



The Egyptian Cabinet
Information and Decision Support Center

IDSC MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

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IDSC IN BRIEF

Acting as the Egyptian Cabinet's Think Tank...Our mission is to

impartially support the government decisions through proposing best policy scenarios and preparing analytical research to improve the socio-economic well-being of the Egyptian society.

Since Egypt has embarked on an ambitious reform process, the climate surrounding such process has increasingly become more complex and interconnected. It has become evident that public policy design demands a variety of professional policy options.

IDSC derives its success from being a multidisciplinary institution which is capable of meeting these outstanding demands. Moreover, operating at the heart of the decision-making process in Egypt, IDSC encourages public debate on its research findings, which are openly available to all members of society.

Being a progressive organization, IDSC works to establish cooperation linkages with international counterparts. The main purpose is to share knowledge and integrate best practices into its operations. We appreciate our existing partnerships and we look forward to developing new ones hoping that through cooperation in mutual areas of interest, we will have a significant impact on developing the decision-making process in Egypt.

This newsletter aims to give a brief account about the recent and future activities of the Center.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

IDSC Signs a Memorandum of Understanding with Nielsen Co.

Seeking to broaden cooperation between local and international institutions, IDSC has signed an MOU with Nielsen Co. a world leader in market research.

The MOU is signed as a result of the center's eagerness to exchange expertise with research institutions worldwide. "Nielsen Co. has broad and deep worldwide experience which can be of use to IDSC", center official says.



Hani Muwafi and Mohammed Ramadan

The MOU includes various cooperation facets; opinion polls, information reports, field surveys are examples of the areas of work which will be jointly conducted by the two institutions. Moreover it gives both IDSC and Nielsen the chance to exchange best practices and new research techniques. IDSC was presented by Mohamed Ramadan; the center's Executive Director while Nielsen was represented by its Regional Director, Hani Muwafi.

Mr. Muwafi, stated that the MOU is considered a big step in the company's work in Egypt. He noted that IDSC is one of the most deep-rooted specialized institutions in the region. He added that IDSC has succeeded in establishing work mechanisms based on scientific methodologies, which helped in issuing a number of periodicals assisting in the betterment of the Egyptian society. Mr. Muwafi predicts the MOU will be a tremendous success and will work on economic, social and developmental issues of relevance to the Egyptian society

IDSC Signs a MOU with the Minister of State for Local Development

In a meeting headed by the Minister of State for Local Development, and IDSC's Chairman, a MOU was signed between the Ministry and the Center. The MOU's importance stems from the fact that the Ministry, which is nowadays highly concerned with revolutionizing its work mechanisms to cope with the information era, will gain access to IDSC's experience in this regard.

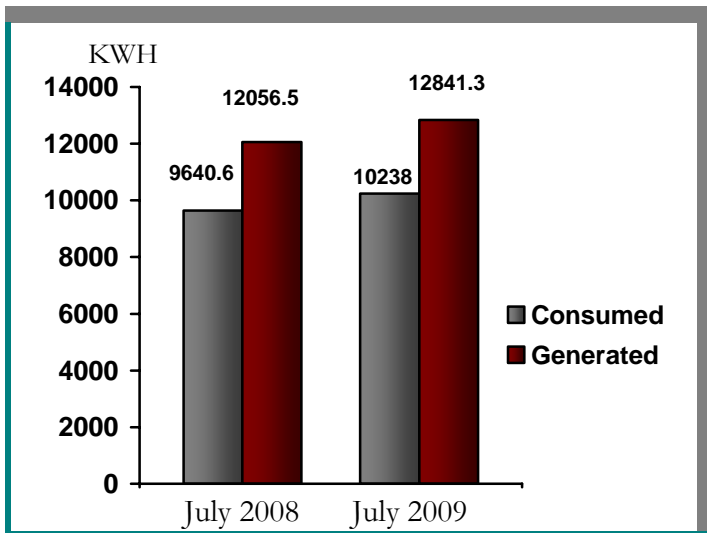


Abdel Salam Mahgoub and Magued Osman

Figures to Remember

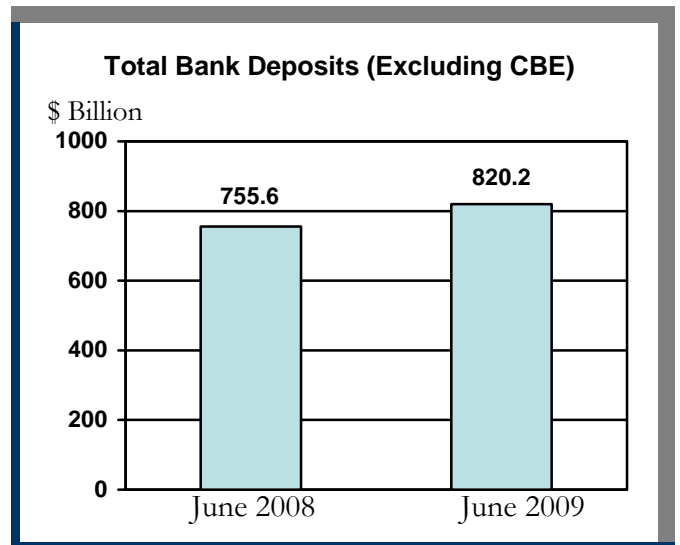
The Economic and Social Indicators Bulletin is a detailed record of the performance of the Egyptian economy over the past year. The bulletin provides important facts about the various sectors of the Egyptian economy acting as a mirror that clearly reflects the state of the economy.

Total **generated electricity** attained **12841.3** million kwh during July 2009, recording an increase of about 6.5% compared with its level during the same month of the previous year. Total **consumption of electricity** reached **10238** million kwh in July 2009, recording an increase of about 6.2% compared with its level during the same month of the previous year.



Egypt's yearly inflation rate decreased to 9.9% in July 2009, compared to 22 % in July 2008.

Net Foreign reserves reached US\$ 31.6 bn. in July 2009, achieving a decrease by nearly 8.9 % compared with its level during the same month of the previous year



Total bank deposits – excluding those of the Central Bank- reached LE 820.2 billion in June 2009 increasing by about 8.5 % compared to the same month of the previous year.

Revenues of railway tickets reached LE 482.6 million during the period (Jan. – July) 2009 increasing by about 4.8% compared with their level during the same period of the previous year. As for the revenues of railway cargo, they attained LE 151.9 million showing a 37.7% increase compared with their level during the same period of the previous year.

Reports

THE INFORMATION AND DECISION SUPPORT CENTER RELEASES A SERIES OF INFORMATION REPORTS ABOUT DIVERSE ISSUES OF INTEREST TO THE PUBLIC AND DECISION-MAKERS.

THE FOLLOWING INTRODUCES ONE OF THESE REPORTS.



The Holy month of Ramadan represents a great source of spiritual joy to Muslims all around the world. Egypt specially is well known for the special ambiance that fills its atmosphere in the Holy month. One of the expressive phenomena in Egypt's Ramadan is Charity Banquets (Mawa'id Rahman) which are offered to Egyptians at sunset, when they break their fast. Although this phenomenon arguably started at the time of the Prophet Muhammad PBUH, however little or even no studies have been conducted to measure its magnitude and effect.

Charity Banquets in Ramadan

The Information and Decision Support Center has issued an Information Report researching the number of Charity Banquets during the Holy month, the people who benefit from them and the donors who organize them.

Reports Cont'd

The number of charity banquets during the Month of Ramadan 2008 was estimated at 13,555 banquets.

The Beneficiaries

- The number of people benefiting from the banquets is between 130 to 137 for each banquet; totaling 1.8 to 1.9 million persons a day.
- 47.5 % of the people benefiting from the banquets are in the age group 30 – 50.
- 57.7 % of the banquets' beneficiaries are married.
- 32.3% of the people benefiting from the banquets are school graduates while 29.7% are illiterate.
- Most of the people benefiting from the banquets are males (90.1%); while only 9.9% are females.
- 64 % of the beneficiaries are employed; and 78% of them work in the private sector.
- According to 60% of the beneficiaries, the economic situation is the reason behind frequenting the charity banquets.

The Organizers

- 87% of the charity banquets are organized by individuals while 13% are organized by charity and Islamic associations.
- 40.9% of the banquets' organizers have completed their preparatory or secondary education and 16. % have completed primary education.
- 37% of the banquets' organizers are in the age group 40 – 50.
- 81.7% of the charity banquets' organizers work while 18.3% do not.
- The vast majority (88.1%) of the organizers are married
- 85.4% of the organizers did not issue permits to organize the banquets.

Studies

Out of the importance of Micro, Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (MSMEs) to the Egyptian economy; IDSC has lately published a study addressing their role in Egypt and recommending policy options which can lead to the flourishing of this crucial sector. A review of this study will be introduced in this and two upcoming issues. This issue is concerned with the sector's significance, and current situation.

The Business Environment for MSMEs in Egypt: Current Situation, Challenges and Opportunities

Micro, Small and Medium Sized Enterprises constitute the majority of Economic institutions worldwide. The importance of the sector, according to the paper, lies not only in its value to economic performance and growth, but also to increasing economic justice. Egypt, in this regard, is not an exception; MSMEs comprise the majority of economic institutions and employ the greater part of the labor force. MSMEs constitute 99% of Egypt's non-agricultural private

sector, employ 75% of the Egyptian labor force and contribute with 80% of the GDP in 2008. However, the MSMEs' share of the Egyptian exports is merely 7.5% of the total exports in 2001. The study outlines the key players involved in developing the sector in Egypt; namely the government, the Social Fund for Development, the private sector, international organizations, NGOs, financial institutions and MSMEs themselves. The significance of each will be fully described in the next issue



ECONOMIC FREEDOM IN EGYPT
PRESENT AND FUTURE

*The Third International
Conference on Economic
Freedom*

Present and Future

Marriott Hotel, Aida Ballroom

Monday October 12th, 2009



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