



Towards a child-friendly justice system in Egypt: Implementing SDGs for children


High Level Launch of the Strategic Review



25 July 2023
Cairo, Egypt

Summary



 Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
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Objective of the Conference:

The high-level conference was a momentum to launch the OECD Strategic Review “Towards a child-friendly justice system in Egypt: Implementing SDGs for children” and endorse the findings and recommendations by the government. The conference underscored the high-level political commitment of the Government to achieve a child-friendly justice system in Egypt, in the framework of the project “Towards a Child-friendly Justice in Egypt” and the readiness of the stakeholders towards the implementation of the Strategic Review’s recommendations.

The conference brought together over 200 participants from key national institutions: the Ministry of Justice (MoJ), the National Council for Childhood and Motherhood (NCCM), the Ministry of Social Solidarity (MoSS), the Public Prosecution Office (PPO) as well as judges, prosecutors, social workers and representatives from the Ministry of International Cooperation and other national institutions along with representatives from OECD embassies, development agencies, and international organisations and NGOs.



The High Level Policy Dialogue was opened by Dr. Hala Al-Saied, Minister of Planning and Economic Development, Dr. Rania Al-Mashat, Minister of International Cooperation, Dr. Nevine El Kabbage, Minister of Social Solidarity, Engineer Nevine Osman, the Secretary General of the National

Council for Childhood and Motherhood, Counsellor Hossam Sadek, Assistant Minister of Justice for International Cooperation, Counsellor Hossam Shaker, Head of the Child Protection Bureau at the Public Prosecution Office, H.E Yvonne Baumann, Ambassador of Switzerland in Egypt, and Dr. Martin Forst, Head of Governance, Reviews and Partnerships, Public Governance Directorate at the OECD.

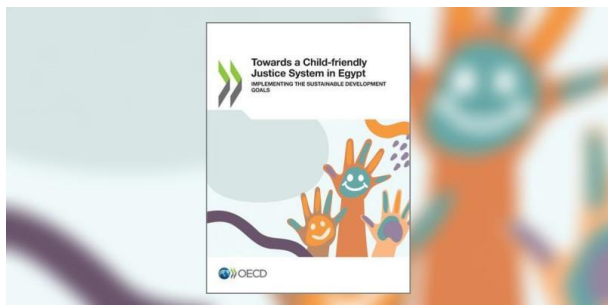
The conference was also attended by high level representatives including H.E. Saleh El Sheikh, President of the Central Agency for Organisation and Administration, Dr. Ahmed Kamaly, Deputy Minister of Planning and Economic Development, Dr. Mona Essam, Assistant Minister of Planning and Economic Development for Sustainable Development, and Dr. Tatyana Teplova, Head of Division and Senior Justice Counsellor at the OECD.



Summary of discussions

The opening remarks delivered by high-level representatives from key project partners emphasised the readiness and strong commitment to engage actively in the implementation of the OECD Strategic Review recommendations. The opening remarks also highlighted the timeliness and relevance of the Review in linking Egypt Vision 2030 with the national sectoral strategies and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It also highlighted the ongoing national efforts to enhance the child-friendliness of Egypt’s justice system and to adopt a whole-of-government

approach to child-justice and foster multi-sectoral cooperation.



Key takeaways

- Access to justice plays a key role to ensure the rights of children are respected which is emphasised by SDG 16;
- An inclusive justice system requires strong institutional coordination mechanisms, a whole-of-government approach and a strong commitment to SDGs.
- Children's right to participation needs to be taken into consideration to ensure children's voices are heard, in line with the principle of the best interest of the child;
- Services and specialised protocols and mechanisms need to be further integrated, in addition to clarifying the roles of national institutions related to the protection of children in contact with the law;
- Participants highlighted the importance of strengthening the rights of children culture and participation of children in legal proceedings.
- To improve and facilitate child-justice pathways across different legal areas, children should be provided with clear and adequate information, in a child-friendly manner
- Stakeholders should set clear targets and plans, aligned with the SDGs indicators and a robust monitoring and evaluation system to be able to measure the progress achieved.
- Specialised capacity-building programmes on child rights and how to deal with children, including a strong focus on child and family-centred approaches should be implemented.

- Enhance the capacities of social and psychological workers, case management methodologies and practices and update the follow-up and monitoring of their work, through new regulations and an electronic regulatory system
- Participants acknowledged the need to work on international custody disputes and child-related matters which requires further coordination and support provided to the Goodwill Committee within the Ministry of Justice



Key recommendations

Enhancing institutional co-ordination and effectiveness for child justice in Egypt:

- Foster multi-sectoral cooperation and implementing sound mechanisms for oversight and accountability to ensure an effective and coordinated response.
- Introduce a legal mandate for inter-institutional cooperation in child justice.
- Consider a state-level mechanism, potentially under NCCM, to strengthen coordination and ensure a more effective system.
- Define the roles of each institution involved across criminal, civil, and administrative justice pathways. This will lead to better coordination and more efficient dealing of cases which will ultimately enhance the overall effectiveness of the system in ensuring justice for children.
- Develop robust protocols for referrals, information-sharing, and data collection which

will facilitate seamless communication and coordination among different institutions.

Designing child-friendly justice pathways in Egypt:

- Strengthening data collection practices to collect information on existing child cases, their steps, and outcomes. This can be facilitated through investment in digital data collection and the establishment of a platform for data sharing.
- Empowering and operationalising the Egyptian National Child Rights Observatory to systematically collect and analyse data.
- Analysing the legal needs of children in Egypt to ensure the best interests of the child are respected.
- Establishing collaborations with research institutes to strengthen internal capacities and publish annual reports on the state of children's rights in the country.

Strengthening child-friendly justice services in Egypt:

- Promote the presence of women in child justice institutions, ensure special treatment for disabled children, and empower girls' participation and protect their rights.
- Review the legal framework regarding the age of legal capacity, seek children's views in legal proceedings, and expand resources for child participation programs.
- Analysis of the appropriateness and responsiveness of child-related processes by advocating for training of professionals, establishment of child-friendly facilities and procedural arrangements, and appropriate services for children in custody.
- Strengthen capacities of the child justice system, fostering support for CSOs and NGOs, by integrating prevention mechanisms and providing support services for child victims and offenders.

Next steps

- Development of an actionable Roadmap and tailored Good Practices Guidelines, to support the Government in the implementation of the recommendations by the national stakeholders.
- Consultations with national and international actors on the Roadmap and the Guidelines.
- Capacity-building and training sessions focusing on specific aspects of the child justice system in line with the Strategic Review's recommendations.
- Development of activities and a Strategic Review on the mandate, composition and efficiency of the Goodwill Committee on Child-Custody Dispute Resolution.

For more Information

- [Check out the Strategic Review here https://lnkd.in/eS2V5W8N](https://lnkd.in/eS2V5W8N)
- [Governance - Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development \(oecd.org\)](https://www.oecd.org/governance/)
- [Library - Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development \(oecd.org\)](https://www.oecd.org/library/)
- [OECD/Open Society Foundations \(2019\), Legal Needs Surveys and Access to Justice, OECD Publishing, Paris.](https://www.oecd.org/open-society-foundations/)
- [Egyptian Law no. 12 of 1996 promulgating the Child Law amended by Law no. 126 of 2008](#)