

# Accelerating SDG progress on youth economic empowerment in the Arab Region: Perspectives and implications for family-centered approaches

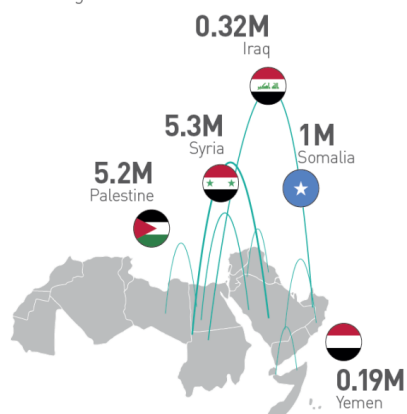
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*DIFI – IFFD Expert Group Meeting on “the Role of Families  
and Family Policy in Supporting Youth Transitions”  
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# 2030 AGENDA & SDG IMPLEMENTATION CHALLENGES IN THE ARAB REGION

58% world refugees originated from the Arab region (2016) of which 60% continue to live in the region



**GOVERNANCE, PEACE & SECURITY**  
Recurrent/protracted conflicts and crises – massive forced displacements: *How to leave no-country and no-one behind?*  
Institutional Weakness, accountability gaps  
Violent Extremism

60% less than 30 years old

The youth faces paramount challenges

28% youth unemployment rate (2017)

This rate is estimated to remain high\* by 2021

75% Labor force participation rate

22.7%

Gender-based violence is still prevalent

- 37% of women experienced some form of violence in their lifetime
- 14% of girls marry under the age of 18

**ENVIRONMENTAL**  
Water scarcity ;  
Climate change, disparities in capacities to transit to renewable energy..

17 countries faced water scarcity (2014)

81% INCREASE in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions (2000-2014)

7x increase in electricity production from renewable sources (excluding hydroelectric) (between 2000 and 2014)

**ECONOMIC & SOCIAL**

- ✓ Youth unemployment disempowerment...
- ✓ Deeply rooted gender inequalities
- ✓ Low labor productivity, lack of economic diversification, rising debt levels, ...



**INTEGRATED SDG BASED SOLUTIONS!**

## THE SDGs FOR THE YOUTH...

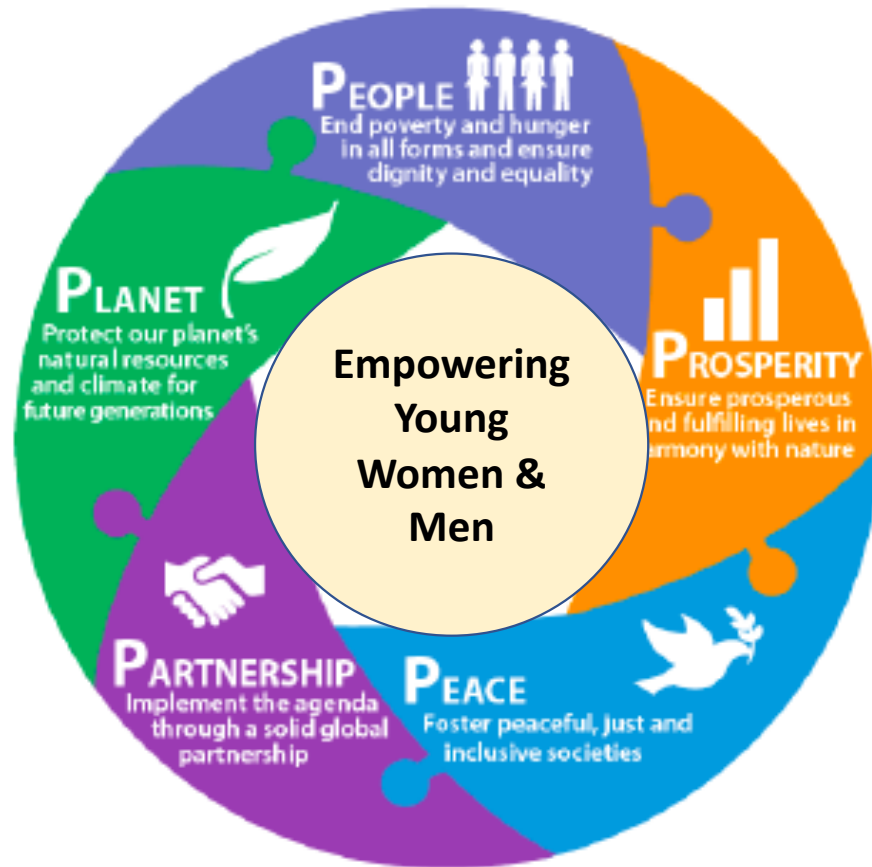


**17 GOALS, 169 TARGETS,  
232 INDICATORS**

**ALTOGETHER 65 out of the 169 SDG targets reference young people explicitly or implicitly, with a focus on empowerment, participation and/or well-being**



## YOUTH FOR SDGs: YOUTH EMPOWERMENT CAN ACCELERATE PROGRESS ACROSS THE SDGs



***“Children, young women and men are critical agents of change and will find in the new Global Goals a platform to channel their infinite capacities for activism into the creation of a better world”***

*Transforming Our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (Point 51)*

**Effective youth transitions could be described as *transitions that effectively empower young women and men, economically, but also socially and politically...***

## THE CHALLENGE: EMPOWERING YOUNG WOMEN AND MEN.....

### Arab Human Development Report 2016

Youth and the Prospects for Human Development  
in a Changing Reality



***“The more youth are granted equitable access to education, matched with proper standards of educational attainment and achievement, hold satisfying employment ....***

***and are in control of their lives, the more well equipped they will be to ‘reclaim’ reason, assert themselves as powerful agents of change, and own the necessary debates around tomorrow’s society”***  
(p.42).

***Effective youth transitions could be described as transitions that effectively empower young women and men, economically, but also socially and politically...***

## TURNING TO YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP SPECIFICALLY...



- Providing technical skills and **SOFT SKILLS, MENTORSHIP** and access to business development services, including (micro)financing and savings schemes...

IS THIS ENOUGH?

- Need to better understand what *intimately* drives, and critically, what inhibits young men and women to engage in entrepreneurship and take business risks



- Need to probe deeper into young men and women's history and relationships within their families...

### RELEVANCE OF 'BEHAVIORAL INSIGHTS'

*behind every policy lie assumptions that humans will behave rationally, and that this will inform why we act the way we do. But these assumptions are not always correct, and more important, they are often untested ....*

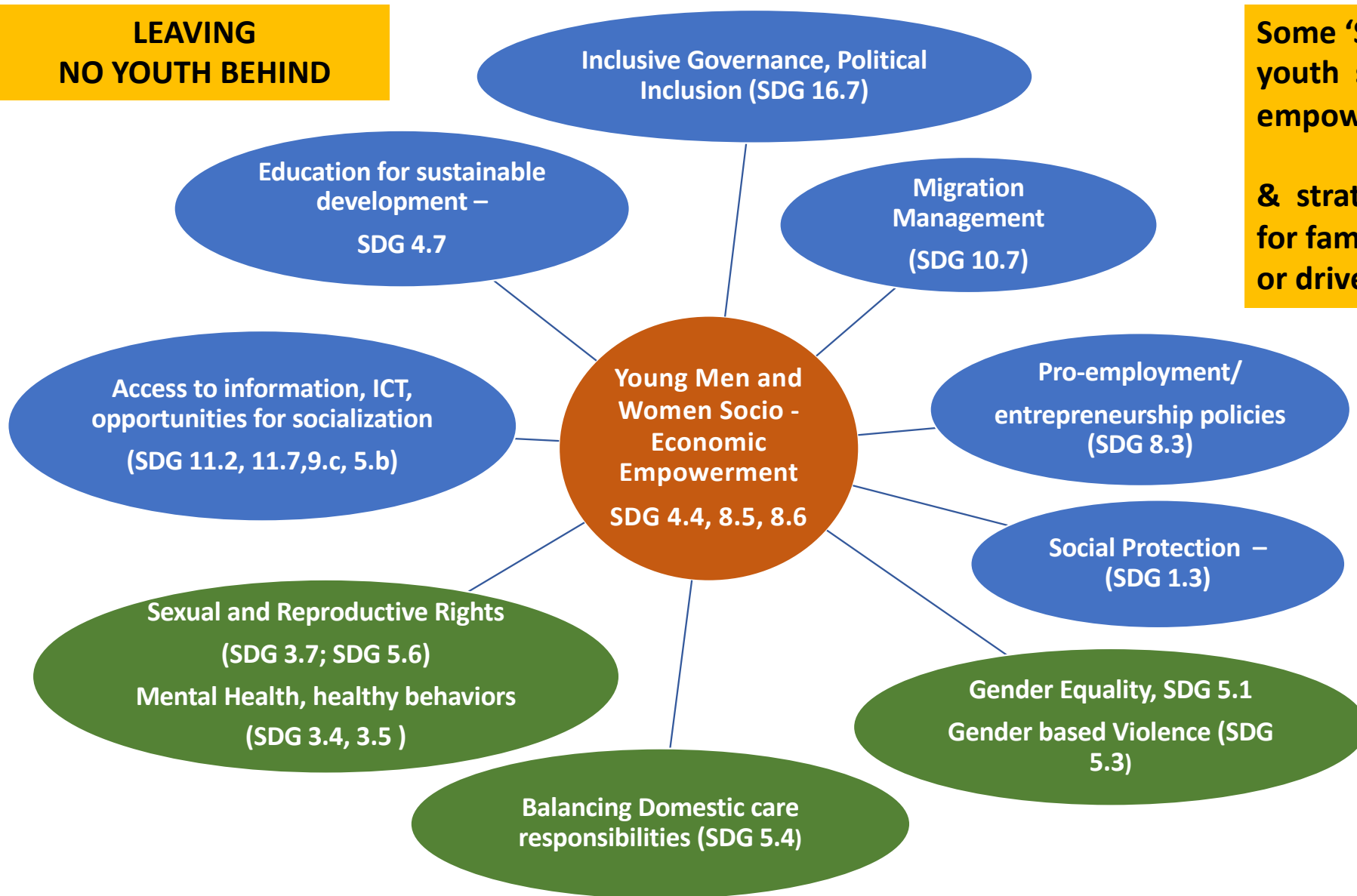
**Youth Solutions SDSN Youth Report (2017)** “*Youth innovations are not born in a vacuum, but rather emerges and prospers where there is an appropriate ecosystem that can provide support and opportunities to young students, leaders and entrepreneurs*” (p.32).

- What role for families within such ‘an ecosystem’?

**LEAVING  
NO YOUTH BEHIND**

**Some 'SDG drivers' of  
youth socio- economic  
empowerment**

**& strategic entry-points  
for family-centered and  
or driven solutions (?) ...**







شكراً



# On Children

*Kahlil Gibran*

**Your children are not your children.**

**They are the sons and daughters of Life's longing for itself.**

**They come through you but not from you,**

**And though they are with you yet they belong not to you.**

**You may give them your love but not your thoughts,**

**For they have their own thoughts.**

**You may house their bodies but not their souls,**

**For their souls dwell in the house of tomorrow,**

**which you cannot visit, not even in your dreams.**

**You may strive to be like them,**

**but seek not to make them like you.**

**For life goes not backward nor tarries with yesterday.**

**You are the bows from which your children**

**as living arrows are sent forth.**

**The archer sees the mark upon the path of the infinite,**

**and He bends you with His might**

**that His arrows may go swift and far.**

**Let your bending in the archer's hand be for gladness;**

**For even as He loves the arrow that flies,**

**so He loves also the bow that is stable.**