

Distr.
LIMITED
E/ESCWA/SDD/2009/Technical Paper.7
13 October 2009
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: ARABIC

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION FOR WESTERN ASIA (ESCWA)

SOCIAL POLICY BRIEF

INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION OF YOUTH IN ARAB COUNTRIES

THIRD ISSUE

Note: This summary was prepared by the Population and Social Development Section in the Social Development Division in the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), with the contribution of Mr. Abd el Kader Latrach.

09-0420

This summary was prepared by the Population and Social Development Section in the Social Development Division in the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), as the third issue of the “Social Policy Brief” series issued periodically by the Division. The Brief deals with youth migration in Arab countries, as it reviews the reasons of this migration as well as the different mechanisms of its administration.

In recent decades, Arab countries registered several social accomplishments that improved the living standards of a wide range of social categories. Through enhancing education opportunities for different social classes, countries managed to limit the gaps in school enrolment rates for both sexes, as well as between large and small cities and urban and rural areas. In addition, Arab countries achieved tangible results in the health sector, particularly general health, as they managed to decrease mortality rates and increase life expectancy. But in light of the natural growth of youth,¹ the low quality of education in the Arab region and its inconsistency with local labour market requirements, many young people fail to find stable and permanent working opportunities that would enable their economic integration in their societies. Indeed, their integration is becoming more and more difficult as they keep postponing the formation of stable families. Therefore, Arab youth migration particularly to North America and Europe has become a main outlet for them to improve their status and accomplish their social goals. The absence of cross-sectoral policies that focus on the particularities of youth marginalizes a focal factor for economic growth and social modernization. Today, many young people resort to migration² leaving their countries by any means possible.³

Migration is not restricted to the unemployed. Young Arab people of all social classes dream of migration, hoping to find appropriate working opportunities that would allow them to improve their social status, prove themselves and realize their social and economic aspirations.

Arab youth migration is considered to be one of the biggest societal challenges today in many Arab countries but it cannot be dealt with apart from overall changes in Arab migration during recent decades. The challenge of migration is the result of many push factors related to economic, social, cultural and political realities prevalent in Arab societies on the one hand, and external pull factors related to globalization and the international demand on labour force on the other hand. Those factors coincide with the increasing numbers of young people in the demographic structure of several Arab countries, and lead to high levels of Arab migration growth in recent years.

Youth migration highlights failures in the growth paths in most Arab countries. In light of the expansion of this phenomenon and plurality of its forms in recent years, Arab countries need more than ever a new developmental perspective with the integration of youth as well as their wide and effective participation in economic and social development as a priority and to launch regional developmental projects to this effect. Such a new perspective can only be achieved through the adoption of a new approach in managing different international migration trends in Arab countries, in particular youth migration.

Youth and the demographic reality in Arab countries

Arab countries have experienced demographic patterns and behaviours which have affected their population structures and placed them among the countries with the highest proportion of young people in

¹ Youth cover the 15-24 age range.

² A study prepared by the Lebanese Emigration Research Center in July 2006 indicates that 60.5 per cent of resident Lebanese expressed a desire to migrate, 80 per cent of whom are highly skilled and masters' holders. As for the reasons of migration, 39.3 per cent of surveyed people said they intended to migrate in order to ensure their future, whereas 25.3 per cent attributed their wish to the political situation in Lebanon.

³ After the XVI Mediterranean Games which took place in Pescara, Italy from 26 June to July 2009, many Arab Athletes, even title winners, left their teams and decided not to go back home.

the world. In this demographic reality linked to fertility trends, the youth (15-24 years) represent, since mid-last century, a fifth of the region's population approximately. If the proportion of young people to the overall population has not witnessed noticeable changes, the number of young people increased by more than five times from 1950 to 2005, to reach 68 million in 2005 compared to around 14 million in 1950.

In light of the expected growth of the overall population in the region during the coming decades, the rate of youth to the overall population is expected to keep increasing to reach around 88 million in 2040, with an increase of 20 million compared to 2005. Those numbers highlight the youthfulness of the demographic structure in the region and its human capacities. From this reality stem major challenges, in particular in view of creating new working opportunities for future generations, reducing different forms of unemployment, providing suitable educational opportunities suited to the requirements of local labour markets and promoting the skills of young persons of both sexes.

TABLE 1. ORIENTATIONS OF THE OVERALL NUMBER OF POPULATION AND YOUTH IN THE ARAB REGION FROM 1950 TO 2040, RATE OF YOUTH TO OVERALL POPULATION

Year	Overall population in the Arab region (thousands)	Overall youth in the 15-24 age range (thousands)	Rate of youth in the 15-24 age range to the overall population (percentage)
1950	76 631	14 343	18.72
1955	862 760	15 721	18.22
1960	97 867	17 329	17.71
1965	111 415	19 853	17.82
1970	127 866	23 873	18.67
1975	147 207	28 430	19.31
1980	173 087	33 699	19.47
1985	201 904	39 635	19.63
1990	231 697	45 171	19.50
1995	260 796	51 882	19.89
2000	291 551	60 469	20.74
2005	324 189	67 867	20.93
2010	359 273	71 472	19.89
2015	394 035	73 127	18.56
2020	428 440	76 592	17.88
2025	461 823	81 396	17.62
2030	493 305	85 854	17.40
2035	523 010	87 938	16.81
2040	423 547	88 070	20.79

Source: United Nations Population Division, <http://esa.un.org/unpp/index.asp?panel=2>.

In light of future population trends in Arab countries, pressures towards international migration are expected to increase, particularly in non-oil countries or middle and low-income countries, whereas demographic expectations in the region may lead to an increase in labour force supply.⁴ Therefore, Arab countries become of the countries with the biggest offer on labour force in international markets, including young labour force.

⁴ World Bank, Shaping the Future, a Long-Term Perspective of People and Job Mobility for the Middle East and North Africa, Washington, 2009, available at: http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTMENA/Resources/Shaping_Future.pdf.

Status of youth in modern Arab migration trends

International migration trends of Arabs underwent many quantitative and qualitative changes in recent years that have modified the structure and characteristics of migrants. In view of the globalization of international migration, the main transformation witnessed by those trends was the unprecedented rise in the number of Arab migrants across the world. During the last decade, about two million Arab citizens left their countries and settled in different countries and regions.⁵ Some countries constituted new destinations for Arab migrants, such as Spain, Italy and Canada, while others traditional destinations, such as France and the United States of America. Arab migration is characterized today by different orientations of migrations within the same trend. While Moroccan migrants traditionally headed to France, today they go to new, closer destinations, such as Spain and Italy, as well as new further destinations such as Canada and the United States of America (see table 2).

TABLE 2. DISTRIBUTION OF ARAB MIGRANTS SETTLED IN DIFFERENT COUNTRIES (1998-2008)

	Spain ^{a/}	Italy ^{b/}	United States of America ^{c/}	Canada ^{d/}	Total
	1998-2008	1998-2008	1998-2007	2000-2006	
Algeria	41 876	3 284	9 419	16 230	70 809
Egypt	1 939	7 312	60 250	6 870	76 371
Iraq	379	251	38 926	9 985	49 541
Jordan	371	0	37 010	2 990	40 371
Lebanon	181	168	37 898	11 355	49 602
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	0	13	1 887	1 085	2 985
Mauritania	7 980	68	2 378	270	10 560
Morocco	576 520	77 987	38 469	14 800	707 776
Palestine	249	116	0	1 200	1 565
Syrian Arab Republic	1 149	424	25 485	4 455	31 503
Tunisia	1 204	11 883	3 867	3 365	20 319
Yemen	-	102	27 365	6 495	33 962
Other Arab countries	0	12 640	122 388	12 640	147 668
total	631 838	114 112	405 342	91 740	1 243 032

a/ 2008 Yearbook of Statistics, available at: <http://extranjeros.mtas.es/es/InformacionEstadistica/Anuarios/Anuario2008.htm>.

b/ Italian National Institute of Statistics, available at: <http://www.istat.it>.

c/ Profiles on Legal Permanent Residents, yearbook of Immigration Statistics, available at: <http://www.dhs.gov/files/statistics/data>.

d/ Statistics Canada, available at: www.statcan.gc.ca.

The increasing numbers of Arab migrants in recent years resulted in the emergence of new social groups within Arab migration trends, such as youth, so that migration today comprises a variable group of new actors. Arab youth became a key element in migration trends, in view of their increased presence in all migration trends to different destinations. The presence of Arab youth within Arab migration trends may be the result of family migration trends, or individual and independent migration which includes in most cases large numbers of minors.

Today, the rate of youth in Arab migration trends varies between 8 and 15 per cent of all migrants. In Canada for example, youth represent more than 15 per cent of migrants from the Arab Maghreb.⁶ In Spain, youth come in different levels of migration trends, due to the different structures of every trend and the level of family integration in each case. This does not reduce the importance of individual migration within each

⁵ This number does not include refugees.

⁶ <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/start-debut-eng.html>.

of the Arab migration trends, particularly minors' migration.⁷ Arab youth migration is characterized today by the inclusion of both sexes, in variable degrees, as shown by the structure of migrant Arab youth in Spain in 2008 (see table 3). This indicates that Arab women managed to penetrate the world of migration which is no longer monopolized by men. Youth migration cannot be considered an exceptional phenomenon witnessed by Arab societies alone; it is on the contrary a phenomenon that involves all trends of international migration. In Spain for instance, young people were noticeable in migration from all regions of the world in 2008, which affirms that this phenomenon affects different parts of the world, in variable degrees. Arab youth migration is the consequence of structural factors, related particularly to the status of young people in developmental policies and their empowerment in the region.

TABLE 3. RATE OF YOUNG MIGRANTS RESIDING IN SPAIN (2008)

Nationality	Total migrants	Youth			
		Total		Women	
		Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Total	473 499	662 246	14.82	322 650	48.72
European Union	1 794 229	281 092	15.67	138 850	49.40
Other European countries	122 840	14 621	11.90	7 562	51.72
Asia	264 460	38 078	14.40	16 832	44.20
Africa	142 575	15 632	11.00	5 503	35.20
Latin America	1 333 886	201 531	15.10	101 758	50.52
North America	20 272	1 627	8.03	687	42.22
Australia	1 839	60	3.26	26	43.33
Total Arab countries	785 810	109 534	8.43	51 325	45.50
Jordan	1 025	80	7.80	48	60.00
Tunisia	1 740	127	7.30	51	40.16
Algeria	48 919	3 779	7.73	1 920	50.81
Syrian Arab Republic	2 140	209	9.77	98	46.89
Iraq	814	86	10.57	40	46.51
Palestine	425	28	6.59	11	39.29
Lebanon	1 346	110	8.17	47	42.73
Egypt	2 858	153	5.36	64	41.83
morocco	717 416	104 266	14.53	48 808	46.81
Mauritania	9 127	596	6.53	238	39.93

Source: 2008 Yearbook of Statistics, available at: <http://extranjeros.mtas.es>.

Caring for youth in Arab countries: clear negligence

Arab countries, in their different developmental models, have adopted a series of public and sectoral developmental policies aimed to improve living standards. Those policies, whose priorities were defined according to national developmental projects or international orientations, dealt with developmental issues in a general manner, without any focus on particular social or demographic groups. The adoption of this traditional approach in defining developmental practical priorities led to addressing the needs of some important demographic and social categories, such as youth, and considering them as part of general needs. Consequently, youth, who are a specific demographic and social category, differentiated from other components of society, did not get the support they deserve, with the exception of public education. This was despite the demographic transformations witnessed by these countries, and despite the different and specific needs of young people.

⁷ Arab minors' migration is one of the components of youth migration in many European countries. In view of the special legal character of this migration, many countries of origin and destination have signed memorandums of understanding to reintegrate their minor citizens to their countries of origin, as in Morocco and Italy for instance.

Many countries still adopt this general perspective to manage development, particularly countries facing demographic pressures, such as Algeria, Egypt and Morocco, or suffering from wars or conflicts such as Palestine and Lebanon. As a result to this approach, young people feel marginalized, ignored and neglected. Therefore, young people in the region consider all forms of migration, including temporary migration, as a solution, that enables them to achieve their ambitions, especially in light of the emergence of the demographic window of opportunity in Arab countries. With this demographic window of opportunity which would provide opportunities in the field of the development of youth, different economic, social and service-related sectors can make use of the large number of individuals at the peak of their productivity. Youth productivity could as well increase, particularly that of young married people and those with experience and skills. Therefore, young people are seen as an effective factor in pushing the development wheel forward. Unlike Arab countries, many countries have succeeded in benefiting from youth, such as Japan, China, in particular Hong Kong, the Republic of Korea and Singapore, where 25 to 40 per cent of the development achieved during the 1965-1990 period is attributed to the remarkable growth in the number of people of working age. Such experiences show that young people are not a burden, rather a source of strength.

Factors contributing to Arab youth migration

International migration is an individual decision and a means through which a person seeks to achieve his or her ambitions and dreams. However, this does not prevent other internal (push) factors and external (pull) factors from accelerating the process, particularly among people dreaming of a better future and seeking to improve their economic and social status.

1. Internal (push) factors

A number of factors have a direct effect on international migration in general and youth migration in particular in Arab countries, including a number of internal factors. They are related to the countries of origin, and seem to be in many cases the main cause driving a person to make the decision to migrate and leave the country. Those factors include the nature of economic structures, particularly the structure of Arab labour markets, educational factors reflected in the nature of educational and university systems in the Arab countries, social factors related to the general social trends prevailing in Arab countries; and the problem of modernization. International migration is also affected by political factors, namely the lack of freedom in Arab countries to take individual and social initiatives, the large number of conflicts and wars and the absence of political and social stability in many countries.

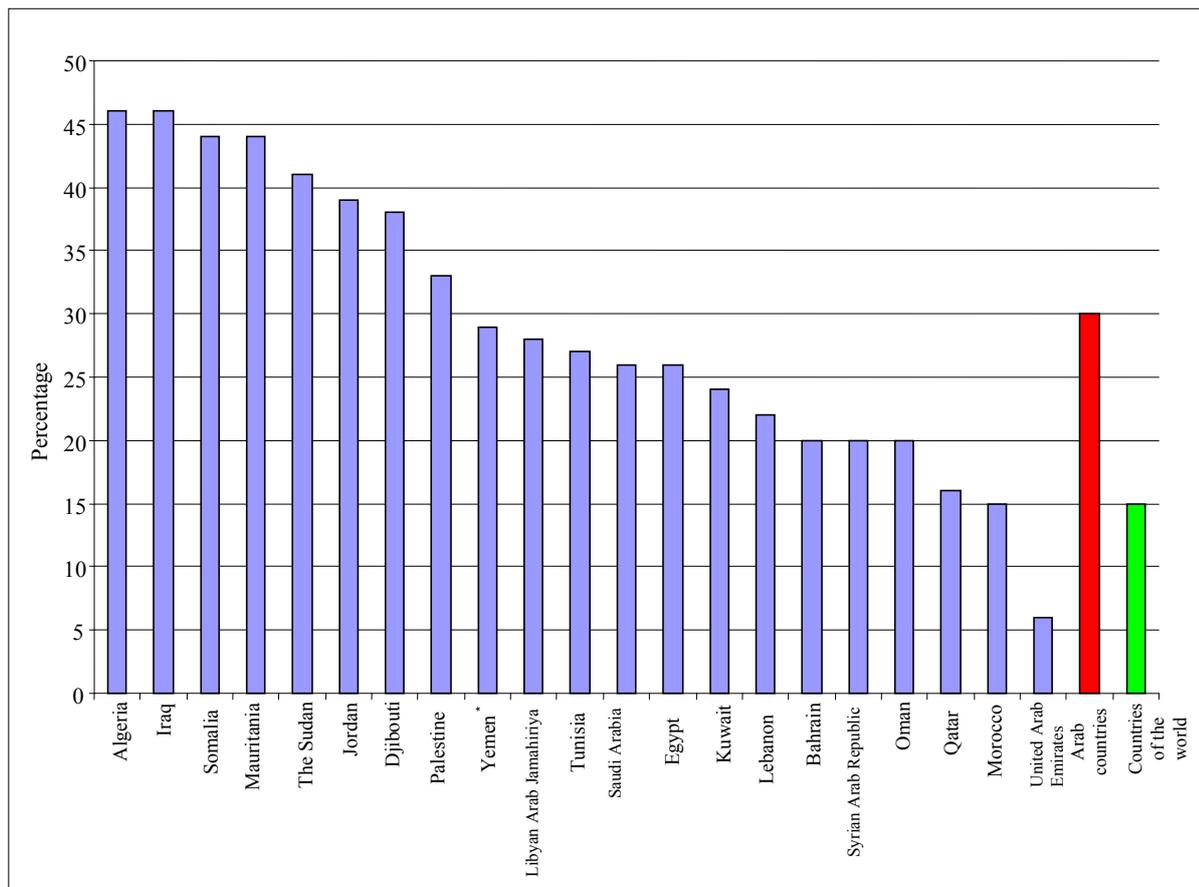
(a) *Economic factors*: Arab countries sought in recent decades to modernize their economic structures and create working opportunities to assimilate the huge numbers of young people looking for work for the first time as well as the unemployed. Fast economic changes, successive financial shocks, the decline in the role of the State in many Arab countries, the traditional nature of the private sector and the lack of diversity in economic and productive activities combined to reduce working opportunities in general, as well as youth working opportunities. Youth unemployment rates in Arab countries are today the highest worldwide (see figure I). Unemployment is not confined to the uneducated; it rather encompasses educated people, even people with higher university degrees.⁸ Youth migration in many cases, in particular in Arab non-oil countries, seems to be the only way to obtain working opportunities that would enable young Arabs to improve their status and their parents' economic situation;

(b) *Educational factors*: The education system in Arab countries was opened to include the lower and middle classes. Higher education which was once monopolized by specific social classes today comprises

⁸ The unemployment rate for university degree holders reached 30.6 per cent in Morocco in 2005, to register the highest unemployment rate in the country. The average period of unemployment for university degree holders surpasses 45 months, exceeding the unemployment period of other groups. In Algeria, about 44 per cent of unemployed high degree and university diploma holders occupy their first post after waiting for more than 25 months.

other social classes. Higher education in Arab countries managed to meet the requirements of new education seekers; however it is still ill-prepared to respond to the requests of modern and developed university education that would meet the needs of local and regional labour markets in new scientific and technical fields. Therefore, thousands of Arab young persons are compelled to leave their countries to seek education abroad and specialize in modern scientific fields, on the one hand, and to reach high scientific levels in different global universities on the other hand. Student migration, or migration for educational purposes, forms therefore one of the important facets of youth migration in Arab countries. In recent years, this form of migration affecting both sexes has become a favourite channel for young Arabs to leave their countries, since many Arab students never came back after finishing their studies;

Figure I. Arab youth unemployment rates (2006)



Sources: UNDP, 2009 Arab Human Development Report, and the ILO database.

* 2009 World Bank data.

[...A]round 192 thousand Arab students pursue their university education abroad, in a number of European, American and Canadian universities.

Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics, Montreal, Canada.

(c) *Social factors*: Different social and cultural classes in Arab societies suffer from numerous social problems, such as conflicts that have made the Arab region of the most turbulent regions of the world. Such problems are related to the nature of the social project in the region, particularly the process of conciliating modernity and tradition in different facets of individuals' and groups' day-to-day life, such as the nature of the family, the relationship between men and women, the status of women in society, the role of religion in

society, democracy, factional freedoms, citizenship and loyalty. In view of these circumstances, important social groups, especially youth, undergo a conflict with collective values prevailing in most cases, resulting in a discrepancy in points of view on many social cases. Such a discrepancy induces those categories to feel like strangers in their own societies. Youth migration, therefore, suggests deep societal implications, that may develop in some cases to become a collective protest and refusal of the status quo;

(d) *Political factors*: The Arab region witnessed during recent decades a series of events, conflicts, political tumults and wars that transformed it into one of the most tense regions worldwide. Iraq for instance underwent in 20 years two of the fiercest wars of recent decades, namely the first and second Gulf wars, followed by the American invasion in 2003. In Lebanon, as soon as the civil war, which had stretched over more than two decades, ended, Lebanon was again the victim of a war in 2006 following Israeli aggression. During the 1990s in the Arab Maghreb, Algeria endured a civil war that lasted several years. Civil wars are still raging in the south and west of the Sudan. In addition to all these cases, the Israeli occupation of Palestinian territories continues. In view of these political situations and the absence of human security considered to be of the basis of development,⁹ several social groups, particularly young people, face deadlocks. Therefore, youth often resort to migration from Arab countries, by legal and illegal means, seeking security and safety. No doubt, Arab youth migration under these circumstances is no more than an expression of their need to find a safe environment that would enable them to achieve their just vital ambitions. Arab youth are, in addition, deprived of any participation in political life, which creates most of the times a feeling of exclusion and marginalization.

2. *External (pull) factors*

External or pull factors motivate international migration trends, including youth migration, and are usually linked to the levels of growth in different countries and regions. Moreover, there are economic factors reflected in the openness of a large number of labour markets in countries of destination in the global North, increases in the level of international demand for labour force, particularly skilled labour, and the rise in salaries. Globalization cannot be underestimated as well, particularly international migration globalization, and its role in activating different Arab migration trends, particularly youth migration.

(a) *Discrepant economic and social growth between regions and countries*: although there are many causes of international migration, the main factors activating it remain linked to structural factors reflected in economic growth patterns, economic growth levels, the openness of local labour markets and social welfare systems in different regions and countries. International migration often results in the transfer of individuals to open, active and stable economic patterns;

International migration trends, including Arab youth migration, are generally directed towards the economies of developed countries. They are therefore a natural expression of the different levels of development between different regions. This increasing discrepancy between growth levels has accentuated the relationship between countries of origin and countries of destination during recent decades. The international migration map reaffirms the nature of this relationship between regions, as developed countries attract over 115 million migrants, as in 58 per cent of international migration. Arab migration trends, particularly youth migration, are not excluded from this trend.¹⁰ Many experts in international migration consider that the continuous attraction of migrants from countries of the South to developed industrialized countries is evidence of this relationship between different regions on the one hand and the supremacy of the capitalist social and economic pattern on the other hand;

⁹ UNDP Regional Bureau for Arab States, 2009 Arab Human Development Report, Challenges to Human Security in the Arab Countries, New York.

¹⁰ United Nations Population Division, International Migrant Stock, available at: <http://esa.un.org/migration>.

(b) *Fast growth of the global labour market*: the demographic transformations and globalization of the production have resulted in an increase in the movement of the labour force and the transfer of jobs between different geographic regions which are no longer isolated from this new reality. In light of the growing desire to migrate, worldwide regions today face pressures resulting from labour migration, particularly regions facing demographic transformations and an increase in the number of population in working age, as is the case in many Arab countries. The globalization of labour markets and the increase in global demand on labour force in many regions led to an increase in international demand for labour, thus to the emergence of new opportunities to migrate, particularly amongst working categories which are greatly in demand globally. The increase in the number of programmes organizing the migration of contractual labour force in Arab countries such as Egypt, Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia are clear evidence of the contribution of the region in the global labour market, and the increase in the opportunities for legitimate migration of persons in the age of migration, including youth. Many Arab countries seek, through these programmes, to meet the external demand for labour force, and therefore migration becomes an important way to integrate Arab countries into the global economic system, and contributes in limiting unemployment rates in the region, increasing household incomes, and supporting national economies. The participation of Arab countries, in particular non-oil countries, in the global labour market is expected to increase as the status of active categories in the region gains more importance. It is very likely for international demand for labour force to be limited to young people in the region in the first place, particularly those with competences and qualifications;

Many Arab countries, such as Egypt, Morocco and Tunisia concluded, within the Mediterranean partnership or their bilateral relationships with European countries, annual agreements based on the principle of quotas. According to these agreements, countries meet annual or seasonal needs of a number of economic productive and service-related sectors in European countries. Moreover, national agencies were established in several Arab countries to employ citizens in global labour markets, particularly European ones, such as the National Agency for the Promotion of Labour and Competencies (ANAPEC) in Morocco (<http://www.anapec.org>).

(c) *Globalization*: Globalization has resulted in the expansion and openness of international migration to include several new social groups comprising both sexes equally. Migration is no longer a project confined to adult men; it is rather a field in which many social groups compete even in early ages, which explains the emergence of youth migration in many international migration trends, including Arab migration. Arab youth migration in the era of international migration globalization includes women and men from different economic and social classes, some of whom have high skills.

Mechanisms for the management of youth migration in Arab countries

No doubt many Arab countries, particularly non-oil countries, face the same challenge today, namely the increase of unemployment, and the inability to create new working opportunities for future educated or uneducated generations. These pressures are expected to increase in view of the increase in the number of young people in the demographic structure of the region. In light of these circumstances, youth migration has become a social and economic challenge, and a means adopted by young people, in non-oil countries particularly, to achieve their economic integration and improve their social status. In the absence of developmental policies based on empowerment of young people and achieving their social and economic integration, the supply will increase in the field of migration in the region. This reality raises questions on the methods to be adopted within countries of the region to deal with youth migration and manage it in the future.

Review of developmental policies

The increase in youth migration rates in the region in recent years requires the review of traditional developmental political paths, because the policies adopted in the past are no longer capable of achieving neither the desired national developmental targets nor the economic and social integration of different components of society, particularly youth. Therefore, the first step to deal with youth migration would be to

make core transformations in developmental policies, through formulating specific policies, stemming from general policies, which would particularly target young people and be based on their requirements, specifications and ambitions. This new approach in managing development, based on multifaceted future planning should aim to achieve the targets of a yearly strategy, such as integrating youth into different key sectors. Such integration would limit youth disappointment and the feeling of social exclusion and marginalization, particularly exclusion which would incite them to look for their status and future outside their countries, by any means possible.

Integrating youth issues into the priorities of developmental policies

The suggested approach to manage youth migration in Arab countries grants priority to integrating youth issues into different developmental policies and projects which would facilitate their integration in all key sectors in the countries. It is based as well on providing more working opportunities, paving the way for individual and collective initiatives in different economic fields, supporting youth economic projects, eliminating administrative constraints to enable them to implement projects such as small industrial units. The integration of youth into the labour market should aim to lessen differences between sexes in the region. Workers' salaries should be increased, particularly those of young people entering labour markets for the first time, including technicians and architects who have graduated from national or foreign universities in different countries of the region, enduring low wages compared to their peers in other geographic regions.

The new approach is also about enabling young people to participate effectively in the different stages of preparing and formulating policies, through youth organizations, to ensure the effectiveness between such policies on one side and the reality and priorities of young people in every country on the other.

Necessity of adopting a new approach to manage international migration

Migration and the movement of individuals in the region represent a natural historical behaviour, and do not form a new phenomenon or emerge from current circumstances. This movement, which involves millions of the region's citizens, has resulted in many benefits to the region, reflected in the increasing rates of local development, household standards of living and even the capacity of concerned countries to compete in global markets. Despite the persistence of migration and the movement of labour force in the region, and their positive and effective participation in many vital fields, countries of the region have still not adopted a clear approach in this area, which keeps them confined to considering the negative traditional impact. Therefore, the future of the management of international migration and the movement of labour force in Arab countries is linked to the nature of the relation between regional institutions and these two phenomena, and how integrated they are within factors contributing to growth more particularly.

In order for the integration of migration and the movement of labour force to be of an effective factor in achieving local growth, they must be taken into consideration when planning the future of the local labour force, and considered essential to enhance opportunities for the employment of youth in the region. Through adopting this approach, countries of the region should be able to define the specifications of local supply of potential migrants, and study the possibilities of meeting international demand, in a way to manage the movement of individuals, especially youth, in a rational way. Through this positive management of international migration, countries can conclude bilateral agreements stipulating the preservation of workers' rights and guaranteeing them abroad, even in case of economic and financial crises, such as the financial crisis affecting the world today. These countries can also include searching for new working opportunities for national labour force in international and regional labour markets among their main tasks, in virtue of bilateral agreements between committees concerned with migration issues or between private sector institutions.

Applied management and the role of databases

The suggested new approach to managing international migration in the countries of the region, particularly youth migration is based on establishing local databases with an overview of local job seekers and their characteristics, as well as of international job offers in different sectors in neighbouring and non-neighbouring countries. With the adoption of this general framework to manage international migration, it will be possible to define international demand on labour force on the one hand, and to define the specifications of the local offer on labour force on the other hand. Also within this framework, work is needed to adapt the labour force to the requirements of global markets, through training local job seekers, especially young people, to meet the standards of international or local demand for labour force, particularly seasonal jobs, which are highly demanded in many regions of the world. The pillar of this positive approach for international migration and movement of labour force in Arab countries is the facilitation of opportunities to adapt job seekers, teach them and empower them to acquire essential knowledge in the field of foreign languages and information technologies.

Institutional partnerships

The new administration of international migration in Arab countries requires the participation of all administrative economic and social actors concerned with the management and follow-up of international migration trends and labour force mobility, in order for the management of the different migration trends not to be monopolized by certain institutions. Partnership should be widened enough to include the private sector, which is the principal actor in many countries, as it should cover the different stages of preparing and organizing the movement of the labour force.

Enhancement of the regional dimension of different Arab migration trends

In view of the different needs of Arab labour markets on the one hand, and the abundance of active labour force in the Arab region on the other, the enhancement of the regional dimension of international migration between Arab countries is a necessary mechanism to manage international migration and the movement of labour force in the region, including youth migration. This dimension, considered to be one of the pillars of regional integration, contributes to decreasing unemployment rates in a number of Arab countries. It is possible to enhance migration opportunities between different Arab countries in different fields, provided the priorities of these countries are defined in the frame of an inclusive partnership involving all effective economic and social entities from both public and private sectors.

Finally, dealing with youth migration in Arab countries in the future requires radical reforms in developmental orientations and the nature of management of different international migration trends. It is necessary as well to establish institutional frameworks specialized in the management of labour force movement and migration in the region.