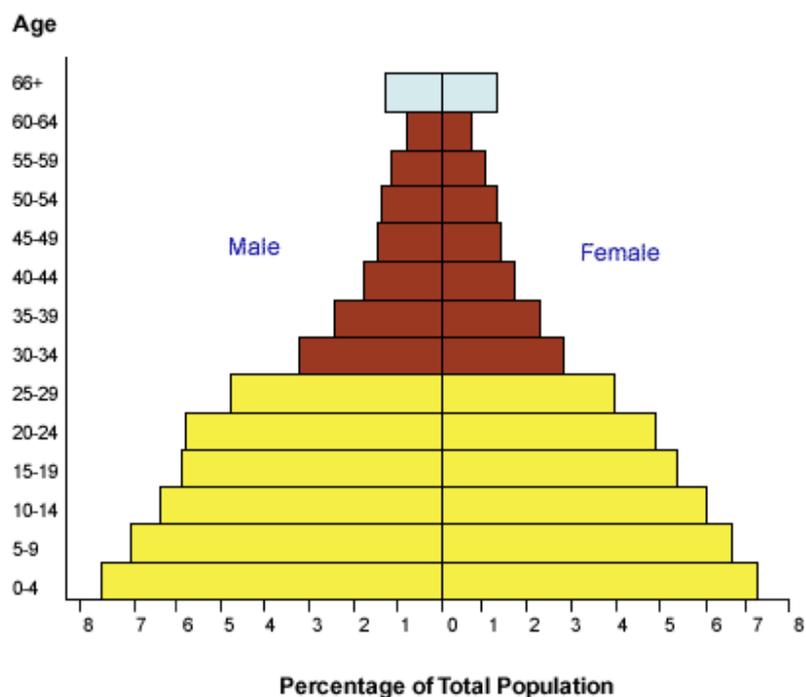


## Jordan Human Development Report 2000

### The Youth of Jordan

#### About the cover



The cover design of the Jordan Human Development Report 2000 is based on a statistical pyramid which provides a breakdown of the size of each age group within the Jordanian population. As the illustration reveals, a large base of child and youth population supports the pyramid, which narrows at the top as the ratio of older persons in the population decreases. The pyramid reflects national statistics, which indicate that a staggering 73% of Jordan's total population falls under the age of 29. Youth aged 15-29 account for 31.4% of the total population and 54.2% of the population over 15 years of age (1997).

## **Foreword by His Majesty King Abdullah II**

IN THE NAME OF GOD THE COMPASSIONATE, THE MERCIFUL

### **Foreword by His Majesty King Abdullah II**

Jordan's youth are its greatest asset and hope for the future. We must tap our young people's intellectual, creative, and productive potential in order for Jordan to keep up with new developments in global scientific, economic, and social sectors. I am delighted, therefore, that this first Jordanian National Human Development Report focuses on the condition and role of youth in our country.

Young Jordanian businessmen and women have pioneered important economic development initiatives, particularly at the global level. While the young have a proven track record and commitment to national development, they still need more opportunities to be able to play their full role in society. I hope that the recent reforms in the education sector will be a stepping stone and impetus for parallel improvements in other key sectors. Such broad reform is needed to create an enabling environment that can tap our young people's creative talents and activate their spirit of initiative and hard work, particularly among our young women. We must listen more carefully to our young people, and accurately hear their concerns, interests, and hopes, so that together we can help them achieve their full rights and fulfill all their dreams.

This inaugural Jordanian National Human Development Report identifies new trends and challenges in Jordanian society, such as overcoming the gender gap, strengthening social identity and integration, linking education to labor market needs, increasing political participation, and dealing with the many effects of globalization. We all need to address these challenges in an integrated manner, for together they comprise the full picture of human development today.

I hope that all sectors of society will reflect seriously on the issues raised in this report, and then reach a democratic national consensus on the most appropriate ways to respond to our real challenges and opportunities. This will require our public and private sectors, NGOs, and international partners to work together as one team, in order to assess the prevailing issues and challenges, and to devise an effective mechanism to monitor our youth's progress and the wider human development situation in Jordan. I also hope that this report will spur the formulation of an action plan for following up the report's policy and research recommendations, and that young men and women will actively participate in its implementation.

I would like to express my thanks and appreciation to all those who contributed to this first Jordanian National Human Development Report, and also to all who will take part in its follow-up activities. We have great hopes that, God willing, this report will bear good fruit in the near future. May God bless and guide you on the right path.

## Excerpts from Executive Summary

The youth of Jordan are the theme of this first Jordan Human Development Report because youth are - and will long remain -- a defining characteristic of Jordanian society and economy. This report broadly defines 'youth' as people aged 15-29, who account for 31.4% of the total population, and 54.2% of the population over 15 years of age (1997). Young Jordanians during these years share common challenges as they make transitions from adolescence to adulthood, from dependence to independence, and from being recipients of society's services to becoming contributors to national economic, political, and cultural life. The capacity of these young Jordanians to contribute to national development and to compete in the global economy will determine whether Jordan remains a low middle income country or joins the ranks of the world's advanced economies.

### The Human Development Concept

The concept of human development, launched in 1990, implies that the fruits of economic growth and development must be translated into improvements and expanded choices in the lives of people, increasing both their capabilities and opportunities. The first global Human Development Report introduced the Human Development Index (HDI), a measure of human development in a country on the basis of variables covering: a long and healthy life (life expectancy at birth), knowledge (adult literacy rates and the combined primary, secondary, and tertiary enrolment ratio), and a decent standard of living (real GDP per capita according to dollar purchasing power parity).

The value for Jordan's HDI rank in the Global Human Development Report 1999 (1997 statistics) was 0.715, placing Jordan in the 94th rank out of 174 countries.

The HDI is supplemented by other important indicators in order to get a broader picture of human development. The Gender-related Development Index (GDI) comprises the HDI variables adjusted for disparity between men and women. Jordan's GDI's value for 1998 was 0.647, ranking it 90 out of 163 countries. The Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM) attempts to measure opportunities for women in terms of their earned income and their participation in the professional workforce and in parliament.

Jordan's GEM value in 1998 was 0.211 and its GEM ranking was 97 out of 102 countries, reflecting the predominant role for men in public and political life. The Human Poverty Index (HPI) attempts to capture deprivations in the basic HDI variables. Jordan's HPI value in 1999 was just 9.8%, which ranked Jordan 9th out of 92 developing countries.

Jordan has made significant advances in building people's capabilities, yet there is room for improvement in aspects of gender-equity, employment, income, and quality and relevance of education. These issues are among the concerns most

frequently mentioned by young Jordanians.

*Priorities and policy implications for applying the human development concept in Jordan include devising a quality of life index for youth, designing a Gender-related Development Index that more accurately takes into account the substantial but often 'hidden' role of women in society, and further researching the full causes of the gaps between women's capabilities and opportunities in society. Collecting gender- and age-segregated data at regional and sub-regional levels could help to achieve these goals.*

## **Youth and Human Development**

Most young Jordanians live in stable families and safe communities, have unprecedented access to basic health, education, shelter, and other human services, and enjoy life choices that are much wider than those of any previous generation of Jordanian citizens. Yet when youth are given a voice they tend to stress negative attitudes or trends, reflecting the issues of greatest concern to them.

Profound economic, political and social changes in a largely urban society offer young Jordanians tremendous new opportunities and challenges; they also compound the potential for stress and confusion that young Jordanians experience as they make the transition from adolescence to adulthood. Social or economic distress often reveal themselves first among the young, in signs such as high school dropout or repetition rates, child labor, crime, family violence, organized street commerce by children, drug and alcohol abuse, and other phenomena. Sociologists see these phenomena as signs that some young people need a means of escaping life's stresses and uncertainties.

Young Jordanian women enjoy virtual equality with men in terms of developing their educational and cultural capabilities, but after they graduate their economic and political participation rates are much lower. Fieldwork to gauge the well-being of youth in Jordan requires a credible methodology that accurately captures the condition of the young, while also allowing them to express themselves freely and honestly.

*Priorities and policy implications for understanding and relieving stresses on the young: Through school- and home-based counseling and awareness of early warning signs, society must pay greater attention to the mental health and emotional needs of young people who are passing through difficult times that can generate feelings of alienation, uselessness, or hopelessness. More reliable information is needed on the different causes and forms of stress on the young, how they cope with stress, and to whom they turn for guidance or assistance. The quantity and quality of leisure opportunities for the young need to be expanded significantly.*

## **Youth's concerns**

Whenever young Jordanians discuss issues of importance to them, they consistently express a range of common concerns and hopes, regardless of their age, education

level, location, religion, or ethnic or geographical background. Typical are the following concerns that have been identified by young men and women who participated in youth forums and focus group research in recent years:

- A lack of sports facilities and leisure activity centers.
- A contradiction between youth's perceptions of their own roles and identities, and society's perceptions of the young's place in society, both within the family and in society as a whole.
- Lack of communication between young men and women, which negatively affects their understanding of each other.
- Unequal educational opportunities and discrimination, particularly in university admission.
- Economic pressures on youth, especially on young men; a high rate of expatriate labor that appears to reduce youth's job opportunities; limited extracurricular programs that link education with employment; and, a serious lack of vocational training centers, combined with society's under-appreciation of vocational professions.
- Anxiety resulting from the secondary school (tawjihi) exam as the decisive factor that determines a student's future, and school curricula that are not relevant to market job demands or other aspects of Jordanian life.
- Shortage of social rehabilitation and counseling centers for young men and women.
- Restrictions on girls' involvement in decision-making related to all aspects of their lives.
- Limited political involvement of youth.
- Negative peer pressures on youth, reflected in phenomena such as smoking and drug use.

Women tend more often than men to describe a gap between their own self-image and that which society has of them, while men's self-image usually corresponds to that which society has of them. Many young people say they feel bored, empty, depressed, or constrained by social norms, with few outlets for their energy, lack of opportunities to express themselves, and no adults who understand their needs, listen to them, or talk with them about their concerns. Young people's limited political participation is due to lack of opportunities and to skepticism among youth about the efficacy of political action. About half the youth voted in previous parliamentary elections, mostly for their tribal candidates. Most Jordanians between 15 and 29 years of age rate the performance of government institutions as excellent or good.

*Priorities and policy implications for increasing youth participation in public opinion formation, decision-making, and community activities, and for promoting social integration through diversity, democracy, and tolerance: Expanding young Jordanians' opportunities to express themselves and to contribute to setting public priorities can be achieved through schools, the mass media, government agencies, private companies, NGOs, a democratically elected youth parliament, and lowering the age of candidates for municipal and national office. New policies could promote community service, summer volunteer and work-study programs, and a national Jordanian Youth Service Corps. To strengthen their roots and sense of belonging by freely expressing their individual identities, young Jordanians need particular understanding and assistance in two areas: first, in finding their own balance among*

*the often contradictory local and global cultural values to which they are exposed; and, second, in mastering the freedoms, responsibilities, and personal rights that come with democracy and pluralism.*

### **The crucial role of education**

The education and training system is the single most important factor in determining the future qualifications, attitudes, and capabilities of the Jordanian population, and thus the well-being of Jordanian society. Positive values and productive skills that students absorb in the education and training system can quickly translate into the increased economic productivity and competitiveness that Jordan requires to compete successfully in the global economy. Activating and actualizing youth's enormous potential require education reforms that generate graduates with creative, entrepreneurial, and problem-solving abilities, and with the precise technical and managerial skills required by the economy. Skills that can promote the information technology sector of the economy will be particularly important in the immediate future.

Education reforms should also translate the very high female education enrolment rates and capabilities into greater participation by women in the labor force and in public life in general.

The education and training sector generates graduates for fast changing domestic and regional markets, which makes education sector planning difficult. Graduates' skills often do not match those required in the domestic economy, while the traditional, rote-based learning system does not respond to the economy's need for graduates with capabilities in problem-solving and creativity. The education system remains largely non-market driven, due to parental pressure on students' fields of study, lack of student career counseling, few linkages between the marketplace and the education system, and a common reluctance among educated young Jordanians to take manual labor jobs.

Jordanian primary students fare well compared to their international colleagues in areas such as science knowledge and application, but rank lower in cognitive skills. Parents express high satisfaction levels with the basic education system in Jordan, yet quite a number of Jordanian young men and women are dissatisfied with the system's ability to equip them for their future careers and responsibilities. The major immediate challenge facing the school system is to raise quality and relevance of education in order to allow graduates to excel in the global economy. A long-term challenge will be to sustain and raise per capita spending at basic and secondary levels, in the face of a youth population that is increasing in both absolute and relative terms.

*Priorities and policy implications for enhancing youth's skills, attitudes, and entrepreneurial capabilities: The education and training system needs to adopt new policies that empower young graduates in three related areas: factual information and knowledge, personal values and attitudes, and intellectual modes of thinking and analysis. This will require significant new policy changes in education and training,*

*school-society linkages, and life-long education.*

### **Youth, labor, and the economy**

Securing satisfactory employment at a reasonable wage level may be the most common concern among young Jordanians in today's increasingly competitive job market. Public sector employment accounts for the largest share of the job market (37%), mainly due to its many attractive fringe benefits. The labor market is also characterized by the simultaneous import and export of labor.

The unemployment rate ranged between 10-15% in the period 1995-1999, while an independent Jordanian university survey using a different methodology put the unemployment rate at over 25%. The largest unemployment differentials are between men and women, and between all community college graduates and women graduates. Hidden unemployment (including part-time workers) may be a problem in parts of the country.

Unemployment disproportionately affects the young. Official surveys since 1996 show that 60% of all unemployed people are below the age of 25. The highest unemployment rate in 1997 -- 76% -- was among 15-29-year-olds. The highest rate -- 82% -- was among women of that age group. Women constitute 48% of the population, but their economic participation rate does not exceed 17% of the total labor force.

The causes of unemployment include: a) behavioral and attitudinal reasons that cause young graduates to shun some manual and service jobs that are deemed inappropriate or unappealing, b) recurring economic slowdowns since the mid-1980s, combined with an increase in labor supply following the return of several hundred thousand Jordanians from the Gulf after 1990, c) school graduates who lack the skills needed in some economic sectors, d) poor career guidance counseling for students, e) shortcomings in job training and continuing education, and, f) low-cost foreign labor in Jordan.

*Priorities and policy implications for enhancing youth's economic productivity and contributions: New policies should promote greater economic self-reliance and initiative by youth, reduce their traditional dependence on government jobs, services, and subsidies, and provide young potential entrepreneurs with the assets, opportunities, and support they need to participate directly in the development of society. Greater linkages between the marketplace and the education-training system are urgently needed, in the form of counseling, work fairs, summer and part-time jobs, internships, and others. Research is needed to determine accurately whether some young people refuse to accept available jobs due to cultural factors or to more material factors such as pay and future prospects.*

### **Youth and social integration**

Youth express a strong desire to participate in responsible decision-making at various societal levels, and to end what many of them perceive to be their marginal

role in society. To do so, they need greater opportunities to make their voices heard in society, and greater choices in their education, training, work, cultural, and leisure activities.

Knowledgeable professionals and officials in Jordan agree that the majority of young Jordanians, in both urban and rural areas, enjoy a warm family environment, satisfactory schooling, and relatively smooth entry into young adulthood, the labor market, starting their own families, and assuming adult rights and responsibilities. Yet, Jordan's young today live in a dynamic marketplace of values and identities in a fast changing society. The identity and sense of belonging of Jordanian youth are still firmly rooted in traditional social structures, while simultaneously the young are widely exposed to global, multicultural influences, even within their own homes. Educators and counselors have identified a high need for youth to receive guidance in processing often conflicting information and lifestyle models -- but such help is not widely available through formal or informal mechanisms.

Signs of social stress and alienation have started to appear among some young Jordanians. According to the common observations of educators, sociologists, and youth workers, some young people express identity confusion, a sense of insecurity, and concerns about the future. Jordanian sociologists now speak routinely of 'value disorientation' among the young. The young themselves express an interest in learning from and adapting the technological developments of the West, but they do not wish to fully adopt Western lifestyles.

The young's sense of belonging and support stem primarily from their identification with their family, tribe, religion, profession, and state. In most cases, though, these institutions, along with schools and workplaces, perpetuate patriarchal socialization of the young; this often delays young Jordanians' development of confidence, self-esteem, and a sense of autonomy. Many of them feel caught between a traditional, patriarchal, communal social value system that promotes conformity and obedience, and a modern, individualistic lifestyle that promotes personal initiative, creativity, and self-assertion. The young also feel that they have few channels for self-expression that could help them overcome this dilemma, or sources of assistance and guidance that could help them deal with it.

*Priorities and policy implications for safeguarding the integrity of the family: Important work needs to be done by all sectors of society to understand the causes, symptoms, and consequences of the gradual loosening of family ties in Jordan, within both the nuclear and extended family. The challenge is to formulate policies that can maintain the traditional strengths of the family unit, while also offering the young the freedom they need to develop to their full potential as productive, wholesome citizens.*

## Soundbites and Statistics

Jordan fares well in human development among Arab countries, but falls behind in gender empowerment and stabilizing population growth.

- Jordan ranks 94 out of 174 developing countries in human development.
- Jordan is one of two Arab countries whose human development ranking is higher than its per capita income — indicating an efficient investment of scarce resources, which translated into human and social development gains.
- Jordan has the highest female literacy and overall literacy of all Arab states.
- Jordan has the highest life expectancy rate in the Arab world.
- Jordan has the highest projected population growth among all middle-income Arab states.
- Jordan has one of the highest human development index values among medium-ranked Arab states, but one of the lowest female economic activity rates.
- Jordanian women make up only 3.4% of senior government positions — less than that of their female counterparts in Algeria, Syria and Tunisia.

### **National statistics reveal gains in health, education, strained by rapid population growth and low income.**

- Literacy has nearly doubled from 47% in 1960 to 87% in 1995.
- 11,000 Jordanians are enrolled in government literacy classes at the moment, of which 10% are males and 90% females.
- 67% of households have access to a doctor, hospital or health center within a ten-minute walk of their home.
- 95% of homes have access to piped water but only 13% of households think their water is very clean.
- Crime, including felonies, more than doubled from 40,300 in 1990 to 88,200 in 1997.
- 21% of Jordanian households live in poverty.
- The average annual income was JD 4,998 per household and JD 767 per capita.
- Even with the decline in fertility rates, the rapid expansion of population will continue to add 130,000 new students into the education system and 70,000 new entrants into the labor market every year for the next two decades.
- Jordan's population stands at 4.6 million (1997 figures) compared to 2.1 million in 1979 and 586,000 in 1952.
- 78% of people live in urban areas.
- The Department of Statistics estimates that the population will double again by 2025.

### **Urban centers marked by higher standard of living than rural areas.**

- Human development index values of governorates show a high of 738 in Amman and a low of 655 in Maan.
- The highest fertility rate was found in Jerash/Ajlun at 5.4 child(s) per woman, compared to a low of 3.7 in Amman.
- The highest infant mortality rate is 48 (per 1000 births) in Tafileh followed by 42 in Maan; the lowest is in Madaba with 26 followed by Irbid with 27 per 1000 births.
- The highest occurrence of low income households was in Balqa/Madaba where 36% had median household income less than JD 1,450; Amman and the southern regions had the lowest occurrence with 25% and 24% respectively (1996 figures).
- Households with no health facility within 10 minutes walking distance ranged from 63% in Jerash/Ajlun to 25% in urban Amman and Zarqa/Mafraq.
- The lowest gross enrollment rates among women (basic, secondary and higher education) are in Mafraq and Maan (62%) and the highest are in Aqaba, Tafileh and Jerash (over 70%).
- Amman tops the adult literacy figures with 90%, and Zarqa comes in a close second with 89.1%; Balqa, Madaba, Irbid, Jerash, Ajlun and Aqaba also enjoy a literacy rate of over 80%.

## **Jordanian youth — who are they, what do they think?**

- Youth (15-29 year olds) represent 31% of the population — the largest group in Jordanian society; youth also constitute 54% of the population over 15 years old.
- The vast majority of youth support the right of women to pursue higher education (89%), to vote (82%), to work (60%), and participate as government ministers or on municipal councils (60%).
- About half of youth voted in previous parliamentary elections, mostly for their tribal candidates. Most Jordanians between the ages 15-29 rate the performance of government institutions as excellent or good.
- Most young Jordanians live in stable families and safe communities, have unprecedented access to basic health, education, shelter and other human services, and enjoy greater life choices than any previous generation of Jordanians.
- A 1998 survey by UNICEF revealed that 21% of youth encountered gender bias, particularly in intra-family relationships, 37% encountered verbal abuse and 33% encountered physical abuse.
- Children constitute 80% of victims of family violence and sexual abuse.
- Most drug abusers are male (94%) and between the ages of 20-35.
- 25% of young males smoke daily compared to 0.3% of females.

## **Jordanian youth shine in educational attainment, yet dropouts continue to be concentrated in low-income families.**

- Students and trainees comprise the single largest occupational segment of Jordan's population.
- Since 1973-74, Jordan has increased the enrolment rate of 16-17 year olds from 44% to 73%.
- 75% of females (16-17year olds) are now enrolled in secondary education, an impressive increase from 35% in 1973-4.
- Youth from low-income families (20% of the population) have a much higher dropout rate than middle- and high- income families. Despite 95% enrolment in the first four grades, by 10<sup>th</sup> grade, 20% of low income students have dropped out, and by age 18 less than half remain in school or complete their secondary education.
- Educators comment that high academic achievers among females often experience a 'fear of success' syndrome after graduation from high school or college: if they succeed in the workplace, they might be perceived as overstepping the boundaries society set for them; yet if they do not take advantage of their proven credentials, they feel they are letting themselves down.
- Women show superior academic performance but do not go on to contribute proportionately to the economy — the highest rate of unemployment is amongst female community college graduates (47%).

- Of the 73,541 teachers in the education system, 38% are under the age of 30, demonstrating the key role played by young Jordanians.

**Jordanian youth show concern towards the state of the economy and pessimism towards finding a satisfying job.**

- Jordanian youth identify the country's main political problems as being the debt crisis, the World Bank-IMF assisted economic restructuring program, water shortages and poverty.
- The main concerns expressed by youth are: future job prospects, economic well-being, equitable access to higher education, participation in political decision making, having a voice in issues that concern their lives, lack of communication between young men and women which they believe negatively affects their understanding of each other, lack of sports and leisure centers, limited extra-curricular programs linking education with employment. Additionally, youth are concerned with the lack of vocational training centers and society's lack of appreciation for vocational professions.
- Main concerns of young Jordanians about their future job prospects are: a) not finding a job at all due to economic pressures b) having to accept work that is unsatisfying and uninspiring in terms of their personal interests or skills c) having to take a low paid job that will make it difficult to marry and raise a family d) limited opportunity to compete for available jobs.
- Jordan's youth feel caught between a traditional, patriarchal communal social value system that promotes conformity and obedience and a modern individualistic lifestyle that promotes personal initiative, creativity and self-assertion.
- Sufficient opportunities for information and cultural exchange exist, but many young people feel ill-prepared to judge the value of accessible information for their own needs and find it difficult to make competent choices.

Jordanian youth, particularly women, comprise largest segment of unemployed population.

- Unemployment disproportionately affects the young. Official surveys since 1996 show that 60% of all unemployed people are below the age of 25. The highest unemployment rate was in 1997 — 76% of which were among 15-29 year olds. The highest rate, 82%, was among women of that age group.
- Only 44% of the population of working age are economically active. Within this group, 15% are women and 72% are men.
- Official unemployment rates stand at 10% for 1999, whilst other independent surveys using different methodologies put the unemployment rate at over 25%.
- Female unemployment is double the male

## The Faces of Jordan's Young

### Troubled Urban Youth: Jamil's Story

Jamil is 18 years old and lives in the densely populated and under-serviced low-income Safh el-Nuzha neighborhood in east Amman. Many young men like him in this community have become hardened by their environment, and are used to living a very rough life. Most are school dropouts, and move in gangs. They earn their living on the streets. Sociologists describe this community as "fractured", since its inhabitants feel they have no say in the decisions taken regarding their society, and many do not feel that they have any definite roles to play in it.

Just over a year ago, Amman Municipality constructed the Jordan Highway that cuts through this area, replacing a small stream that used to flow there. Like many in this harah (neighborhood) Jamil and his family feel frustrated and angry that they had no say in this decision, and were not consulted. The small living room in the one-bedroom house is devoid of any furniture save for the frayed mattresses used for sitting on and sleeping. Towards the ceiling a small window allows a little mid-day sun to seep in. The stone embankments that prevent rocks from falling down on the house provide an uninviting view of metal, rock, and tar from below - a scene that Jamil and his family have been looking at for a year now.

As he sat in his gloomy home, with his ten brothers and sisters and his 52-year-old unemployed father, Jamil recounted his life in Safh el-Nuzha. He dropped out of school when he was in third grade because "I didn't like school, I didn't want to study."

Jamil works whenever he can find a job, which might be "for one month in the year, and then I could be without work for several months after that, or even for a year. Sometimes I leave this area and go far away to find work outside this harah. I worked as a carpenter, blacksmith, and at other tasks, but these jobs never lasted so I came back home."

Working through the Housing and Urban Development Corporation, a British non-governmental organization initiated "pro-social" community programs at Safh el-Nuzha for children and youth in particular. At first this organization was attacked by angry children and youth who threw stones at its staff and tried to vandalize the building it worked from, which belonged to the Corporation. It later became evident that the building had been built on what once had been the children's only playground."

We only want a clean place where we can play," said one child. After understanding the problem, the British NGO worked on building bridges of trust and confidence with the youth. It uses an approach which acknowledges the vital role and rights of the child as a maturing individual, and fosters positive feelings towards himself/ herself and society.

The NGO offered 17 boys between the ages of 11 to 18 years the chance to participate in the Prince Hassan Award for Youth through a six-month program. This scheme focuses on encouraging the young's leadership skills, responsibility, and potential. Jamil considers himself lucky to have taken part in this program. He said, "I participated in a five-day camp and was trained in various skills such as map reading, rope climbing, and how to set up a tent."

He feels that above all he learned discipline: "I learned how to sleep early and wake up early and to organize my life better," he said with a smile. He says that in the past he used to stay up late until the early hours of the morning with his friends smoking cigarettes, a habit he picked up when he was 14. He would wake up around mid-day, since he had nothing to do with his life."

The NGO promised to help by enrolling me at a pastry making course. I'm still waiting," shrugs Jamil, partly hopeful, partly unsure of his future prospects.

## The Faces of Jordan's Young

### Youth and Job Opportunities After University: Zeid and Nabela's Stories

Zeid, 25, had always wanted to study business administration and then work at a bank, but his low high school academic average did not allow it. So instead he studied education at a university in Jordan for four years. Upon graduating, his father found him a job as a daily substitute teacher at the Ministry of Education."

Due to the nature of my work, I was asked to teach temporarily in different parts of the kingdom. It was very trying, going from one school to another for a short period of time every time. Above all, it was not permanent," says Zeid.

The young man coped with this situation for two months. He then quit and worked at a local airline for one year. This work was not in line with his qualifications, and so a year later he landed a teaching job with the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA)."

For the past three years I have been teaching classes with 50 or more students. It's hard, but in general I am 50% satisfied," he says. He is now aspiring to study a relatively pioneering field in Jordan: technology of education.

\* \* \*

Nabela, 28, had a different experience. Her low tawjihi average did not allow her to enroll at university. She tried to find work, but remained unemployed for eight years."

I was depressed and tired. I kept thinking of the future and of what was going to happen to me. I had nothing to do, and was dependent on my family. They had seen me through high school, and to end up the way I was, for me, was a waste," Nabela explains."

I then started to take courses in hair- dressing at a vocational training center. I even trained at a beauty salon," she says.

She decided then that she must do something with her life, and so she took out a loan and set up her own hair salon."

I wanted to ensure my future, especially as I am an unmarried female. So, I took out a loan from a local institution which was targeting youth to take loans and start their own projects. I now feel productive. I have an identity, a place of my own, and a future," says the excited Nabela."

I have peace of mind. I no longer fear the future."

She works on her own, in order to pay back the loan through the money she earns. After she repays her loan, Nabela wants to expand her salon and employ people to work for her.

## Background

### **About the Human Development Report (HDR)**

First launched in 1990, the Human Development Report is an independent publication commissioned by the United Nations Development Programme with the aim of putting people back at the center of the development process in economic debates, policy and advocacy. Every year, the widely-read publication stirs a lively debate in development circles and among governments with its ranking of countries according to the Human Development Index (HDI). Derived from a basket of socio-economic indicators such as life expectancy, literacy rate and per capita income, the HDI reflects the quality of life in each country.

By examining living standards in over 170 developing and industrialized nations, the report draws attention to socio-economic disparities between countries. In the past, human development reports have issued stark warnings on the plight of the poor and guided policy makers with plans of action to address their problems. Since the first Report, four new composite indices for human development have been developed - the Human Development Index, the Gender-related Development Index, the Gender Empowerment Measure, and the Human Poverty Index.

### **About the National Human Development Report (NHDR)**

The NHDR is a key advocacy initiative undertaken by national governments and/or NGOs in developing countries to produce an annual report, which examines human development issues at the local level. An offshoot of UNDP's Human Development Report, these publications track national trends in such areas as poverty, governance, education, health, gender and human settlements, uncovering socio-economic disparities within the country. To date, 120 developing countries have produced NHDRs, with UNDP support; many contributed to public policy-making in the developing world and influenced the allocation of national resources. In the Arab world, Djibouti, Egypt, Iraq, Lebanon, Kuwait, Morocco, Palestine, Sudan and Tunisia have already published their own NHDR.

Jordan's inaugural NHDR, which focuses on youth, was produced by the Ministry of Planning with **technical assistance from UNDP** and **financial contribution from United Kingdom's Department for International Development**. It provides the first ever composite indices for human development, human poverty and gender advancement at the governorate level, equipping Jordanian policymakers with culturally specific statistics for informed decisionmaking.

### **About United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)**

The United Nations Development Programme is the UN's principal provider of development advice, advocacy and grant support. With a network of 132 country offices worldwide, UNDP works closely with national governments, donors, civil society and private sector to develop partnerships for fighting poverty. It is committed to making a pivotal contribution to halving world poverty by 2015, as pledged by world leaders at the United Nations Millennium Summit in September 2000. UNDP also engages in extensive advocacy work about poverty issues and

people-centered development through the annual Human Development Report. In each country office, the UNDP Resident Representative serves as the Resident Coordinator of development activities for the United Nations system. Through such coordination, UNDP seeks to ensure the most effective use of UN and international aid resources.

In Jordan, UNDP has provided grant technical assistance since 1952. At the request of the Government of Jordan, UNDP is currently focusing its multi-sectoral advisory services in the areas of democratic governance, poverty alleviation, gender empowerment, energy and environment, and information and communications technology.

### **About Department for International Development (DFID)**

The Department for International Development is the British government department responsible for promoting development and the reduction of poverty. The central focus of DFID's policy, as set out in the White Paper on International Development, is a commitment to an internationally agreed target to halve the proportion of people living in extreme poverty by 2015. In addition, associated targets include ensuring basic health care provision and universal access to primary education by the same date.

DFID aims to work in partnership with other governments committed to these targets and with the business and private sector, civil society and the research community. It also works with multilateral institutions, including the World Bank, United Nations agencies and the European commission.

In Jordan, the UK's bilateral aid programme is fully grant-funded by DFID, with two funding mechanisms - government-to-government aid and a small grants scheme aimed at non-governmental organizations. This aid programme targets three main priority areas: economic reform/privatization, education and poverty-reduction. The programme also funds in-country and UK-based training and equipment costs.