

Doha Briefing 2018

“Focusing on Families to Support the Implementation of the SDGs ”

Integrating a Family Perspective in the Localization of the SDGs and Arab Youth within the Context of Family Policies

Anis Ben Brik, Ph.D.
Director of Family Policy
Department, Doha International
Family Institute

Nader Kabbani, Ph.D.
Director of Research, Brookings Doha Center
Senior Fellow, Brookings Global Economy &
Development Program

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Key Messages & Recommendations: Family Policies and SDGs

- 🕒 The absence of the family perspective in SDGs could be considered as **an opportunity** to focus on its integration in national development strategies and plans
- 🕒 Policies should be designed to **empower families** and give them more choices in line with the SDGs framework
- 🕒 **Develop family policies** that lead to:
 - ❖ Self-sufficient and resilient families
 - ❖ Healthy and educated children
 - ❖ Improved access to decent work for family bread-winners, men and women alike
 - ❖ Better work–family balance
 - ❖ Gender equality
 - ❖ Fulfillment of children’s rights
 - ❖ Stronger intergenerational bonds
- 🕒 Promote an **inclusive social protection system** that allows individuals to exit poverty reduction programs without forfeiting their rights to social protection.

Key Messages & Recommendations : Children & Parenting

- 🕒 The provision of policies supporting **parental education** to contribute to the achievement of SDGs
- 🕒 **Family support programs** are indispensable tools for promoting children's development, reducing family poverty, and preventing intergenerational transfers of income and welfare ingredients
- 🕒 Extending the use of **couples' counseling** to children and young people's mental health services
- 🕒 **Family-work balance policies** are important to helping achieve a fairer distribution of household duties and child-care responsibilities
- 🕒 Promoting **family' involvement in quality and inclusive education**
- 🕒 Acknowledging the role of **grandparents** in parenting

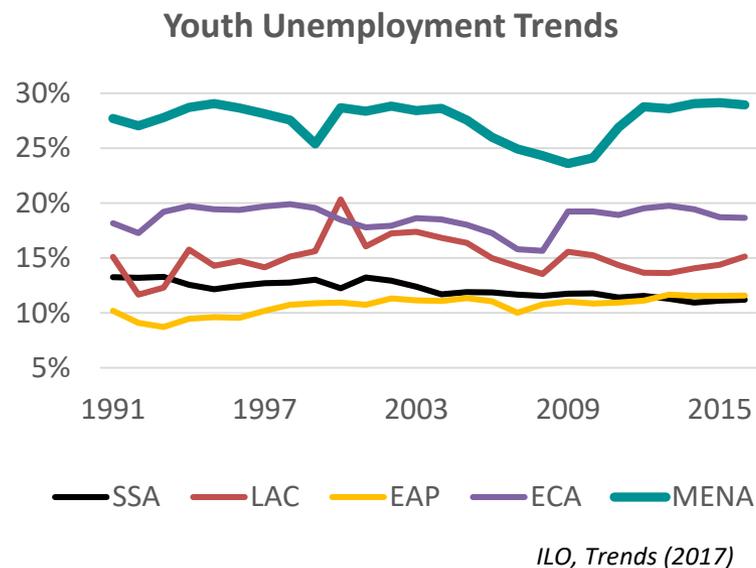
Key Messages & Recommendations: Women & Youth

- Promote family policies that takes into account the status of **women's autonomy** for all
- Alleviate **legal barriers and legislative** shortcomings to gender equality
- Overcome region-specific gender stereotypes
- Youth policies can be more effective when approached through a **family lens**
- Family policies need to ensure **safe transition to adulthood**
- Build **capacity** for the youth to ensure equal opportunities for boys and girls to access quality education and decent jobs
- Youth in the Arab region experience the highest incidence of informal employment.

The MENA* Youth Employment Challenge

Main Issue: Youth Social-Economic Exclusion

- 🕒 MENA consistently has had the **highest rates of youth unemployment** in world (30% in 2016).
- 🕒 Youth queue up for jobs in the **public sector**
- 🕒 Scarcity of jobs in the **formal private sector**
- 🕒 Schools provide limited marketable skills
- 🕒 Few opportunities to gain work experience
- 🕒 **Family pressures** limit interest in some careers
- 🕒 **Family financial support** can delay job take up



* Most available data is for the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, which is mainly formed of Arab countries.

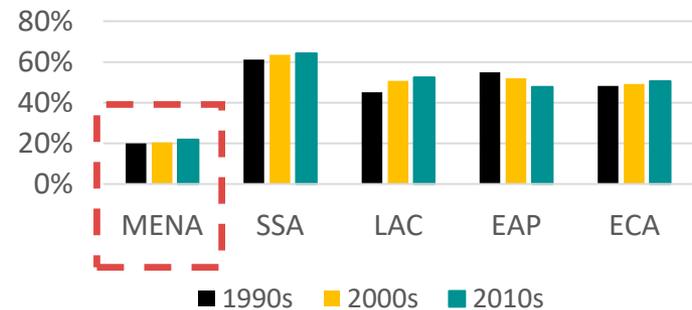
Other regions are Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA), Latin American and the Caribbean (LAC), East Asia and Pacific (EAP) and Europe and Central Asia (ECA). North America is omitted.

Female Labor Force Participation (LFP)

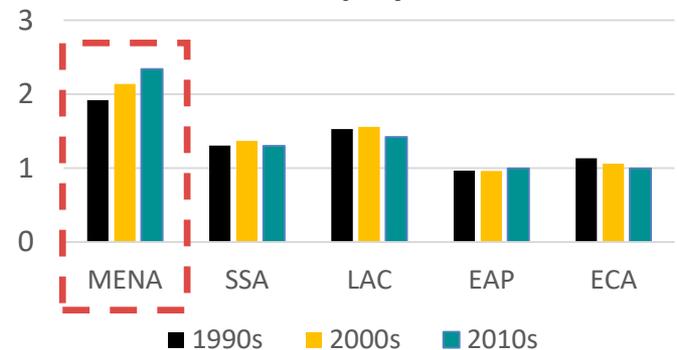
Main Issue: Female Social-Economic Exclusion

- MENA has by far the **lowest female labor force participation rates** in the world (21% in 2016)
- MENA also has the **highest gender differences in unemployment rates** (2.3 times in 2016)
- Social and family norms regarding female work
- Limited range of **socially acceptable jobs**
- Preference for jobs with good work conditions
- Strong preference for jobs in the **formal sector**
- Weak **social support structures** (ex. day care)
- Reliance on family support gives families a say

Female LF Participation Rates



Ratio F/M Unemployment Rate



The Plight of Migrant Workers & Refugees

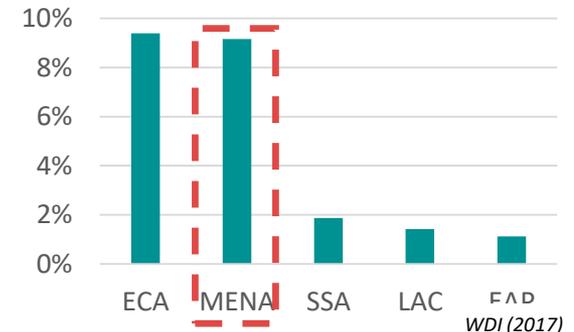
Integration of Migrant Workers

- Among the **highest population shares** in the world
- Mainly in the Gulf, but also Lebanon, Jordan, etc.
- Limited ability to change jobs or start a business
- More flexibility would promote economic growth

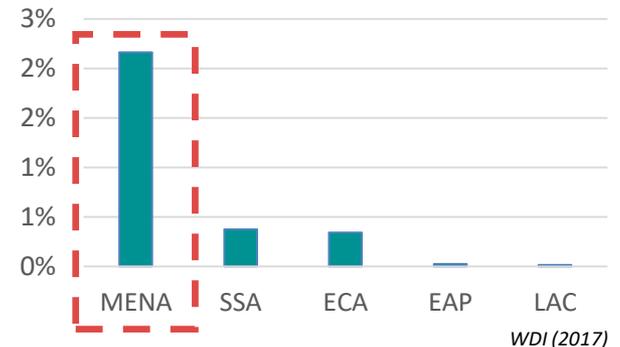
Integration of Refugees

- By far the highest population share in the world
- Inability to access jobs in the formal sector
- Deterioration in their socioeconomic conditions
- Enormous pressures on **host communities**

Population Share - Migrants



Population Share - Refugees

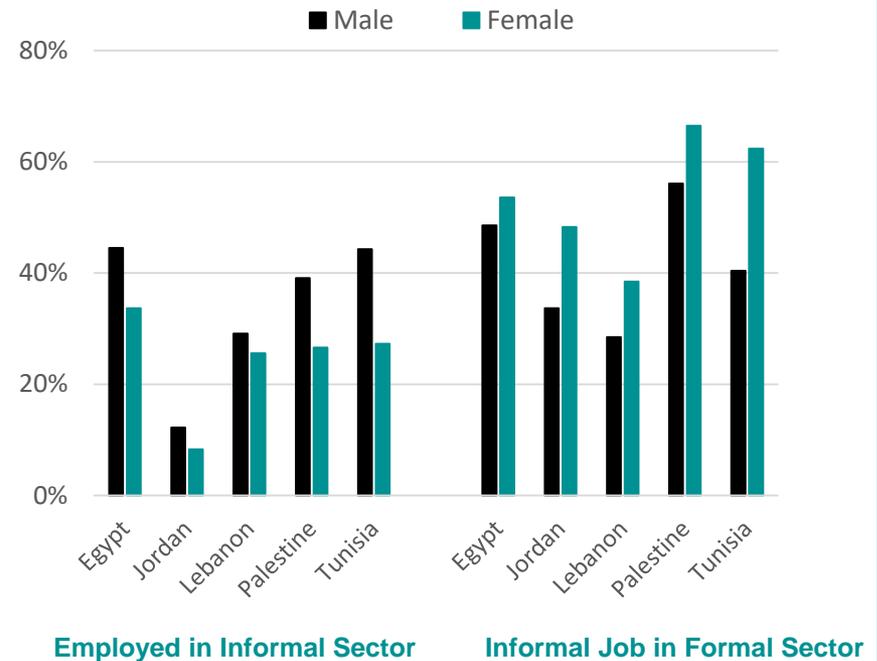


Large Informal Sector

Main Issue: Insertion into the public sector and formal private sector

- Large **unregulated informal economy** covering over **60%** of MENA workers
- Informal employment rates among youth may be as high as **80%**.
- Informal jobs typically lack stability, social protection, legal recourse and benefits
- Young women** are less likely than young men to work in the informal sector
- Young women more likely than young men to have informal job in formal sector

Youth Employment in Informal Sector by Gender

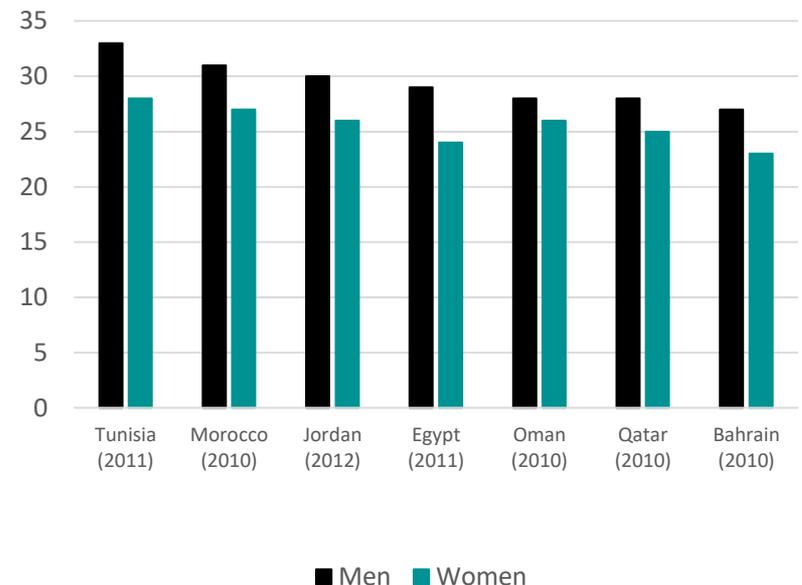


Source: SWTS (2015)

Family Formation and Cohesion

- 🕒 Delayed marriage and family formation has become a major problem in the MENA region.
- 🕒 In Tunisia, the mean age at first marriage reached 33 for men and 28 for women in 2011.
- 🕒 Delayed marriage can lead to frustration, unrest and radicalization among a country's youth.
- 🕒 Major reasons for delayed marriage include:
 - ❖ Lack of decent employment opportunities.
 - ❖ Poor quality, low wage, unstable jobs.
 - ❖ The high cost of marriage and buying a house.
 - ❖ High rates of migration, especially among men.
- 🕒 These factors also affect family cohesion.

Mean Age at First Marriage



Source: UNDP (2016); ESCWA (2013)

National Policies for Promoting Youth Employment

Family Policy – Before Marriage

- ✔ Financial support for low-income families
- ✔ Policies / programs to support family cohesion
- ✔ Neutralize social stigma for entry-level jobs
- ✔ Neutralize stigma for female employment

Family Policy – After Marriage

- ✔ Improve access to affordable housing
- ✔ Reduce barriers to female employment
- ✔ Support affordable daycare and preschool
- ✔ Policies / programs to support family stability

Education Systems

- ✔ Focus on relevant, marketable skills
- ✔ Improve career guidance & work experience

Public Sector

- ✔ Align salaries / benefits with the private sector
- ✔ Improve governance and limit corruption

Private Sector

- ✔ Reduce barriers to starting & running a business
- ✔ Limit cronyism, especially on small scale

Arab Youth & Family Policies: Points for Discussion

- ✔ Families in the Arab region play an important role in supporting their youth.
- ✔ Many actions help; covering aspects of social protection that are lacking in the region.
- ✔ Others actions hinder youth development and efforts to form families of their own.
- ✔ This is part of the Arab context and is expected and accepted by most youth and adults.
- ✔ Family policies are needed at the national level to support and complement their role.
- ✔ Globally, families, as a unit, have been suppressed and marginalized in the SDGs.
- ✔ Arab countries should focus on families as key actors in the development process.
- ✔ This is part of the important process of contextualizing and localizing the SDGs.



DIFI

معهد الدوحة الدولي للأسرة
Doha International Family Institute

البحوث لدعم السياسات الأسرية
Research to advance family policies

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