



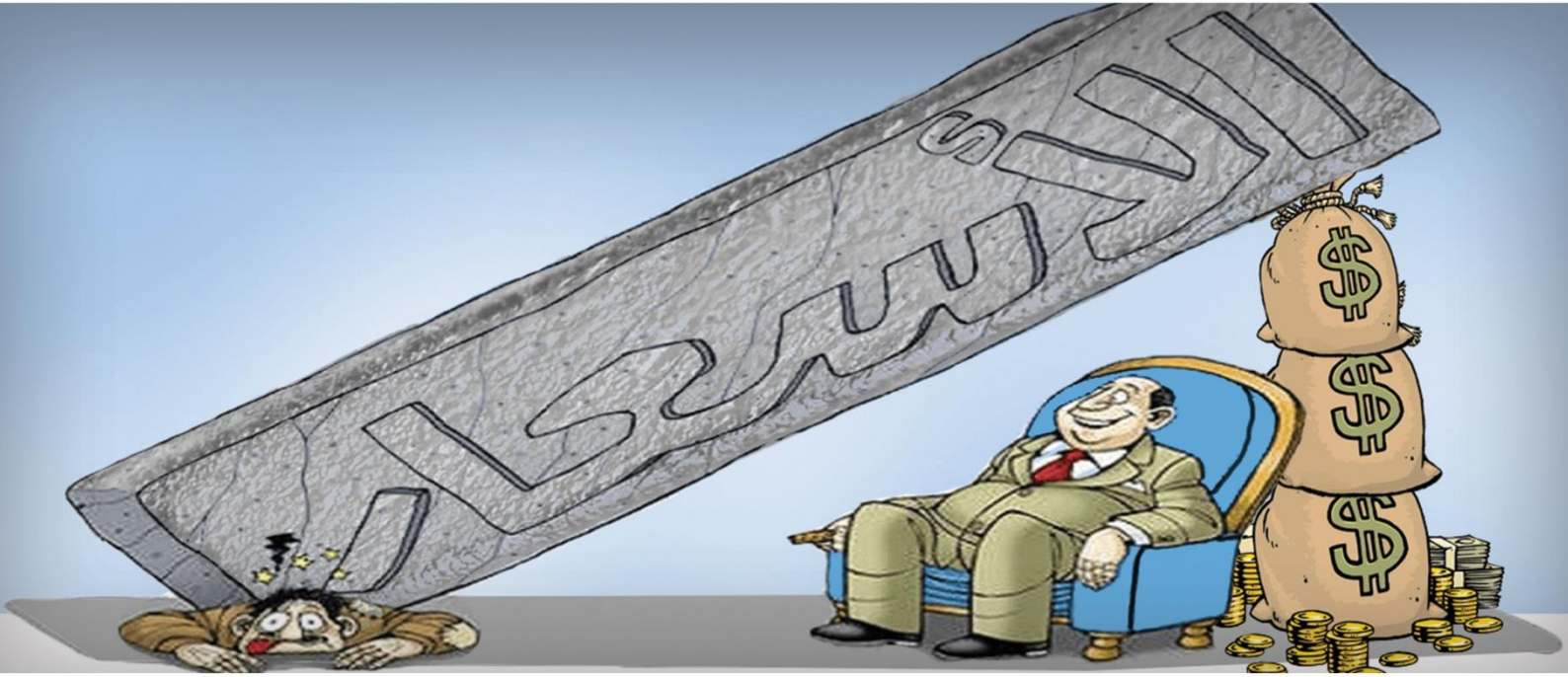
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Social Repercussions of Rising Prices in Egypt

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The rising prices in Egypt have become a complex multifaceted phenomenon, characterized by inability of a certain category of Egyptian people to meet the minimum levels of basic needs, in addition to inability of different capacities to participate in development processes and reap its benefits.

Unemployment, poverty, terrorism, corruption, and others have become some of the most prominent diseases of the current time, and all competent authorities such as academia, media, experts and those concerned have become aware of the significance of addressing these problems and monitoring the consequences resulting from such [phenomenon](#).

Economic crises have serious consequences in society, given that the phenomenon of rising prices has been accompanied by an increase in armed robberies on banks and increased robberies in general, as well as begging, violence and killings to meet various needs.

Egypt's [National Center for Social and Criminal Research](#) (NCSCR) has revealed that the number of divorces reached 24,000 in various governorates during the last five months, in addition to divorces resulting from customary marriages (that are performed outside the court). The NCSCR stressed that the hardships of living experienced by Egyptians due to the so-called 'economic reform' are behind the rising divorces, family breakdowns, and the increasing numbers of street children. Also, the NCSCR report referred to an increase in suicides among husbands and wives. It also highlighted the worsening of marital problems that are likely to lead to killings to escape responsibility; as the number of divorced women in Egypt reached about 3 million, in addition to reported escalation of the phenomenon of spinsterhood and customary marriages as well as homosexuality and addiction.

Several studies have also paid attention to the social and economic motives behind murders, especially in the Egyptian families, and found that domestic murders in Egypt represent one quarter to one third of the total murders, the main causes of which are [poverty and unemployment](#).

The [Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics](#) (CAPMS) has issued a new report indicating that inflation rates have surged to a record high, reaching about 30% during this year, in light of the rising prices of food commodities by 40%. CAPMS also reported that 27.8% of the Egyptian population cannot meet their basic needs, that the current poverty rate is the highest since the year 2000, with Sohag and Assiut as the poorest governorates (66%), followed by Qena (58%); that the lowest percentage of the poor in Egypt is in Port Said Governorate (6.7%), followed by Alexandria (11.6%); and that 18% of Cairo's population are among the poor. The report pointed out that 10.8% of Egyptians (more than 11.8 million citizens) are in the lowest expenditure category in Egypt, where their average per capita expenditure is less than LE 4,000 per year (less than LE 333 per month). The report also said that 14.7% of the total individuals in Egypt are within the richest category, where they spend more than LE 12,000 per year.

Key repercussions of higher prices

Among the key repercussions of the rising prices are poverty, citizenship, social exclusion, crime, and domestic violence in Egypt:

1- Poverty

The statistics declared by the Egyptian government about the number of [the poor](#) in Egypt are less than the true numbers, although they indicate that 2,100,000 Egyptians live below poverty line. Some analysts attribute this to the fact that the price rises and rigid wage system, that is incommensurate with these rises, are among the most prominent factors that have impoverished the middle class which is considered the basis of society, thus posing a real threat to the Egyptian society; in addition to the misdistribution of the Gross Domestic Product and the lack of strategies and programs to combat poverty.

2- Citizenship

There is a clear challenge to the principle of citizenship in Egypt, i.e. the change in the fabric of society due to the widening circle of collective dissatisfaction as a result of the deteriorating economic conditions of many Egyptian families. In fact, the issue of the rising prices is the spearhead of this change, leading to a growing sense of social injustice. According to T.H. Marshall, the ideal citizenship experience entails access to political, civil and social rights in a state.

3- Social exclusion

The phenomenon of social exclusion comes as a direct result of high prices and the consequent decline in livelihood opportunities; and the reduction of citizens' opportunities for decent living, as well as the destruction of hope for the future to various segments of society, amid growing cronyism and corruption (in all state institutions), marginalization, unemployment and economic disparity in income. With the rising economic inequality associated with rising prices and the unfair distribution of resources and revenues, the violations, abuses and various manifestations of exclusion become much higher, given that social exclusion is defined as 'blocking individuals from various rights – or denying them full access to – opportunities and resources (such as housing, employment, healthcare, civic engagement, democratic participation, etc.) that are normally available to members of a different group in society'.

4- Crime

Some Egyptian newspapers have pointed to the high rate of crimes in Egypt in light of the worsening social and economic crises and the ruthless high prices that affect the poor, in addition to lack of job opportunities, which pushes some to committing crimes due to inability to provide their basic needs of living.

These reports also indicate that various governorates are currently suffering from high rates of crimes, including poverty-motivated murder, with expectations that these rates will continue to increase. Based on security reports, the number of robbery-motivated killings in the Egyptian governorates during the first half of 2018 amounted to 296 crimes, in addition to 13 cases of poverty-motivated suicide. Reports also confirm that the majority of robbery-motivated killings are committed by people who fail to provide for the needs of their families, with Cairo governorate ranking first, followed by Giza, Qalubia, Alexandria, and finally Assiut.

5- Violence

The spread of poverty, unemployment, low standard of living, poor distribution of wealth, increasing manifestations of social provocation, collapse of the value of work, congestion of slums (informal housing), and the increasing numbers of school and university graduates who do not find jobs - all these factors lead to tension and fuel domestic and societal violence, motivated by muffled anger over poor living conditions, which may portend threats beyond even the idea of violence.

To read the full study in Arabic, click [here](#)

