Ex-post evaluation
Quality Education Support Programme I, Egypt

Title	**Quality Education Support Programme (QESP I)**				
Sector and CRS code	11220 Primary education				
BMZ number	2008 65 667				
Commissioned by	BMZ				
Recipient and executing agency	Egyptian Ministry of Education (MoETE)				
FC financing volume and instrument	EUR 14.0 million (budgetary grant)				
Project duration	2010-2021	**Reporting year**	2025	**Year of random sample**	2025

Overall rating

successful

1: very successful – **6:** completely unsuccessful

Project objectives and implementation

The objective at the outcome level was to achieve sustainability in the improvement of equitable, needs-based access to basic education facilities in selected districts of the governorates of Sohag and Assiut in Egypt. At the higher level of development policy, the objective was to improve the quality of basic education. To achieve these objectives, investments were made in the construction, expansion and renovation of school infrastructure at 30 school locations in four districts of the Upper Egyptian governorates of Assiut and Sohag. These investments were supplemented by measures to strengthen community participation in the education process and the decentralised and participatory management of school infrastructure and simple maintenance routines.

Key findings

The project had an impact on development policy and is appraised as 'successful'. The following findings are particularly decisive in this regard:

- The relevance of the programme is considered to be very high. The measures aimed to improve school infrastructure, including child-friendly learning environments, and thus directly addressed the most urgent education-related needs of the target group in disadvantaged districts of Upper Egypt.
- The programme was closely integrated into national reform plans and combined investments in educational infrastructure with measures to strengthen local planning and administrative structures.
- Despite institutional upheavals and limited administrative capacities, most of the outcome-level objectives were achieved. The planned outputs – construction, expansion and renovation of schools – were largely realised in quantitative and qualitative terms.
- The efficiency of resource utilisation was also high. By leveraging existing administrative structures and focusing on simple, locally implementable solutions, resources could be deployed in a targeted and cost-effective manner.
- Sustainability can be appraised as moderately successful. The infrastructure created and the routines introduced for simple maintenance provide a solid foundation for long-term improvements in the education sector. However, their lasting impact depends crucially on institutional anchoring, political prioritisation and the continued provision of sufficient operating resources at national and subnational level.

Conclusions

- The holistic approach of combining investment in school construction and renovation with participatory school development - while simultaneously strengthening local administrative structures - can contribute to a more sustainable learning environment This requires that responsibility is given to local structures.
- Embedding this approach in the national education strategy and close cooperation between the central partner institutions ensure political backing, institutional acceptance and continuity in implementation.
- The use of standardised school designs enables significant cost savings and sets new standards for quality and functionality in educational infrastructure.
- Measures to strengthen the participatory management of school infrastructure reinforce local ownership.

Contents

List of abbreviations

BMZ	Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development
BoT	Board of Trustees
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
EGP	Egyptian pound
eIDP	Electronic education plans at district level
EMIS	Education Management Information System
EPE	Ex-post evaluation
EUR	Euro
FC	Financial cooperation
FC E	FC Evaluation
GAEB	General Authority for Educational Buildings
GDP	Gross domestic product
GIZ	German Society for International Cooperation
HDI	Human Development Index
IVP	Integrated Village Planning approach
KfW	Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau
MEK	Misr EL-Kheir Foundation – national NGO – active in the fields of education, health and poverty reduction.
MoETE	Ministry of Education and Technical Education
MP	Module proposal
NILE	New Improved Learning Environment Project (KfW)
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PA	Project appraisal
PCR	Final completion report
Plan	Plan International Egypt – international children's rights organisation focusing on the advancement of girls
PP	Project proposal
QESP	Quality Education Support Programme
SCC	Social Contract Centre – Egyptian Cabinet institution for promoting participatory development planning
TC	Technical cooperation
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Emergency Fund
USD	US dollar

Overview

General conditions and classification of the project

With over 116 million inhabitants and an annual population growth of around 1.7% (2024)[1], Egypt faces major challenges in the education sector. Around one third of the population is under the age of 15 – a demographic pressure that is causing a continuous increase in demand for school places, infrastructure and qualified teaching staff. Despite numerous reforms, almost one third of the population lives below the national poverty line, which further exacerbates existing educational inequalities.

Against this backdrop, the efforts of the Egyptian government and German development cooperation (DC) increasingly focused on structurally weak regions where access to education and school quality were particularly limited. The Quality Education Support Programme I (QESP I) was designed and implemented in this context as a contribution to improving basic education in the socio-economically disadvantaged governorates of Assiut and Sohag in Upper Egypt. At the start of the programme, these regions faced particularly difficult conditions: high poverty rates, inadequate educational infrastructure, low school enrolment rates for girls and severely overcrowded classrooms, some with more than 60 pupils per class. Many schools operated in double or even triple shifts, and up to 20% of children attended rented buildings that often did not meet minimum safety or hygiene standards.

These challenges existed within a highly centralised administrative system that allowed only limited scope for local planning and decision-making. District administrations (Idaras) and schools were institutionally and personnel-wise under-resourced, particularly in the areas of school construction planning, maintenance and repair, and participatory school development. This is where QESP I came in: in addition to constructing and renovating school buildings, the focus was on strengthening local governance structures and building sustainable maintenance and planning capacities.

QESP I was embedded in the bilateral portfolio of FC E in the education sector. The programme was designed as a pilot programme for the decentralisation of school construction and focused on standardised, child-friendly and maintenance-friendly school designs in order to meet the specific conditions in disadvantaged regions of Upper Egypt.

The programme was implemented in a challenging political environment. It was launched in the aftermath of the 2011 revolution, part of the Arab Spring, which was marked by institutional instability, frequent changes in leadership and macroeconomic tensions.

Brief description

To improve the quality of basic education in structurally disadvantaged regions of Upper Egypt, QESP I pursued an integrated approach combining infrastructure development and institutional capacity building. The investment component included the construction, renovation and equipping of a total of 30 school locations. Implementation took place within the framework of a decentralised, participatory planning process involving all relevant stakeholders (Integrated Village Planning – IVP) with the aim of systematically conducting an appraisal of education-related bottlenecks in the villages and proposing solutions that were supported by all parties involved. The IVP resulted in concrete action plans (educational Idara Development Plans, eIDP) to solve the problems identified in the schools. The approach had already been established under the predecessor project NILE (New & Improved Learning Environment, BMZ No. 2004 66 417). An accompanying measure aimed to strengthen the skills and abilities of school, community and all school administration levels with regard to the operation, maintenance and upkeep of schools.

The project was implemented in close cooperation with the General Authority for Educational Buildings (GAEB) and the Egyptian Ministry of Education (MoETE), with the support of an international implementation consultant.

The programme's target groups were education authorities at the governorate and district levels, school management (boards of trustees), teachers and school-age children in grades 1-6 of primary school. A particular focus was placed on promoting educational equity and gender sensitivity, especially in terms of equipment, location selection and the design of the learning environment.

The programme was implemented between 2013 and 2021 with funding from the FC, supplemented by Egyptian contributions and EUR 22.3 million from the German-Egyptian Debt Swap Facility (Debt Swap Facility, BMZ No. 2019 68 684), which were pledged in the wake of the Arab Spring (2011). The combination of FC funds, debt conversion and national contributions made a total of around EUR 46.9 million available. Note: The additional school construction projects financed under the debt swap facility (EUR 22.3 million) are not covered by the evaluation.

[1] Source: World Bank (via Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis).

Breakdown of total costs

The programme included an accompanying measure that was implemented as part of the investment project (BMZ No. 2008 65 667) – there is no separate BMZ No. for this measure.

	QESP I (plan)	QESP I (actual)
Investment costs (total) in EUR million	16.5	15.64
Own contribution in EUR million	1.5	2.02
External funding in EUR million	15.00*	13.62
of which BMZ funds in EUR million	14.00	13.62

Table1: *Breakdown of costs*
Note: *Including planned co-financing between FC and UNICEF amounting to EUR 1 million. ** In addition to the FC grant of EUR 14 million, residual funds from the predecessor project NILE (BMZ 2004 66 417) amounting to EUR 0.25 million were made available during implementation, bringing the total FC contribution to EUR 14.25 million. Of this, EUR 13.37 million was disbursed.

Map of the programme region

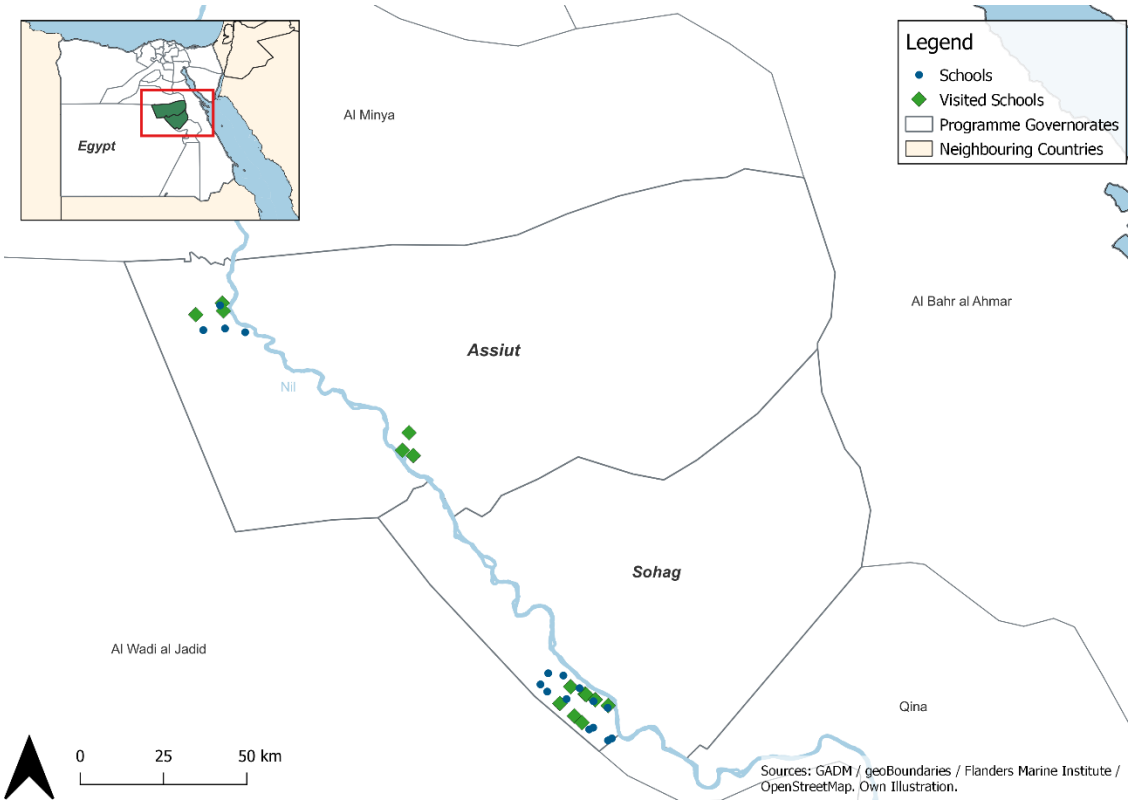

Figure 1 *: Map of the programme region*
Source*: Own illustration, map basis see map legend*

Strengths and weaknesses of the programme

The strengths include in particular:

- QESP I targeted a sector that is central to Egypt's socio-economic development – basic education. The programme combined construction investments with institutional support, thereby contributing both to improving the learning environment and strengthening local administrative structures.
- The measure was closely embedded in the national education strategy (Pre-University Education Reform Strategic Plan) and was implemented with a high degree of ownership on the part of the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MoETE) and the General Authority for Educational Buildings (GAEB). This political embedding contributed significantly to acceptance and continuity of implementation.
- The standardised and modular school construction method led to high efficiency gains in planning, tendering and construction. Value engineering and design optimisations[2] reduced construction costs by up to 20% compared to traditional GAEB schools. Individual design principles were informally adopted by GAEB and influenced later construction programmes, underlining the project's structure-building effect.
- Tools such as the Integrated Village Planning (IVP) approach, which emerged from the predecessor project NILE, and the Education Integrated District Plans (eIDPs) based on it strengthened local planning capacity and are still considered good practice in education planning today.
- The project contributed to a visible strengthening of ownership and responsibility at the local level. School committees and district administrations developed their own maintenance routines and took responsibility for maintaining the infrastructure.
- The combination of German financial support and Egyptian contributions, as well as the supplementary use of debt conversion funds, increased the impact and visibility of Germany's contribution to the education sector.
- The overall architectural concept set new standards in school construction: for the first time, aspects such as natural ventilation, lighting, shading and appealing colour schemes were systematically taken into account, resulting in a more child-friendly learning environment.
- The competition created by the Simple Maintenance Award Fund (SMAF) initiative (SMAF)[3], which was financed by debt conversion funds and rewards individual schools for their commitment to the maintenance and upkeep of school infrastructure, provided incentives for personal responsibility and good maintenance practices at school level, thereby complementing the impact of the project/programme.
- The involvement of Egyptian architectural firms in the planning process strengthened local expertise and led to the modernisation of architectural planning processes in public education construction.
- The programme achieved remarkable continuity of implementation in a politically volatile environment.

The weaknesses include in particular:

- With regard to impact measurement, in addition to indicators for improving access, class density, maintenance practices and gender parity, the infrastructure achievements in the area of new school construction and rehabilitation were also documented. However, metrics on learning outcomes or educational quality in the narrower sense (e.g. learning progress, dropout or graduation rates) were not systematically recorded.
- Internal programme monitoring was limited in terms of the long-term use, maintenance and upkeep of the schools. There was no regular technical condition assessment or follow-up of maintenance activities.
- Despite the successful introduction of IVPs and eIDPs, their use after the end of the programme remained selective and without permanent institutional anchoring. Financial and human resources for the continuous updating of planning processes are still lacking.
- Long-term financing for maintenance and operation remains uncertain. Appropriate budget lines at district or national level have not yet been systematically established.
- The originally planned co-financing and educational support from UNICEF did not materialise; as a result, planned contributions to quality development and accreditation of schools were not made, which limited the depth of impact in the educational sector.

[2] Value engineering refers to a systematic approach to cost optimisation in which the functionality of a building is maintained or improved while unnecessary costs are reduced. As part of the project, standardised modules, optimised use of materials and simplified construction details were used to make planning and construction more efficient.
[3] The rationale for establishing SMAF was based on the predecessor project NILE and it was continued under QESP I.

- The desired decentralisation of school construction could only be implemented to a limited extent at the institutional level. Decision-making and financing powers remained largely centralised at MoETE and GAEB, which limited the intended learning effect at the district level.
- Despite the strengthening of local school administration structures and the introduction of simple maintenance routines, there was a lack of initiatives to develop sources of income at school level. No systematic approaches to generating own funds (e.g. through local contributions, partnerships or school-based activities) were developed, nor are there any clear guidelines on the use of such funds. As a result, the financial autonomy of schools remains limited, and long-term maintenance continues to be heavily dependent on central budget allocations.
- The maintenance system (SMAF) showed positive results and high acceptance during the project period, but was only continued after the end of the project as part of the follow-up project QESP II. It has not yet been incorporated into the regular school budget of the Ministry of Education.

General conclusions/lessons learned

- The holistic approach of combining investment in school construction and renovation with participatory school development approaches can – while simultaneously strengthening local administrative structures - contribute to a more sustainable learning environment. This requires that responsibility is given to local structures.
- The early involvement of local actors in planning and implementation strengthens ownership, relevance and sustainability – in particular through participatory decision-making processes at district and school level.
- In order to ensure the traceability of the chain of effects, it makes sense – in addition to data on the outcome indicators achieved – to systematically collect indicators at a higher level (e.g. school enrolment, transition and graduation rates or learning achievements) in order to be able to demonstrate contributions to educational participation, learning quality and equal opportunities more consistently in the future.
- Infrastructure measures should always be combined with an institutionally secured maintenance and repair mechanism, including clearly defined budgetary responsibilities.
- Building local planning capacities (IVP, eIDPs) creates an important foundation for evidence-based education management. However, without institutional anchoring and continuous funding, such instruments quickly lose their effectiveness.
- Flexible programme designs ("open programmes") allow for adaptation to volatile conditions, but carry the risk of weaker target control and make impact measurement and comparability more difficult.
- A balanced relationship between quantitative expansion targets (e.g. number of new classrooms) and qualitative components (e.g. school management, maintenance, gender) increases the overall effectiveness and sustainability of education programmes.
- Strengthening boards of trustees (BoTs) contributed to social embedding and ownership at school level. Their institutional safeguarding remains central to the continuity of participatory school development.

Assessment according to OECD DAC criteria

Relevance

1. **Alignment with policies and priorities**

With the Pre-University Education Reform National Strategic Plan 2007–2012, the Egyptian government initiated a strategic change. The central objectives were the decentralisation of education planning, school management and maintenance. QESP I directly addressed these reform priorities through a combination of construction investments and institutional strengthening measures. Planning and implementation were based on objective needs indicators such as enrolment rates, gender gaps and infrastructure deficits. Accompanying approaches such as training for administrative staff, participatory planning processes (Integrated Village Planning – IVP) and the introduction of district-level education development plans (eIDPs)[4] were designed to support the development of local responsibility. As part of the overarching Strategic Vision 2030, the MoETE's current Education Sector Plan (2023–2027) continues to aim to strengthen equal access to and successful completion of basic education for all, with a particular focus on excluded and marginalised groups, in order to reduce inequalities based on gender, disability and geographical location.

QESP I was part of the bilateral German-Egyptian FC in the education sector, which has been ongoing since 1996, and was in line with the BMZ's education strategy "Creating equal opportunities for high-quality education" (2015) and its predecessor strategy "Ten goals for more education, 2010-2013". The programme combined infrastructure support with participatory planning, gender-sensitive construction concepts and approaches to decentralising responsibility for education policy. Elements of the BMZ's feminist development policy were also taken into account in the programme design through the targeted promotion of gender-sensitive infrastructure. These include separate sanitary facilities, safe access routes, hygiene and protection rooms, which strengthen parents' confidence and make it easier for girls to attend school. This supports the goal of strengthening inclusive societies with equal participation, as outlined in the current BMZ position paper "High-Quality Education (2025)". Since 2020, the BMZ has been promoting basic education primarily (except in crisis contexts) through multilateral mechanisms, in contrast to its previous bilateral cooperation.

The programme's objectives were and continue to be aligned with global priorities and policies: in addition to the former Millennium Development Goals (MDG 2: universal access to primary education; MDG 3: gender equality), QESP I contributes significantly to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals – in particular SDG 4 (high-quality, inclusive education), SDG 5 (gender equality) and SDG 11 (sustainable, resilient settlements).

The institutional framework was taken into account insofar as the programme aimed to strengthen decentralised school governance through cooperation between governorate administrations (Muderiyas) and district administrations (Idaras) and the General Authority for Educational Buildings (GAEB).

2. **Alignment with the needs and capacities of stakeholders and beneficiaries**

The QESP I fundamentally addressed key problems in the Egyptian education system in disadvantaged regions – in particular, inadequate school infrastructure, the associated high class sizes and the limited vertical coordination between central planning and decentralised implementation. These shortcomings were already identified during the design phase, but a differentiated analysis of institutional capacities at district and Idara level was only carried out during implementation.

At the time of the appraisal, the governorates of Assiut and Sohag, which were proposed by the MoETE and supported under the programme, were among the poorest areas in Egypt: while the overall poverty rate in Egypt had fallen to 20%, it was 60% in Assiut and 41% in Sohag. The HDI – Human Development Index was also below the national average, as were the education indicators. The HDR education index for the two governorates was below 0.5, while the national average was 0.78 (2006)[5].

The selection of districts within the two governorates was based primarily on educational and socio-economic factors, with a focus on the criteria of "multi-shift teaching", "school enrolment rate for girls" and "number of pupils per class"[6]. Based on these criteria, a ranking of the Idaras (district administrations) with the highest needs was drawn up. A total of 10 Idaras were selected – four received support as part of the programme being evaluated and six others received support through debt conversion

[4] **IVP (Integrated Village Planning):** A participatory planning approach at village level in which educational needs are identified and prioritised together with local stakeholders, school administrations and communities. The tool is used for fact-based site selection and needs assessment for new or refurbished schools. **eIDP (Education Integrated District Plan):** A multi-year education development plan at district level based on the results of the IVP processes. The eIDPs bundle information on school locations, needs and priorities and serve as a strategic planning and control tool for local education authorities.
[5] The 'HDR Education Index' refers to the education component of the Human Development Index (HDI). The HDI is an index that measures a country's level of development based on three main categories: life expectancy, education and standard of living (gross national income per capita).
[6] Other criteria included whether the school used rented buildings, the gross enrolment rate and the HDI.

funds. The Idaras Sahel Selim and Elkoseya (Assuit) as well as El-Baliana and Girga (Sohag), which were supported as part of the programme under evaluation, had already been preselected by GAEB and met the selection criteria, even though they were not at the top of the list of Idaras with the greatest needs.

The selection of the schools themselves was to be carried out jointly by the local GAEB branch, the Muderiya and the Idaras, with the support of the consultant, using the IVP approach developed under NILE, which is the core element of the participatory planning process. The assessment of needs and prioritisation of measures also takes place in close cooperation with the schools and village authorities. In this respect, it should be ensured that the measures are actually geared to the development policy needs of the target group.

From an educational perspective, the most disadvantaged groups are primarily children from rural areas, lower income groups and girls. At the time of the appraisal, the density of schools in some rural areas was still inadequate. Long journeys to school have a particularly negative impact on the school enrolment rates of young children and girls. Promoting schools close to home, thereby shortening journeys to school, and improving sanitary facilities, school attendance, especially among girls, should be supported. As described above, the enrolment rate of girls was also an important criterion in the selection of Idaras to receive support. Other forms of social vulnerability – in particular disability or minority status – were not systematically included in the planning and implementation.

As an infrastructure project, QESP I was unable to directly support particularly poor children, but it was able to reach them indirectly: by building and renovating schools in structurally weak districts with high poverty rates and by creating local, free learning centres, thereby significantly improving the chances of school education for children from low-income families.

3. Appropriateness of design

From a technical and organisational perspective, the plan was to involve the Ministry of Education, the GAEB and local administrations (Muderiyas, Idaras). This was appropriate, but required intensive support. The accompanying measure was intended to cushion the limited implementation capacities and challenges posed by the technical complexity of the tasks (planning, construction, maintenance). It supported the education authorities and schools through training, process support and practical tools such as IVP and eIDPs in independently implementing and institutionalising planning, maintenance and participation processes. The chosen structure – consisting of an investment component and an accompanying measure – also appears to be appropriate ex post. It essentially enables a flexible response to local challenges. The financial volume also appears to be appropriate, although it cannot be expected that all shortcomings in the education sector of the selected districts can be addressed within the budget.

During the appraisal of the programme, "Improved access to higher-quality, child-friendly primary education facilities based on the National Education Strategy (2007-2012) in selected districts" was formulated as the outcome-level objective and, at the time of the PCR/final inspection, supplemented with the addition "while also improving management at all four administrative levels (MoETE Cairo, Muderiyas, Idaras and schools)." The chosen wording ("access") is at the output level and is expanded to include the aspect of utilisation (outcome) in the evaluation. The strategic combination of infrastructure measures with accompanying measures to strengthen parent/community representation and to support management at the local administrative and school levels was important in order to anchor the effects sustainably in institutions beyond the end of the programme. The target formulation is therefore also supplemented by the aspect of *sustainability* in access. Furthermore, this should be *equitable* – i.e. care should be taken to ensure that infrastructure measures are *needs-based* and, for example, respond to the needs of girls. The formulation of the objective at the outcome level is therefore adjusted as follows within the framework of the EPE: *Use of facilities that are sustainably improved and equitable, providing needs-based basic education in selected districts of the governorates of Sohag and Assiut in Egypt*. The indicators formulated were largely suitable for measuring the effects.

The impact-level objective defined at the time of the appraisal was to make a contribution to the achievement of MDGs 2 and 3 and to the establishment of decentralised and efficient school infrastructure management in the selected governorates and districts. In principle, composite objectives should be avoided so that the focus is now on a single issue. Support for school infrastructure management was a planned part of the accompanying measure and should already be reflected at the outcome level, i.e. in the use of sustainability. Therefore, the impact-level objective was modified as follows in the evaluation: *The quality of basic education in selected districts of Egypt has improved.* No impact indicators had been formulated at the time of the appraisal. The evaluation uses the increase in the gross enrolment rate, the reduction in the repetition rate, the literacy rate and the completion rate in primary education, separately for girls and boys, as proxy indicators.

The programme combined two complementary approaches: the expansion and renovation of schools on the one hand, and the strengthening of local planning, management and maintenance skills on the other. The logic of the programme appears clear and comprehensible: the renovation and construction of additional and better-equipped school infrastructure was intended to create learning conditions that meet local needs. It seems plausible that improved learning conditions through the use (outcome level) of adequate school infrastructure will have a positive effect on the level of education (impact level) in the supported districts. Support for management structures at all administrative levels and the active involvement of parents and communities in school

development lead to systemic strengthening, enabling the established structures to have a long-term impact. Ultimately, the interaction of all impact factors is decisive in achieving the objectives. In addition to school infrastructure, management and parental and community involvement, these include curricula and content, learning materials, teacher motivation and the financing of salaries and materials.

The programme pursued a holistic approach to sustainability: improved learning and teaching conditions can contribute to higher quality basic education. Dropout and repeat rates decline, and transition rates to secondary school, university and vocational training increase in the long term. Improving educational attainment is essential for reducing poverty and achieving sustainable economic growth.

4. **Adaptability – response to change**

From the outset, QESP I was designed as an open programme and thus conceived in such a way that it could respond flexibly to changing conditions – a necessary prerequisite in view of the numerous political, institutional and operational challenges – such as construction delays, limited local capacities and complex coordination processes between the authorities involved – during the implementation period.

A key factor was Egypt's highly centralised education system. Although the project provided for measures to strengthen local administrative levels at an early stage, the actual degree of decentralisation – particularly with regard to planning powers, resource sovereignty and decision-making scope at the level of the Idaras and Muderiyas – tended to be overestimated in the initial phase. This was addressed by using the accompanying measure specifically to offer additional training, simplify standards and structure local processes – including the continuation and operational support of the IVP and eIDPs already developed in the predecessor project NILE.

In the institutional sphere, a cooperation protocol between the Ministry of Education (MoETE) and the General Authority for Educational Buildings (GAEB) was drawn up during the project period. It clarified the distribution of tasks and improved coordination between central and decentralised actors. The GAEB took on more technical tasks, while the district administrations focused more on coordination and control. Nevertheless, the practical implementation of the cooperation protocol between the governorates remained inconsistent and depended heavily on the commitment of individual actors.

The COVID-19 pandemic posed additional challenges for the programme from 2020 onwards. School closures, restricted mobility and disrupted supply chains led to delays, particularly in construction work and face-to-face training. However, through rescheduling, increased use of digital communication channels and reprioritisation – for example, in favour of maintainable existing buildings – the project was largely kept on track.

Overall, it is clear that QESP I had a robust basic structure that enabled a rapid and pragmatic response to external changes. However, this adaptability was based more on the flexibility of the accompanying measures and external support than on permanently established institutional structures within the Egyptian education system. It was a key factor in ensuring that the programme objectives were largely achieved despite difficult conditions (see chapter on effectiveness).

Rating summary of relevance: successful (2)

Strengthening the quality of basic education remains a topic of great importance in Egypt. There is still a need for school infrastructure, especially in rural areas. QESP I was designed to be flexible in order to respond to institutional, logistical and pandemic-related challenges. Overall, the relevance of the programme meets the expectations of a good programme.

Coherence

5. **Internal coherence**

QESP I was designed in line with the development policy objectives of German-Egyptian cooperation, which aimed to strengthen the education sector as a contribution to social development and poverty reduction. At the time of the appraisal, the programme was integrated into the predecessor projects "Construction of Primary Schools" (NILE), Phases I to VI (BMZ Nos.: 1994 66 301, 1997 65 769, 1999 66 391, 2001 65 894, 2004 66 417, 2006 70 018 (BMZ)) both in the former and current FC landscape through the ongoing follow-up phase QSEP II (BMZ Nos.: 2012 66,881, 2012 70,255 (BM)) in the basic education sector in Egypt. In doing so, it supported the objectives of German FC, which were aimed at improving access, quality and decentralisation of basic education. German TC was not active in the basic education sector but focused primarily on vocational training and employment promotion. There was no direct operational coordination between the two pillars, but their complementary orientation contributed to the coherence of German education cooperation in a broader sense.

Since 2018, basic education has no longer been part of the BMZ country strategy for Egypt. In line with the strategy, Germany's commitment to education will continue through FC and TC vocational training projects focusing on "sustainability in economic

development, training and employment". Overall, the basic education programme also contributes to strengthening decentralised structures and increasing the employment opportunities of the target group, thus indirectly supporting the strategic goals of employment promotion, good governance and participation.

QESP I is in line with international frameworks such as Agenda 2030, in particular SDG 4 (quality education for all) and SDG 5 (gender equality), as well as with the basic principles of the German human rights strategy. Although these strategies were only formally adopted after the programme had been designed, they reflect objectives that were already inherent in the programme. Fundamental principles such as inclusion, child protection, equal opportunities and gender equality were incorporated into the planning and implementation – for example, through gender-sensitive infrastructure, targeted location selection in disadvantaged regions and participatory school development.

6. External coherence

QESP I was consistently embedded in national structures and implemented with the close involvement of the relevant government agencies – in particular the Ministry of Education (MoETE), the General Authority for Educational Buildings (GAEB) and the governorate and district authorities. The measure was deliberately aligned with existing administrative channels, thereby strengthening the individual responsibility of the partner institutions in line with the principle of subsidiarity. As the main technical actor, GAEB not only took on planning and construction, but also provided personnel and material resources, which further strengthened the institutional anchoring.

In contrast, vertical coherence between the central ministerial level and decentralised administrative structures (Idaras, Muderiyas) was less pronounced. Although district authorities were involved in implementation on a selective basis – particularly within the framework of the IVP methodology – there was a lack of systematic control mechanisms to feed local insights and needs back into national education planning and infrastructure development on a permanent basis. As a result, the existing potential for vertically integrated and learning-adaptive control remained largely untapped.

There was no formal co-financing with other donors. Coordination with external actors – such as the EU, UNICEF, USAID or the World Bank – took place on an ad hoc basis within the Education Donor Sub-Group, but remained largely informal and project-related. There was no operational link to the World Bank-financed Education Sector Reform Project (ESRP). As the ESRP focused primarily on quality development, examination reforms and digitisation, there was only limited overlap with the infrastructure and planning approaches of QESP I. Closer coordination could have been achieved at most in the use of local data for planning processes at the Idara level, but this was not pursued. Although this enabled independent implementation, sector-wide synergies could have been achieved in the areas of monitoring, planning, gender inclusion and maintenance systems.

The originally planned cooperation with UNICEF – involving appropriate measures in the area of capacity building to create a child-friendly learning environment – did not materialise despite repeated attempts; a memorandum of understanding was not concluded and the cooperation was discontinued[7]. Coordination with civil society actors took place on an ad hoc basis – for example, with the Social Contract Centre (SCC), the Misr El-Kheir Foundation (MEK), Plan International Egypt[8] and, from 2015, with the Egyptian Food Bank in the area of school meals – but remained largely informal. Individual universities (Assiut, Sohag) were involved in architecture workshops and pilot designs.

On a positive note, national responsibility was significantly strengthened during the course of implementation. The partner institutions – in particular the Ministry of Education (MoETE) and the General Authority for Educational Buildings (GAEB) – made substantial contributions of their own and upheld the principle of subsidiarity in the implementation. Nevertheless, QESP I showed that there was a lack of strategic management and reliable donor coordination. Without both, it was difficult to coordinate measures.

Rating summary of coherence: successful (2)

QESP I was well embedded in German development cooperation and supported the Egyptian government's own efforts. Close cooperation with the Ministry of Education (MoETE) and the General Authority for Educational Buildings (GAEB) indicates a high degree of coherence. The programme made use of existing national structures and maintained informal contact with other donors through the Education Donor Sub-Group. Sector-wide harmonisation remained limited, but this was due to the institutional framework and the lack of national coordination mechanisms. Overall, the coherence of the programme – both internally and externally – is appraised as largely successful.

[7] The originally planned cooperation with UNICEF failed in 2013 due to unresolved financing and responsibility issues; an MoU was not concluded, and the accompanying measure was subsequently taken over by the consultant.
[8] Under QESP I, there was occasional coordination with these actors on school meals, community work and participatory planning.

Effectiveness

7. Achievement of objectives

The objective adjusted within the framework of the EPE was to achieve the usage of a sustainably improved, equal access to basic education facilities in selected districts in Egypt. The objective was thus aligned with the Egyptian education strategy, which defined the expansion of basic education – especially in disadvantaged regions – and the improvement of the learning environment as national priorities.

The following indicators were used to measure the outcome objective:

Indicator	Status at time of review	Target value at EPE (review)	Actual value at PCR	Actual value at EPE
(1) A simple and sustainable maintenance system is in place.	20% (2013/14)	Established in 75% of the schools receiving funding three years after the start of the project, measured using the SMAF criteria*	Achieved in all 30 programme schools (100%)	The majority of schools visited met the SMAF criteria: simple maintenance measures (preventive and corrective), general cleanliness, active involvement of the board of trustees, and adequate and functional use of school buildings. Target value achieved
(2) a) Ratio of pupils to classrooms at the supported schools b) Ratio of pupils to classrooms at the supported schools compared to the governorate average	a) Average ratio at supported schools in Assiut: 47 Average ratio at supported schools in Sohag: 45 (2013/14) b) The ratio at the supported schools is above the governorate average: Average ratio in Assiut governorate: 45 Average ratio in the governorate of Sohag: 43 (2013/14)	a) The pupil-classroom ratio in the programme schools is falling significantly compared to the baseline and is approaching the national target of a maximum of 37, which according to the Sector Education Plan (2023-2027) is to be achieved by 2027. b) In 75% of the supported schools, the ratio is at least 10% below the governorate average.	Achieved in three out of four districts (no exact percentage given).	a) Class sizes in programme schools generally range between 35 and 49 pupils. -Average ratio in supported schools in Assiut: 43 pupils/classroom -Average ratio in supported schools in Sohag: 41 pupils/classroom Although these figures are still above the target of 37 pupils per class by 2027 set out in the sector education plan (2023–2027), a decline is evident. This is supported by the recent large-scale recruitment of teachers and the new MoETE directive to limit enrolment to a maximum of 50 pupils per class. b) Specifically, in 45% (5/11) of the supported schools in Assiut, the ratio of pupils per classroom is at least 10% below the governorate average. In Sohag, this applies to 42% (8/19) of the supported schools. The governorate average is 42 in Assiut and 41 in Sohag. Target value partially achieved
(3) Gender gap compared to the governorate average	Programme schools in Assiut: 45% girls (2013/2014) Programme schools in Sohag: 48% girls (2013/2014) Average proportion of girls in Assiut: 46.2% (2013/14) Average proportion of girls in Sohag: 47.6% (2013/14)	In 90% of programme schools, the gender gap is below the governorate average	It is reported that the target has been achieved, but without specifying the exact number.	**Number of schools:** Assiut 72% (8 out of 11 schools); Sohag 79% (15 out of 19 schools). The proportion of girls in the programme schools is slightly above the respective governorate averages of 48.62% (Assiut) and 48.55%

				(Sohag), averaging 48.86% in Assiut and 49.31% in Sohag. i.e. on average, the gender gap is below the governorate average. However, in terms of the number of individual schools (target: 90%), the indicator has not been met. Target value not achieved
(4) Respondents from district administrations in the programme area conduct at least one school visit and needs assessment per year in accordance with national guidelines.	/	100%	/	All schools visited reported regular visits by district administrations. Target value achieved

***Table 2** : Outcome target achievement*
***Source**: PV 2010, PCR 2022, information provided by the project executing agency, October 2025*
***Note**: * The Simple Maintenance Award Fund (SMAF) is an instrument that was developed in the predecessor programme NILE with the aim of rewarding schools that maintain, repair and clean their schools well within the scope of their responsibilities and organise this systematically and participatively with the BoT.*

8. Contribution to the achievement of objectives

As part of QESP I, extensive investments were made in school infrastructure in four selected districts in the governorates of Assiut and Sohag. The measures financed included the construction, extension and renovation of school buildings at a total of 30 locations – including classrooms, administrative areas, sanitary facilities and outdoor areas. A total of 374 new and 182 refurbished classrooms and 29 kindergarten rooms were built[9], creating school places for more than 25,116[10] pupils. Fourteen school locations were visited as part of the evaluation mission. The selection was based on the inclusion of both new buildings and refurbished schools. In addition, care was taken to ensure a mix of locations that had already been inspected as part of the PCR and those that were not part of the PCR. Additional criteria were also taken into account, including the geographical distribution between Assiut and Sohag, different building typologies, and more urban and rural locations.

In addition to the quantitative provision of infrastructure, the programme made a significant contribution through the quality of the construction work: all school buildings funded followed a child-friendly, standardised design that took into account accessibility, natural ventilation and lighting, and safe outdoor areas. These structural features helped to significantly improve the learning environment. Measures to promote girls' education, such as school locations close to home and separate sanitary facilities, were implemented consistently across the board, thereby promoting equal access to school education.

Although the schools are generally designed to be barrier-free – with ramps and safe access – only some of the locations had suitable sanitary facilities. Additional elements, such as those for visually or hearing-impaired children, were not implemented. Measured against today's inclusion standards, as later defined by UNESCO (2017) and in ISO 21542 (2011), these elements were not taken into account. At the time of the appraisal in 2010, however, there were no corresponding international guidelines.

Access to public primary schools is officially free of charge. Although in practice there are small school fees (up to approx. EUR 10 per year), these can be waived for low-income families. Other expenses, such as school uniforms, must generally be paid by the parents.

As part of the accompanying measure, steps were taken to strengthen public participation in the education process, including the promotion of parent and community representatives (known as Boards of Trustees, BoTs), as well as measures to improve school management at the local administrative and school level for better maintenance and upkeep of school infrastructure. The activities included raising awareness of the QESP among the school community and administration, identifying training needs together with relevant stakeholders, supporting BoTs in their establishment, setting up maintenance committees, drawing up maintenance and cleaning plans, developing a maintenance manual and providing training for simple maintenance work. Capacity

[9] Although QESP I was formally focused on the expansion of primary schools, the open programme structure also allowed for the occasional support of kindergarten facilities. This only took place where there was a clear local need, where communities expressed corresponding priorities, or where the addition of kindergarten facilities improved the functionality of the entire school location (e.g. transitions to primary school, use of shared infrastructure). However, the primary target group of the programme remained primary schools.
[10] The number is based on the average class size of 42 pupils in the programme schools at the time of the evaluation.

building was pursued through a train-the-trainers approach. A total of around 49,000 participants (school administrators, teachers, administrative staff, boards of trustees and community actors) took part in over 770 training measures.

A key result was the continuation and consolidation of the Simple Maintenance Award Fund (SMAF), which had already been developed in the predecessor programme NILE and was supported by debt conversion. Under QESP I, the instrument and the associated training approaches were expanded and adapted to local school administration structures.

The outcome-level targets were largely achieved. In the majority of the schools visited, simple but sustainable routines for cleaning, maintenance and minor repairs were established – yet no more comprehensive measures – which were supported by active BoTs (indicator 1). Implementation varied in consistency; in particular, cleanliness in some cases fell short of the desired standards. Compared to earlier programmes, however, a clear cultural shift towards greater personal responsibility and maintenance awareness at school level can be observed.

On site, it became apparent that the schools are fulfilling their educational mandate and that the capacities created are being well utilised overall, even if individual institutions show fluctuations in utilisation – for example, due to location-dependent differences in enrolment figures. At the time of the evaluation, the pupil/classroom ratio at the supported schools (indicator 2 (a)) was 43 in Assiut and 41 in Sohag, which is below the upper limit of 50 pupils per class set by the MoETE, but above the target value of 37 pupils per class defined in the Sector Education Plan 2023–2027. At the time of the appraisal, the ratio was still 47 in Assiut and 45 in Sohag. However, the attractiveness of the newly built schools led to an influx of pupils, with the result that individual institutions again had increased occupancy rates or double shifts. With regard to indicator 2 (b), in 45% (5/11) of the supported schools in Assiut, the ratio of pupils per classroom is at least 10% below the governorate average. In Sohag, this applies to 42% (8/19) of the supported schools.

An important criterion in selecting the Idaras to receive support was the enrolment rate of girls, with the aim of increasing the proportion of girls in schools and thus reducing the gender gap in the long term. At the time of the baseline survey (2013/2014), the proportion of girls in the programme schools in Assiut was 45% and in Sohag 48%. By the time of the evaluation, this proportion had risen to 48% in Assiut and 49% in Sohag, putting the programme schools above the governorate averages of 46.2% in Assiut and 47.6% in Sohag. This finding is also confirmed at school level: 72% of the schools visited in Assiut and 79% in Sohag had a higher proportion of girls than the respective governorate average – although the target proportion of 90% was not achieved (indicator 3). Parents emphasised the importance of safe, gender-sensitive construction (separate toilets, shorter access routes, adequate lighting).

In accordance with national guidelines, the district administrations in the programme area conduct school inspections and needs assessments at least once a year. This was also confirmed by all the schools visited, which reported regular inspection and monitoring visits by the district administrations (indicator 5).

In addition, there are a number of other factors that can influence the learning and teaching environment. The teacher-student ratio remained challenging. Although teachers received regular training and all children were provided with free textbooks at the beginning of the school year, the average ratio of 35:1 to 40:1 remained well above the national target of 26:1[11]. Other contextual factors also became apparent on site, such as the sometimes fluctuating attendance of teachers and bottlenecks in certain subjects - some schools reported a particular shortage of Arabic and religious education teachers. In addition, it became apparent that playground equipment was often inadequate and not particularly child-friendly. Many schoolyards still lack sufficient shade. More trees or (adequate) covered areas would make the outdoor areas more pleasant for the children, especially in the summer months. More trees or shade providers in the schoolyards would thus significantly improve the usability of the outdoor areas. The equipment in the libraries also proved to be limited; in many places, the collections consisted mainly of older books that had been provided by other donors many years ago.

The original plan was for the schools to undergo accreditation with the aim of 75% of the supported schools qualifying for accreditation in accordance with the requirements of the National Education Strategy. As UNICEF withdrew its technical support and MoETE and the implementation consultant were unable to compensate for this, the target was not achieved. No reliable data on the status of accreditation is available.

The IVP approach was a decisive internal factor in the achievement of (intended) objectives. Although implementation was relatively time-consuming, it proved to be an important tool for making an orderly, fact-based selection of schools to be supported, while at the same time involving all relevant stakeholders in a fully participatory approach. The functional cooperation between MoETE and GAEB – set out in the cooperation protocol – helped to clearly separate technical and administrative tasks. In addition to selecting the programme schools, the IVP approach resulted in concrete action plans (educational Idara Development Plans, eIDP) for all 1,000 schools surveyed to solve the identified problems, thus providing local administrations with an effective

[11] UNICEF (2024): Egypt Data Snapshot

tool. The participatory planning instruments are now routinely used in Assiut and Sohag, but have not been fully institutionalised at the national level. This means that there is a risk that these innovations will remain limited to project-supported districts.

Local communities were involved primarily through workshops and participatory planning processes designed to promote greater identification of the population with the project schools. In practice, however, it became apparent that cultural norms, local power structures and social hierarchies – such as the limited involvement of women in decision-making processes – were sometimes underestimated and restricted the openness of participation. Cooperation with local non-governmental organisations, such as the Egyptian Food Bank or smaller community initiatives[12], proved valuable in mobilising local support and organising school meals. However, due to a lack of clear responsibilities and institutional control, this cooperation remained sporadic.

9. Quality of implementation

The implementation of QESP I took place under complex administrative conditions and was characterised by temporary coordination and capacity bottlenecks – especially at the subnational level. Although the programme was implemented in close cooperation with the relevant Egyptian partner institutions (MoETE, GAEB, governorate and district authorities), operational coordination was not without friction in practice. The role-specific division of tasks between GAEB as the technical service provider and the local education authorities was formally defined, but required repeated clarification and adjustments during implementation.

In retrospect, the programme's objectives – overcoming overcrowding, improving infrastructure and promoting decentralised school governance – were highly relevant, but in some respects very ambitious. Given the initial conditions in Upper Egypt (rapid population growth, weak administrative capacities, limited resources), it would have been more realistic to focus initially on school construction and maintenance systems and to introduce governance reforms gradually.

Construction quality and technical implementation: Overall, the school buildings constructed under QESP I were of solid construction quality. The design standards developed placed particular emphasis on child-friendly design, natural ventilation and lighting, gender-sensitive sanitary facilities, barrier-free access and safe outdoor areas. On-site inspections and feedback from the districts confirm that most of the buildings were functional, safe and user-friendly. A consistently appropriate standard was also achieved in terms of school furniture and equipment. At the same time, isolated implementation problems arose: in several cases, there were delays, a need for rectification or quality defects, for example in windows, ramps or sanitary installations. Technical responsibility lay with GAEB, while the Muderiyas, as local control units, were sometimes overwhelmed. There was a lack of systematic construction site monitoring, documented acceptance reports and uniform quality controls. Accordingly, the quality of construction varied between regions and depended heavily on the commitment of the responsible actors on site.

Process quality, monitoring and control: The project's internal quality assurance instruments – such as community feedback, technical test reports and school development reports – were only used to a limited extent for strategic control. There was no regular and systematic consolidation of the data collected for overall project management. As a result, the impact orientation of the monitoring fell short of its potential.

Accompanying measures and participatory approaches: The accompanying measures were methodologically sound and addressed key challenges in the areas of maintenance, participatory school development and decentralised planning. The IVP approach, the use of eIDPs and the involvement of boards of trustees were generally well received. In practice, however, it became apparent that the success of these components depended heavily on local commitment, personnel continuity and institutional support. In particular, the development of maintenance skills and the implementation of simple maintenance plans varied greatly: while some schools were able to establish sustainable routines, in other cases measures remained fragmented – partly due to unclear financing structures or a lack of technical support at district level.

10. Unintended effects (positive or negative)

On a positive note, there has been an increase in the social value placed on education in the target regions. In many communities, parents and local actors became more involved in BoTs, taking on not only maintenance but also fundraising activities. The visible investments in school buildings and the participatory involvement of the population – especially in the context of the IVP workshops – promoted the communities' trust in state education provision.

Another positive side effect was a noticeable improvement in the learning atmosphere. Teachers and school administrators repeatedly reported a calmer teaching environment, which can be attributed to better room design, natural ventilation, optimised lighting conditions and lower noise levels. These quality gains – although not explicitly anchored in the target system – indirectly supported the educational effectiveness of the measure. At the same time, new challenges emerged: the high attractiveness of the new schools led to displacement effects, which in some cases caused overcrowding again and necessitated the use of double shifts or the repurposing of ancillary rooms (e.g. staff rooms, kindergarten rooms).

[12] Local contributions were made through community-based *community development associations*, parent committees and women's groups, which participated in IVP workshops and organised smaller support activities at the programme schools.

No relevant negative environmental impacts were identified during the course of the project. Environmental and social aspects were integrated on the basis of existing GAEB guidelines and procedures. The measures were widely accepted by the communities, especially where school locations were chosen close to residential areas and local concerns – such as the preservation of green spaces or safe access routes – were taken into account.

Rating summary of effectiveness: successful (2)

QESP I made a contribution to the achievement of objectives in key areas. The planned outputs – in particular the expansion of school infrastructure, the improvement of learning conditions and the introduction of participatory planning processes – were fully implemented. At the outcome level, positive developments in access to education are evident, especially for children in rural areas and for girls. Although these effects cannot be attributed solely to the programme, they do demonstrate the relevance of the framework conditions created by the programme. The quality of implementation is appraised as good overall. The participation of the target groups – for example, through IVP workshops and the involvement of school boards – promoted the local anchoring and acceptance of the programme.

No unintended negative effects were identified during the evaluation. On the contrary, additional positive effects were observed, such as increased engagement of local actors in the education sector. Overall, the effectiveness of the project is appraised as successful.

Efficiency

11. Production efficiency

The programme was implemented at a total cost of around EUR 15.64 million. Almost all of the funds were utilised[13]. Efficient project management, the use of standardised school construction methods and the consistent application of value engineering principles enabled a high level of cost control and technical quality. The Egyptian project executing agency (GAEB/MoETE) made the planned contribution in the form of planning services, personnel and material resources.

The accompanying measure had a financial volume of EUR 1.09 million (around 7% of the total funds) and was thus at the lower end of the range for comparable educational infrastructure projects. These costs are appraised as economically reasonable as they made a measurable and important contribution to the operational and management efficiency of the schools.

The construction work was awarded through national tenders by the GAEB. The high level of competition this achieved led to market-driven, in some cases below-average bid prices. The programme responded flexibly to the significant price increases for building materials – initially as a result of the currency devaluation in 2016 and later due to global supply chain problems during the COVID-19 pandemic. Through targeted technical adjustments to the school design, the standardisation of building elements and needs-based allocation of funds, the planned measures were largely implemented without compromising the educational quality of the infrastructure.

During the design reviews, the implementation consultant and local engineering firms identified several technical optimisations that led to significant material and cost savings, including:

- Adaptation of the foundation design to local load-bearing values in accordance with soil surveys,
- Terrain-based planning of enclosures,
- More precise structural modelling to avoid oversizing,
- Connecting new and existing buildings with simple bridge structures
- Simplified stair and roof constructions and optimised use of materials.

These measures reduced construction costs by 15–20% compared to conventional GAEB schools, while increasing usable space, energy efficiency and educational functionality. According to final technical data, average construction costs fell from around EGP 7,105/m² (≈ EUR 830/m²) to around EGP 5,000/m² (≈ EUR 585/m²). The cost per classroom also fell from approximately 300,000 EGP (≈ 35,100 EUR) to around 266,000 EGP (≈ 31,100 EUR) (as of 2015; exchange rate used: 8.5 EGP/EUR). The share of direct and indirect foreign exchange costs was 22%. Overall, the efficiency gains led to savings in the construction sector of around 13% compared to the planned figure, which were, however, partially offset by higher expenditure on consulting and training measures (+91%).

[13] As things stand, only around EUR 630,000 in unspent funds remained in the contingency fund, which corresponds to around 4% of the total volume.

Component	Outputs	Beneficiaries[14]	Direct costs (EUR)	Average costs per beneficiary
1) Infrastructure	New school construction[15]	Approximately 15,708 pupils (374 newly built classrooms with an average class size of 45)	7,553,483[16]	≈ EUR 481 per pupil
2) Accompanying measures	Training / education / school management	Approximately 49,000 people	1,094,160	≈ EUR 22 per participant

According to national estimates, the average construction costs for a classroom in Egypt are around EUR 26,000, corresponding to approximately EUR 657 per school place. The average cost of around EUR 481 per school place achieved under QESP I is therefore below the cost levels of national school construction programmes.[17] At EUR 22 per person trained, the social component is very low cost, which is due to the wide reach and use of standardised training materials.

The implementation of the programme was significantly delayed compared to the original plan, as the project preparation and approval processes on the Egyptian side took longer than expected. The main reasons for this were institutional coordination between MoETE and GAEB, lengthy tendering procedures and political upheavals in the years 2011 to 2013. After the actual start of the programme, the implementation of the construction and training measures proceeded largely according to plan. Subsequent restrictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic from 2020 onwards were mitigated by flexible rescheduling, digital training formats and virtual coordination. Despite price fluctuations and political uncertainties during the construction phase, the programme remained within the planned budget, while the scope and quality of the services were fully realised.

Overall, QESP I demonstrates high production efficiency. Systematic standardisation, technical simplifications and close coordination between GAEB, MoETE and the implementation consultant GOPA made it possible to shorten construction times, reduce costs and improve quality standards. The programme thus proved to be exemplary in terms of cost-effectiveness, replicability and sustainability of construction methods.

12. Allocation efficiency

The use of resources within the framework of QESP I was fundamentally needs-based and focused on infrastructure bottlenecks in disadvantaged rural regions of Upper Egypt. The selection of target regions and locations was based on objective criteria (see chapter on relevance), indicating an overall effective and efficient allocation of funds. The focus was on the physical expansion of school infrastructure and on accompanying measures to strengthen local administrative and planning capacities.

Investments in new school buildings and renovations, as well as accompanying training measures, were coherently linked and geared towards achieving sustainability. The use of standardised building designs, established planning tools and the involvement of local stakeholders contributed to the cost-effectiveness and needs-based use of funds.

The expansion approach for existing schools developed as part of the IVP analyses had a particularly positive effect: instead of exclusively constructing new locations, many measures were geared towards structurally supplementing and functionally upgrading existing schools. This approach made it possible to use the existing infrastructure – such as water and electricity connections, outdoor facilities and administrative facilities – efficiently, thereby creating a large number of additional school places in the short term. At the same time, investments were targeted more specifically at local needs and operating costs per pupil were reduced.

Rating summary of efficiency: successful (2)

The QESP I programme was implemented with a high overall level of technical and financial efficiency, but with significant delays. While cost control, construction quality and standardisation were implemented in an exemplary manner, adherence to deadlines fell considerably short of the original plans.

[14] Multiple counts between 1) and 2) are possible, as the same individuals may be included in several activities.
[15] For better comparability, only newly constructed classrooms are taken into account.
[16] The calculation of the average investment costs per school place is based on the cost per newly built classroom of EUR 20,196.48 (Consultant Completion Report, note: the costs are based on an exchange rate of 18.84 EGP/EUR in 2022). With a total of 374 newly built classrooms and an average class size of 42 pupils, this results in an average investment value of around EUR 481 per school place.
[17] According to government figures, Egypt needs around 250,000 new classrooms, the construction of which is estimated to cost a total of around EGP 130 billion. At an average exchange rate of EUR 1 = EGP 18.84 (annual average for 2019), this corresponds to a total investment volume of **approximately** EUR 6.9 **billion** or around EUR 27,600 per classroom. Assuming an average class size of 42 pupils, this results in average construction costs of around EUR 657 per school place. See Sobhy, Hania (2019): Expensive Classrooms, Poor Learning: The Imperatives of Reforming School Construction in Egypt. Max Planck Institute for the Study of Religious and Ethnic Diversity, Working Paper 19-02, Göttingen, p. 7.

The project benefited from a clear structure in construction and accompanying measures, close coordination between MoETE, GAEB and KfW, and the early application of value engineering principles. Through the use of standardised and modular school designs, competitive tendering and consistent cost monitoring, the funds were used fully and economically. The costs per classroom were around 15–20% lower than those of conventional GAEB schools, with increased usable space and improved functional quality. The accompanying measure was also implemented efficiently with a low budget by international standards and contributed to strengthening local maintenance and planning capacities.

Overall, the efficiency of the programme is considered to be largely successful.

Impact

13. Overarching developmental changes

The impact-level objective was specified and defined as follows: The quality of basic education in selected districts of Egypt has improved.

The following indicators were used to measure the impact objective:

Indicator	Status at time of review	Target value at EPE (review)	Actual value at PCR	Actual value at EPE
(1) Gross enrolment rate (boys/girls)	***2013/14*** *Assiut (total 97.5%) / (99.5% boys) / (95.3% girls) and Sohag (total 95.1%) / (97.1% boys) / (93.1% girls)*[18]	(EPE) School enrolment rates increase	/	***2025*** *Assiut (98% overall) / (96.82% boys) / (99.24% girls) and Sohag (97.7% overall) / (97.58% boys) / (100.59% girls)* Target value achieved
(2) Repetition rate (boys/girls)	***2013*** *Assiut (total 1.14%) / (1.40% boys) / (0.85% girls) and Sohag (total 1.14%) / (1.40% boys) / (0.85% girls)*	(EPE) Decline in repeat rates	/	***2024*** *(no data available for 2025)* *Assiut (total 0.56%) / (0.73% boys) / (0.39% girls)* *Sohag (total 0.30%) / (0.39% boys) / (0.22% girls)* Target value achieved
(3) Literacy rate	***2013*** *(national 74%, Assiut 34.6%, Sohag 33.6%)*[19]	(EPE) Increase in literacy rate	/	***2020*** *(national 85%*[20] *, Assiut 65.4%, Sohag 66.4%)* Target value achieved
(4) Primary school completion rate (6th grade, boys/girls)	***2013*** *Assiut and Sohag (total 88.22%/ (82.61% boys) / (95.91% girls)*	(EPE) Increase in completion rates	/	***2025*** *Assiut (total 102.3%) / (103% boys) / (101.6% girls)* *Sohag (total 100%) / (100.2% boys) / (99.81% girls)* Target value achieved

Table 4 *: Impact target achievement*
Source*: Project executing agency communications from October 2025*

14. Contribution to overarching intended developmental changes

QESP I has contributed effectively to the overarching development policy objectives. In the governorates of Assiut and Sohag, the average school enrolment rate (indicator 1) rose slightly, but there was a significant increase among girls, particularly in Sohag. The rate for boys in Assiut declined slightly. This may be due to the fact that in some communities, boys are more often required to help with agricultural work at short notice or their families move to another area shortly before the start of school. In such

[18] The data here is based on UNICEF (2017): The Impact of Population Growth on Youth Employment and School Education in Egypt. An Analytical Paper. Note: The disaggregated data for boys and girls is estimated based on the proportion of boys and girls in schools in the respective governorates.
[19] Based on data from the Central Agency for Public Mobilisation and Statistics (CAPMAS): https://english.ahram.org.eg/News/110142.aspx
[20] CAPMAS - https://egypt.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/event-pdf/1.pdf?utm

cases, the children are originally registered but do not attend school there and therefore do not appear in the local statistics. This can lead to small declines in the enrolment rate for boys.[21]

Between 2013 and 2024, repetition rates declined significantly in both governorates. While around 1.14% of children in Assiut and Sohag had to repeat a year in 2013, the figures had almost halved by 2024. The decline is evident among both boys and girls, with girls consistently showing lower repetition rates.

Literacy rates rose significantly during the project period. In Assiut and Sohag, they improved from very low baseline levels (around 34 per cent in each case) in 2013 to over 65 per cent in 2020. This increase exceeds national growth and indicates a significant improvement in access to education and learning outcomes in the programme's catchment area. Nevertheless, Egypt still has a high illiteracy rate: in Assiut and Sohag, approximately one in three adults cannot read or write.

Completion rates have also developed positively since 2013. While only around 88% of children in Assiut and Sohag completed primary school at that time - with particularly low rates among boys - the rates in 2025 are close to 100% or even slightly above[22] . Overall, the results show that a significantly larger proportion of pupils are completing primary school on a regular basis.

Teachers and school administrators reported a measurable decline in unexcused absences, higher motivation to learn and improved reading and writing skills. These improvements are closely linked to improved physical learning conditions, such as better ventilation, lighting, acoustics and sanitary infrastructure. The learning environment itself also contributed to educational gains: smaller class sizes, quieter rooms and more daylight were cited in almost all schools as direct factors for more concentrated learning.

Social inclusion and equality: The construction of local, safe and gender-sensitive schools has made it easier for girls and children from low-income households in particular to access basic education. The choice of location was based on local needs and gender-specific school enrolment rates. The provision of separate sanitary facilities, barrier-free access and safe outdoor areas helped to overcome traditional barriers to access. QESP I thus made an important contribution to strengthening educational equity in the supported governorates.

Institutional impact and standard setting: The planning instruments developed under QESP I – in particular the IVP and the eIDPs – were successfully tested in several districts and, in some cases, continued. Their application contributed to improved needs analysis**,** greater transparency in decision-making processes and stronger involvement of local and civil society actors. QESP I also set standards in the area of architectural standards: the design principles recognised by GAEB as exemplary – such as natural ventilation, lighting and optimal room design – were taken up and further developed in subsequent school construction projects by the FC (QESP II). However, it should be noted that GAEB has so far only systematically incorporated some of the qualitative elements developed within the framework of QESP I and II into its standard designs for the "mass production" of up to 1,000 schools per year. These include, in particular, some of the design principles listed under *sustainability* - such as greater consideration of building orientation and shading to prevent overheating, energy-efficient measures and adapted open space and land use concepts.

15. Contribution to overarching unintended developmental changes

New and renovated schools were seen as visible government investment in many communities. Schools were used as safe meeting places, and the activity of parent and community committees increased, promoting social cohesion and community ownership; the introduction of participatory procedures in the education sector strengthened local participation in individual districts, even if a transfer of IVP logic to municipal decision-making processes cannot be clearly proven. At the same time, ambivalent effects emerged: attractive "magnet" locations attracted a disproportionate number of enrolments and, where staff and operating resources did not grow accordingly, led to renewed overcrowding.

Rating summary of impact: successful (2)

Against this background, the overarching developmental impacts are appraised as successful.

[21] It cannot be ruled out that statistical data collection is more reliable today than it was 10 years ago.
[22] The rate is defined as the number of actual primary school graduates in relation to the population of the official age group. The rate may exceed 100% if, for example, children start school earlier (younger than the cohort) or repeat a year, i.e. pupils then move up to the graduating year later and increase the numerator without affecting the denominator.

Sustainability

16. Capacities of beneficiaries and stakeholders

Government spending on education in Egypt is well below international benchmarks. The Incheon Declaration on Inclusive Education recommends that governments allocate between 4% and 6% of their GDP or 15% to 20% of public expenditure to education in order to achieve the SDG 4 targets. Although the 2014 Egyptian constitution requires the state to spend at least 6% of GDP on education – 4% of which is for pre-university education – education spending fell from 2.3% of GDP in 2020/2021 (6.7% of government expenditure) to 1.7% of GDP (5.3% of government expenditure) in the 2024/25 budget, which is the lowest level in five years.[23] A structural risk remains in the inadequate financial resources available to local education authorities for maintenance and repair tasks, which may compromise the sustainability of the infrastructure that has been created. Although QESP I laid the foundations for systematic maintenance routines (see next section), their long-term implementation depends on political and financial conditions that are beyond the immediate influence of the programme. With over 90% of the national education budget spent on personnel costs, there are hardly any funds available for operation and maintenance. Schools therefore remain heavily dependent on local contributions, which vary in scope and continuity.[24] According to the Ministry of Education (MoETE), an increase in the budget for maintenance and repair measures was decided in mid-2025 in order to reduce the existing backlog of maintenance and minor repairs. However, this announcement could not be verified on site during the evaluation mission.

17. Contribution to supporting sustainable capacities

QESP I made a substantial contribution to building capacities that are sustainable in terms of technical, administrative and participatory aspects in the Egyptian education sector, particularly at district and community level. At the start of the programme, many of the institutions involved, especially the governorate administrations (Muderiyas) and district administrations (Idaras), had only limited experience in needs-based education planning and school administration. As part of the accompanying measure, targeted support measures were therefore implemented, which led to noticeable learning processes and a visible strengthening of local responsibility.

The core element was the introduction of the IVP approach, which enabled local actors to systematically and data-based determine school construction priorities for the first time. In addition, the eIDP tool was developed, which provided district administrations with a sound basis for investment decisions. The application of these tools led to a demonstrable improvement in the quality of planning and decision-making at the subnational level.

In addition, training packages were developed and implemented for GAEB technical staff, district-level employees and BoT members. These covered both construction and administrative topics as well as content on maintenance, repair and gender aspects. The training courses were practice-oriented and tailored to specific target groups, and in particular strengthened the operational competence and personal responsibility of the participants. Maintenance plans were successfully implemented in many schools, and most institutions continue to carry out preventive measures such as painting or repairs at the beginning of the school year, financed primarily through BoT contributions. The Simple Maintenance Award Fund (SMAF) proved to be an effective incentive mechanism for establishing simple maintenance routines at school level and promoting independent action.

The programme contributed to professionalisation: the General Authority for Educational Buildings (GAEB) was responsible for implementing the construction measures and already had extensive experience in school construction at the start of the project, but with weaknesses in planning transparency, cost control and maintenance mechanisms. Through close cooperation with KfW and the use of standardised construction methods, GAEB achieved greater technical and organisational efficiency. The authority gradually developed into a more service-oriented player with improved planning, design and construction supervision skills. Nevertheless, its institutional links to school maintenance structures remained weak, and its internal capacity for preventive maintenance remained limited.

There is an open risk regarding the long-term continuation and financing of the processes that have been introduced. Although instruments and routines have been successfully introduced and actors at all levels have been trained, their continuation depends on political priorities, administrative support from the MoETE and the permanent provision of budgetary resources for maintenance and further training. Without these framework conditions, the capacity gains achieved could lose their effect in the medium term.

18. Durability of impacts over time

The school buildings constructed and renovated as part of the programme have been fully integrated into the Ministry of Education and Training's (MoETE) public school network and continue to contribute to reducing class overcrowding and improving the

[23] See HRW (2025): Egypt: Declining Funding Undermines Education. Adequate Budgets Needed to Tackle Inadequate School Infrastructure, Teacher Shortages
[24] UNDP: Egypt Human Development Report 2021

learning environment in the target regions. Due to the standardised construction, robust materials and functional architecture, the buildings are expected to have a technical service life of at least 20 years – and even longer with proper maintenance. The buildings were also constructed with solid foundations, allowing for future expansion.

Sustainability effects are also visible in the area of school architecture and construction planning. QESP I promoted child-friendly and architecturally appealing learning environments through coloured façades, natural lighting, improved ventilation, landscaping and play and recreation areas. GAEB incorporated several of these design principles into its technical guidelines, including consideration of building orientation and shading to prevent overheating, as well as energy efficiency measures. In addition, open space and land use concepts were adapted: The proportion of traffic areas[25] in GAEB designs demonstrably fell to around 31–35% (previously over 40%), and ergonomic furniture – especially flexible individual pieces – was adopted in around half of the newly built schools. These architectural elements are now part of GAEB's standard designs and thus continue to have an impact beyond the project.

A key risk to the sustainability of the effects achieved lies in the long-term financing of operation and maintenance. Although school staff, maintenance groups and boards of trustees were trained in maintenance routines as part of QESP I to implement these independently, in practice the actual continuation of these routines depends largely on the regular provision of budgets by the MoETE. To date, there has been only limited commitment to anchoring such funds in the budgets at the governorate level in a binding and systematic manner. Differences in the commitment of BoTs and school management lead to varying standards of maintenance and safety: while some schools maintain high standards of cleanliness and maintenance, deficiencies have been identified elsewhere. There were deficiencies in the fire protection systems installed at several locations: hoses were not in the wall cabinets provided for them, water tanks on the roofs were not filled, and fire extinguishers were missing from the wall mountings provided for them (e.g. Osman Ali Ahmed in Qusiya, Tanagha PS in Qusiya). These deficiencies rule out their functionality in the event of a fire. In addition, cleanliness varies greatly; bird nests were found in some ventilation openings in the double-walled exterior walls. Fire safety preparedness and repairs to defective classroom doors, loose tiles, open cable ducts and fuse boxes, and defective toilets should be checked regularly and rectified. Better inspections and regular cleaning routines would help to keep the buildings in good condition in the long term. Doors and sanitary facilities are in need of repair in many cases. Some schools would like additional floors, as available capacity is becoming increasingly scarce (e.g. Naga el Amarna, Bardis El Kadima). The very few pieces of playground equipment installed by the project are unusable – swings and seesaws have been dismantled in almost all of the schools visited. Overall, there is a lack of child-friendly equipment in school playgrounds. Outdoor play areas could be better equipped with robust, simple equipment designed for the number of pupils.

During the evaluation mission, the most important critical aspects of the project were highlighted, particularly with regard to maintenance funds, the worn appearance of some schools due to a lack of painting, the lack of cleanliness in numerous facilities and other issues. During the mission, schools reported an average of EGP 3,000 per year for maintenance, which differs from the information provided by the MoETE, as schools have apparently been receiving significantly more funds since September 2025 (EGP 5,000 per month or EGP 60,000 per year). According to the Ministry of Education, this was announced in a ministerial circular during a meeting with 12,000 school principals. If this is the case, the schools would have significantly more funds at their disposal, which could considerably improve sustainability. However, it is not clear to what extent this increase in funding has already been fully implemented.

Another sustainability factor concerns the human resources capacity of the institutions involved. Although many of the staff trained in the programme continue to work in the district administrations, frequent staff changes, promotions or retirements mean that some knowledge and practical experience is lost. The long-term impact of capacity development measures therefore depends crucially on whether training and IVP processes are institutionally secured, repeated regularly and integrated into the routine activities of education administrations.

Staffing levels at schools remain critical. In recent years, the MoETE has hired new (assistant) teachers on short-term contracts, which has reduced bottlenecks. However, these new teachers have limited experience, and high staff turnover makes it difficult to achieve sustainability in applying the knowledge imparted in the project. The comparatively low salary level also contributes to instability.[26]

Overall, the effects achieved show a positive trend, but their long-term stability is considered only partially assured. The infrastructure created and the tools developed form a solid basis for long-term improvements in the education sector. However, their sustainability depends on institutional continuity, political prioritisation and the provision of sufficient funds for operation, maintenance, teacher development and participatory processes at national and subnational level.

[25] In GAEB schools, a large part of the floor space was taken up by corridors, staircases and entrance areas. In some cases, this accounted for over 40% of the total building area. This means a lot of space to walk through, but less space for learning.
[26] Education Sector Plan 2023–2027; HRW (2025): Egypt: Declining Funding Undermines Education. Adequate Budgets Needed to Tackle Inadequate School Infrastructure, Teacher Shortages

Rating summary of sustainability: moderately successful (3)

QESP I made an important contribution to building sustainable structures and competencies, but the capacity gains achieved are only partially secured. The sustainability of the programme is therefore assessed as moderately successful.

Overall assessment: successful (2)

The QESP I programme aimed to improve the quality of education in disadvantaged rural regions of Upper Egypt by expanding school infrastructure and building local planning and management capacities. The programme was clearly aligned with the policies and priorities of Egypt and Germany – in particular with Egypt's education reform strategy and Germany's development cooperation focus on education.

The programme was highly relevant. There was a considerable need for school infrastructure in the target regions, especially with regard to girls' education, spatial undersupply and overcrowding. QESP I addressed a key obstacle to development and strengthened existing national structures.

The coherence of the programme is also appraised positively. QESP I fitted into the German FC landscape in Egypt and was consistently embedded in national structures. Sector-wide harmonisation, on the other hand, remained limited.

The project was effective. The outcome targets were largely achieved. The IVP approach proved to be a key factor in the successful implementation.

Funds were used cost-effectively, tenders were competitive, and economies of scale were achieved through standardised construction procedures. Consulting and training costs remained moderate by international standards. At the same time, administrative delays and pandemic-related interruptions led to an extension of the implementation period.

The programme had a development impact in the governorates where it was implemented. The schools not only improved the learning environment, but also strengthened social cohesion and trust in state education. Girls in particular benefited from the improved learning environment and local school provision.

However, the sustainability of the effects is considered to be only partially assured. Overall, the programme is regarded as a model for integrated education support in Egypt and has provided sustainable impetus for participatory planning and the improvement of the learning environment.

Contribution to Agenda 2030

With Agenda 2030, the international community has agreed on 17 goals for sustainable development (SDGs). QESP I made a direct contribution to several of these global goals – in particular SDG 4 ("Quality Education"), SDG 5 ("Gender Equality"), SDG 10 ("Reduced Inequalities") and SDG 11 ("Sustainable Cities and Communities").

By expanding school infrastructure in disadvantaged rural regions of Egypt, the programme supported the achievement of SDG 4.1, which aims to ensure equal access to high-quality, inclusive and free primary education for all girls and boys. The targeted selection of locations based on evidence-based criteria and the construction of child- and gender-sensitive school buildings (including separate sanitary facilities) made an important contribution to promoting equal opportunities.

In addition, QESP I supported SDG 5.1 and 5.a by addressing structural barriers to girls' education in rural areas and involving women in school management processes (e.g. in the BoTs). The improved infrastructure also had a positive impact on girls' sense of security and educational opportunities.

By promoting decentralised planning structures and participatory decision-making processes, the programme also strengthened municipal development and thus contributed to SDG 11.3, which aims to achieve inclusive and sustainable urbanisation and the participation of the population in urban and regional planning.

Methodology

Evaluation methodology

The ex-post evaluation follows the methodology of a rapid appraisal, i.e. a data-based, qualitative contribution analysis, and represents an expert opinion. The project is attributed effects based on plausibility considerations, which are based on a careful analysis of documents, data, facts and impressions. Where possible, this also includes the use of digital data sources and modern techniques (e.g. satellite data, online surveys, geocoding). The causes of any contradictory information are investigated, attempts are made to resolve them, and the assessment is based on statements that are confirmed by several sources of information (triangulation), where possible.

The analysis of the effects is based on assumed causal relationships, documented in the impact matrix developed during the project appraisal and updated during the ex-post evaluation, if necessary. The evaluation report sets out arguments as to why certain influencing factors were identified for the effects observed and why the project under review probably made a certain contribution (contribution analysis). The context of the development measure is taken into account in terms of its influence on the results. The conclusions are put into relation to the availability and quality of the data basis. An evaluation concept serves as the reference framework for the evaluation.

The method offers a balanced cost-benefit ratio for project evaluations, on average, with a balance between knowledge gain and evaluation effort, and allows for a systematic assessment of the effectiveness of DFG projects across all project evaluations. Individual ex-post evaluations cannot therefore meet the requirements of a scientific assessment in the sense of a clear causal analysis.

The main objective of the evaluations (knowledge interest) is to measure impacts, provide accountability, promote transparency and enable institutional learning.

Type of evaluation:

Trip to the project area

Non-public (internal) documents

Programme proposal, reporting and final review by KfW, GOPA reports, secondary specialist literature, strategy papers from the BMZ and the Egyptian government

Directory of public sources

Aldinger, Martin (2014): *Educational Architecture and Learning Environments: Lessons from QESP-I and NILE*. Stuttgart: Aldinger Architects.

Arab Republic of Egypt (2023/2024) – Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics (CAPMAS) (2019): *Statistical Yearbook – Education and Demographics*. Cairo: CAPMAS.

BMZ (2023): Menschenrechtskonzept der deutschen Entwicklungspolitik. Bonn.

Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) (2015): *Decentralisation in Egypt's Education Sector – Comparative Study*. Eschborn: GIZ.

Egyptian Food Bank (2018): *School Feeding Programme – Implementation Report 2010–2018*. Cairo: EFB.

GAEB – General Authority for Educational Buildings (2011): *Criteria and Conditions for the Suitability of Locations & Buildings of Basic and General Secondary Schools*. Cairo: GAEB.

HRW – Human Rights Watch (2025): Egypt: Declining Funding Undermines Education. Adequate Budgets Needed to Tackle Inadequate School Infrastructure, Teacher Shortages.

Masr el-Kheir Foundation (2016): *Community Participation in Basic Education: Lessons from Upper Egypt*. Cairo: MEK.

Ministry of Education and Technical Educiation (2007): *Pre-University Education Reform National Strategic Plan 2007–2012*. Cairo: MoE.

Ministry of Education and Technical Education (MoETE) (2014): *Strategic Plan for Pre-University Education 2014–2030*. Cairo: MoETE.

Ministry of Planning (MoP) (2014): *Egypt National Budget 2014/15*. Cairo: Ministry of Planning.

Sobhy, Hania (2019): *Expensive Classrooms, poor Learning*. The Imperative of Reforming School Construction in Egypt.

UNICEF (2017): The Impact of Population Growth on Youth Employment and School Education in Egypt. An Analytical Paper.

UNESCO-UNEVOC (2019): *Education 2.0: The New Vision for Egyptian Education*. Bonn: UNESCO.

UNICEF (2012): *Child-Friendly Schools Manual*. New York: UNICEF.

UNICEF (2024): Egypt Data Snapshot

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) (2010): *Egypt's Progress Towards Achieving the Millennium Development Goals*. Cairo: UNDP.

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) (2021): *Egypt Human Development Report, Development, a right for all: Egypt's pathways and prospects*

United Nations (2015): *Sustainable Development Goals – Agenda 2030*. New York: UN.

USAID (2011): *Education Reform Program (ERP I & II) – Final Evaluation Report*. Washington D.C.: USAID.

World Bank (2018): *Improving Education Quality in Egypt: Systems and Governance Challenges*. Washington D.C.: World Bank.

Data sources and analysis tools

on-site data collection, partner monitoring data

Project sites visited

1) Naziet el-Milk, 2) Tanagha BE, 3) al-Khawalid PS (Sahel Selim), 4) Mir for BE, 5) Osman Ali Ahmed PS, 6) Tahagha PS (Qusiya), 7) Nagala Owels PS, 8) Naga El-Gadallat for BE, 9) El-Mahasna El-Kadima PS, 10) and 11) Mazata El-Kadima (2xSchools) (Girga), 12) Abdel Alim Fouad for BE,13) Bardis el-Kadima for BE and 14) Naga el-Amarna for BE (Baiana).

Interview partners and modality (in person, virtual/by telephone, in writing)

KFW, Ministry of Education, GAEB, GOPA Tech, school administrators, representatives of the governorates and education directorates (Muderiyas and Idaras), parent representatives and members of school boards (BoTs).

The analysis of the effects is based on assumed cause-and-effect relationships, documented in the impact matrix developed during the project appraisal and updated during the ex-post evaluation where necessary. The evaluation report sets out arguments as to why certain influencing factors were identified for the effects observed and why the project under review probably made a certain contribution (contribution analysis). The context of the development measure is taken into account in terms of its influence on the results. The conclusions are put into relation to the availability and quality of the data basis. An evaluation concept serves as the reference framework for the evaluation.

On average, the method offers a balanced cost-benefit ratio for project evaluations, with the knowledge gained and the evaluation effort being in equilibrium, and allows for a systematic appraisal of the effectiveness of FC project/programmes across all project evaluations. Individual ex-post evaluations cannot therefore meet the requirements of a scientific assessment in the sense of a clear causal analysis.

The following aspects limited the evaluation

The programme's effects can only be isolated to a limited extent, as parallel national reform initiatives (such as *Education 2.0*) pursued similar objectives. Furthermore, feedback from local authorities and parents' representatives could only be obtained on a selective basis.

Assessment methodology

A six-point scale is used to assess the project according to OECD DAC criteria, with the exception of the sustainability criterion. The scale values are as follows:

Level 1 Very successful: results significantly above expectations

Level 2 Successful: results fully in line with expectations, without significant shortcomings

Level 3 Moderately successful: results below expectations, but positive results predominate

Level 4 Moderately unsuccessful: significantly below expectations and negative results dominate despite recognisable positive results

Level 5 Unsuccessful: despite some positive partial results, the negative results clearly dominate

Level 6 Highly unsuccessful: the project is useless or the situation has deteriorated

The overall rating on the six-point scale is based on a project-specific weighting of the six individual criteria. Levels 1–3 of the overall rating indicate a 'successful' project, while levels 4–6 indicate an 'unsuccessful' project. It should be noted that a project can generally only be classified as "successful" in terms of development policy if both the achievement of objectives at the outcome level (effectiveness) and impact level, as well as sustainability, are rated at least as "moderately successful " (level 3).

The annex to this report is available upon request (German only).

Imprint

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