

Source: Sky News Arabia

Issue: 703

Date: July 22, 2024

On the Government's 2024 Work Program



The Egyptian government's work program for the period from 2024/2025 to 2026/2027 was announced days following the formation of the new cabinet, which indicates that its directions are largely pre-determined. Notably, Dr. Mostafa Madbouly continues as Prime Minister. This program comes a few months after the announcement of the broad outlines of the new presidential phase, issued by the Cabinet's Information and Decision Support Center, and about which the Egyptian Center for Economic Studies (ECES) issued a "Views on News".¹ In fact, there are significant similarities between these broad outlines and the new program.

[Link](#)

¹ <https://eces.org.eg/%d9%85%d8%b3%d8%a7%d8%b9%d8%af-%d8%b1%d8%a6%d9%8a%d8%b3-%d8%a7%d9%84%d9%88%d8%b2%d8%b1%d8%a7%d8%a1-%d9%8a%d9%83%d8%b4%d9%81-%d8%aa%d9%81%d8%a7%d8%b5%d9%8a%d9%84-%d9%88%d8%ab%d9%8a%d9%82%d8%a9-%d8%aa/>

Our Views

Aside from this initial observation, this issue of “Views on News” addresses a number of general comments on the new government work program and will be followed by other issues that will address each of the strategic goals of the program in further detail.

1. First of all, what was published are the government’s strategic goals for the next three years, divided into a group of main and sub-programs that end with some performance indicators, including the cost items of some programs, though it is not clear how they were calculated. While these are indeed some of the features of successful government programs, the most important elements are absent, particularly specific implementation mechanisms. While the strategic objectives are sound and important, they have been mentioned many times before and only a few have been achieved, highlighting implementation mechanisms as key to their achievement.
2. Implementation mechanisms do not mean a miniature set of goals, but rather mentioning justifications for arranging the steps and determining the entities responsible for implementing each goal, in addition to its cost, time frame, indicators for measuring progress, implementation difficulties faced previously, overlap of specializations if any, and others. This is completely absent from the program. Therefore, it is better to call what was published “broad outlines of the government’s directions or objectives” rather than the Government’s work program.
3. Since Egypt has not yet emerged completely and sustainably from its recent and critical economic woes, and is still at the beginning of implementing the new IMF program, it would have been better to have an urgent intensive

program for the next six months, for example, to deal with the challenges of this stage on the basis of comprehensive institutional reform. This should be followed by another development program for the rest of the three years. But targeting the same general goals for the entire period means that no distinction is drawn between the critical time we continue to go through and development objectives in general.

4. Funding sources were mentioned in the program without mentioning specific amounts, but with a clear definition of the order of their importance. At the forefront comes the partnership between the State and the private sector. Although the mention of the private sector indicates the State's recognition of its important role, partnership implies the continued role of the State in investing openly and significantly over the coming period. It also signifies that the role of the private sector as a locomotive for development is not the basis of the new direction. This clear direction in the program also indicates that the State shall be the one to select the projects to be implemented. It also means that mega projects will continue, although the country needs projects with high added value more than infrastructure projects and new cities, areas in which the State has already made great strides. It is time to put more focus on productive sectors.
5. The program does not clearly specify how a comprehensive evaluation of State projects implemented over the past ten years will take place, even though this is a key prerequisite for continuing with the same policy. Granting a level playing field for both the State and the private sector, if actually achieved, would be complementary to that first step and not a substitute as the fundamental principle is to maximize the benefits from all resources to the greatest extent possible.

6. The government work plan addresses each pillar or strategic objective separately from the others, when huge overlaps and complementarities actually exist between all of them. These call for serious coordination between all programs that is totally absent from the government work plan, indicating highly likely implementation problems. This applies to all pillars, particularly the national security one, as all its programs are integral to most other pillars. Despite the undeniable importance of national security, it is crucial to define its boundaries so that the focus on national security does not hinder production and export growth. Many of the current struggles faced by industry and exports are related to excessive security regulations, all falling under the broad concept of national security.
7. With regard to continuing the process of economic reform, institutional reform is reduced to administrative reform and digital transformation. Institutional reform is a more comprehensive and broader concept and is linked to all stages of economic decision-making, as well as the extent of coordination between the various entities in implementing decisions. ECES addressed the topic of institutional reform in detail in a study that was presented in one of its seminars following Egypt's agreement with the IMF.²
8. Likewise, structural reform is still limited to focusing on agriculture, industry and communications, which does not achieve real structural transformation. Each of these areas is multidimensional, and it is important to formulate a clear industrial policy on the basis of which detailed reform programs can be built that lead to the desired outcomes.

² https://eces.org.eg/eces_event/%d9%87%d9%84-%d8%ae%d8%b1%d8%ac%d8%aa-%d9%85%d8%b5%d8%b1-%d8%a8%d8%a7%d9%84%d9%81%d8%b9%d9%84-%d9%85%d9%86-%d8%a3%d8%b2%d9%85%d8%aa%d9%87%d8%a7-%d8%a7%d9%84%d8%a7%d9%82%d8%aa%d8%b5%d8%a7%d8%af%d9%8a/

9. Lastly, the coordination between ministries remains unclear, particularly regarding efforts to increase exports, which requires an increase in investment and production. The key question is: how will this be achieved with responsibility fragmented between ministries.

There are several other comments that will be addressed in upcoming issues, but a final general comment is worth noting. This comment is not directly related to the program, but rather to indicators of the method of implementation on the ground. It is about the announcement of the economic group, from which the ministries of industry and agriculture are absent. Such absence indicates distancing production systems from investment and the State's financial performance, which is alarming.

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