

EGYPT

Socio-Economic Costs of Gender-Based Violence



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Gender-based violence (GBV) is a global pandemic, with serious social and economic repercussions for survivors, their families, communities and nations.ⁱ

This project aimed to estimate the socio-economic costs of GBV (domestic violence, early and forced marriage, and public sexual harassment) in six USAID presence countries: Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Tunisia, and West Bank and Gaza.

Across the globe, 1 in 3 women has experienced physical and/or sexual violence at the hands of an intimate partner.ⁱⁱ The prevalence (26%) of intimate partner violence (IPV) in Egypt is on par with this global average with 14% experiencing such violence once or more in the past year. Twenty five percent of ever-married women have experienced physical violence. Violence during pregnancy is a concern, with at least seven percent of women reporting physical violence while pregnant.ⁱⁱⁱ

Another important form of GBV is child marriage - defined as any marriage before the age of 18. Egypt is not considered a “hot spot” for child marriage. Nonetheless, 18% of Egyptian women are married before age 18, and two percent are married before the age of 15.^{iv} The national average age at first marriage is just over 20 years of age.^v The magnitude of child marriage varies by governorate.^{vi} For example, 68% of women in Upper Egypt are married before

the age of 18.^{vi} Unlike other countries in the MENA region, female genital mutilation (FGM) is highly prevalent in Egypt, where nearly all women (92%) have undergone the practice.^{vii}

A 2013 government study released found that sexual harassment is also nearly universal- over 99% of surveyed women and girls reported experiencing some form of sexual harassment in their lifetime.^{viii} The vast majority of female respondents (83%) report feeling unsafe in the street. A 2015 report shed light on children’s experience of verbal harassment, noting a significance between harassment experienced by boys and girls- more than half (56%) of girls had experienced such harassment compared to only 9% of boys.^{ix}

The Egyptian Penal Code does not explicitly criminalize GBV and its various forms, and it also does not provide special legal protections for GBV survivors. However, it does criminalize acts of violence in general terms that do not consider the gender of the perpetrator or the victim, and also has very lenient punishments for sexual violence. In Article 267, for example, the law stipulates that the punishment for raping a woman is hard labor with no mention of other possible, more severe punishments.

New legislation to combat sexual harassment was proposed in 2012 as a measure to promote the security of Egyptian citizens, yet is still has not been fully implemented.^x

Nearly half (48%) of women, who have experienced GBV have never told anyone or sought help from any source, formal or informal.^{xi} Of those who sought help, 80% went to their families and 31% to their husbands’ families. Another 17% told someone, but did not seek help.

INCIDENT LEVEL COSTS

Due to project restrictions, this study did not collect primary data in Egypt. Thus, the estimates provided here are not directly comparable to those in other profiles in this series. Instead, estimates for Egypt are drawn from a 2010 household study conducted by KARAMA.^{xii} The four-province study surveyed over 1,500 households and estimated the financial consequences of

26%

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violence against women by calculating both direct and indirect costs. It found that the total direct cost to an individual survivor who experienced violence in the home is \$4.87.^{xiii}

Survivors' out-of-pocket expenses will depend on which services they need and are able to seek. Those who seek legal services can incur at least \$208 in litigation costs, an expense that generally has to be paid by the survivor due to limited public funding for legal services.

Similarly, the cost of transportation to access these services is relatively high, estimated at up to \$36.60 for a woman traveling by herself. If she is accompanied by anyone, the cost for each companion, including children, can be \$6.

Beyond these direct and out of pocket costs the KARAMA study also calculated the indirect costs that result from GBV. These include lost productivity, missed work, and the inability to complete usual household tasks and errands, among other consequences. Taking into consideration the differential costs among women who work outside the home and those who do not, the study estimates an average indirect monthly cost of \$139 per woman.^{xiv}

NATIONAL LEVEL COSTS

The same study used these individual-level estimates to calculate the cost of violence against women at the national level. The direct cost of violence against women is at least \$111.8 million per year, or 0.0054% of Egypt's 2010 GDP. The indirect costs are substantially higher, at almost \$25 billion per year, or an estimated 11.4% of annual GDP.^{xv}

\$111.8 MILLION

**direct cost of violence
against women**

\$25 BILLION

**indirect cost of violence
against women**

These figures reflect the significant costs of continued inaction to prevent GBV in Egypt. As a comparison, Egypt's total health expenditures was only 2% of its 2010 GDP. This spending on violence against women represents significant lost opportunity costs. The money that is invested in responding to cases of GBV or lost as a consequence of experiences of violence could instead be invested in services like education that promote the prevention of GBV and challenge patriarchal traditions and harmful social norms. State institutions such as the National Council for Women, as well as Civil Society Organizations, and non-profit organizations invest into providing support to survivors of GBV all over Egypt.

METHODOLOGY

While no primary data was collected for Egypt, this costing model is supported by work conducted under the present project, and summarized in the accompanying Literature Review and Context Analysis. The figures presented here were calculated by the CPE and KARAMA study, with additional extrapolation using secondary data to estimate the comparisons of GDP and the conversion from Egyptian Pounds to US Dollars.

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iv. National Council for Childhood and Motherhood (NCCM) and UNICEF (2015), Violence against Children in Egypt. A Quantitative Survey and Qualitative Study in Cairo, Alexandria and Assiut, NCCM and UNICEF Egypt, Cairo http://www.unicef.org/egypt/Final_YAC_1002015.pdf

v. Ibid. El-Zanaty, F., WayA. (2015).

vi. Hassan, Farkhunda. (2009). Egypt Violence Against Women Study: Summary Report. Cairo.

vii. Ibid. National Council for Childhood and Motherhood (NCCM) and UNICEF (2015).

viii. <http://harassmap.org/en/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/UN-Women-Sexual-Harassment-Study-Egypt-Final-AR-c.pdf>

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xi. Ibid. El-Zanaty, F., WayA. (2006).

xii. CPE and KARAMA. (2010) Study on the Cost of Violence against Women in Egypt. Bayt al Khebra al Watany

xiii. Figures calculated using the 2010 exchange rate of 1USD=0.1741 Egyptian pounds. http://www.exchangerates.org.uk/USD-EGP-14_11_2010-exchange-rate-history.html

xiv. Ibid, CPE and KARAMA (2010)

xv. Ibid, CPE and KARAMA (2010)