



Report on **The Egyptian Efforts to Realize the Right to Food on the Occasion of World Food Day**

Since 1981, the world has celebrated World Food Day on October 16 of each year. On this occasion, the Technical Secretariat of the Supreme Standing Committee for Human Rights prepared this report on the Egyptian efforts to realize the right to food. The report clarifies the national framework to protect this right; along with the efforts the government has taken at the level of operational policies and programs to enhance its implementation.

First: The National Framework for the Protection of the Right to Food



1. *The constitutional framework:* The Egyptian Constitution stipulates the right of every citizen to healthy and adequate food. It obligates the state to secure food resources for all citizens, ensure food sovereignty in a sustainable manner, and guarantee the preservation of agricultural biodiversity and local plant varieties to safeguard the rights of future generations (Article 79). These provisions are considered an important step in terms of placing the right to food within the framework of economic and social rights that the state – with its agencies and institutions – is committed to. The Constitution also considers agriculture a basic component of the national economy and obligates the state to protect and increase the agricultural area, criminalize attacks on it, develop agricultural and animal production, and encourage industries that are based on them (Article 29).
2. *The legislative framework:* Laws were passed on the reclamation of new lands, the prevention of encroachment on agricultural lands, and the creation of centers for counseling and training services. A law was also issued to establish the Agricultural Solidarity Fund to cover the damage resulting from natural disasters and other risks to agricultural crops in order to achieve sustainable agricultural development. A number of legislations related to food security were also issued, the most important of which are the law establishing the National Food Safety Authority and the Consumer Protection Law.
3. *The “Sustainable Development Strategy: Egypt Vision 2030”* includes several goals that are directly related to the promotion of the right to food. The most important of these goals are: increasing and protecting agricultural lands; increasing agricultural production, achieving self-sufficiency in a number of strategic commodities; developing agricultural technology; and

establishing clusters for agricultural industries. This is in addition to taking into consideration the environmental dimension and moving towards sustainable agriculture as well as the development of livestock, poultry, and fish.

Second: The Government's Efforts to Promote the Realization of the Right to Food

1. The government is making continuous efforts on several parallel tracks to realize the right to food and raise the level of food security in Egypt. Notable efforts include those related to developing the agricultural sector; increasing livestock, fish, and poultry; increasing food subsidies, especially for those in greatest need; and reducing food waste. Furthermore, they include raising awareness of the importance of proper nutrition and improving the quality of foodstuff by strengthening food safety oversight.
2. In 2019, Egypt advanced six ranks in the Global Food Security Index, reaching 55 in the world after it was 61 in 2018: In terms of food availability, Egypt was ranked 23 in 2019 after it was 39 in 2018 while in terms of food quality and safety; it reached 50 after having been at 57.
3. The total value of food production in Egypt increased to more than EGP 500 billion in the fiscal year 2017/2018 compared to only EGP 305 billion in 2013/2014, which indicates a remarkable improvement in the availability of food in the local market. The improvement in the foreign exchange reserve ratio contributed to covering about 6 months of food imports in 2019 compared to less than 2.5 months in 2012, and this helped ensure the stability of imports of basic commodities. It is worth noting that this improvement came as a result of improved macroeconomic indicators following the economic reforms that were implemented between 2016 and 2019. The Government Action Program (2018–2022) aims to achieve the highest possible degree of self-sufficiency in the provision of basic food commodities.

“The “Sustainable Development Strategy: Egypt Vision 2030” includes several goals that are directly related to the promotion of the right to food.”

Third: Prominent Achievements in the Realization of the Right to Food

The following is a review of the most prominent achievements in several areas related to the realization of the right to food:

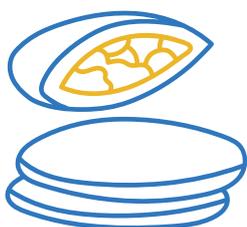
1. *Development of the Agricultural Sector:*
 - Self-sufficiency ratios of important agricultural crops were raised and strategic crops that support food security were expanded.
 - The contribution of the agricultural sector to the GDP for the year 2019 was approximately 12%. The Egyptian Government Action Program (2018–2022) aims to increase the total cropped area to nearly 18 million acres and raise the acre productivity levels of the various groups between 15% and 25%.
 - The national project for reclamation of one and a half million acres was launched as a first phase of a total target of four million acres to ensure the growth of agricultural output. This project includes an integrated agro-industrial approach to specific crops, vegetables, and fruits.

- The government took decisive measures to prevent encroachment on agricultural lands.
 - The government was keen to increase the agricultural area to compensate for what Egypt lost as a result of dredging, uprooting, and urban encroachment. The government established the New Egyptian Countryside Development Company to work on the reclamation and development of the one and a half million acres. The company is also working to establish new sustainable communities based on agriculture on new lands according to a scientific, technical, and economic methodology.
 - The average per capita share of cereals or grains increased from 221.1 kg in 2012 to 244.9 kg in 2018 while the average per capita share of wheat increased from 122.5 kg in 2012 to 155.2 kg in 2018.
 - The National Project of Grain Silos is one of the projects that the government has paid special attention to, given the importance of wheat as a strategic food commodity. The project includes the construction of 50 giant silos to store wheat and grains according to the latest storage technology systems to be implemented and established in 17 governorates. The storage capacity of wheat increased to 301 million tons of wheat annually during the period from July 2014 to June 2020. The Government Action Program (2018–2022) aims to increase the storage capacity of wheat by constructing 13 silos and ensuring a strategic reserve of 4030 thousand tons of wheat.
 - The Egyptian government signed an agreement with the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) in 2018 aimed at combining innovative international best practices and global standards with national and regional experiences during the partnership period extending from 2018 to 2022. In accordance with this agreement, FAO will also provide support to the Egyptian government to implement the national program framework based on the following priorities: improving agricultural productivity, raising the level of food security for strategic food commodities, and the sustainable use of natural agricultural resources.
2. *Increasing Livestock, Fish, and Poultry:*
- The state works through an integrated national program based on preserving and developing the current livestock, poultry, and fish wealth to meet increasing demands by increasing supply on the one hand while also improving quality and reducing costs on the other hand.
 - In the field of livestock, the government's plan aims to increase production from 950 thousand tons in the year 2016/2017 to 1.75 million tons in 2020–2022, which would raise the self-sufficiency rate of red meat from 79% to 82% in 2021/2022. The plan also aims to increase domestic production of milk from about 6 million tons in the year 2016/2017 to about 10.5 million tons in 2021/2022, which would raise the self-sufficiency rate from 90% to 99% by the end of 2021/2022.
 - With regards to poultry, the self-sufficiency rate of white meat has been raised to about 95%.
 - In the field of fish wealth development, fish farming projects have been expanded. Fishing ports, repair and maintenance workshops, and the manufacturing equipment attached to them have also been established and developed. The government aims to increase fish

production from 1.9 million tons in 2016/2017 to about 3 million tons in 2021/2022, so that production from the Nile River will increase by 7% annually, from the lakes by 13%, and from marine aquaculture by about 20%.

3. *The State's Efforts to Provide Healthy Food to Groups in Most Need:*

- The government has pursued policies and programs to provide food at subsidized prices to groups in most need. The value of commodity support allocations during 2020/2021 amounted to EGP 89 billion. The number of beneficiaries of the ration card system applied in Egypt is approximately 69 million people. The number of beneficiaries from the bread subsidy system is 79 million citizens and the percentage of bread subsidy from the state budget is 6%.
- The new food subsidy system depends on directing subsidies to those who deserve it while allowing the beneficiaries to choose between 20 commodities.
- The government contributes to providing basic food commodities at reduced prices through a disciplined and regular distribution network consisting of 1,172 branches of companies affiliated with the Ministry of Supply and Internal Trade covering all the governorates. This is in addition to projects implemented by the government such as Gamiyaty (My Co-op) Project, which currently has a total number of 4,605 commodity distribution outlets but aims to reach 6,000 outlets in 2020. Furthermore, there are mobile services with a total of 2,414 mobile cars in various governorates with an additional one thousand cars targeted by 2022. Finally, there are also numerous seasonal exhibitions for this matter.
- Some amendments to the food subsidy program were introduced with the aim of improving the nutritional value of the commodities provided under the program and encouraging the beneficiaries to follow healthy and more varied diets.
- Free school feeding programs were expanded to accommodate more than 11 million students, with up to 81% of the students enrolled in the primary education stage of public and Azhari education. The Ministry of Finance approved about EGP 2 billion for school feeding in the fiscal year 2019/2020, as 70 million meals were produced during the academic year 2019/2020. Of these, 40 million school meals were distributed during the first semester of 2019/2020 to school students in 13 governorates.
- As part of the development of social safety nets, the government supports the social initiatives to combat hunger through the Egyptian Food Bank, which is a non-profit, non-governmental organization that aims to eliminate hunger in Egypt. In 2019, the Egyptian Food Bank assisted about 3.5 million families with its monthly and seasonal feeding programs in addition to providing nearly 3 million school meals for 24 schools.



In 2019, the Egyptian Food Bank assisted about **3.5 MILLION FAMILIES**



Free school feeding programs accommodates more than **11 MILLION STUDENTS**

4. Increasing Awareness of the Importance of Proper Nutrition and Reducing Food Loss and Waste:

- A number of awareness campaigns were conducted to reduce food waste and highlight the importance of proper nutrition in preventing chronic diseases, especially among the groups most vulnerable to diseases related to malnutrition.
- In 2019, the Ministry of Health and Population launched a program to detect diseases related to malnutrition – such as obesity, anemia, and stunting – among school children, referring identified children to health insurance for follow-up and free treatment. This campaign targeted about 11.5 million students in more than 22,000 schools.
- The prevalence of undernourishment and malnutrition among the population decreased during 2018 compared to 2017 to reach 4.5%. The percentage of children who suffer from stunting also decreased from about 30.7% in 2012 to about 22.3% in 2018. Finally, the weight gain index of children under five decreased from 20.5% in 2012 to 15.7% in 2017.
- In cooperation with FAO and through the Project entitled “Reduction of Food Loss and Waste, and Value Chain Development for Food Security in Egypt”, the Egyptian government was able to train and develop the capacities of about 7,895 farmers, agricultural advisors, and tradesmen on how to reduce loss and waste of crops for post-harvest periods.

5. Enhancing Efforts on Food Safety Control:

- The National Food Safety Authority was established in 2017. It is an agency affiliated with the President and aims to protect consumer health by ensuring that the food produced, processed, distributed, or traded in the market meets the highest safety and health standards. The establishment of the authority reflects the adoption of a new preventive approach based on monitoring the process of handling food with the aim of avoiding any source of pollution during all stages of the food chain.
- The authority works to develop and implement a system to control food establishments and verify their implementation of the provisions of food legislation through all stages of food handling.



In **2019**, Egypt reaches **55** in the world after it was 61 in 2018



2,414
MOBILE
CARS
to distribute
basic food
commodities