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**Sharing of Local Good Practices and Commitment to Transparency are Critical to Meaningful Business Reform for Egypt's Small and Medium-size Firms**

**Cairo, December 8, 2013** — A new report by the World Bank Group finds that local entrepreneurs face different regulatory challenges, depending on where they establish their businesses. Nevertheless, the report highlights good practices already in place in some locations in Egypt that can be easily leveraged to empower local entrepreneurs and firms throughout the country.

*Doing Business in Egypt 2014* finds that it is easier to start a business in Alexandria, Cairo, and Giza; deal with construction permits in Suez; register property in Port Said, and enforce contracts in Damietta. The report benchmarks 15 locations and five ports on five *Doing Business* topics: starting a business, dealing with construction permits, registering property, enforcing contracts, and trading across borders.

Until 2004, entrepreneurs from governorates across Egypt had to travel to the national capital to register and start a business. Today there are one-stop shops in Alexandria, Assuit, Cairo, Ismailia and 10th of Ramadan. As a result, the report finds that it is now as easy to start a business in Alexandria as in Cairo. In dealing with construction permits, there are notable variations across locations in the clearances required before a construction engineer applies for a building permit. It is easier to deal with a construction permit in Suez, for example, where the necessary clearances and the building permit are issued directly by the Municipal Authority. Enforcing a contract in Damietta takes 7 months less than in Cairo.

"Egyptian policymakers have a unique opportunity to address many of the obstacles currently facing local entrepreneurs," said Alessio Zanelli, Private Sector Development Specialist, Global Indicators Group, World Bank Group. "We find that there are many good practices already in place in Egypt, national and local governments can share their experiences, learn from each other, and help promote needed business regulatory reform that would benefit the country, its citizens and local businesses."

The report shows that in some cities it is more difficult to access information on what is needed to obtain a construction permit, for example, or how much it may cost. At times, Egyptian entrepreneurs have to pay personal visits to the public official in charge. Moving to a system of more transparent rules—rules that respond to the needs of the business community while narrowing the gap between the law as written and the law as practiced—will go a long way toward creating the conditions for more equitable economic growth and a faster pace of job creation, not only in Cairo but across the country.

The project is the result of collaboration between the World Bank Group's Global Indicators Group and the IFC's Investment Climate Advisory Services MENA of the World Bank Group. It was produced with the assistance of the General Authority for Investment and Free Zones (GAFI) of the Ministry of Investment and the Ministry of State for Local Development.

For more information or to access the report, please visit: [www.doingbusiness.org/Egypt](http://www.doingbusiness.org/Egypt)

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