



USAID | **MIDDLE EAST**
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

100 Million Youth: A Wise Investment

Lori Severens
Amira Taha



MENA Youth

- Since 1970, the population of the region has jumped from 127 million to over 300 million;
- Forty percent of Middle East and North Africa countries' populations are below the age of 15.

... there's a lot at stake

- The region's youth could be a source of growth and energy for the region;
- The World Bank estimates that the Middle East and North Africa region needs to develop over 100 million jobs before 2020;
- Yet, educational systems are unable to make the region's youth more employable.



Presentation Outline

- Current approaches;
- What our participants have to say;
- Lessons learned: what seems to work and what doesn't;
- Recommendations for discussion.





Innovative Approaches

1. Building Skills

- Recognizing existing assets
- Motivation and initiative taking
- Networking
- Organizational skills
- Leadership





Innovative Approaches

2. Offering Opportunities

- Financial support
- Building skills (communications, financial planning, entrepreneurial, and project management)

3. Highlighting role models

- In local and national media
- Providing media training
- Building regional networks





Impact on Participants – A Qualitative Review

In assessing the impact to date and defining future program needs, USAID used a series of participant interviews.

- Self-Discovery
- Communications Skills
- Networking
- Inspiration and Motivation
- Organization Skills

“We learned it is not important for you to have the money. What is important is that you have the passion. I guess we had the passion. It was an important lesson for us.”



Lessons Learned

- Financial resources – integrated some micro-level grant funding to start or expand community or entrepreneurial activities
- Measuring outcomes – capturing outcome data vs. output data
- Alumni support – mobilization, tracking and support
- Participants' certification – to help participants gain recognition





Recommendations

Elements to be considered in designing youth development programs

- Community-based skills development – to provide practical training opportunities and sustain skills by applying them;
- Incorporating communications and networking – to help expand visibility and resources;
- Building opportunities and positive expectations – by showcasing successes and encouraging young people to believe in themselves;
- Identifying existing resources – including volunteers, local talent, community spaces, etc.



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