

Poverty & Equity Brief

Middle East & North Africa

Arab Republic of Egypt

April 2021

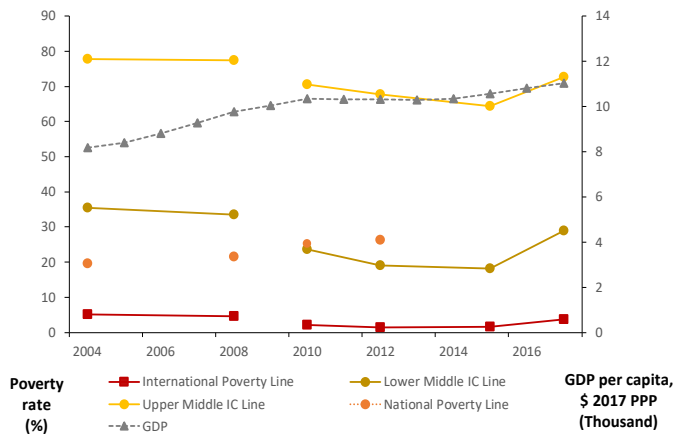
In 2017-18, an estimated 3.8 percent of Egyptians lived on less than the international poverty line of US\$1.90 (2011 PPP US\$) per day, and 4.7 percent of Egyptians were assessed to be multidimensionally poor when using the dimensions considered by the World Bank for international comparisons. The low shares of international and multidimensional poverty reflect Egypt's strong performance relative to other countries on dimensions such as consumption, schooling, and access to basic utilities.

A much higher share of the population lived on less than US\$3.20 per day, a poverty line used by the World Bank as a benchmark for lower middle income countries. In 2017-18, the poverty rate at US\$3.20 was estimated to be 28.9 percent, up from 18.1 percent in 2015. The increase in poverty rates was not unexpected given the increases in inflation in that period. The COVID-19 outbreak containment measures and the economic effects of the pandemic could affect future poverty reduction prospects working through the labor market and remittances channels. The official poverty estimates, calculated using a new poverty line set each survey year, also showed a rising incidence of poverty between 2015 and 2017. The official poverty lines can be considered to be relative poverty lines with the real value of the lines changing over time to reflect the most recent consumption patterns of the population: 29.7 percent of Egyptians lived below the 2019 official poverty line. Future poverty trends will depend upon subsequent policy responses and how well the labor market responds. The expansion of targeted cash transfer programs, Takaful and Karama, and increases in the food subsidy allowance can help contain the increase in poverty and loss in real incomes. The Gini index, measuring inequality in distribution of per capita consumption, was 31.5 in 2017-18 and this value has barely changed since 2010, other than a dip in 2012. Based on international comparisons, a Gini index of 31.5 suggests inequality is low in Egypt (estimates of Gini index are based on published household survey data). However, measures of inequality that are not based on consumption surveys show inequality to be higher (e.g., Alvaredo et al., 2018).

POVERTY	Number of Poor (million)	Rate (%)	Period
National Poverty Line	31.3	32.5	2017
International Poverty Line 12.7 in Egyptian pound (2017) or US\$1.90 (2011 PPP) per day per capita	3.7	3.8	2017
Lower Middle Income Class Poverty Line 21.4 in Egyptian pound (2017) or US\$3.20 (2011 PPP) per day per capita	27.9	28.9	2017
Upper Middle Income Class Poverty Line 36.7 in Egyptian pound (2017) or US\$5.50 (2011 PPP) per day per capita	70.0	72.6	2017
Multidimensional Poverty Measure		4.7	2017
SHARED PROSPERITY			
Annualized Consumption Growth per capita of the bottom 40 percent		-2.50	2012-2017
INEQUALITY			
Gini Index		31.5	2017
Shared Prosperity Premium = Growth of the bottom 40 - Average Growth		-1.37	2012-2017
GROWTH			
Annualized GDP per capita growth		1.35	2012-2017
Annualized Consumption Growth per capita from Household Survey		-1.13	2012-2017
MEDIAN INCOME			
Growth of the annual median income/consumption per capita		-1.85	2012-2017

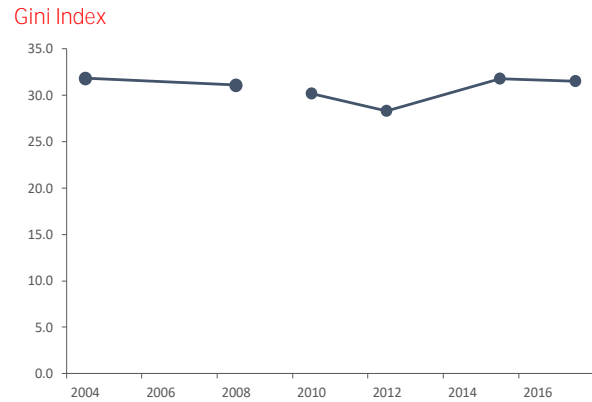
Sources: WDI for GDP, National Statistical Offices for national poverty rates, POVCALNET as of February 2021, and Global Monitoring Database for the rest.

POVERTY HEADCOUNT RATE, 2004-2017



Source: World Bank using HIECS/MNAPOV/GMD

INEQUALITY TRENDS, 2004-2017



Source: World Bank using HIECS/MNAPOV/GMD

KEY INDICATORS

Distribution among groups: 2017	Lower Middle Income line(%)		Relative group (%)		Multidimensional Poverty Measures: 2017 (% of population)	
	Non-Poor	Poor	Bottom 40	Top 60		
Urban population	78	22	31	69	Monetary poverty (Consumption)	
Rural population	66	34	47	53	Daily consumption less than US\$1.90 per person	3.8
Males	72	28	40	60	Education	
Females	70	30	40	60	At least one school-aged child is not enrolled in school	4.2
0 to 14 years old	60	40	54	46	No adult has completed primary education	10.6
15 to 64 years old	75	25	35	65	Access to basic infrastructure	
65 and older	87	13	19	81	No access to limited-standard drinking water	0.8
Without education (16+)	69	31	42	58	No access to limited-standard sanitation	3.2
Primary education (16+)	73	27	38	62	No access to electricity	0.5
Secondary education (16+)	75	25	37	63		
Tertiary/post-secondary education (16+)	90	10	16	84		

Source: World Bank using HIECS/MNAPOV/GMD

Source: World Bank using HIECS/MNAPOV/GMD

Notes: N/A missing value, N/A* value removed due to less than 30 observations

POVERTY DATA AND METHODOLOGY

Poverty and inequality estimates in Egypt are produced by the Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics (CAPMAS). CAPMAS collects a nationally representative household survey (HIECS) on average every two years and publishes national and regional poverty rates after each survey round. In 2015, the welfare aggregate estimation, based on a consumption measure, included the following expenditure groups: food, dwelling-related expenditures, education, health, general services, food away from home, a rental value as proxy for housing services, purchases of durable goods, transportation, and communications, and purchases of other non-durable goods. The welfare aggregate is not temporally deflated. The official poverty measure is based on a household-specific poverty line that considers two key things: (1) the household composition and thus the household-specific caloric requirements; and (2) the regional variation in cost/calorie and non-food allowance. This methodology leads to several thousand poverty lines. The methodology to measure welfare changed starting in 2015, and caution should be used when comparing official estimates with pre-2015 indicators. The real value of the poverty line is not fixed and a new poverty line is estimated for each survey round. The HIECS 2017-18 was conducted between October 2017 and September 2018. The first round of the 2019-2020 survey was conducted during October 2019-March 2020 and official poverty estimates were announced in December 2020; the anonymized micro data have not yet been publicly released.

HARMONIZATION

The numbers presented in this brief are based on the MNAPOV database. MNAPOV is a new data collection effort enacted in 2014, and managed by MNATSD. It covers 36 surveys from 11 countries. Two data points (surveys) are available for each country, except Algeria. The database is organized in 3 modules following the Global Monitoring Database (GMD) Harmonization guidelines, including the welfare aggregate which is used for Global Poverty Monitoring. Terms of use of the data adhere to agreements with the original data producers.