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**YOUTH DEVELOPMENT IN THE ESCWA REGION:
STATISTICAL PROFILES, NATIONAL STRATEGIES AND SUCCESS STORIES**

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Introduction

Youth in the Arab countries are the source of wealth and the pillar for development. They represent a great potential for the present and future of society. The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) has focused its work for the biennium 2010-2011 on emphasizing to member countries the importance of designing national policies for youth under the framework of the World Programme of Action for Youth. In that context, ESCWA is pursuing two tracks: one is promoting the World Programme of Action for Youth which is a major step forward at the level of designing policies targeted at youth; the other is enhancing national capacities of member countries by raising awareness of their staff on their role in policymaking and enabling them technically and practically to formulate policies which respond to the youth needs and take into consideration all youth groups and their social components.

By adopting the Declaration on the Promotion among Youth of the Ideals of Peace, Mutual Respect and Understanding between Peoples, in 1965, the United Nations has acknowledged that addressing young men and women, their principles, ideals and abilities is a vital necessity to achieve the goals and targets of development. Three decades later, in 1995, the United Nations adopted the World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond.¹

In 2007, the World Programme of Action for Youth was further endorsed by the international community through the report of the United Nations Secretary-General entitled "Goals and targets for monitoring the progress of youth in the global economy"² which was submitted to the General Assembly at its sixty-second session. The World Programme of Action for Youth became a practical agenda for youth development in four of its priority areas: globalization, poverty and hunger, education and employment. The report defined a set of goals and targets that can be monitored and assessed for the period 2005-2015.

Goals and targets are set up for youth

The United Nations adopted in 1995 the World Programme of Action for Youth which was an unprecedented initiative by the international community to acknowledge the value and role of youth.

The World Programme of Action for Youth presents a policy framework and practical guidelines for national work and international support in order to improve the status of youth. It defines 15 priority areas for youth grouped in three clusters as follows:

1. Youth in the global economy

- Globalization.
- Poverty and hunger.
- Education.
- Employment.

2. Youth in civil society

- Environment.
- Leisure-time activities.
- Full and effective participation of youth in the life of society and in decision-making.
- Intergenerational issues.
- Information and communications technology.

3. Youth and their well-being

- Health.
- HIV/AIDS.
- Substance abuse.
- Juvenile justice.
- Girls and young women.
- Armed conflict.

A set of goals and targets have been established recently for the purpose of monitoring the youth progress achieved in each of those priorities.^(*)

Therefore, similarly to the Millennium Development Goals, youth have by now their relevant goals and targets.

* See the reports of the Secretary-General: A/62/61/Add.1-E/2007/7/Add.1 and A/64/61-E/2009/3 at: <http://documents.un.org>.

¹ Available at: <http://documents.un.org> under the symbol A/RES/50/81.

² A/62/61/Add.1-E/2007/7/Add.1.

In its resolution 64/130 of 18 December 2009, the General Assembly took note of a subsequent report of the Secretary-General in that regard entitled "Implementation of the World Programme of Action for Youth: progress and constraints with respect to the well-being of youth and their role in civil society"³. The report defined a supplemental set of goals and targets on the remaining priority areas: health, HIV/AIDS, substance abuse, juvenile justice, girls and young women, armed conflict, environment, leisure-time activities, full and effective participation of youth in the life of society and in decision-making, intergenerational issues, and information and communications technology. In that resolution, the General Assembly called upon Member States to consider using the goals and targets proposed in the reports of the Secretary-General at the national level as a means of facilitating the monitoring of progress towards the implementation of the World Programme of Action for Youth.

This booklet is produced by the Population and Social Development Section of ESCWA Social Development Division in celebration of the 2010 International Year of Youth: Dialogue and Mutual Understanding. It highlights the youth statistical profiles and national strategies in each member country and presents success stories achieved in member countries in the area of launching and implementing national programmes and projects for youth development and empowerment. The booklet concludes with a summary of the project prepared by ESCWA in response to the World Programme of Action for Youth.

Countries in this booklet are presented in the English alphabetical order adopted by the United Nations for country names.

³ A/64/61-E/2009/3.

Bahrain



Youth Statistical Profile

2010 Demographic Profile			
Total population (in thousands, 2010) ^a	807		
Total youth aged 15-24 (in thousands, 2010) ^a	144		
Ratio of youth to total population (% , 2010) ^a	17.9		
Ratio of youth to total population of working age (% , 2010) ^a	24.9		
Percentage of youth living in urban areas (% of total youth, 2005) ^b	89.7		
Percentage of youth living in rural areas (% of total youth, 2005) ^b	10.3		
Full dependency ratio (% , 2010) ^a	39.0		
Education			
	Male	Female	Total
Youth literacy rate (% , most recent year available: 2001) ^c	96.8	97.3	97.0
Crude secondary education enrolment (% , 2004) ^c	96.1	101.6	98.8
Crude tertiary education enrolment (% , 2004) ^c	24.5	45.1	34.4
Employment			
	Male	Female	Total
Youth unemployment rate (% , most recent year available: 2001) ^j	17.0	27.0	
Percentage of youth in total unemployed population (% , most recent year available: 2001) ^d	55.9	51.2	54.0
Health			
	Male	Female	
Percentage of youth having comprehensive and accurate information on AIDS and HIV transmission (% , 2000-2007) ^e	-	-	
Percentage of currently smoking youth (% , most recent year available: 2002) ^f	28.0	11.7	
Mean age at first marriage (in years, most recent year available: 2001) ^g	29.8	25.9	
Fertility rate among adolescent females (per 1000 girls aged 15-19, 2000-2007) ^e	15		
Main cause of death among youth/its ratio to total youth deaths (% , most recent year available: 2000) ^c	Road accident/14%		
Participation in Public Life			
Voting age (in years) ^h	21		
Globalization and Information and Communications Technology [*]			
Cellular phone subscribers (per 1000 population, 2005) ⁱ	1030		
Internet users (per 1000 population, 2005) ⁱ	213		

* Data in this cluster refer to total population and do not specify youth in particular.

Note: Data sources are listed in the annex, p. 44.

National Youth Strategy

Bahrain National Youth Strategy 2005-2009: enabling youth to realize their potential



In August 2003, the Government of Bahrain, represented by the General Organization for Youth and Sports, and the Bahrain office of the United Nations Development Programme signed an agreement to develop a national youth strategy.⁴ The Strategy was launched in May 2005. The formulation process incorporated extensive consultations in addition to theoretical and practical studies including the following: a review of international experiences, data, declarations and pacts related to youth development; a review of national literature on the subject; the formation of eight working groups charged with defining key elements of a national youth strategy; national conferences and workshops on the various aspects of that strategy; the “National Youth Perceptions” survey on the status and aspirations of youth, which covered 1840 households; and the “Youth Voice Campaign” involving 10 thousand youth to youth interviews and dialogues.⁵



Bahrain National Youth Strategy defines youth as being the population aged 15 to 30. It identifies the following ten priority themes for youth development: environment; healthy lifestyles; education and training; employment; culture; sports and leisure; information and communications technology; globalization; civil and human rights; and citizenship. The National Youth Strategy presents a vision tailored to the Bahraini youth. It consists of empowering youth by building “a society in which all youth in Bahrain have access to equal social, cultural, health, education and employment opportunities, in order to enable them to participate as responsible citizens in building a safe, prosperous and compassionate society”.

In 2007, the International Council on National Youth Policy, a non-governmental international organization based in Vienna with the mission of promoting and developing the concept and mechanisms of national youth policies around the world,⁶ has selected Bahrain to be one of its 11 members representing all regions of the world, in recognition of the efforts exerted by Bahrain for the advancement of youth. The Council had granted Bahrain in 2004 two awards for best national youth strategy and best working mechanism.

⁴ United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)-Bahrain and the General Organization for Youth and Sports, *Operations Manual for the Formulation of the Bahraini National Youth Strategy and Action Plan*, 2004. Available at: http://hdr.undp.org/docs/network/hdr_net/Bahrain_OperationsManual_Youth.pdf.

⁵ UNDP-Bahrain, *Bahrain National Youth Strategy Assessment Report*, September 2005.

⁶ www.icnyp.org.

Success Stories

inJAz Bahrain to ensure a better life for youth



inJAz Bahrain,⁷ which is a member of the worldwide organization Junior Achievement, was established in 2005, with a view to offer young people a business and economic education that provides them with the knowledge, skills and hands-on experience needed when seeking employment.



inJAz offers school students, in cooperation with volunteers, courses on various topics including economy, free enterprise, and business management ethics among others. inJAz, in partnership with Tamkeen, is currently implementing “Career with a Purpose”, a programme that offers secondary school students a unique opportunity to develop a strong perception of business ethics and a higher purpose in choosing their careers. It is expected to reach 4020 students in 30 secondary schools.

Unemployed graduates training project



In February 2008, the Council of Ministers in Bahrain commissioned Tamkeen to explore business opportunities for 1912 unemployed college graduates in all business fields in Bahrain. Tamkeen is a semi-independent authority which mission slogan is “working for a prosperous future”. It formulates strategic and operational plans to invest the fees collected by the Labour Market Regulatory Authority in enhancing employability, job creation, and social support.⁸

Tamkeen started the implementation of the first phase of the project in October 2008. It was able to employ 1100 graduates in the public and private sectors. The implementation of the second phase was launched in September 2009 with the goal of finding jobs for 300 unemployed graduates. The model employment applied in the project consists of hosting graduates for a period of no less than six months and no more than 24 months in a government or private authority where they receive hands-on training at real posts matching their qualifications and are subject to staff regulations applied in that authority. The employing authority presents Tamkeen with quarterly assessment reports on the graduate’s performance while Tamkeen funds the training expenses including salaries.



Moreover, the Ministry of Labour launched the Graduate Employment Project⁹ in October 2009. This Project will be implemented over a two-year period under the supervision of the Ministry and in cooperation with Tamkeen (Employment fund). It aims at raising awareness of the importance of working in the private sector; reducing graduate unemployment rates and integrating them in private sector jobs that match their qualifications (in particular female graduates); designing rehabilitation and vocational training programmes for graduates seeking employment; and improving the salary scale for national graduate workers and providing encouraging incentives and advantages.

⁷ <http://www.injazbah.org>.

⁸ www.tamkeen.bh/ug1912/?p=Intro.

⁹ <http://www.mol.gov.bh/universitygraduates/default.aspx>.

Bahrain joins the Youth Peer Education Network (Y-PEER)



The Youth Peer Education Network¹⁰ is a groundbreaking and comprehensive youth-to-youth initiative that was pioneered by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) in 2002. It comprises 500 non-profit organizations and governmental institutions. Its membership includes thousands of young people from Central and Eastern Europe, Central Asia, the Middle East and North and East Africa. Y-PEER is an efficient means of promoting youth participation in issues related to reproductive health. It operates in many countries around the world through individual meetings and interactive websites. It provides remote education and funds annual training, campaigns, workshops, and teleconferences at the national and international levels.

Y-PEER was launched in Bahrain in 2008 in cooperation with the General Organization for Youth and Sports, the Ministry of Health and UNFPA with the objective of educating youth on reproductive health and contributing to the fight against HIV/AIDS.

¹⁰ <http://www.youthpeer.org>.

Youth Statistical Profile

2010 Demographic Profile			
Total population (in thousands, 2010) ^a	84474		
Total youth aged 15-24 (in thousands, 2010) ^a	17030		
Ratio of youth to total population (% , 2010) ^a	20.2		
Ratio of youth to total population of working age (% , 2010) ^a	31.9		
Percentage of youth living in urban areas (% of total youth, 2005) ^b	43.3		
Percentage of youth living in rural areas (% of total youth, 2005) ^b	56.7		
Full dependency ratio (% , 2010) ^a	58.0		
Education			
	Male	Female	Total
Youth literacy rate (% , most recent year available: 2005) ^c	90.1	78.9	84.9
Crude secondary education enrolment (% , 2004) ^c	89.8	84.2	87.1
Crude tertiary education enrolment (% , 2004) ^c	-	-	32.6
Employment			
	Male	Female	Total
Youth unemployment rate (% , most recent year available: 2002) ^j	21.0	40.0	-
Percentage of youth in total unemployed population (% , most recent year available: 2006) ^d	68.1	66.0	67.1
Health			
	Male	Female	
Percentage of youth having comprehensive and accurate information on AIDS and HIV transmission (% , 2000-2007) ^e	-	-	
Percentage of currently smoking youth (% , most recent year available: 2005) ^f	16.0	7.6	
Mean age at first marriage (in years, most recent year available: 2005) ^g	-	23.0	
Fertility rate among adolescent females (per 1000 girls aged 15-19, 2000-2007) ^e	27		
Main cause of death among youth/its ratio to total youth deaths (% , most recent year available: 2000) ^c	Unknown cause/14%		
Participation in Public Life			
Voting age (in years) ^h	18		
Globalization and Information and Communications Technology [*]			
Cellular phone subscribers (per 1000 population, 2005) ⁱ	184		
Internet users (per 1000 population, 2005) ⁱ	68		

* Data in this cluster refer to total population and do not specify youth in particular.

Note: Data sources are listed in the annex, p. 44.

National Youth Strategy

Proposed National Youth Policy in Egypt: targeting all youth groups and sectors



The National Council For Youth laid out a proposal for the National Youth Policy in Egypt¹¹ in 2007. The policy targets all youth groups and sectors, with special focus on unemployed youth, girls and young women, youth in rural areas and youth with disabilities. It has the following goals:

- Integrating the youth component in all policies related to the youth;
- Empowering the youth economically, socially and politically;
- Broadening youth participation in public life;
- Fostering the values of loyalty and nationalism among youth;
- Vitalizing the role of girls and young women and eliminating all forms of discrimination against them;
- Improving services provided to youth and facilitating youth access to them;
- Achieving maximum decentralization in the provision of services to youth;
- Encouraging and supporting the participation of the private sector and civil society in achieving youth development.

The policy covers the following 12 priority areas for the Egyptian youth: employment, political participation, education, health, population, culture, information, social activity and volunteerism, social care and dealing with social delinquency, sports and leisure, environment, and studies and research.

The National Council For Youth is preparing the final draft document which will be presented at the National Conference for adoption. Subsequently, all relevant ministries and Government agencies will undertake to convert the goals and strategies laid down in the National Youth Policy into plans of action and implementation programmes with the participation of civil society and private sector as major partners in the youth development process, and in coordination with the National Council For Youth which conducts a review of the policy every three years.

Success Stories

National Project for Youth Training to achieve qualitative progress in society and its institutions



The Ministry of Military Production in Egypt adopted since 2000 the issue of rehabilitating young graduates and qualifying them for the labour market with a view to solving the problem of unemployment among youth with medium, high and higher education, by training them on professions, vocations and skills that would enhance their chances to obtain employment. Training is given in an efficient method combining theoretical knowledge, practical skills and the needs of society.¹²

¹¹ www.alshabab.gov.eg

¹² Ibid.

Mubarak-Kohl: a training programme promoting a dual education system

The Mubarak-Kohl initiative undertakes the reform of the education methods. It adopts a dual education system which combines theory and practice and is implemented through a private-public partnership and Egyptian-German cooperation. Over a three-year programme, students from secondary technical schools spend only two days in school every week and four days in the real work environment of private sector industry. The amount of 27 million euros was allocated to that initiative for implementation over a ten-year period starting in 1995 through the Ministry of Education. Subsequently, the time frame of the initiative was extended until 2008 and its coverage expanded from 3 to 22 governorates.¹³ Moreover, the number of schools implementing the project increased from 54 in the school year 2006/2007 to 63 in the school year 2007/2008. The number of students is expected to reach 35,000 in the school year 2008/2009.¹⁴

ISHRAQ: providing education for vulnerable girls in marginalized rural areas



ISHRAQ¹⁵ was launched in 2001 as a joint programme by four governmental organizations with the cooperation of the Ministry of Youth and the National Council for Childhood and Motherhood. The programme, which is implemented in four rural villages in Upper Egypt, has the following objectives: increasing literacy rates and improving life skills, providing information on reproductive health, and encouraging civil participation of vulnerable adolescent girls. The programme attempts to raise awareness of the society and create an environment conducive to accepting social change, by involving male figures, parents and local community leaders. Young female secondary school graduates from the community were recruited and trained as programme leaders. Two thirds of the 277 girls who participated in ISHRAQ from beginning to end had entered middle school by the time the programme drew to a close and the success rate among those who took the literacy exam was 92 per cent. Moreover, the participating girls indicated an increased preference for delaying marriage and reduced support for female genital mutilation. With the cooperation of local authorities, the girls were able to obtain identification cards, an important step towards enhancing civil participation and limiting marriage of minor girls. At the same time, the participation of young men, parents and local community leaders in the programme contributed to changing their perceptions of gender roles which became more progressive.¹⁶

“Our Youth Work” programme: a comprehensive vision for youth employment



The programme entitled “Our Youth Work”¹⁷ offers detailed schemes for specific programmes aimed at providing 4.5 million employment opportunities for youth over the next six years. As an example, the “Small Loans” programme offers loans to every young man or woman wishing to start a small project, in addition to information on production requirements, technical knowledge and marketing opportunities for their products. “Labour Market” is another example which attempts to provide over 900 thousand employment opportunities in all fields of industry, production and services. The banking sector will finance 2000 new small and medium projects in the fields of industry, trade, transport, and information and communications technology.

¹³ *Addressing youth unemployment in the ESCWA region*, paper prepared by Samir Radwan, Nevine Orabi and Ghada Nadi, and presented at the twenty-fourth session of ESCWA, Beirut, 8-11 May 2006, E/ESCWA/24/4(Part II).

¹⁴ <http://www.aba.org.eg/mob-ko/about.htm>.

¹⁵ Information on ISHRAQ is provided by the Population Council, a non-governmental organization participating in the project, at: http://www.popcouncil.org/projects/40_IshraqSafeSpacesGirls.asp.

¹⁶ United Nations, *World Youth Report 2007-Young people's transition to adulthood: Progress and challenges*. Chapter 4, box 4.2, p. 131. Available at: www.un.org/esa/socdev/unyin/wyr07.htm.

¹⁷ www.alshabab.gov.eg.

Information Technology Clubs to initiate youth on modern technology

The Information Technology Clubs¹⁸ were founded by the National Council For Youth. They provide the following services: training and initiating youth to keep abreast of the times in technology; coaching young graduates on the use of information technology applications, thus qualifying them for new employment opportunities in different fields; and qualifying young professionals in computer sciences to work as trainers in the process of solving the problem of youth unemployment.

Those clubs are located in all governorates in Egypt and their number has reached 1277 clubs which comprise 9171 computers with 156729 young men and women users.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

Youth Statistical Profile

2010 Demographic Profile			
Total population (in thousands, 2010) ^a	31467		
Total youth aged 15-24 (in thousands, 2010) ^a	6272		
Ratio of youth to total population (% , 2010) ^a	19.9		
Ratio of youth to total population of working age (% , 2010) ^a	35.5		
Percentage of youth living in urban areas (% of total youth, 2005) ^b	66.6		
Percentage of youth living in rural areas (% of total youth, 2005) ^b	33.4		
Full dependency ratio (% , 2010) ^a	78.0		
Education			
	Male	Female	Total
Youth literacy rate (% , most recent year available: 2000) ^c	88.9	80.5	84.8
Crude secondary education enrolment (% , 2004) ^c	53.7	35.5	44.8
Crude tertiary education enrolment (% , 2004) ^c	19.3	11.4	15.4
Employment			
	Male	Female	Total
Youth unemployment rate (% , most recent year available: -) ^j	-	-	-
Percentage of youth in total unemployed population (% , most recent year available: -) ^d	-	-	-
Health			
	Male	Female	
Percentage of youth having comprehensive and accurate information on AIDS and HIV transmission (% , 2000-2007) ^e	-	3.0	
Percentage of currently smoking youth (% , most recent year available: 2008) ^f	17.7	15.2	
Mean age at first marriage (in years, most recent year available: 2007) ^g	-	22.8	
Fertility rate among adolescent females (per 1000 girls aged 15-19, 2000-2007) ^e		68	
Main cause of death among youth/its ratio to total youth deaths (% , most recent year available: -) ^c		-/-	
Participation in Public Life			
Voting age (in years) ^h	18		
Globalization and Information and Communications Technology [*]			
Cellular phone subscribers (per 1000 population, 2005) ⁱ	20		
Internet users (per 1000 population, 2005) ⁱ	1		

* Data in this cluster refer to total population and do not specify youth in particular.

Note: Data sources are listed in the annex, p. 44.

National Youth Strategy

Steps towards adopting a national youth strategy

Iraq is developing a national strategy for youth based on the National Development Strategy 2005-2007 and the International Covenant Document with Iraq. In that process, it has completed, at the end of 2009, the national adolescents and youth survey conducted by the United Nations Population Fund and the League of Arab States. The survey targeted the age group 10-30 years and collected information on the youth knowledge, opinions and practice in the following areas: education, labour force and employment, overall health, sexually transmitted diseases, reproductive health, nutritional condition, mental and social condition, leisure time, youth participation, youth and technology, youth and security, and disability.

The national youth strategy aims at striking a balance between the youth goals set up by the Government and the youth aspirations, and enhancing the efficacy and technicality of programmes targeting youth for the advancement of that sector. The strategy lies on the following principles: education; development; humanism; mobilization (by helping youth to emphasize national loyalty and interaction with national issues and play an active role in maintaining national unity); demographic requirements; and change and development (by changing and improving youth attitude and behavior and involving them in achieving social change).¹⁹

Success Stories

“How to Start Your Project”: a policy for increasing youth employment opportunities

“How to Start Your Project”, or self-employment, is one of Iraq youth employment policies. It consists of youth programmes aimed at enhancing self-reliance, such as exploring employment opportunities; facilitating access to grants and loans for young people with business ideas in order to support them in realizing those ideas, and easy loans to start small business projects; and assisting young people in developing entrepreneurial proposals. It also consists of creating employment opportunities for unemployed youth and preparing skill development programmes.²⁰

Iraqi Youth Parliament: activating youth participation in public life

The establishment of the Iraqi Youth Parliament was announced on 12 August 2009 at a ceremony in celebration of the International Youth Day proclaimed by the United Nations.²¹ The Youth Parliament has among its objectives to activate youth participation in the political, cultural and social fields, and provide channels of communication allowing them to express their aspirations and contribute in making the decisions that affect them. The Youth Parliament comprises 275 members. It shall exercise its mission for one year during which it will develop its rules of procedure and form specialized commissions, then organize elections for an elected and permanent parliament.

¹⁹ *National report on the response of Iraq to the World Programme of Action for Youth* prepared by Nawal Abbas Al-Mahdi and presented at the Expert Group Meeting on Reinforcing Social Equity: Integrating Youth into the Development Process, organized by ESCWA and the Family Development Foundation in Abu Dhabi, 29-31 March 2009, p. 10, 12 and 13.

²⁰ *Ibid*, p. 10.

²¹ Information about the United Nations work with regard to youth is available at: www.un.org/youth.

JORDAN

To Insert Flag

Youth Statistical Profile

2010 Demographic Profile			
Total population (in thousands, 2010) ^a	6472		
Total youth aged 15-24 (in thousands, 2010) ^a	1322		
Ratio of youth to total population (% , 2010) ^a	20.4		
Ratio of youth to total population of working age (% , 2010) ^a	32.8		
Percentage of youth living in urban areas (% of total youth, 2005) ^b	78.0		
Percentage of youth living in rural areas (% of total youth, 2005) ^b	22.0		
Full dependency ratio (% , 2010) ^a	60.0		
Education			
	Male	Female	Total
Youth literacy rate (% , most recent year available: 2003) ^c	99.3	98.9	99.1
Crude secondary education enrolment (% , 2004) ^c	86.9	88.0	87.4
Crude tertiary education enrolment (% , 2004) ^c	37.5	41.3	39.3
Employment			
	Male	Female	Total
Youth unemployment rate (% , most recent year available: 2005) ^j	28.0	50.0	
Percentage of youth in total unemployed population (% , most recent year available: -) ^d	-	-	-
Health			
	Male	Female	
Percentage of youth having comprehensive and accurate information on AIDS and HIV transmission (% , 2000-2007) ^e	-	-	
Percentage of currently smoking youth (% , most recent year available: 2007) ^f	33.7	26.1	
Mean age at first marriage (in years, most recent year available: 2004) ^g	28.6	25.4	
Fertility rate among adolescent females (per 1000 girls aged 15-19, 2000-2007) ^e	28		
Main cause of death among youth/its ratio to total youth deaths (% , most recent year available: -) ^c	-/-		
Participation in Public Life			
Voting age (in years) ^h	18		
Globalization and Information and Communications Technology [*]			
Cellular phone subscribers (per 1000 population, 2005) ⁱ	304		
Internet users (per 1000 population, 2005) ⁱ	118		

* Data in this cluster refer to total population and do not specify youth in particular.

Note: Data sources are listed in the annex, p. 44.

National Youth Strategy

National Youth Strategy for Jordan 2005-2009: Raising and developing Jordanian youth who are aware, loyal, proactive and empowered



The National Youth Strategy for Jordan 2005-2009²² addresses youth as a national priority. It was formulated according to a scientific participatory method with the cooperation of governmental, non-governmental and international organizations. It defines youth as being the population aged 12 to 30 years.

The vision statement of the Strategy is summarized as follows: “Raising and developing Jordanian young men and women who are aware of themselves and their abilities, loyal to their country and proactively take part in its progress and development, able to deal with variables and developments of this age in a confident, aware and steadfast manner, within a secure and supporting environment.”



The Strategy identifies nine themes: participation, recreation activities and leisure time, civil rights and citizenship, media and culture, information technology and globalization, education and training, employment, health, and environment. In each theme, the Strategy presents a youth status analysis, strategic objectives and operational objectives which include the required plans and activities.

²² The Higher Council for Youth (2004) in cooperation with the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Children's Fund, *National Youth Strategy for Jordan 2005-2009*. Available at: http://youth.gov.jo/index.php?page_type=pages&page_id=215.

Success Stories

“Madrasati” initiative aimed at increasing education opportunities for children and youth



“Madrasati”²³ initiative was launched in 2008. It undertakes the renovation of old public schools with a view to increasing education opportunities for children and youth in Jordan.

The main concern of this initiative is repairing public schools infrastructure and buildings. It works on improving school environment to ensure student safety in "healthy" schools. It consists of training teachers in order to improve education quality and tools. Noteworthy is the voluntary participation of college students in this initiative for the renovation of public schools.



“INJAZ” for the Creation of Economic Opportunities for Jordanian Youth



"INJAZ"²⁴ was launched in 2001. It is a not-for-profit organization with the mission of enabling youth to become productive members of society and facilitating their involvement and success in the global economy. It brings capacity-building programmes to public schools and universities in many areas, including communication, success, planning, leadership and problem-solving skills, in addition to enhancing knowledge in market economy, business-entrepreneurship and finances. INJAZ is currently working with 161 schools and 27 universities in all regions of Jordan. The number of students who benefited from it since its inception has reached about 350 thousand, while more than nine thousand volunteers have contributed to its educational activities and put their experience at the service of the Jordanian youth.



²³ www.madrasati.jo.

²⁴ www.injaz.org.jo.

Youth Leadership Center for the enhancement of youth leadership and sports capacities



negotiations and conflict resolution, creative thinking skills, volunteering and others.

Work started at the Youth Leadership Center²⁵ upon the issuance of its new regulations in 2002. It operates under the supervision of Jordan Higher Council for Youth with the following goals: (1) qualifying and enabling youth and sports leaders; (2) organizing seminars and training sessions; and (3) conducting and documenting research and studies on youth activities. In this connection, the Center offers support for sports activities, encourages the participation of Arab and foreign delegations in those activities, classifies trainers and refines their talents, and certifies water sports lifeguards. It also organizes training sessions on

Knowledge Stations to introduce the information and communications technology to local communities



The idea of establishing the Knowledge Stations was inspired by His Majesty King Abdallah, whose vision consists of creating a digital and knowledge-based economy and providing Jordanian citizens with the opportunity to use information and communications technology (ICT), in particular in the rural and remote areas. The initiative of establishing Information Technology and Community Service Centers (renamed later Knowledge Stations)²⁶ was launched in 2001.

The Knowledge Stations aim mainly at bridging the digital divide between the various regions of Jordan, introducing ICT tools to individuals and institutions and encouraging the use of ICT in the daily lives of citizens, reducing computer illiteracy by providing ICT training, enabling local communities to become involved in the e-Government project and offering electronic services to local communities. In 2010, the number of Knowledge Stations operating in Jordan reached 175, of which 61 are located in the Northern County, 69 in the Central County and 45 in the Southern County with more than 100 thousand trainees (44 per cent males and 56 per cent females).



²⁵ www.youthcenter.gov.jo.

²⁶ www.ks.jo.

Youth Statistical Profile

2010 Demographic Profile			
Total population (in thousands, 2010) ^a	3051		
Total youth aged 15-24 (in thousands, 2010) ^a	440		
Ratio of youth to total population (% , 2010) ^a	14.4		
Ratio of youth to total population of working age (% , 2010) ^a	19.4		
Percentage of youth living in urban areas (% of total youth, 2005) ^b	98.4		
Percentage of youth living in rural areas (% of total youth, 2005) ^b	1.6		
Full dependency ratio (% , 2010) ^a	34.0		
Education			
	Male	Female	Total
Youth literacy rate (% , most recent year available: 2005) ^c	99.7	99.8	99.7
Crude secondary education enrolment (% , 2004) ^c	87.2	92.8	89.9
Crude tertiary education enrolment (% , 2004) ^c	12.3	33.4	22.3
Employment			
	Male	Female	Total
Youth unemployment rate (% , most recent year available: 1995) ^j	16.0	8.0	-
Percentage of youth in total unemployed population (% , most recent year available: -) ^d	-	-	-
Health			
	Male	Female	
Percentage of youth having comprehensive and accurate information on AIDS and HIV transmission (% , 2000-2007) ^e	-	-	
Percentage of currently smoking youth (% , most recent year available: 2005) ^f	28.0	14.3	
Mean age at first marriage (in years, most recent year available: 1995) ^g	28.5	27.0	
Fertility rate among adolescent females (per 1000 girls aged 15-19, 2000-2007) ^e	14		
Main cause of death among youth/its ratio to total youth deaths (% , most recent year available: 2002) ^c	Road accident/46%		
Participation in Public Life			
Voting age (in years) ^h	21		
Globalization and Information and Communications Technology [*]			
Cellular phone subscribers (per 1000 population, 2005) ⁱ	939		
Internet users (per 1000 population, 2005) ⁱ	276		

* Data in this cluster refer to total population and do not specify youth in particular.

Note: Data sources are listed in the annex, p. 44.

Success Stories

INJAZ-Kuwait inspired by the youth success



INJAZ-Kuwait²⁷ was founded in 2005 as a non-governmental not-for-profit institution supported by the public sector and member of the worldwide organization Junior Achievement. It offers educational programmes on technical projects and financial knowledge to students from kindergarten to secondary level through a strategic partnership with the business and education sectors in Kuwait and with help from qualified volunteers. The vision of INJAZ-Kuwait revolves around the following: (1) ensuring that all students in Kuwait are well informed on the free economy system; (2) qualifying a new generation of future business entrepreneurs who will contribute to building the economy of Kuwait; and (3) setting up an unprecedented model in the field of volunteering and community service for the benefit of both individuals and communities.

Youth Leadership Capacity-building Initiative



The Youth Leadership Capacity-building Initiative was taken by Jusoor Arabiya Centre²⁸ in cooperation with the Middle East Partnership Initiative and Exxon Mobil Kuwait Limited for Exploration and Production.

The Initiative offers free training through intensive workshops aimed at instilling leadership skills and assisting Kuwaiti young men and women in starting developmental and civil projects and maintaining positive interaction and meaningful relationships with civil society and public and private sectors in Kuwait. A group of 50 Kuwaiti young men and women aged 18 to 28 were selected to receive training and capacity-building programmes to help them achieve their aspiration to obtain distinguished posts in their careers and play an effective and influential role in society.

²⁷ www.injaz-kuwait.org.

²⁸ <http://www.jusoorarabiya.com/Training.htm>.

Youth Statistical Profile

2010 Demographic Profile			
Total population (in thousands, 2010) ^a	4255		
Total youth aged 15-24 (in thousands, 2010) ^a	765		
Ratio of youth to total population (% , 2010) ^a	18.0		
Ratio of youth to total population of working age (% , 2010) ^a	26.5		
Percentage of youth living in urban areas (% of total youth, 2005) ^b	88.6		
Percentage of youth living in rural areas (% of total youth, 2005) ^b	11.4		
Full dependency ratio (% , 2010) ^a	47.0		
Education			
	Male	Female	Total
Youth literacy rate (% , most recent year available: -) ^c	-	-	-
Crude secondary education enrolment (% , 2004) ^c	84.9	92.6	88.7
Crude tertiary education enrolment (% , 2004) ^c	44.9	50.4	47.6
Employment			
	Male	Female	Total
Youth unemployment rate (% , most recent year available: 1997) ^j	24.0	14.0	-
Percentage of youth in total unemployed population (% , most recent year available: 2004) ^d	-	-	48.1
Health			
	Male	Female	
Percentage of youth having comprehensive and accurate information on AIDS and HIV transmission (% , 2000-2007) ^e	-	-	
Percentage of currently smoking youth (% , most recent year available: 2005) ^f	65.8	54.1	
Mean age at first marriage (in years, most recent year available: 2004) ^g	31.4	27.4	
Fertility rate among adolescent females (per 1000 girls aged 15-19, 2000-2007) ^e		18	
Main cause of death among youth/its ratio to total youth deaths (% , most recent year available: -) ^c		-/-	
Participation in Public Life			
Voting age (in years) ^h		21	
Globalization and Information and Communications Technology [*]			
Cellular phone subscribers (per 1000 population, 2005) ⁱ		277	
Internet users (per 1000 population, 2005) ⁱ		196	

* Data in this cluster refer to total population and do not specify youth in particular.

Note: Data sources are listed in the annex, p. 44.

Success Stories

Enhancing youth knowledge on reproductive health issues

The Lebanese Survey of Household Health showed that 90 per cent of Lebanese youth are well informed about family planning methods and contraception use. It noted that the level of awareness on those issues is higher among young women compared to young men and is higher among older men. The Family Planning Organization in Lebanon has been active since the 1970s in raising awareness among the population, especially youth, on reproductive health issues, by conducting studies on substance addiction and HIV/AIDS, and organizing conferences, volunteering camps, festivals and other activities.²⁹

Moreover, the Ministry of Social Affairs is implementing, with the cooperation of the United Nations Population Fund, a project entitled “Information, Education and Communication in Support of Reproductive Health at Community Level”. The project aims at bolstering information, knowledge and communication on reproductive health issues and building the capacity of the Ministry of Social Affairs in organizing awareness campaigns on reproductive health issues by undertaking local community mobilization campaigns, building communication capacities of healthcare providers and community education workers, training young volunteers, producing information and communication material, and building a support network for the media.³⁰

Progress in the National AIDS Control Programme

Available data show that the Lebanese youth is well informed on the transmission of HIV/AIDS and the required preventive measures. The Lebanese Government established the National AIDS Control Programme in 1989 and allocated a budget item to support it. The Programme is currently implemented through a joint project of the Ministry of Health and the World Health Organization with a view to achieving the following goals: (1) enhancing preventive measures and encouraging safe sexual behaviour to limit the spread of HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted diseases; (2) alleviating health and social consequences of HIV/AIDS infection; (3) determining and mobilizing local and external resources to be used in combating the spread of AIDS; (4) offering care and treatment to people living with HIV/AIDS; and (5) providing advisory services to people living with HIV/AIDS and their families. This Programme has opened centres for voluntary testing and advice to assist in diagnosing possible infections. It also had a leading role in developing national policies and strategies, securing resources, and coordinating efforts between the various sectors in order to raise awareness, increase prevention and improve healthcare.³¹



²⁹ *National report on the response of Lebanon to the World Programme of Action for Youth* prepared by Khayriya Kaddouh and Miriana Khayat Sabouri and presented at the Expert Group Meeting on Reinforcing Social Equity: Integrating Youth into the Development Process, organized by ESCWA and the Family Development Foundation in Abu Dhabi, 29-31 March 2009, p. 15.

³⁰ The document project of “*Information, Education and Communication in Support of Reproductive Health at Community Level*” is available at the UNFPA website: <http://www.unfpa.org.lb/projects/ProjIEC.htm>.

³¹ See source in footnote 48.

The Lebanese National Youth Parliament in public and private schools



The Lebanese National Youth Parliament,³² the first such parliament in Lebanon, was launched in 2009 with the cooperation of the International Migration Organization and the United Nations Democracy Fund. It comprises 64 member students aged between 15 and 19, who were selected from a representative sample of Lebanese public and private schools. The selection ensured gender equality and was based on competencies demonstrated in the electoral programmes proposed by the students themselves. This initiative is in line with the principles of fostering citizenship, motivating young people to participate actively in decision-making and helping them to acquire leadership abilities and negotiation and cooperation skills. The Youth Parliament offers its members the opportunity to learn about such democracy concepts as negotiating, public speaking, and voting, in addition to considering national interests and local community issues.

³² <http://www.lnyp.org>.

Youth Statistical Profile

2010 Demographic Profile			
Total population (in thousands, 2010) ^a	2905		
Total youth aged 15-24 (in thousands, 2010) ^a	598		
Ratio of youth to total population (% , 2010) ^a	20.6		
Ratio of youth to total population of working age (% , 2010) ^a	31.2		
Percentage of youth living in urban areas (% of total youth, 2005) ^b	71.9		
Percentage of youth living in rural areas (% of total youth, 2005) ^b	28.1		
Full dependency ratio (% , 2010) ^a	51.0		
Education			
	Male	Female	Total
Youth literacy rate (% , most recent year available: 2003) ^c	97.9	96.7	97.3
Crude secondary education enrolment (% , 2004) ^c	88.1	84.6	86.4
Crude tertiary education enrolment (% , 2004) ^c	10.9	15.0	12.9
Employment			
	Male	Female	Total
Youth unemployment rate (% , most recent year available: -) ^j	-	-	-
Percentage of youth in total unemployed population (% , most recent year available: -) ^d	-	-	-
Health			
	Male	Female	
Percentage of youth having comprehensive and accurate information on AIDS and HIV transmission (% , 2000-2007) ^e	-	-	
Percentage of currently smoking youth (% , most recent year available: 2007) ^f	17.8	11.3	
Mean age at first marriage (in years, most recent year available: 2003) ^g	28.1	24.8	
Fertility rate among adolescent females (per 1000 girls aged 15-19, 2000-2007) ^e		11	
Main cause of death among youth/its ratio to total youth deaths (% , most recent year available: -) ^c		-/-	
Participation in Public Life			
Voting age (in years) ^h	21		
Globalization and Information and Communications Technology [*]			
Cellular phone subscribers (per 1000 population, 2005) ⁱ	519		
Internet users (per 1000 population, 2005) ⁱ	111		

* Data in this cluster refer to total population and do not specify youth in particular.

Note: Data sources are listed in the annex, p. 44.

Success Stories

National Centre for Vocational Guidance: adapting education to labour market demands

The Ministry of Education in Oman founded the National Centre for Vocational Guidance³³ with the objective of assisting students in selecting careers and professions that correspond to the labour market in Oman, and providing them with enough information about higher education institutions and programmes. The Centre launched its activities in the 2007/2008 school year. It selects school vocational guidance teachers among those who took the relevant training.

Cognitive Knowledge Development Program: enhancing student knowledge in sciences, mathematics and concepts of environmental geography



The Cognitive Knowledge Development Program³⁴ aims at catalyzing and encouraging male and female students to widen their knowledge in sciences, mathematics and environmental geography through written and oral contests, practical projects and support programmes targeting fifth to tenth grade students. The Program also aims at improving the knowledge of supervisors and teachers on writing examination questions, urging them to keep abreast with novelties in sciences, mathematics and environmental geography, and raising awareness on the importance of scientific, mathematical and geographical concepts and competence and their relevance to economy and sustainable social development.

“Sanad” Program to provide employment for the Omani youth

“Sanad” Program³⁵ aims at providing Omani citizens, including young people, with job opportunities and necessary training for an effective contribution to the labour market; encouraging and supporting individual initiatives and self-employment enterprises; establishing business incubators to support individuals wishing to found small enterprises; and developing individual projects and drafting their promotional plans and programmes.

Fund for Development of Youth Projects “Sharakah”: supporting youth in their business endeavors



The Fund for Development of Youth Projects was founded in 1998 with the goal of reducing youth unemployment and creating new employment opportunities. The Fund provides support for small initiatives and projects through financing up to 50 per cent of the project capital. In 2008, the Fund took up a new name “Sharakah”³⁶ as part of a new strategy to activate its operations and encourage a new generation of business entrepreneurs. Sharakah Fund envisions becoming Oman's leading entrepreneurial fund by providing services and programmes dedicated to the establishment and growth of businesses that add value to the national economy and the Omani society.

³³ National report on the response of Oman to the World Programme of Action for Youth prepared by Kawthar Bin Hamad Al-Farsi and presented at the Expert Group Meeting on Reinforcing Social Equity: Integrating Youth into the Development Process, organized by ESCWA and the Family Development Foundation in Abu Dhabi, 29-31 March 2009, p. 7.

³⁴ <http://www.moe.gov.om/portal/sitebuilder/sites/EPArabic/MOE/eleguide/knoguide.aspx>.

³⁵ <http://www.manpower.gov.om/sanad.asp>.

³⁶ <http://www.youthfund.com.om/sharakah/tabid/90/Default.aspx>.

National Strategy for Information, Education and Communication and Seventh Five-year Plan for Health Development for the promotion of youth and adolescent health

Government agencies and international organizations cooperated in formulating the National Strategy for Information, Education and Communication which was published in 2004 for the promotion of adolescent health. The Strategy aims at meeting the health needs of adolescents and providing them with the highest level of services. It comprises sectoral plans in areas related to adolescent health, including social conditions, education, information, health, preaching and guidance, and boy and girl scouts.

Furthermore in that regard was the establishment of the Seventh Five-year Plan for Health Development 2006-2010 which dedicated domain 24 for “Adolescent and Youth Health” with two defined goals: improving health behavior among adolescents and youth in all regions, and enhancing effectiveness, quality and inclusiveness of health services with access to all adolescents and youth across Oman. The Five-year Plan considers the National Strategy for Information, Education and Communication as one that leads to the achievement of the first goal for “Adolescent and Youth Health.”³⁷

Institutions and measures for providing support in the areas of reproductive health and AIDS

Oman has established many governmental institutions to provide pregnancy care and promote birth spacing, as well as clinics for pre-nuptial consultations and a hotline that provides information and consultation on HIV/AIDS with total confidentiality. Youth represent 43 per cent of the hotline users.

Encouraging volunteering among young people to enhance their role in society

The Omani Government urges young people to invest their leisure time in paid volunteering work which is beneficial to youth, in particular those seeking employment, and to society. In that regard, community health support groups provide assistance to health institutions in raising awareness on health issues. The Ministry of Health developed training programmes for volunteers to enable them to improve their performance. In 2008, the number of volunteers exceeded 3000 with youth seeking employment representing 75 per cent of them. Volunteering examples include young people teaching in centres for illiteracy eradication under the supervision of the Ministry of Education after receiving relevant training provided by the Ministry. That kind of volunteering is very popular, in particular among young women.³⁸

National Strategy for Oman Digital Society, E-Government and Oman Digital Initiative: enhancing the use of information and communications technology



The implementation of the National Strategy for Oman Digital Society and the E-Government started in May 2003.³⁹ Following are some of its focus areas: making the information and communications technology (ICT) sector more effective; providing employment opportunities to youth; improving access to education; streamlining Government services; improving health services; promoting social development by using information technology; and making Oman more attractive to foreign investments and more conducive to business.

Oman Digital Initiative was based on that Strategy. It endeavors to adopt ICT to improve Government services, advance the business sector, create a knowledge-based economy and enable individuals to handle

³⁷ The Seventh Five-year Plan for Health Development 2006-2010 is available at: http://www.moh.gov.om/nv_menu.php?fNm=fiveyearPlan.htm&SP=1.

³⁸ See source in footnote 31, p. 9 and 10.

³⁹ http://www.ita.gov.om/ITAPortal_AR/Services/eoman_strategy.aspx.

digital transactions. Oman Educational Portal⁴⁰ is one of the projects of the Digital Initiative. The Portal connects the various education elements through a number of programmes and services available at the site. It aims at streamlining the educational process and making it more effective and attractive to students, teachers and parents, facilitating follow-up and communication between education parties, and processing administrative work through digital processing of applications and digital archiving.⁴¹

⁴⁰ <http://www.omanet.om/arabic/misc/egov011.asp>.

⁴¹ <http://www.moe.gov.om/portal/sitebuilder/sites/eps/Arabic/MOE/eEducation.pdf>.

Youth Statistical Profile

2010 Demographic Profile			
Total population (in thousands, 2010) ^a	4409		
Total youth aged 15-24 (in thousands, 2010) ^a	879		
Ratio of youth to total population (% , 2010) ^a	19.9		
Ratio of youth to total population of working age (% , 2010) ^a	37.9		
Percentage of youth living in urban areas (% of total youth, 2005) ^b	72.7		
Percentage of youth living in rural areas (% of total youth, 2005) ^b	27.3		
Full dependency ratio (% , 2010) ^a	90.0		
Education			
	Male	Female	Total
Youth literacy rate (% , most recent year available: 2005) ^c	99.1	98.8	99.0
Crude secondary education enrolment (% , 2004) ^c	91.2	96.1	93.6
Crude tertiary education enrolment (% , 2004) ^c	37.3	38.6	37.9
Employment			
	Male	Female	Total
Youth unemployment rate [*] (% , most recent year available: 2004) ^j	39.0	45.0	-
Percentage of youth in total unemployed population (% , most recent year available: -) ^d	-	-	-
Health			
	Male	Female	
Percentage of youth having comprehensive and accurate information on AIDS and HIV transmission (% , 2000-2007) ^e	-	-	
Percentage of currently smoking youth (% , most recent year available: -) ^f	-	-	
Mean age at first marriage (in years, most recent year available: 2004) ^g	-	22.4	
Fertility rate among adolescent females (per 1000 girls aged 15-19, 2000-2007) ^e		-	
Main cause of death among youth/its ratio to total youth deaths (% , most recent year available: -) ^c		-/-	
Participation in Public Life			
Voting age (in years) ^h	18		
Globalization and Information and Communications Technology ^{**}			
Cellular phone subscribers (per 1000 population, 2005) ⁱ	302		
Internet users (per 1000 population, 2005) ⁱ	67		

* Arab population living in the West Bank and Gaza.

** Data in this cluster refer to total population and do not specify youth in particular.

Note: Data sources are listed in the annex, p. 44.

2. *Bridges*: to create a secure environment for children enabling them to exercise their activities and hobbies and learn by playing during after school hours and in many areas; and to build the capacities of children and youth to participate actively in their society by gathering them for meaningful educational, social and cultural activities.

3. *Partners*: dedicated to building the capacities of youth organizations and supporting youth initiatives in Palestine.



Youth Statistical Profile

2010 Demographic Profile			
Total population (in thousands, 2010) ^a	1508		
Total youth aged 15-24 (in thousands, 2010) ^a	269		
Ratio of youth to total population (% , 2010) ^a	17.9		
Ratio of youth to total population of working age (% , 2010) ^a	21.5		
Percentage of youth living in urban areas (% of total youth, 2005) ^b	95.5		
Percentage of youth living in rural areas (% of total youth, 2005) ^b	4.5		
Full dependency ratio (% , 2010) ^a	20.0		
Education			
	Male	Female	Total
Youth literacy rate (% , most recent year available: 2004) ^c	94.9	97.5	95.9
Crude secondary education enrolment (% , 2004) ^c	98.2	95.4	96.8
Crude tertiary education enrolment (% , 2004) ^c	9.2	33.8	19.1
Employment			
	Male	Female	Total
Youth unemployment rate (% , most recent year available: 2004) ^j	8.0	30.0	-
Percentage of youth in total unemployed population (% , most recent year available: 2004) ^d	71.4	68.8	70.4
Health			
	Male	Female	
Percentage of youth having comprehensive and accurate information on AIDS and HIV transmission (% , 2000-2007) ^e	-	-	
Percentage of currently smoking youth (% , most recent year available: 2007) ^f	25.2	13.1	
Mean age at first marriage (in years, most recent year available: 2004) ^g	27.6	25.8	
Fertility rate among adolescent females (per 1000 girls aged 15-19, 2000-2007) ^e	16		
Main cause of death among youth/its ratio to total youth deaths (% , most recent year available: -) ^c	-/-		
Youth Participation in Public Life			
Voting age (in years) ^h	18		
Globalization and Information and Communications Technology [*]			
Cellular phone subscribers (per 1000 population, 2005) ⁱ	882		
Internet users (per 1000 population, 2005) ⁱ	269		

* Data in this cluster refer to total population and do not specify youth in particular.

Note: Data sources are listed in the annex, p. 44.

Success Stories

Providing secondary and higher education opportunities for youth and meeting the labour market demands

Qatar offers youth a variety of education opportunities, including public and independent high schools, the Leaders Academy, Aspire Sports Academy and Qatar Technical School, in addition to the schools of foreign communities. The State enabled the appropriate environment conducive to host in Qatar branches of the most prestigious universities in the world and encourage students to enroll in them. Among those universities are Weill Cornell Medical College, Virginia Commonwealth, and Georgetown University School of Foreign Service. Moreover, the State assumes all school tuitions, living expenses, and travel tickets for students wishing to enroll in western universities. It also supports Qatar University in its plan to develop its education programmes in accordance with the requirements of the State development plans and programmes. In that context, the Higher Education Institute of the Supreme Education Council ensures that education opportunities correspond to labour market demands in Qatar by offering vocational advice and guidance to students.⁴⁵



Social Development Center: “Start and Improve Your Project”



The Social Development Center⁴⁶ was founded in 1996 as member of Qatar Foundation for Education, Sciences and Social Development. It offers youth capacity-building programmes, including "Start and Improve your Business" which targets young men and women and comprises the following:

1. *Get Your Business Idea*: targets youth wishing to start their own business and assists them in exploring, analysing and considering different investment opportunities.
2. *Start Your Business*: targets youth having defined business ideas and wishing to implement them, and trains them to conduct an economic feasibility study of their project.
3. *Improve Your Business*: targets youth who already have small enterprises, and provides them with training on the way to improve those enterprises.



Qatar Leadership Academy: Investing in youth to enable them to become future leaders



Qatar Leadership Academy⁴⁷ was founded in 2005 with the goal of preparing youth from age 11 to become the future leaders in business entrepreneurship and politics. It engages youth in an environment that promotes excellence in academics, leadership, athletics and character through the following two phases:

1. Medium level in which students are taught English, Arabic and French, humanities, information technology, sciences, mathematics and Islamic and cultural studies.
2. Secondary level in which students are offered the international Baccalaureat curriculum.



⁴⁵ www.education.gov.qa.

⁴⁶ www.sdc.org.qa.

⁴⁷ www.qla.edu.qa.

Youth Statistical Profile

2010 Demographic Profile			
Total population (in thousands, 2010) ^a	26246		
Total youth aged 15-24 (in thousands, 2010) ^a	4949		
Ratio of youth to total population (% , 2010) ^a	18.9		
Ratio of youth to total population of working age (% , 2010) ^a	29.0		
Percentage of youth living in urban areas (% of total youth, 2005) ^b	81.3		
Percentage of youth living in rural areas (% of total youth, 2005) ^b	18.7		
Full dependency ratio (% , 2010) ^a	54.0		
Education			
	Male	Female	Total
Youth literacy rate (% , most recent year available: 2000) ^c	98.1	93.7	95.9
Crude secondary education enrolment (% , 2004) ^c	71.8	63.6	67.8
Crude tertiary education enrolment (% , 2004) ^c	22.2	33.4	27.7
Employment			
	Male	Female	Total
Youth unemployment rate (% , most recent year available: 2002) ^j	25.0	39.0	-
Percentage of youth in total unemployed population (% , most recent year available: 2007) ^d	55.3	43.2	50.9
Health			
	Male	Female	
Percentage of youth having comprehensive and accurate information on AIDS and HIV transmission (% , 2000-2007) ^e	-	-	
Percentage of currently smoking youth (% , most recent year available: 2007) ^f	20.2	10.7	
Mean age at first marriage (in years, most recent year available: 2007) ^g	27.2	24.6	
Fertility rate among adolescent females (per 1000 girls aged 15-19, 2000-2007) ^e	7		
Main cause of death among youth/its ratio to total youth deaths (% , most recent year available: -) ^c	-/-		
Participation in Public Life			
Voting age [*] (in years) ^h	21		
Globalization and Information and Communications Technology ^{**}			
Cellular phone subscribers (per 1000 population, 2005) ⁱ	575		
Internet users (per 1000 population, 2005) ⁱ	70		

* Males only.

** Data in this cluster refer to total population and do not specify youth in particular.

Note: Data sources are listed in the annex, p. 44.

Success Stories

Innovative and ambitious initiative for the reform of the education system in Saudi Arabia



The project of King Abdallah Bin Abdel Aziz for the reform of the education system was adopted in 2007 and will be implemented over a six-year period. It represents a tangible progress in the education sector in Saudi Arabia. The project, which was named “Tatweer”,⁴⁸ came as a response to the eighth development plan and a realization of the vision of King Abdallah Bin Abdel Aziz, which perceives education as the most critical element in building a knowledge-based economy and involving youth in all aspects of social development. The following are the objectives of the project: establishing international education standards; designing an integrated system for improving education and measuring its quality; modernizing curricula; rehabilitating teachers according to those curricula; enabling the education environment by digitizing curricula; and enhancing student capacities through various activities outside the classroom.

Saudi Employment Strategy: “saudizing” employment

The Council of Ministers approved the Saudi Employment Strategy⁴⁹ prepared by the Ministry of Labour on 5 August 2009. This Strategy is a framework serving as a reference for addressing recruitment and labour issues. It lies on methodical and scientific principles and will be implemented in three phases, short, medium and long term over a period of 25 years. It aims at increasing suitably-paid employment opportunities in order to make use of all human resources in Saudi Arabia, and developing a competitive national economy. The Strategy targets youth by applying such policies as recruiting young employment seekers less than 25 years old, encouraging the establishment of student counseling and guidance offices in secondary and high education institutions, and maintaining technical coordination between education institutions and the labour market.

National awareness programme and fight against HIV/AIDS

The Ministry of Health is implementing a national programme to combat the spread of HIV/AIDS.⁵⁰ It comprises cultural activities aimed at raising awareness on health issues, and periodical surveys on medical exams and blood fitness tests for preventive control.

Student Consultative Council to develop dialogue skills among youth

The Ministry of Education in Saudi Arabia undertook the establishment of the Student Consultative Council⁵¹ with the objective of instilling the principle of dialogue and acceptance of different opinions among students. It provides student leadership training by forwarding all education issues to the Council which discusses them independently without any interference by the school administration or any supervising authority.

⁴⁸ <http://www.tatweer.edu.sa/Pages/home.aspx>.

⁴⁹ <http://www.mol.gov.sa/ar/AboutMinistry/Pages/Strategy.aspx>.

⁵⁰ *National report on the response of Saudi Arabia to the World Programme of Action for Youth* prepared by Ahmad Bin Nasser Tayyar and presented at the Expert Group Meeting on Reinforcing Social Equity: Integrating Youth into the Development Process, organized by ESCWA and the Family Development Foundation in Abu Dhabi, 29-31 March 2009, p.13.

⁵¹ Ibid.

National Communications and Information Technology Plan: encouraging the use of information and communications technology in the public education sector

The National Communications and Information Technology Plan⁵² was adopted on 28 May 2007. It encompasses a 20-year vision with seven objectives and a five-year plan comprising directives leading to the realization of the vision. The vision consists of "effecting a transformation into an information society and digital economy so as to increase productivity, provide information technology (IT) services to all segments of the population in all parts of the country, and build a strong information industry that becomes a major source of income." One of the objectives of the plan is "raising the efficacy of education and training, and preparing and qualifying national manpower to contribute to the economic and social development."

In that regard, the Plan urges the Ministry of Education to use information and communications technology (ICT) in education in order to advance that sector, by promoting digital teaching, developing school curricula, increasing the competence of teachers and ICT workers, all of which require specialized programmes. Some of the achievements include: the establishment of the Saudi IT Leaders Club, the agreement to found the Wipro Academy specialized in training and qualifying youth in all aspects of ICT, and the adoption of the Strategy and Plan for Giftedness, Creativity and Supporting Innovation 2022.⁵³

⁵² <http://www.mcit.gov.sa/arabic/NICTP/AboutNICTP>.

⁵³ See source in footnote 62, p. 8 and 9.

Youth Statistical Profile

2010 Demographic Profile			
Total population (in thousands, 2010) ^a	43192		
Total youth aged 15-24 (in thousands, 2010) ^a	8773		
Ratio of youth to total population (% , 2010) ^a	20.3		
Ratio of youth to total population of working age (% , 2010) ^a	35.2		
Percentage of youth living in urban areas (% of total youth, 2005) ^b	41.2		
Percentage of youth living in rural areas (% of total youth, 2005) ^b	58.8		
Full dependency ratio (% , 2010) ^a	73.0		
Education			
	Male	Female	Total
Youth literacy rate* (% , most recent year available: 2000) ^c	84.6	71.4	77.2
Crude secondary education enrolment (% , 2004) ^c	34.0	31.6	32.8
Crude tertiary education enrolment (% , 2004) ^c	-	-	-
Employment			
	Male	Female	Total
Youth unemployment rate (% , most recent year available: -) ^j	-	-	-
Percentage of youth in total unemployed population (% , most recent year available: -) ^d	-	-	-
Health			
	Male	Female	
Percentage of youth having comprehensive and accurate information on AIDS and HIV transmission (% , 2000-2007) ^e	-	-	
Percentage of currently smoking youth (% , most recent year available: 2005) ^f	18.0	10.1	
Mean age at first marriage (in years, most recent year available: 1993) ^g	29.1	22.7	
Fertility rate among adolescent females (per 1000 girls aged 15-19, 2000-2007) ^e	-		
Main cause of death among youth/its ratio to total youth deaths (% , most recent year available: -) ^c	-/-		
Participation in Public Life			
Voting age (in years) ^h	17		
Globalization and Information and Communications Technology**			
Cellular phone subscribers (per 1000 population, 2005) ⁱ	50		
Internet users (per 1000 population, 2005) ⁱ	77		

* Data are for Northern Sudan only.

** Data in this cluster refer to total population and do not specify youth in particular.

Note: Data sources are listed in the annex, p. 44.

Success Stories

Productive Employment and Graduate Recruitment Project



The Productive Employment and Graduate Recruitment Project⁵⁴ was launched in 2001 under the supervision of the Ministry of Social Welfare, Women and Child Affairs in the Sudan, as a response to the increasing number of university graduates and the decreasing employment opportunities in the public and private sectors. The project has the following objectives: (1) propagating free enterprise culture amongst youth; (2) reducing unemployment rates, in particular amongst youth; (3) making use of the youth potentials in order to expedite development; and (4) capitalizing on the youth creative abilities by providing them with opportunities to access leading and innovative fields.

The project adopts the following four tracks: (1) intervening in policies; (2) funding small and medium-sized enterprises (the graduate fund); (3) admitting youth in national projects (construction and social guidance); (4) organizing conversion training aimed at providing graduates with new and specialized skills that are wider than the traditional skills acquired from traditional education, and adapting their skills to the labour market demand. The project contained a four-year programme (2005-2008) that was endorsed by the Council of Ministers as a national strategy for combating unemployment. The programme aimed at reducing graduate unemployment by 65 per cent, thus finding jobs for 297050 graduates in the labour market over the four-year period.



National Strategy for Reproductive Health and National AIDS Programme

The Federal Ministry of Health in the Sudan drew up the National Strategy for Reproductive Health 2006-2010⁵⁵ with the objective of accelerating progress towards meeting the nationally and internationally agreed upon reproductive health goals, in particular the Millennium Development Goals, and ultimately attaining the highest achievable standards of reproductive health for all population. The following are among the priorities of that Strategy: improving the reproductive health of adolescents and youth by providing them with relevant information, guidance and services; improving the quality of reproductive health services available in schools and universities; and conducting research and studies to analyse youth reproductive health problems.

Moreover, the Government of the Sudan addresses AIDS as an issue threatening national security and sustainable development and having detrimental social and economic impacts on all regions and population groups. In that regard, the Federal Ministry of Health developed the National AIDS Programme⁵⁶ with a view to: establishing a framework for leading, coordinating and carrying out the cross-sectoral national response to the HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases; protecting and supporting the most vulnerable groups; alleviating the economic and social impact of that epidemic; setting up a framework for enhancing the capacities of individuals, institutions and communities in all sectors in order to limit the spread of the virus and the disease.

⁵⁴ www.emp-graduates-sd.net.

⁵⁵ www.fmoh.gov.sd/English/index.php?id=3.

⁵⁶ A summary of the National AIDS Programme is available at: <http://fmoh.gov.sd/indexAr.php?id=11>.

Youth Statistical Profile

2010 Demographic Profile			
Total population (in thousands, 2010) ^a	22505		
Total youth aged 15-24 (in thousands, 2010) ^a	4618		
Ratio of youth to total population (% , 2010) ^a	20.5		
Ratio of youth to total population of working age (% , 2010) ^a	33.1		
Percentage of youth living in urban areas (% of total youth, 2005) ^b	53.1		
Percentage of youth living in rural areas (% of total youth, 2005) ^b	46.9		
Full dependency ratio (% , 2010) ^a	61.0		
Education			
	Male	Female	Total
Youth literacy rate (% , most recent year available: 2004) ^c	94.3	90.2	92.2
Crude secondary education enrolment (% , 2004) ^c	65.5	60.9	63.2
Crude tertiary education enrolment (% , 2004) ^c	-	-	-
Employment			
	Male	Female	Total
Youth unemployment rate (% , most recent year available: 2003) ^j	16.0	36.0	
Percentage of youth in total unemployed population (% , most recent year available: 2003) ^d	58.2	55.3	57.0
Health			
	Male	Female	
Percentage of youth having comprehensive and accurate information on AIDS and HIV transmission (% , 2000-2007) ^e	-	7	
Percentage of currently smoking youth (% , most recent year available: 2007) ^f	38.6	19.5	
Mean age at first marriage (in years, most recent year available: 2001) ^g	29.3	25.4	
Fertility rate among adolescent females (per 1000 girls aged 15-19, 2000-2007) ^e		75	
Main cause of death among youth/its ratio to total youth deaths (% , most recent year available: -) ^c		-/-	
Participation in Public Life			
Voting age (in years) ^h		18	
Globalization and Information and Communications Technology [*]			
Cellular phone subscribers (per 1000 population, 2005) ⁱ		155	
Internet users (per 1000 population, 2005) ⁱ		58	

* Data in this cluster refer to total population and do not specify youth in particular.

Note: Data sources are listed in the annex, p. 44.

National Youth Strategy

Steps towards adopting a national strategy for young people



The tenth five-year development plan (2006-2010) accorded great importance to youth. It addressed the goals of satisfying the financial and moral needs of young people, optimizing their mobilization, creating the environment that enables them to build their independent personality, establishing the bases of a new contract between them, the State and other actors in society. Those goals are based on the recognition of youth as a major power in the youth development process. They also are essential conditions for a successful achievement of the development plan.⁵⁷



The State Planning Commission is the authority in charge of formulating youth strategies, policies and programmes at the national level and in coordination with the relevant ministries and authorities. The Syrian Government signed with the UNFPA in October 2006 a project in support of the National Strategy for Young People. The project is being implemented by the State Planning Commission and the Syrian Commission for Family Affairs. It has so far completed the following phases towards formulating the Strategy:

1. Collecting new and detailed data on the status of youth in various areas including education, employment, living conditions, general and reproductive and mental health, and participation in public life. Quantitative data were gathered by a field survey on youth empowerment and participation in society. Qualitative data were gathered by means of 30 focus discussion groups.
2. Preparing reports and studies on the status of Syrian youth in all fields with a view to highlighting the problems encountered by youth and which should be addressed in the National Strategy for Young People. A quantitative report on the survey results⁵⁸ and a qualitative report on the results of the focus groups were prepared.⁵⁹ Moreover, in-depth analytical studies were conducted on five priority issues, namely general health and reproductive health; education; living conditions; gender; and participation in society. All those studies comprised recommendations for the Syrian National Strategy for Young People.

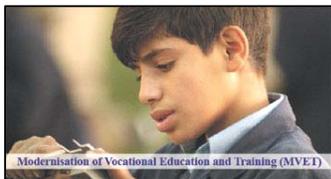
⁵⁷ *National report on the response of the Syrian Arab Republic to the World Programme of Action for Youth* prepared by Yassin Khalifa and Waddah Al-Rakad and presented at the Expert Group Meeting on Reinforcing Social Equity: Integrating Youth into the Development Process, organized by ESCWA and the Family Development Foundation in Abu Dhabi, 29-31 March 2009.

⁵⁸ State Planning Commission, Syrian Commission for Family Affairs and UNFPA, *Project in Support of the Syrian National Strategy for Young People: Youth Empowerment and Participation in Society* (Quantitative report), by M. A. Al-Kash with A. Ahmad, 2007.

⁵⁹ *Ibid*, (Qualitative report).

Success Stories

Modernisation of Vocational Education and Training (MVET): adapting education outcomes to labour market demands



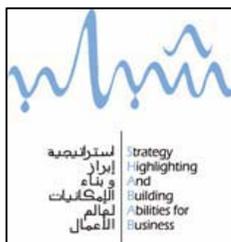
Since 2004, the State Planning Commission is in the process of implementing the MVET,⁶⁰ a 21 million euro project funded by the European Union. MVET aims at adapting the outcomes of the education system to the labour market demands by strengthening the link between education institutions (labour force supply) and industry (labour force demand). The project, which is being implemented in the governorates of Damascus, Homs and Aleppo, focuses on two industries: (a) ready-made garments; and (b) maintenance engineering. Education institutions are benefiting from it in improving curricula, training teachers and acquiring the necessary equipment to improve their vocational education and training programmes.

National Programme for Combating Unemployment

The National Programme for Combating Unemployment was launched as part of the ninth five-year plan 2001-2005. It is a development programme operating under the Authority for Combating Unemployment, of the Prime Minister's Office, aimed at promoting small enterprises and loans for the unemployed in the agricultural, industrial, services or trade fields, targeting in particular youth and women. In the period 2001-2005, the amount of LS18.5 billion was spent on financing projects: 68 per cent of it for household loans and 32 per cent for small enterprises. Emphasis is currently placed on ensuring access of the poor to financial resources and increasing investment rates in the neediest governorates.



SHABAB Project: a Strategy Highlighting And Building Abilities for Business



SHABAB, a non-profit project launched by the Syrian Secretariat for Development in 2007, is dedicated to preparing young people aged 15 to 24 to enter the business world. It aims at achieving the following objectives: (1) boosting entrepreneurship amongst youth; (2) encouraging them to enter the business world; (3) equipping them with the key skills needed to succeed as productive individuals in society; and (4) creating a positive perception in society of doing business and founding small enterprises.⁶¹

SHABAB runs four programmes targeting youth, namely: business awareness; know about business; business experience; and business clinics. More than 100 young men and women in several schools, universities and colleges of the various Syrian governorates have already benefited from those programmes. More than 350 male and female volunteers from the business world participated in their implementation. SHABAB is the only non-governmental organization that is allowed to enter schools and bring volunteers from the business world to share their experience with students. It is also the first development project to have one of its programmes adopted by the Ministry of Education and incorporated into the national curriculum of vocational schools and intermediate institutes.

⁶⁰ [www.delsyr.ec.europa.eu/en/eu and syria_new/projects/6.htm](http://www.delsyr.ec.europa.eu/en/eu_and_syria_new/projects/6.htm).

⁶¹ www.shabab.net.sy.

Youth Statistical Profile

2010 Demographic Profile			
Total population (in thousands, 2010) ^a	4707		
Total youth aged 15-24 (in thousands, 2010) ^a	559		
Ratio of youth to total population (% , 2010) ^a	11.9		
Ratio of youth to total population of working age (% , 2010) ^a	14.9		
Percentage of youth living in urban areas (% of total youth, 2005) ^b	78.9		
Percentage of youth living in rural areas (% of total youth, 2005) ^b	21.1		
Full dependency ratio (% , 2010) ^a	25.0		
Education			
	Male	Female	Total
Youth literacy rate (% , most recent year available: -) ^c	-	-	-
Crude secondary education enrolment (% , 2004) ^c	64.7	68.4	66.4
Crude tertiary education enrolment (% , 2004) ^c	12.2	39.5	22.5
Employment			
	Male	Female	Total
Youth unemployment rate (% , most recent year available: 1995) ^j	6.0	6.0	
Percentage of youth in total unemployed population (% , most recent year available: 2005) ^d	30.0	41.0	33.4
Health			
	Male	Female	
Percentage of youth having comprehensive and accurate information on AIDS and HIV transmission (% , 2000-2007) ^e	-	-	
Percentage of currently smoking youth (% , most recent year available: 2005) ^f	25.2	13.2	
Mean age at first marriage (in years, most recent year available: 1995) ^g	26.6	24.4	
Fertility rate among adolescent females (per 1000 girls aged 15-19, 2000-2007) ^e		23	
Main cause of death among youth/its ratio to total youth deaths (% , most recent year available: -) ^c		-/-	
Participation in Public Life			
Voting age (in years) ^h		-	
Globalization and Information and Communications Technology [*]			
Cellular phone subscribers (per 1000 population, 2005) ⁱ	1000		
Internet users (per 1000 population, 2005) ⁱ	308		

* Data in this cluster refer to total population and do not specify youth in particular.

Note: Data sources are listed in the annex, p. 44.

Success Stories

The Youth Consultative Council in Sharjah

The Youth Consultative Council in Sharjah⁶² was founded in 2004 and is managed by the Supreme Council for Family Affairs in Sharjah. It offers youth the opportunity to express their opinions and discuss issues related directly or indirectly to their future with all officials at all levels. The Council contributes to the selection and training of promising young individuals in all fields as potential members of future State legislative and political councils. It also helps youth assimilate the concept of democracy and learn how to prepare an election programme. The number of youth aged 15 to 18 involved in the Council has reached 60 (36 males and 24 females).



The Leader Qualification Centre: an academic institution to prepare a leading generation



The Leader Qualification Centre⁶³ in the United Arab Emirates undertakes the implementation of the policy of the General Authority of Youth and Sports Welfare with regard to the preparation, education and refinement of young and sports leaders and the enhancement of their scientific and technical knowledge. It coordinates with youth and sports institutions and organizations in formulating future plans and programmes, organizing training sessions, conducting studies, issuing publications on the training and supervision of youth and sports leaders, in addition to suggesting specialized sessions conducted abroad and selecting candidates to be assigned for participation in those sessions. The 2010 programme of the Centre includes, in addition to sports activities, a seminar on the methods and techniques of invigorating youth, a training session on management planning and goals setting, and other activities.

The United Arab Emirates is first among Arab countries in globalization and information and communications technology

In 2008, the percentage of Internet users in the United Arab Emirates exceeded 50 per cent of the total population and is estimated to reach 75 per cent by 2015. Moreover, the average of cellular subscribers exceeded 100 per cent reaching 110 per cent (some individuals use more than one line).⁶⁴ In that context, Dubai Internet City,⁶⁵ which was founded in 2000 and is the largest ICT hub in the region, provides ICT enterprises with the appropriate infrastructure and environment and enables them to work with high level of competitiveness. Youth form the largest part of workers in Dubai Internet City which encourages technological creativity. It hosts, for example, “DemoCamp Dubai” which offers a forum for young business leaders to exhibit their ideas and projects.



⁶² National report on the response of the United Arab Emirates to the World Programme of Action for Youth prepared by Jamal M. Hamadi and other researchers and presented at the Expert Group Meeting on Reinforcing Social Equity: Integrating Youth into the Development Process, organized by ESCWA and the Family Development Foundation in Abu Dhabi, 29-31 March 2009.

⁶³ www.uaelqc.com.

⁶⁴ See source in footnote 9.

⁶⁵ www.dubaiinternetcity.com.

Youth Statistical Profile

2010 Demographic Profile			
Total population (in thousands, 2010) ^a	24256		
Total youth aged 15-24 (in thousands, 2010) ^a	5359		
Ratio of youth to total population (% , 2010) ^a	22.1		
Ratio of youth to total population of working age (% , 2010) ^a	40.7		
Percentage of youth living in urban areas (% of total youth, 2005) ^b	29.4		
Percentage of youth living in rural areas (% of total youth, 2005) ^b	70.6		
Full dependency ratio (% , 2010) ^a	84.0		
Education			
	Male	Female	Total
Youth literacy rate (% , most recent year available: -) ^c	-	-	-
Crude secondary education enrolment (% , 2004) ^c	64.2	30.5	47.8
Crude tertiary education enrolment (% , 2004) ^c	13.5	5.1	9.4
Employment			
	Male	Female	Total
Youth unemployment rate (% , most recent year available: 2003) ^j	21.0	14.0	-
Percentage of youth in total unemployed population (% , most recent year available: -) ^d	-	-	-
Health			
	Male	Female	
Percentage of youth having comprehensive and accurate information on AIDS and HIV transmission (% , 2000-2007) ^e	-	-	
Percentage of currently smoking youth (% , most recent year available: 2008) ^f	14.5	10.5	
Mean age at first marriage (in years, most recent year available: 2004) ^g	25.4	22.2	
Fertility rate among adolescent females (per 1000 girls aged 15-19, 2000-2007) ^e		80	
Main cause of death among youth/its ratio to total youth deaths (% , most recent year available: -) ^c		-/-	
Participation in Public Life			
Voting age (in years) ^h		18	
Globalization and Information and Communications Technology [*]			
Cellular phone subscribers (per 1000 population, 2005) ⁱ		95	
Internet users (per 1000 population, 2005) ⁱ		9	

* Data in this cluster refer to total population and do not specify youth in particular.

Note: Data sources are listed in the annex, p. 44.

National Youth Strategy

National Children and Youth Strategy of Yemen: enhancing participation through social integration

The National Children and Youth Strategy 2006-2015 is the result of three years of collaborative efforts by Government, civil society and international organizations. It proposes the formulation of a national plan of action to determine the means of implementation. The vision of the Strategy aims at building “a society where all Yemeni children and young men and women are protected, valued and respected for their unique contributions and creativity; experience a deep sense of Yemeni identity and loyalty to their country and its true Islamic values; and have equitable access to a full range of social, health, education, employment and leisure opportunities to reach their potential and develop as healthy, responsible and active citizens within a peaceful and prosperous Yemen.”⁶⁶

The following are some of the key focus areas of the Strategy: creating a national youth employment plan; involving youth in all issues at the local and national levels; strengthening national identity; increasing leisure options; creating children- and youth-friendly environment; and reducing the risks of reproductive health and preventing early pregnancy.⁶⁷

Success Stories

Youth Consultative Council to involve youth in discussing their issues and finding solutions



The Youth Consultative Council⁶⁸ in Yemen was launched in February 2007. Its 111 members are young people aged 20 to 25 where females constitute 45 per cent. The Council meets every six months and its membership is limited to three years. Candidate members are nominated by political parties, human rights civil organizations, governmental unions, syndicates, and organizations for youth and persons with disabilities. The objectives of the Council include developing volunteering spirit among youth, and involving them in civil work, social service, and discussions of youth and national issues to find solutions. The Council conducts discussions of solutions to the problems of fundamentalism and terrorism among youth, youth unemployment, corruption, and other issues related to youth and society with a view to drawing the attention of the House of Representatives and the Shura Council to the youth issues and proposing solutions and recommendations to assist them in their legislative work.



⁶⁶ *The National Children and Youth Strategy and Action Plan*, paper presented by the High Council for Motherhood and Children at a the National Symposium on Youth Issues, National Population Council, 25-27 April 2006.

⁶⁷ *National report on the response of Yemen to the World Programme of Action for Youth* prepared by Mansour Ali Bechiri and presented at the Expert Group Meeting on Reinforcing Social Equity: Integrating Youth into the Development Process, organized by ESCWA and the Family Development Foundation in Abu Dhabi, 29-31 March 2009, p.10.

⁶⁸ <http://dsyemen.org/young3.PHP>.

More success stories will be pursued

The initiatives undertaken by ESCWA member countries in the area of youth development are ambitious and reflect the increasing attention paid by Governments to youth issues. However, most of those initiatives lack planning and most success stories are related to projects that are limited and geographically dispersed. Furthermore, their achievements do not correspond to the dynamism of the youth group neither to the international pressures and the change imposed by globalization. Those projects are not sustainable by nature, do not cover the youth increasing needs and do not provide enough empowering opportunities.

In that context, ESCWA took the initiative to formulate a regional project entitled “National capacity-building in formulating youth policies and action plans: response to the World Programme of Action for Youth.” It has been proposed to implement this project, which lasts three years, at ESCWA headquarters in Beirut with consultative missions to member countries as requested.

The targeted groups in the project are decision makers, policymakers, experts in youth issues and policies, in addition to producers and users of youth data. This project benefits directly the youth group 15-24 years and indirectly their families and society as a whole.

The expected achievements of the project are summarized as follows:

Expected achievement 1: Enhancing awareness of the importance of adopting youth-targeted national policies.

Expected achievement 2: Examining youth conditions and defining relevant priorities.

Expected achievement 3: Building the capacities of policymakers to formulate national youth policies based on the needs of that group and its priorities.

Expected achievement 4: Preparing a national action plan for youth comprising goals, targets and indicators that are measurable and assessable for monitoring the progress achieved.

Annex

Data sources

- (a) United Nations, *World Population Prospects: The 2008 Revision*. Available under the symbol ST/ESA/SER.A/287/ES on the United Nations Official Documents system: <http://documents.un.org/default.asp>, or at: <http://esa.un.org/unpp>.
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- (g) DESA, Population Division (2009), *World Marriage Data 2008* (POP/DB/Marr/Rev2008). Available at: <http://www.un.org/esa/population/publications/WMD2008/Main.html>.
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- (j) Population Reference Bureau, *Youth in the Middle East and North Africa: Demographic opportunity or challenge?* By Raji Assaad and Farzaneh Rousi-Fahimi, April 2007. Available at: <http://www.prb.org/Publications/PolicyBriefs/YouthinMENA.aspx>.