

2013

**National Framework for Youth
Empowerment and Mainstreaming**

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State of Kuwait

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“I invite you to focus on youth development, provide them with job opportunities and means of decent life, and activate their positive engagement and constructive role in the service and development of our community. They are the source of hope. Therefore, I instructed the Amiri Diwan to convene a National Conference for Youth that crowns their efforts while preparing a national document to empower them to harness and benefit from their creative energies in the service of their country.”

- **HIS Highness the Amir of Kuwait,
"The National Assembly", February 2012**

Preface

Key actions taken by HIS Highness the Amir of Kuwait in recent years are evidence of the State's commitment to engage with and for youth. In 2013, His Highness the Amir of Kuwait has established a Ministry of Youth Affairs. As one of the first orders of business the State Minister of Youth Affairs, has decreed the establishment of a special higher advisory committee for youth to develop the vision, policies, plans and fields of specialization of the Ministry of Youth, among other things. To this end, *The National Framework for Youth Empowerment and Mainstreaming* is first of its kind in the State of Kuwait. The document is both timely and necessary as young people in Kuwait constitute more than 60% of the total population. The State's Ministry of Youth Affairs aims to develop and oversee the implementation of a National Policy for Youth Empowerment and Mainstreaming which will ultimately lead to a Youth Empowerment Strategy (YES). This will require a National framework for government's actions for youth development which will articulate priorities, themes, and processes to ensure youth engagement in development.

The approach of the document is based on emerging best and promising practice for youth development and mainstreaming gleaned from international and regional benchmarks, as well as a thorough review of local data on youth status in the State of Kuwait. The document is further informed by consultations with young people and youth serving organizations and stakeholders. The suggested framework is aligned with the principles set forth in the Constitution of the State of Kuwait, the visions of the political leadership and Islamic principles.

Traditionally, the implementation of youth programming was limited within specific sectors, including health, education, employment, and civic participation. Increasingly, however, working in the field of youth development requires a cross-sectoral approach and youth need to be seen as contributing to national competitiveness. This document provides a conceptual framework for youth development that is designed with and for young people with the aim to seize this opportunity of this *demographic dividend*.

The National Youth Empowerment and Mainstreaming Framework identifies four main themes that are akin to the needs of young Kuwaitis, namely, policies that

promote national competitiveness, creativity, social cohesion and leadership and voice.

Finally, reaching youth development goals in the State of Kuwait will depend on how the government institutions and other stakeholders pool resources to prepare, enable and empower young Kuwaitis.

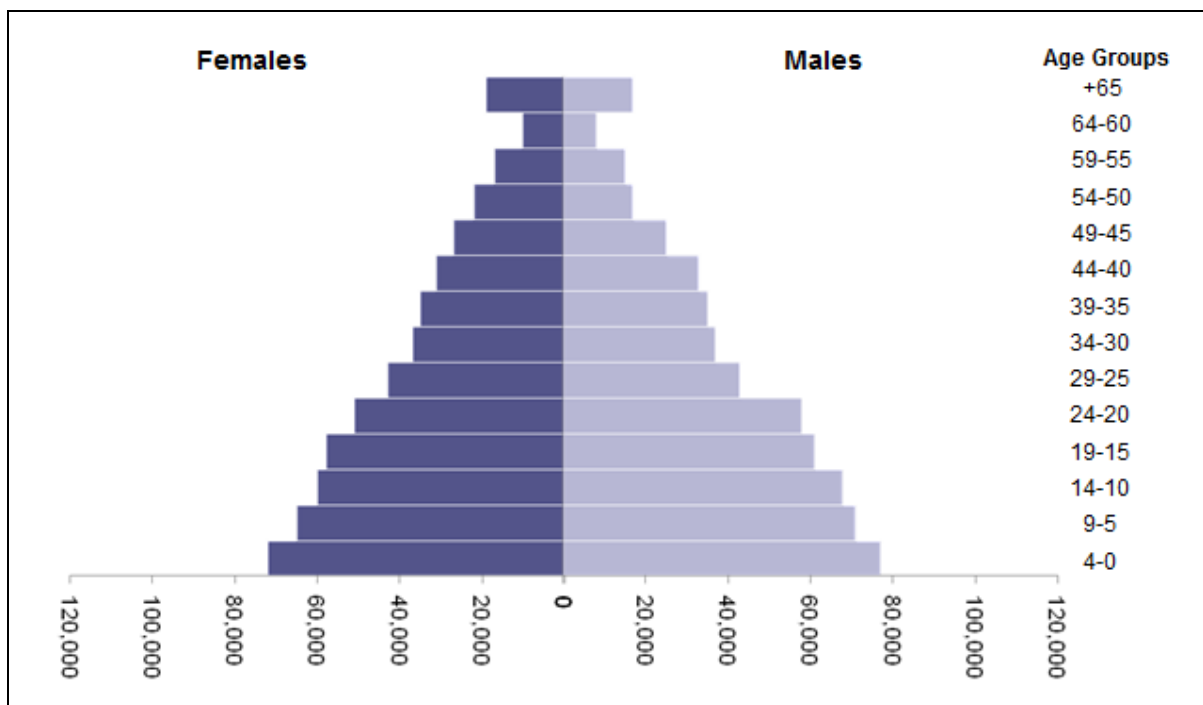
A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a series of fluid, overlapping strokes that form a stylized name.

Mounira Jamjoom, PhD

Part I: Kuwaiti Youth Profile

The Kuwaiti society is youthful in nature. In spite of declining fertility rates experienced in the past decade¹, children between ages (0-14) constitute 37% of the total population, and young people between ages (15-34) constitute 35% of the total population². In fact, the Kuwaiti population pyramid clearly characterizes the age structure of the population where the wide base indicates a high number of young people and thus increasing future demand for social services such as education, health as well as on the numbers of jobs required to accommodate new entrants to the labor market (See Exhibit 1).

Exhibit 1: Population Pyramid (Nationals)



Source: National Statistics, 2013

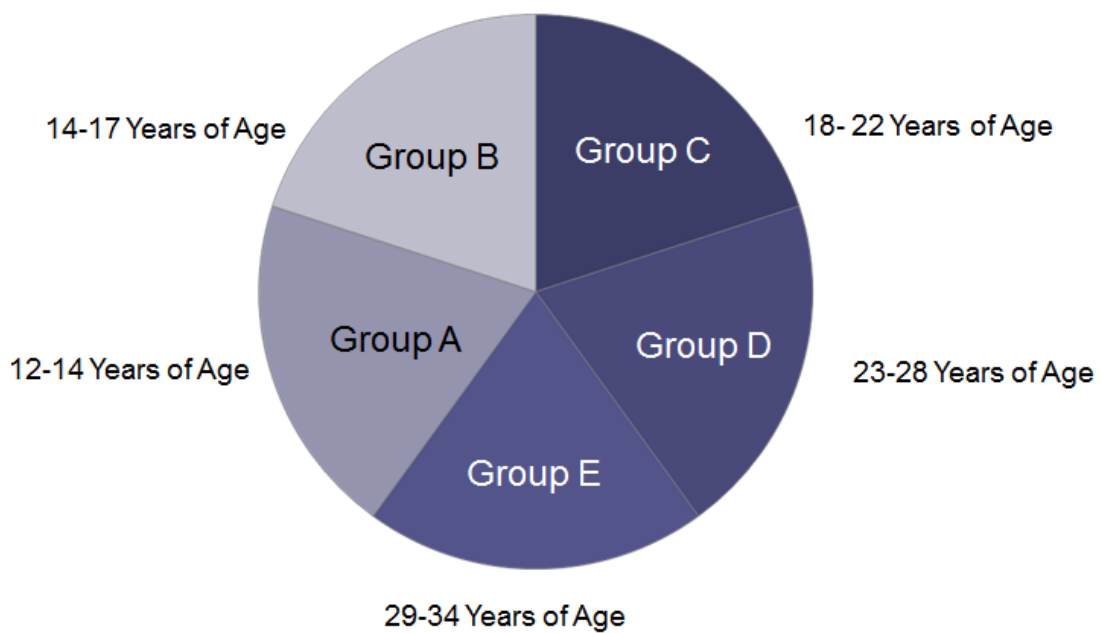
¹ UNDP, World Bank Data

² Population Statistics 2012

Youth Definition and Target Groups

The **National Framework for Youth Empowerment and Mainstreaming** is directed towards young Kuwaitis males and females who are aged 14 to 34 years old. These were identified as the years where young people transition from childhood to adulthood and from dependence to independence. While key multilaterals define youth as 15 to 24 years for statistical purposes, yet for policies and programs many countries expand this range to reflect the needs of their young population. The framework recognizes that even within this age range there are a number of youth age brackets whose needs and issues will vary and differ. The framework and action plan specifically uses the five age brackets exemplified in Exhibit 2.

Exhibit 2: Youth Age Brackets Covered by the National Framework for Youth Empowerment and Mainstreaming



The age groups were divided based on the following logic:

- **12-14 Years of Age:** This age bracket is where the transition from childhood to adolescents takes place. It is crucial that the framework ensures a healthy and smooth transition for young adults.
- **14-17 Years of Age:** This group is generally characterized by those students who are in Middle and High school. To simplify the category we refer to them as 'school- aged youth' whether they are in or out of school. Programs

targeting this group need to be mindful of the transition from childhood to adulthood as well as the physical, social and psychological needs of this group.

- **18-22 Years of Age:** In this group young people are expected to be attending some form of tertiary education. These early adulthood years need to be rich with an enabling education that prepares young people for the workforce.
- **23-28 Years of Age:** This age group is typically when young people go through early career experiences. Youth may still be in higher education, unemployed, self-employed or perusing a particular career pathway whether in public or private sector. Youth in this age group may also get married or begin to form families of their own and thus the nature of support, training and empowerment services will differ.
- **29-34 Years of Age:** This age group is when young people are expected to have had several years of experience in the labor market. They are also expected to be young leaders. While many of young people in this age group may be unemployed, or lack the necessary skills that allow them to succeed in the labor market, the nature of services provided will need to take into consideration their previous experience as they may be the hardest group to re-skill.

The Framework recognizes that young Kuwaitis are not a homogenous group. In the same manner, there should be equally diverse and unique interventions designed to address those needs. The framework also acknowledges that problems experienced by individual categories of targeted youth groups are unique, multifaceted and require involvement of various services providers across different sectors. Therefore it would be important to identify the broad categories of targeted youth groups requiring specialized and tailored interventions. They include, but are not limited to the following: young women, young men, youth in secondary school, youth in tertiary institutions, school aged out of school youth, unemployed youth, youth in the workplace, and youth at risk i.e. youth from poor households, orphaned youth, youth with disabilities, youth in conflict with the law, youth abusing dependency creating substances. The framework however identifies three priority target groups based on a review of Kuwaiti data: unemployed youth, young women and youth at risk.

Youth and Education

The government in Kuwait recognizes that education plays a key role in the country's prosperity. Several initiatives were taken to improve quality and quantity of education over the last two decades. As a result Kuwait has witnessed a marked improvement in the quality of education. 12.9% of total government expenditure is spent to education compared to a MENA average of 19.3% and a world average of 15.1%. In 2010-11, Kuwait had a total of 1,269 schools comprising both private and government run schools and 38 vocational institutes³. Kuwait also has a very well-developed private school sector. The gross enrolment rate of pre-primary, primary and secondary education segment is very high and stands at 82.2%, 105.6% and 101.0% respectively. However, enrollment rates of Kuwaiti youth drop sharply at tertiary education levels, where the gross enrollment rate stands at 21.9%⁴ reflecting a mismatch between skills taught to graduates and requirements of the labor market.

The majority of school aged Kuwaiti youth attend public schools (56.7%) while only 7.0% attend private schools. Total number of students in the primary and secondary education segment increased at a CAGR of 1.7% between 2004 and 2010. In the coming years, the total number of students enrolling in tertiary education is expected to grow indicating the need for strengthening higher education opportunities for youth. Despite this progress, education still faces a number of challenges that directly affect young people; some of these challenges include but are not limited to the following⁵:

- The low level of educational attainment in general education: The average repetition rate for students in middle school was 8.2% and 24.1 % in secondary school for the years 2003/2004. This situation represents a big waste of educational opportunities, especially at the secondary level.
- The quality of tertiary education in Kuwait is still not on par with developed nations.
- The shortage of skilled teachers remains the biggest challenge for the education sector in Kuwait

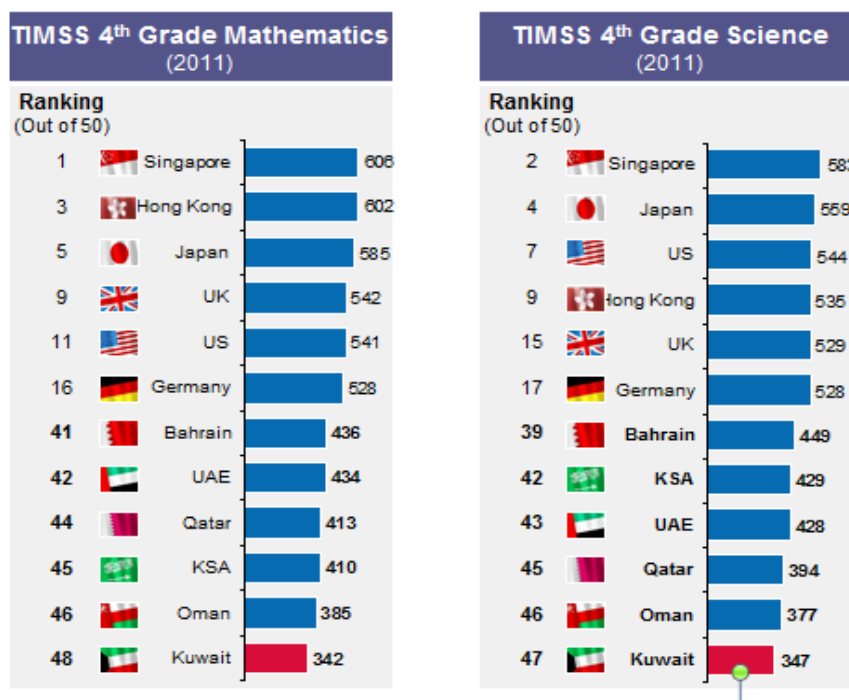
³ Statistical Review, Central Statistical Bureau, State of Kuwait, 2013

⁴ UNESCO, World Bank Data

⁵ Surveys, Desk Review, and the Five Year Development for the State of Kuwait (2006/2007- 2010/2011)

- Inadequate focus on science education: Kuwait tends to score low on the TIMSS international Math and Science assessments (See Exhibit 3); this has also led to a lack of specialization in scientific or high value adding disciplines in Universities.
- The lack of creativity, innovation, ICT use and a focus on 21st century skills in teaching methods and the national curriculum.
- The low enrollment and poor quality Technological and Vocational Education: in fact the total percentage of enrollment in technical and vocational education in 2007 was only 2% compared to a 10 % world average.
- The weak link between higher education and the labor market.

Exhibit 3: Kuwait Scores in TIMSS Assessments



Source: 2011 TIMSS Scores

Youth with Special Needs

Kuwait has witnessed active participation of both public and private entities to fulfill the needs and potential of youth with special needs. According to 2010/2011 statistics, there are 1746 students in studying in 29 special needs schools. The majority of special needs service recipients are women and children. Kuwait has witnessed some progress on the disability and youth front. For example, the Public Authority for Special Needs recently issues a disability identity card for individuals with disability. The Parliament of Kuwait also approved a new Disability Rights Act,

which increases the employment quota and provides further incentives to employers in order to support the integration of persons with disabilities into employment and social life. While there are many institutes providing education, training and rehabilitation for youth with special needs a greater emphasis needs to be placed on 'professionalizing workers' in the youth and special needs arena, bolstering educational ties with centers of excellence abroad, and creating vocational training tracks that are suitable for youth with special needs. Youth with giftedness, talents or exceptionalities also require special programs to avoid the 'Brain Drain' effect.

Youth and Employment

Employment is a critical issue for young Kuwaitis. When looking at the Kuwaiti employment landscape we need to consider two important factors: *Unemployment* and *Underemployment*. Indeed, initiatives and programs designed for youth need to target these two issues holistically.

Youth Unemployment

The Youth Unemployment Rate in Kuwait hovers around 6% with an average value of 9.73 from the years 1983 to 2005. Indeed, the employment statistics of 2011 confirm that unemployment is most prominent among the youth segment and has significantly increased since 2010⁶. In 2011, 45% of the total unemployed were between (15-29) years and almost 72.8% were between (15-39) years.

The majority of unemployed individuals in Kuwait are women as they form 77% of the total unemployed. While this number may have been inflated due to the subsidies offered from government, it is still a large number and an indication that the potential of young women is not being harnessed. A third crucial feature of unemployment is that it is most prominent among individuals with low education levels (Elementary and Intermediate levels). In 2011, 44.7% of unemployed had low education levels, almost half of the total unemployed population. Unemployment is also prominent among married youth. This is an indication youth unemployment in Kuwait may have an extended negative impact on the family of the unemployed individual.

⁶ In 2010, 47% of unemployed were between (15-29) and 68% were between (15-39) years.

Unemployment duration in Kuwait is also relatively high hovering around 12 months or more⁷. Long periods of unemployment may suggest two crucial issues: 1) Unemployed youth had been relying on their families for support 2) A lack of effective communication channels between employers and the unemployed. In particular, when a large number of young people experience lengthy unemployment, it degrades the overall skill level. Youth who are unemployed for long periods may also stop looking for work altogether and thus contribute to an increase in the inactive workforce⁸.

Youth Underemployment

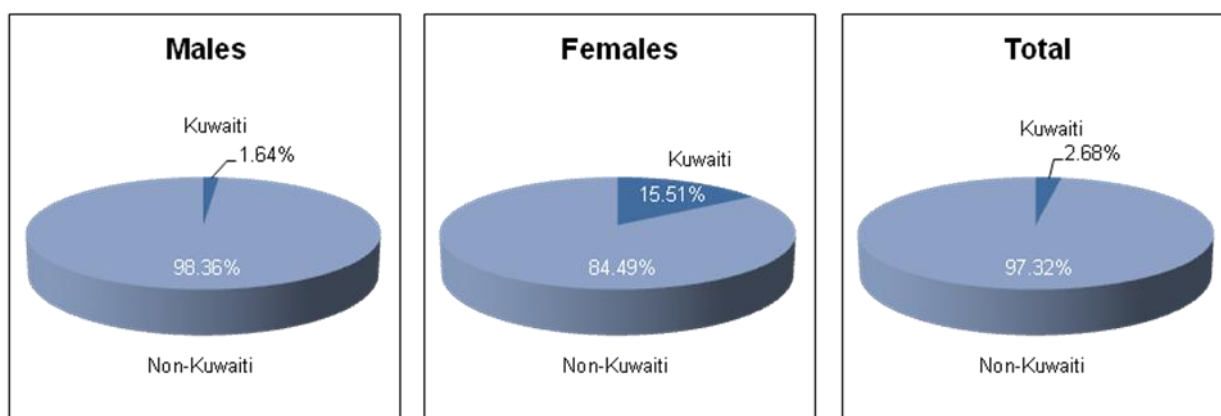
Another hidden problem which the Framework takes into consideration is *Underemployment*. Underemployment is manifested in those economically active youth who are not productive. This is may be due to the fact that the majority of Kuwaiti youth work in in government sectors where in many cases, these sectors are characterized by overstaffing and underutilization of skills. Underemployment among Kuwaiti youth has similar economic implications as unemployment, such as low economic productivity and is in fact a form of *masked unemployment*⁹. National employment statistics in 2012 suggests that the majority of those employed in the public sector are among the youth segment. For example, 31% of Kuwaiti nationals working in public sector are between (20-29) years and 38% are between (30-39) years. This means that more than half of the national population working in public sector is youthful. According to 2008 national statistics, only 2.68% of total employees in private sector are Kuwaiti Nationals .Interestingly, Kuwaiti women make up 15% of total women working in private sector while men makeup on 1.64%, indicating that Kuwaiti women are able to penetrate the private sector more than their male counterparts (See Exhibit 4).

⁷ Statistical Review, 2013, State of Kuwait

⁸ " Meeting the Employment Challenge in the GCC: The Need for a Holistic Strategy' Ideation Center, Booz & Company

⁹ Ibid

Exhibit 4: Percentage Distribution of Labor Employment in the Private Sector by Nationality (Kuwaiti & Non-Kuwaiti) and Gender (Males & Females) as of 30/6/2008



Youth and SMEs

The SMEs sector is a great opportunity for young Kuwaitis to become self-dependent. Yet another important challenge facing Kuwait is the low level of enterprise creation. Findings from the MENA-OECD Investment Program Working Group on SMEs and Entrepreneurship confirm that the limited development of entrepreneurship in MENA, Kuwait inclusive can be explained by at least three factors:

- High barriers to doing business, particularly for smaller firms (e.g., corruption, complex licenses, rigid labor laws, high taxes, and unfair competition)
- Cultural norms in which entrepreneurial activity is seen by young graduates as second-best compared with employment in the public sector, which offers more job security: This is particularly relevant to Kuwait where a recent study by Booz & Company shows that only 14% of the total sample said they wanted to 'start their own business'. Preferences were for working in public sector and/or Multinational companies due to the value proposition they offer in terms of training etc¹⁰.
- The very low participation of women in the labor force and in entrepreneurial activity.

¹⁰ Booz & Company, Ideation Center Insight, Student Voice in the GCC

The quality of the environment and ecosystem of doing business in any country has a significant impact on the competitiveness and economic growth. Indeed, the nature of regulations governing the practice of business in any economy is what determines the ease of start-up companies. Our interviews with youth suggest that regulations and high barriers of doing business is a major challenge for young entrepreneurs in Kuwait. In 2012, Kuwait Ranked 82 out of 185 countries in ease of doing business¹¹. It is clear that the Framework must focus on addressing issues related to the ease of starting business for youth (See Table 1).

Table 1: Ranking of Ease of Doing Business for State of Kuwait, 2012

Business Environment Dimensions	Rank
Starting a Business	142
Dealing with Construction Permits	119
Getting Electricity	55
Registering property	89
Getting Credit	104
Enforcing Contracts	117
Trading Across Borders	113
Resolving Insolvency	92

¹¹ Doing Business Report 2012, IFC

Youth and Wellbeing

Wellbeing is an overarching term that encapsulates quality of life, happiness, satisfaction and good physical and mental health. These are underpinned by economic security, safety, shelter, connection to others and having positive personal relationships. Young people's health and wellbeing, whether physical, emotional or mental, is a crucial factor in their later life outcomes and is vital for the State of Kuwait's future. Looking at the Kuwaiti youth landscape, there are some serious issues with the potential to undermine wellbeing, including mental disorders, overweight, obesity, delinquency and problems with substance abuse.

Youth and Health

The importance of an effective healthcare system is enriched in Kuwait's Constitution Article 15 which states that "The State cares for public health and for means of prevention and treatment of diseases and epidemics". Advancing health care is central to the larger vision of sustainable growth and opportunity. Health indicators Infant and maternal mortality have been decreasing in the past decades and are currently low in Kuwait. According to WHO reports, morbidity and mortality patterns reflect a high prevalence of non-communicable diseases and chronic diseases including diseases related to lifestyle and behavior as well as a high rate of injuries, primarily road traffic accidents. **Heart diseases, cancer, and injury (particularly transport accidents) are the three major causes of death in Kuwait.** While heart disease and cancer typically affect adults, awareness and prevention interventions must start at an early age. Diabetes is another crucial challenge facing Kuwaiti youth. Non-insulin-dependent (Type 2) diabetes is emerging as a major chronic non-communicable disease among the Kuwaiti population in general. Environmental factors such as diet, lack of physical activity and obesity appear to be most immediately amenable to prevention at a young age.

The importance of health and wellbeing in the lives of young people came through clearly in the National Youth Project in Kuwait. Young people were particularly concerned about the quality of health services, the lack of specialized care and targeted prevention health services for youth. As of 2011, Kuwait currently has 15 government hospitals, 12 private hospitals and 92 primary healthcare centers¹². It is

¹² 2012 National Statistics Review

unclear which centers offer targeted services for youth health and wellbeing. It is highly recommended that a review of current health services targeting youth is performed to set the baseline, gaps and possible way forward.

Youth and Social Services

In light of information and data provided by the Ministry of Education about wellbeing of students in public school, the data illustrates that 27% of total student body receive social support services (33% boys and 22% girls). Among school aged boys behavioral delinquencies are most prominent(37.3%), followed by problems in school change (31.3%), health and wellbeing (21.6%), problems of absence (8.9%) and finally economic problems which virtually non-existent for up to (0.45%). Among school aged girls, school change and inconsistency seems to be the number one issues (35.3%), followed by behavioral problems (32%), then health and wellbeing (24.7%), absence (6.2%) and finally economic problems (0.79%). Behavioral problems were also reported in studies conducted in Kuwait University and the General Authority for Applied Education and Training¹³.

Youth in Conflict with the Law

Young people are at risk of engaging in delinquent behaviors and juvenile crime. In Kuwait, juvenile crimes both felonies and misdemeanors declined between 2010 and 2011 from 1228 cases of the total general crimes to 978 cases. Juvenile crime tends to be concentrated in certain districts in Kuwait such as Farwaniya, Hawalli Jahra, Al-and Ahmadi¹⁴. A recent study found that 75 percent of the crimes committed by juveniles in Kuwait are linked to broken homes¹⁵. Indeed, a recent study on youth trends in Kuwait asserts that parents are the most important source of support for youth. Hence, youth programs need to consider family development as a whole (See Exhibit 5). While there have been numerous programs that have attempted to lower juvenile delinquency and crime, it is essential to determine the efficacy of different programs, and to see what works and what does not. In this way, the most successful programs can continue to be implemented and improved, while those that do not work are discontinued. Research on juvenile delinquency illustrates that

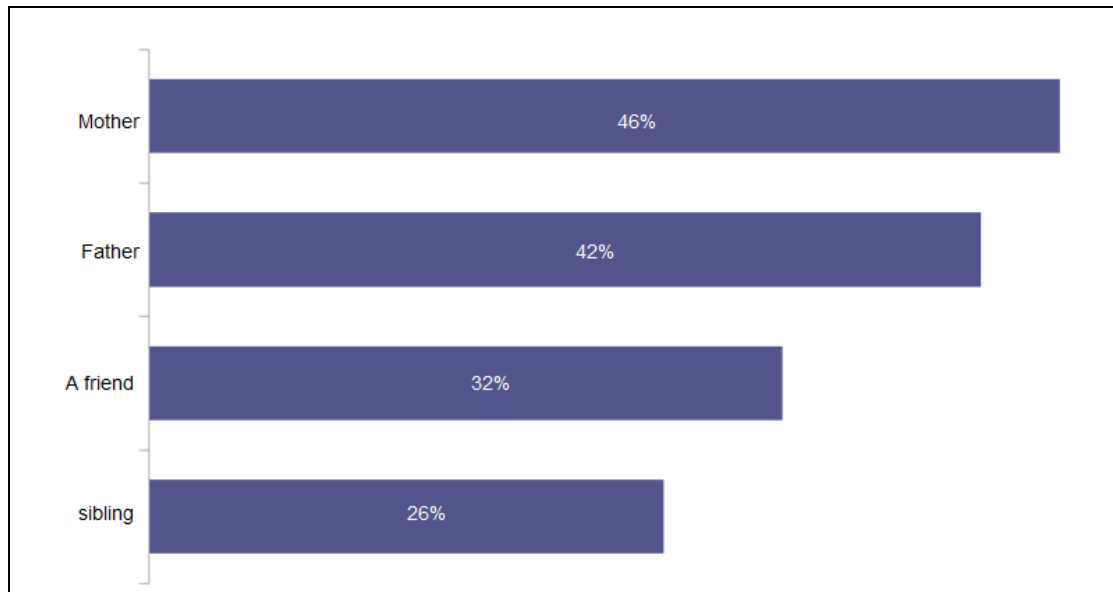
¹³ Report Presented by Dr. Bader Al Issa, 2013

¹⁴ Study by Dr Bader Al Issa

¹⁵ Research by Ministry of Social Affairs

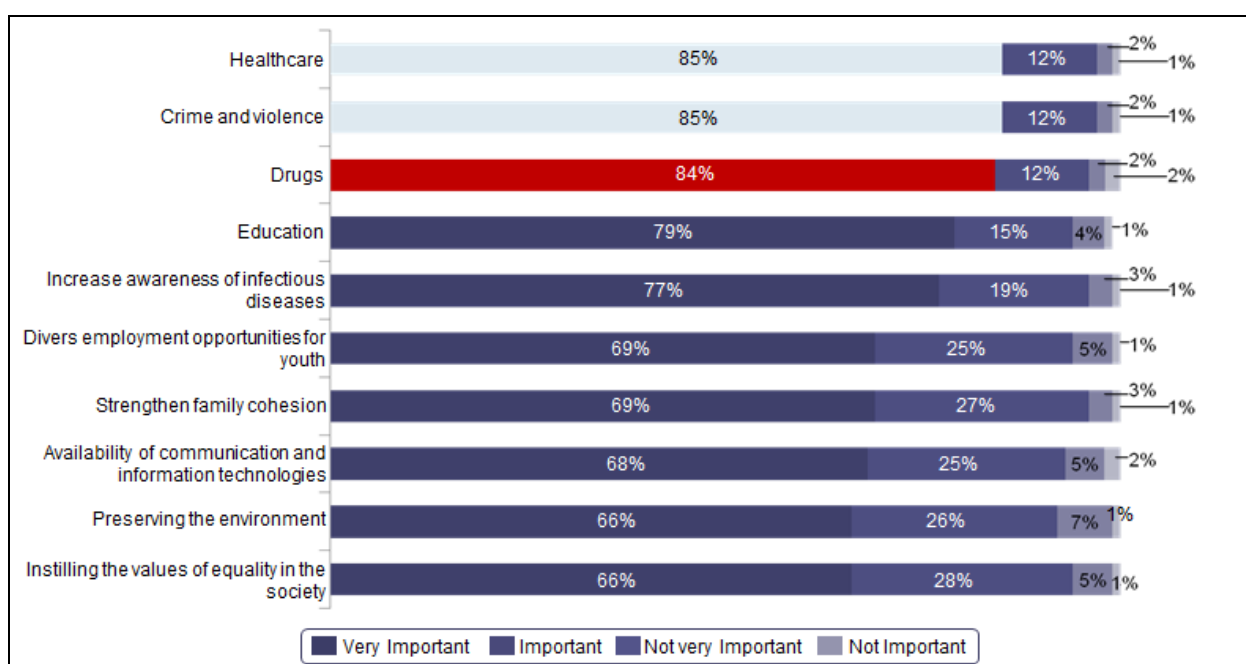
most effective programs are ones that intervene before the *onset of delinquent behavior* and *prevent that behavior* – prevention programs. By getting involved in children’s lives early, later crime can be effectively reduced. A recent survey by the UNDP clearly establishes the fact that delinquent behavior among youth a priority for action (See Exhibit 6).

Exhibit 5: Parents are Crucial Source of Support for Youth



Source: UNDP Youth Survey, 2012

Exhibit 6: Wellbeing, and Juvenile Delinquency is a Priority for Kuwaiti Youth



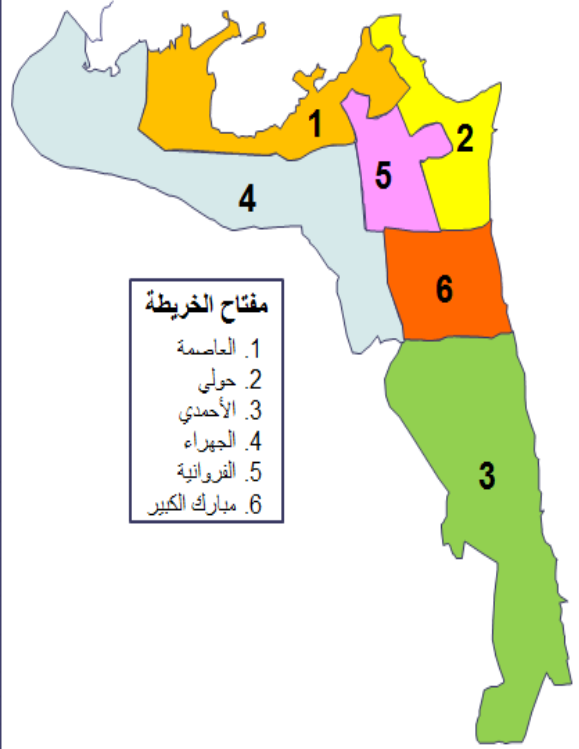
Source: UNDP Youth Survey, 2012

Youth and Sports & Leisure

Kuwait has a growing, young and increasingly affluent population with ample leisure time but participation in sports and physical activity is low. Chronic diseases are a major cause of death in Kuwait. The primary drivers of Kuwait's chronic diseases are inactivity and a sedentary lifestyle which poses increasing health risk. Children and young people can gain more from physical activity that just improved physical health, involvement in sports helps build character and discipline which is a skill that can be transferred to other areas of life. To date, there are 23 sports clubs in Kuwait 8 of which are specialized sports clubs dedicated to one kind of sport, 15 of which are wide-ranging sports clubs including a maximum of 14 sports and minimum of 6. There is a marked scarcity in sports clubs and youth centers dedicated to young women (see exhibit 7). Clubs are concentrated in the capital while many are under construction in other areas.

Exhibit 7: Sports Clubs and Youth and Reaction Centers in Kuwait

الموضوع	المحافظات						الإجمالي
	العاصمة منطقة 26 منطقة 38	حولي منطقة 15 منطقة 15	الأحمدي منطقة 29 منطقة 20	الجھراء منطقة 26 منطقة 14	الفروانية منطقة 20 منطقة 13	مبارك الكبير منطقة 12 منطقة 9	
السكان	كويتي	146.945	192.778	229.322	152.542	216.225	1.089.969
	غير كويتي	179.568	480.132	358.746	248.433	602.346	1.975.881
المجموع		326.513	672.910	588.068	400.975	818.571	3.065.850
الجس	ذكور	71.468	95.873	114.621	75.163	107.261	540.960
(الكويتيين فقط)	إناث	75.477	96.873	114.701	77.379	108.964	549.009
المجموع		146.945	192.778	229.322	152.542	216.225	1.089.969
قوة الشباب	ذكور	34.390	26.157	30.881	20.387	30.087	171.073
(15-29 سنة)	إناث	20.176	25.961	29.693	19.707	29.869	152.738
(الكويتيين فقط)	المجموع	54.566	52.118	60.574	40.094	59.956	323.811
المدارس الحكومية	ذكور	49	45	65	48	54	295
(من غير مدارس الروضة)	إناث	80	70	105	82	95	502
المجموع		129	115	170	130	149	797
الأندية الرياضية القائمة		4	3	3	1	3	15
الأندية الرياضية المتكفئة		-	4	2	2	-	8
نادي اميرال كويت	1	2 تحت الإنشاء	-	1 نادي موجود	1 تحت الإنشاء	1	3 نادي موجود
كلمة مدمية سابقة	2 تحت الإنشاء	2 تحت الإنشاء	3 تحت الإنشاء	3 تحت الإنشاء	4 تحت الإنشاء	2 تحت الإنشاء	17 تحت الإنشاء
كلمة خاصة	1	1	2	-	1	-	5
مراكز الشباب	4	1 مركز موجود	1 مركز موجود	1 مركز موجود	1 مركز موجود	1 مركز موجود	10 مركز موجود
المساحات الرياضية التوجيهية	5 ساحات	2 ساحات موجودة	2 ساحات موجودة	2 ساحات موجودة	4 تحت الإنشاء	2 تحت الإنشاء	13 تحت الإنشاء
كلمة المشروعات السياحية	1 - مدينة لوتيفية - حديقة	3 نادي - حديقة	-	-	-	حديقة	4 - مدينة لوتيفية - حديقة
الحقول العامة	32	35	17	11	14	20	119
الضوايق العامة	4	5	3	1	-	2	15
الضوايق الخاصة	-	-	4	-	-	-	4
دور السينما	2	6	3	-	3	1	15
المنتجعات	-	-	2	1	-	-	3
مناطق التخييم	-	-	-	✓	✓	-	-



On the Sports legacy front, Kuwait was among the first countries in the region to develop a National Olympic Committee (NOC) in 1957 which was then recognized by the International Olympic Committee. Yet, Sport is currently not an embedded aspect of the social and recreational lives of Kuwaiti nationals. Across the globe there is recognition of the valuable role that sport and exercise can play in the lives of people- especially young people- who are leading increasingly sedentary lifestyles, yet policy-makers in Kuwait are falling behind in their efforts to raise sports -for -all within national consciousness. Football is by far the most popular sport, both to play and to watch, and in Kuwait football receives the most attention at elite and grass roots levels. Despite considerable investment in professional clubs, Kuwait has not yielded notable international success in football. The top five countries in the FIFA/Coca-Cola world football rankings are Spain, Germany, Argentina, Croatia, and Portugal. GCC countries rank as follows: UAE: 89, Qatar: 102, Oman: 103, KSA: 108, Kuwait: 113, Bahrain: 117

Kuwait is also not known for hosting specific sporting events. While investing in sports such as equestrian events or motor car racing has afforded neighboring GCC

countries such as the UAE and Bahrain a level of international prestige, and draws sports tourists to the region, Kuwait has not embarked on this strategy. Also, Kuwait has seen improvement in athletic sports yet it still lags behind Qatar for example. To take just one bench mark, the graph below shows the performance of Kuwait in the Asian Games- a premier multi sports competition a to continental level. Kuwait was the first GCC country to win a Gold Medal in 1982 Asian Games. However Qatar is the most consistent and successful GCC country having women the most number of medals (See Exhibits 8, and Tables 2 and 3).

Exhibit 8: Cumulative Gold Medals at Asian Games (1970-2010)

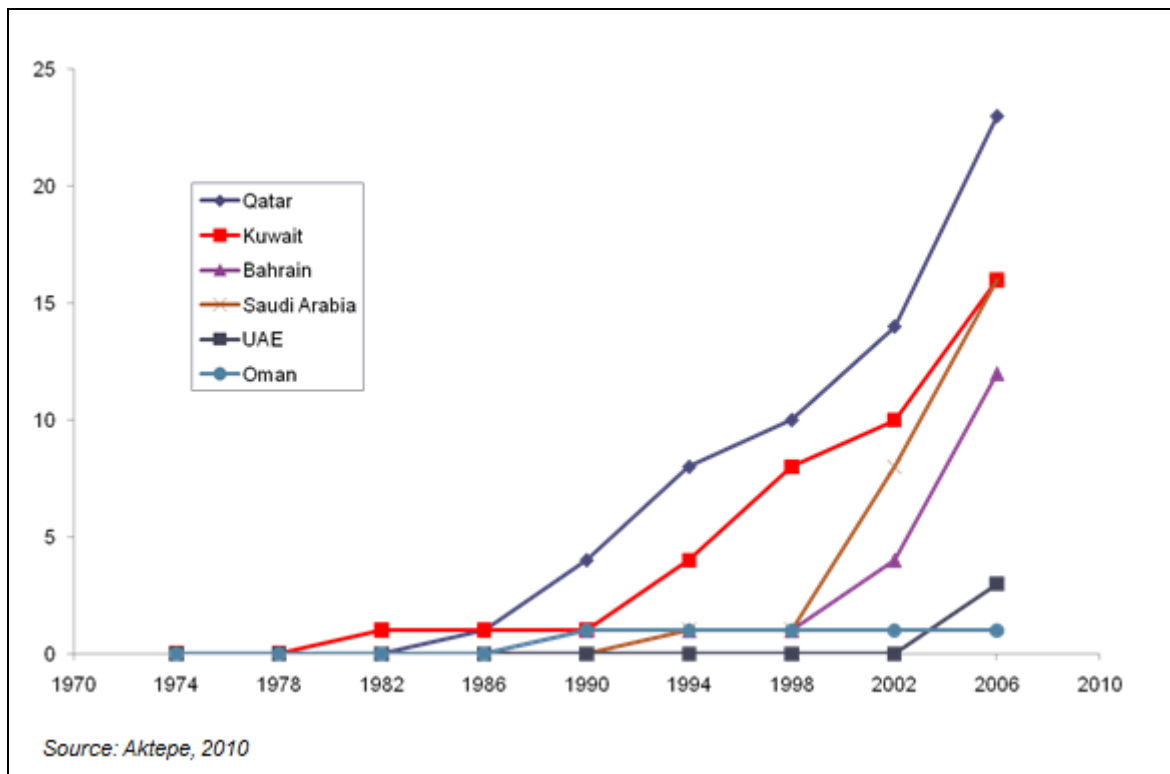


Table 2: Kuwait Leading GCC Champions League in the 90's







Champion(s)	Nation	Year(s)
9 times	 Kuwait	1970, 1972, 1974, 1976, 1982, 1986, 1990, 1996, 1998
3 times	 Saudi Arabia	1994, 2002, 2003
3 times	 Iraq	1979, 1984, 1988
2 times	 Qatar	1992, 2004
1 time	 United Arab Emirates	2007
1 time	 Oman	2009

Table 3 : Number of Competitors per NOC Delegation in Summer Olympics (2000-2008)

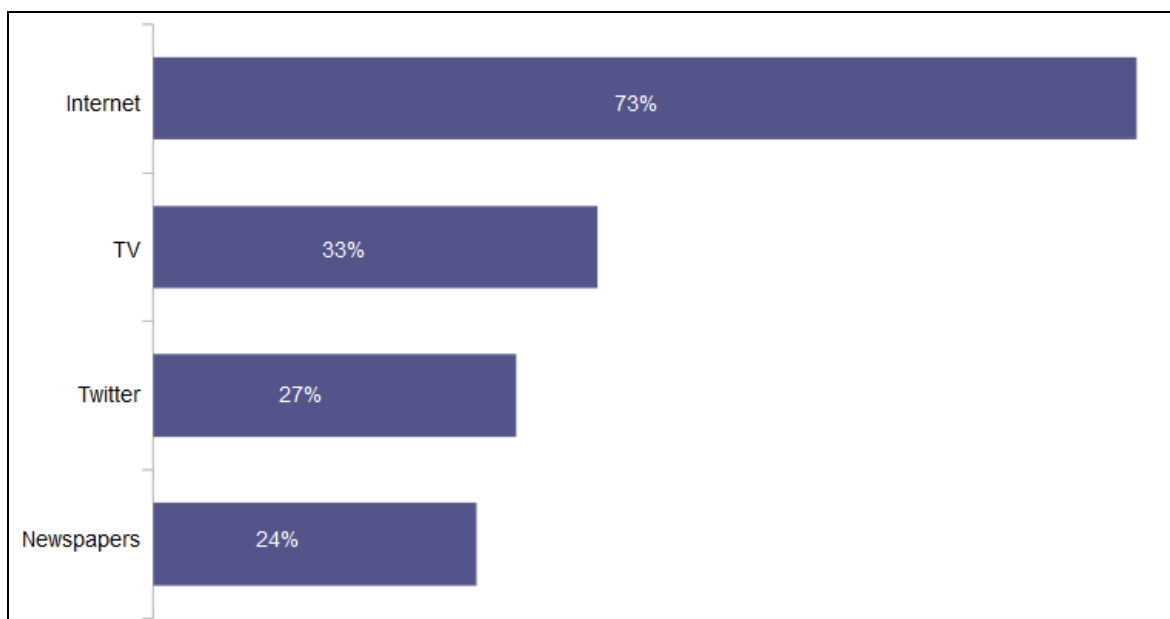
Country	2000	2004	2008
Bahrain	4	6	15
Jordan	8	8	7
Kuwait	29	29	6
Oman	6	2	5
Qatar	17	22	22
Saudi Arabia	12	16	16
Syria	8	6	8
UAE	4	4	8
Yemen	2	3	5

Little development is witnessed on the leisure front for youth i.e. Youth Centers and other initiatives. A study conducted by the Research Department of the National Assembly found that sports clubs were the most prominent in attracting attendance and interest among the youth category, while Youth Centers both failed and deteriorated over the years in the quality of service offerings and attraction to youth. Young people (ages 6-18 years) enrolled in youth centers in Kuwait do not exceeding 2% of the total number of Kuwaiti youth in this age group. According to the research, the reasons for failing Youth Centers are twofold: 1) inability to keep up with contemporary youth trends hence the absence of activities that are attractive to

today's youth 2) A dearth of specialists and professionals in the youth development field.

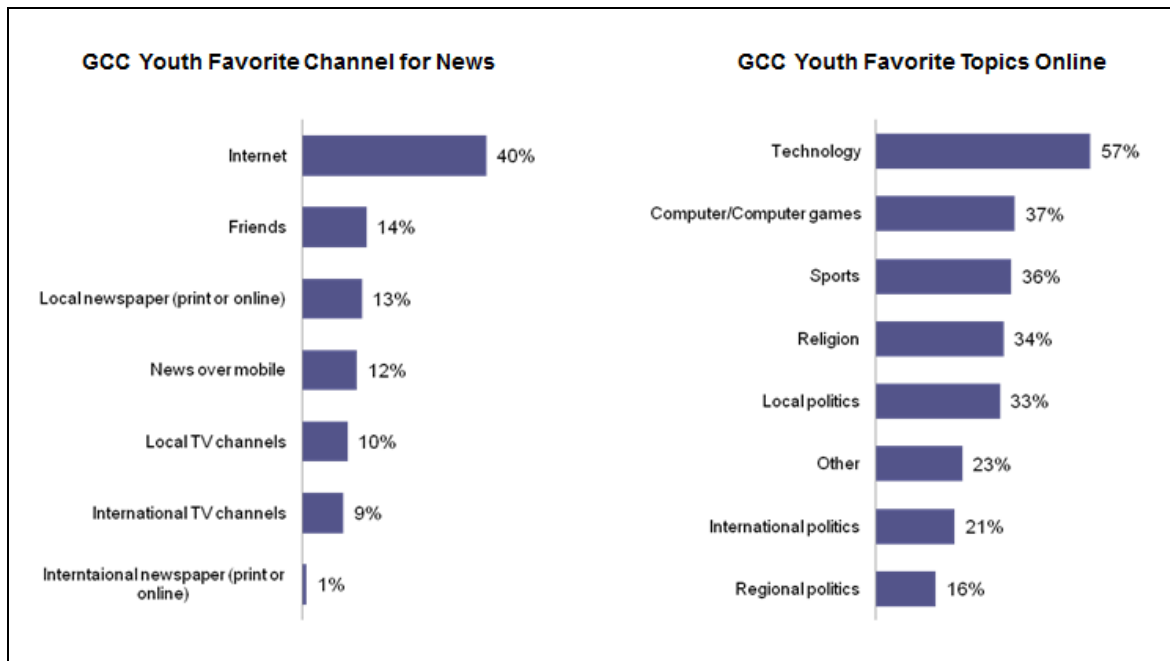
In addition to the above, Leisure programs for youth lack the digitization, creativity and connectivity elements. Indeed, the internet remains the most popular choice of information and source of entertainment for youth (See Exhibit 9 and 10). In fact, in Kuwait 45% of youth access the internet from home, 30% from work and only 18% percent from internet cafes and public spaces indicating a need to better accommodate the youth connectivity needs in youth public spaces.

Exhibit 9: Preferred source of Information for Youth



Source: UNDP Youth Survey, 2013

Exhibit 10: Youth are Digitally Engaged



Source: "GCC Youth Report" Booz & Company

Youth and Substance Abuse

Substance abuse poses risks to the individual's health and to society more generally. Although it is virtually impossible to collect reliable and comprehensive statistics on substance abuse given that use of many of the substances is illegal and under-reporting will be common, it is possible to outline some trends in Tobacco use. A study conducted among Kuwaiti University male students has revealed a smoking prevalence of 30% by age 20 and 50% by age 24 for the current smokers. The level of smoking observed among the male college students in Kuwait was also found to be considerably higher than the prevalence of smoking reported among college students in other countries¹⁶. The Global Youth Tobacco Survey for Kuwait also illustrates that Tobacco use starts in school with students ages 13-15. The study suggests that Tobacco use is quite high among school students, where nearly one third (28.8%) of students sample in the survey tried smoking cigarettes. Also, one in four (21.2%) of current smoker students smoke at home. The percentage of current smoker females who usually smoke at home is significantly more than current

¹⁶ Moody, M., Anjum, M., Sugathan, T., Gerges, N., Al-Bustan, M., 1994. Factor associated with the initiation of smoking by Kuwait males. *Journal of Substance Abuse*.

smoker male students. It is high time to implement modern and comprehensive preventive and control programs and professionalize workers in substance abuse counseling and treatment domains.

Young Women

The 1962 constitution provides men and women with equal rights. Kuwaiti women have the right to vote and run as candidates in parliamentary and local elections. For the first time in Kuwait's history, four women won seats in the 2009 parliamentary elections. Women also comprise more than 60 percent of the student body at several leading Kuwaiti universities. Nevertheless, women face discrimination in several areas of law and society and remain underrepresented in the workforce¹⁷. This Framework advocates for specific gender focused interventions targeting young women and taking into consideration the gender imbalances and consequently promoting gender parity.

The key challenge for young Kuwaiti females is economic empowerment. For example, the number of unemployed female citizens, as of April 20, 2012, reached 15143, forming 79.4% of the total unemployed, compared to 20.6% for their male counterparts. Thus far the talent pool of women in Kuwait remains untapped; women represent a better-educated talent pool where they make up 67 % of university graduates. Despite these education levels, the percentage of women in the labor force in is 51%, higher than most GCC countries and lower than other countries, particularly global leaders like Norway, Switzerland, and Canada¹⁸.

The successful integration of national women into the private-sector workforce will help address the dual imperatives of nationalizing workforces and reducing regional unemployment. Women have already made significant gains according to latest statistical trends of private sector employment (See Table 4).

¹⁷ Freedom House Report

¹⁸ 'Educated, Essential and Ambitious: Women will drive the GCC's Future' Booz & Company Report

Table 4: National Labor Force in the Private Sector from 2009-2012

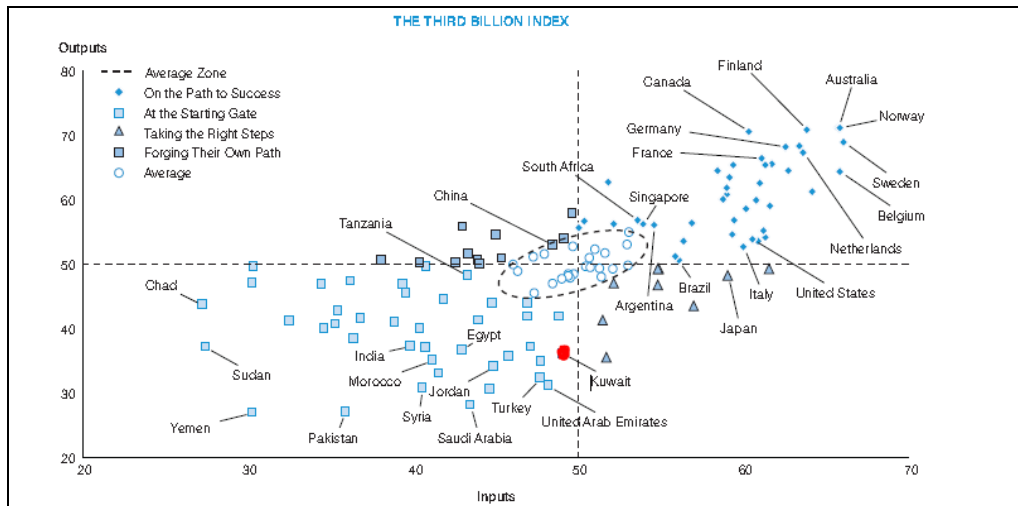
Year	Males	Females	Total
2009	25197	26838	52035
2010	27103	30417	57520
2011	29101	32334	61435
2012	28611	33279	61890

Source: Bulletin of the basic features of national employment in the private sector. Central Administration of Statistics

A Snapshot of the Third Billion: Kuwait

Booz & Company recently published a report entitled "Empowering the Third Billion: Women in the World of Work in 2012". In the report, Booz & Company created the Third Billion Index, a ranking of 128 countries worldwide that is based on how effectively leaders are empowering women as economic agents in the marketplace. The Index is a composite of established data on women's economic and social status. Kuwait was ranked 97 out of 128 countries according to the Index. The Third Billion Index groups countries into five clusters according to the efforts they have expanded to empower women economically, and the results they have achieved. Kuwait was clustered 'At the Starting Gate' meaning that the country has not yet *systematically* approached women empowerment. The Index is made up of Inputs and outputs. *Inputs* assess government and private sector steps to improve the economic position of women, while *Outputs* represent observable aspects of women's participation in the national. In the inputs side, Kuwait scores (52.6) for preparation and education of women, (40.6) in access to work policy and (53) on entrepreneurial support. This indicates the need to expend more efforts in these three particular areas, with special emphasis on 'access' to work policy. On the outputs side Kuwait scores low for both advancement (37.6) and inclusion (37.3) indicating the need to support women when they are in the workforce. Kuwait also scores (42) on equal pay (See Exhibit 11).

Exhibit 11: Kuwait at the Starting Gate of Women Economic Empowerment



Youth Concerns, Hopes and Aspirations

Listening to young people’s voices, hopes and aspirations is vital in today’s rapidly changing world. This framework takes into consideration the hopes and aspirations youth have for themselves, their communities and their country. To document trends in youth hopes and aspirations we have sought two different sources:

- Research and Youth Surveys i.e. Kuwait Listens, UNDP Youth Survey, Arab Youth Survey and other studies
- Focus groups and discussions with youth

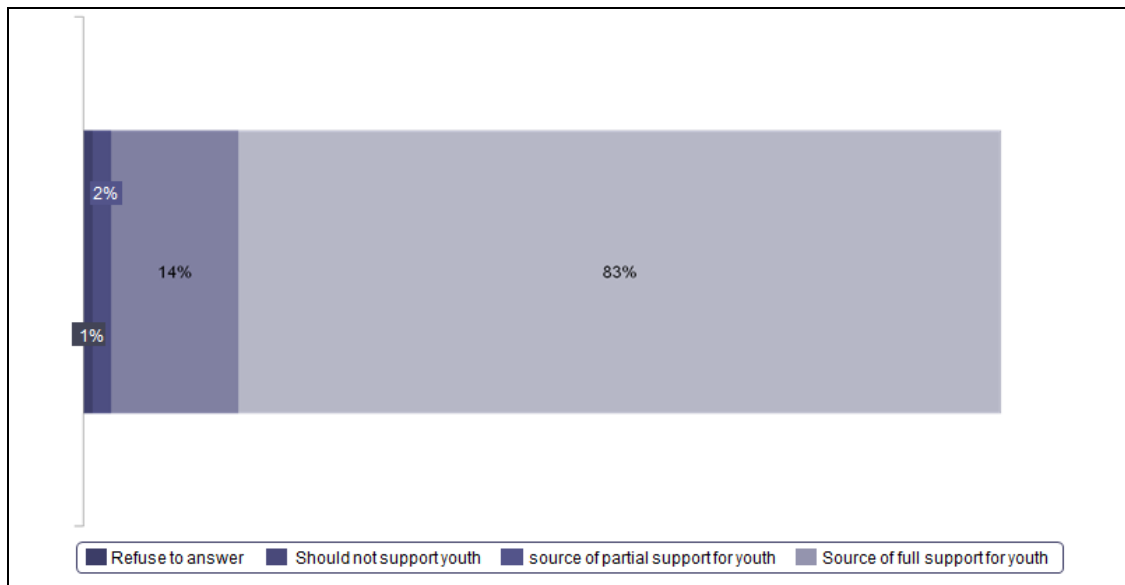
Trend 1: Youth believe Government plays an important role in youth development services

Exhibit 12 clearly illustrates that youth believe that government has a bigger role to play in supporting youth empowerment and mainstreaming. 83% of surveyed youth believe government should be the source of full support and only 14% said it should be the source of partial support. While this trend is in line with current government efforts to support youth development, it is an indication that youth so not see *private sector* or *third sector* as potential partners in youth development. This is a potential problem leading to a sense of entitlement by the youth segment.

Recommendation:

- Governments should communicate the role of private sector and third sector in supporting youth.
- Governments need to create incentives for private sector to support youth development and reward best practices

Exhibit 12: Youth Views on Role of Government in Youth Development



Source: UNDP Youth Survey, 2012

Trend 2: Youth are optimistic about the future

Generally speaking the majority of Kuwaiti youth feel comfortable living in Kuwait, they are optimistic about the future but they believe that there needs to be 'targeted' programs dedicated to the youth segment (See Exhibit 13).

Youth optimism in Kuwait is consistent with the broader Arab youth trends where three quarters of Arab youth, including youth in Kuwait have said their best days are ahead of them¹⁹. In each of the 15 countries surveyed, a clear majority are optimistic about the future, with a nearly equal percentage of youth in the Gulf and non-Gulf states (76 percent and 72 percent, respectively). In fact Youth in Kuwait maintain the strongest faith in a brighter future, with 82% stating that “our best days lie ahead.” (See Exhibit 14)

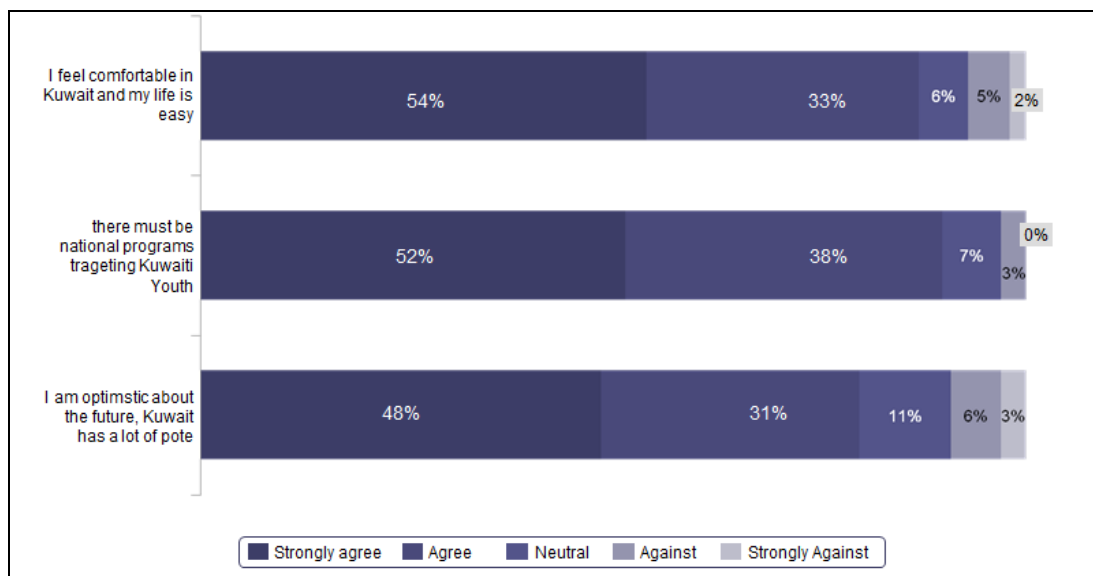
¹⁹ The fifth annual ASDA'A Burson-Marsteller Arab Youth Survey, 2013

Generally speaking this current youth generation is seen as optimistic where their pattern of responses associated with optimism and seeking to improve their prospects in life to gain a respected place in society.

Recommendation:

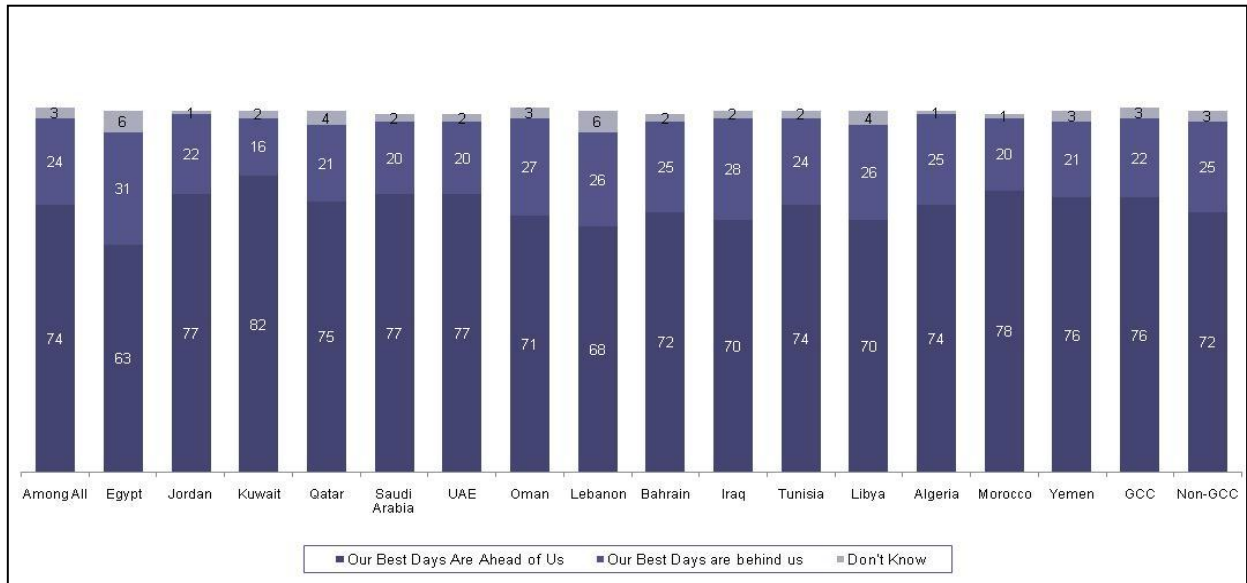
- Supporting the development of social enterprises in Kuwait that are led by youth. For example, **Power of Youth** is a social enterprise, led by youth in Scotland that aims to “harness the power and optimism of young business leaders and entrepreneurs who have the fire and drive within them to make a difference to the world and inspire a generation”
- Creating Channels of communication with youth to harness the power of innovative ideas.

Exhibit 13: Youth Optimism in Kuwait



Source: UNDP Youth Survey, 2012

Exhibit 14: Our Best Days Lie Ahead of Us



Source: The fifth annual ASDA'A Burson-Marsteller Arab Youth Survey, 2013

Trend 3: Kuwaiti youth aspire to a high quality education, better teachers and a creative curriculum

In almost all youth surveys and research in Kuwait education comes as a top priority for youth (See Exhibit 15). A recent survey by Booz & Company suggests that 61 percent of Kuwaiti youth believe their education system can be improved²⁰. The focus groups conducted for this framework also suggests that youth are proposing a shift from high stakes testing model to a creative, digital and modern curriculum. Kuwaiti youth express the greatest dissatisfaction with innovation in education in addition to very poor rapport with their teachers.

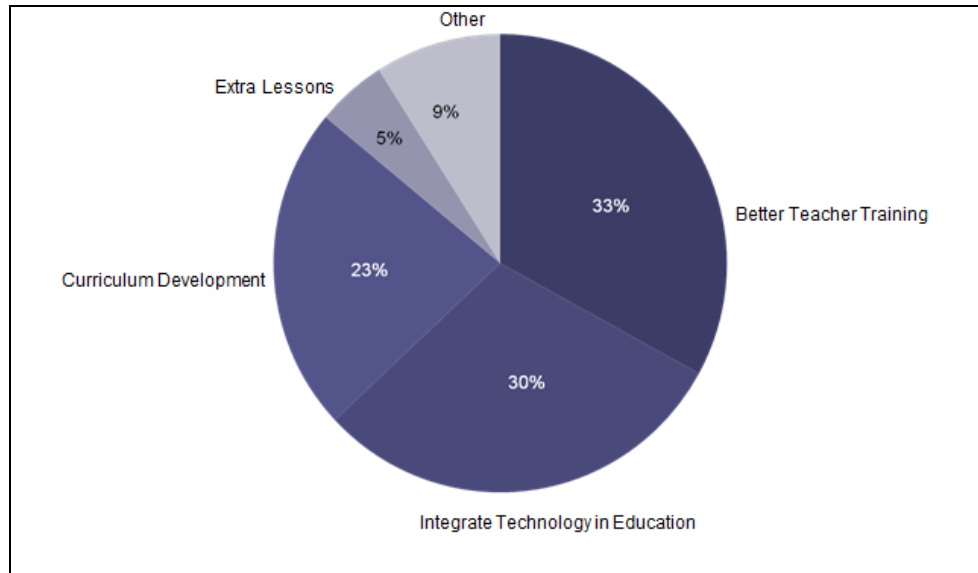
Recommendation:

- Engage private universities and centers of excellence aboard in teacher training both at the in-service and pre-service levels to reduce depended of public universities and improve teacher quality
- Provide training for teachers in adult-youth relationships
- Provide training for teachers in integration of technology in education

²⁰ Listening to Student Voices in the GCC, Booz & Company, Ideation Center Insight

- Launch a national review of the curriculum with focus on flexibility, choice and creativity

Exhibit 15: Kuwaiti Youth Education Reform Priorities



Source: Kuwait Listens, 2012

Trend 4: Kuwaiti youth hope to re-establish the rule of law

Research suggest that youth want to promote citizenship and social security, cohesion and national identity, through endorsing the rule of law, and integrating and reinforcing civic education topics. Kuwaiti youth agree that civil unrest and the lack of democracy are the two crucial barriers to the county's future development. and display a growing frustration with the political direction of their country²¹.

Recommendation:

- Allow for youth participation in government decision making
- Enhance civic education and national identity initiatives i.e. character building programs, national campaigns etc.

²¹ Interviews with youth, National Youth project, Arab Youth Survey

Trend 5: Kuwaiti youth are concerned about high cost of living and employment opportunities

Throughout the region Arab youth are more worried about the rising cost of living than “the economy”, “the threat of terrorism” and “events of the Arab Spring”. This translates into the need for a secure future, for worries about employment and owning a house. These concerns are evenly split across Gulf countries and Arab countries outside the GCC. Sixty-one per cent of Arab youth in the GCC and 63% in the remaining countries surveyed say they are very concerned about the issue.

Also, “being paid a fair wage” remains the priority of Arab youth – cited as the highest priority of 82%. In Kuwait, 84% describe being paid a fair wage as “very important”. Given the importance of a fair wage, this is clearly one explanation why Kuwaiti youth choose public sector employment over other forms of employment.

Recommendations:

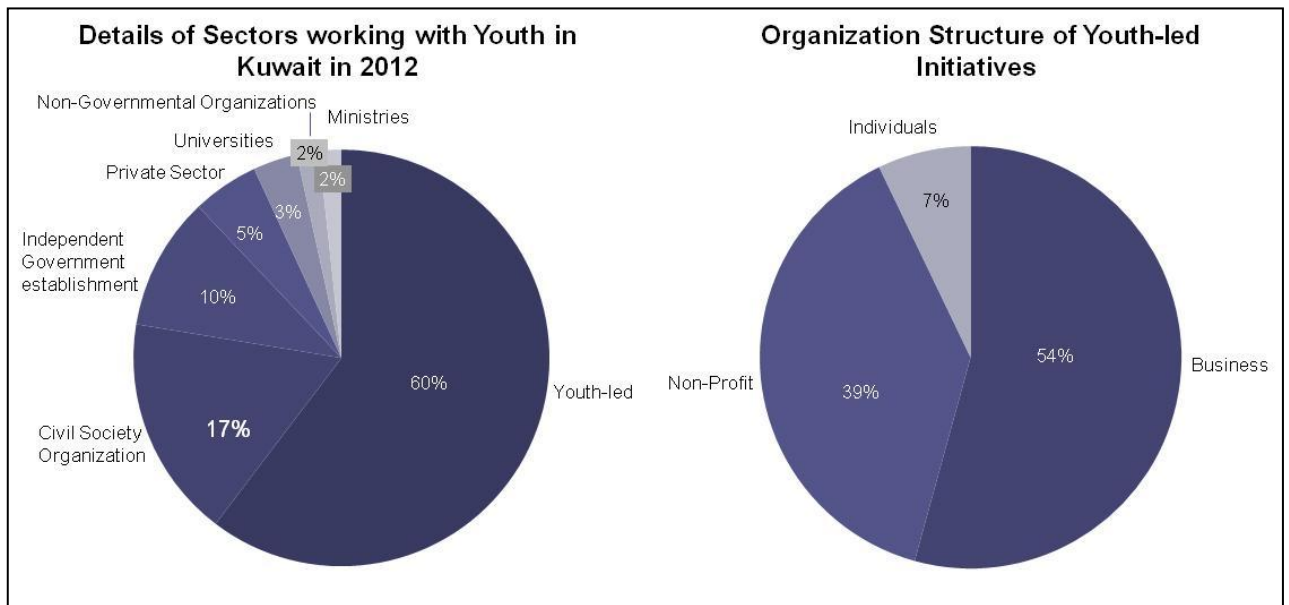
- Promote affordable housing for youth
- Possibly provide incentives and subsidies to increase private sector employment i.e. “salary top-up scheme”
- Promote financial literacy and financial management skills to youth
- Promote SME development in high tech and high value adding sector
- Make public sector employment less attractive
- Introduce Career Education schemes as an early age

The Youth organizations Landscape in Kuwait: Youth Leading Youth and Social Enterprises

The youth organizations landscape in Kuwait appears to be highly youth led. Indeed, in Kuwait volunteer work seems to be a growing trend among youth. In a study conducted by the UNDP, most organizations offering support and development to youth were youth led (70%). The second most popular category of youth organizations are civil societies. Private sector involvement in youth development seemed minimal. Among the youth organizations, most of them appeared to be run like businesses i.e. social enterprises. Indeed, the social enterprise model is a highly attractive to youth. Social entrepreneurship can be a powerful solution for Kuwaiti youth. By blending both financial sustainability (profits) with a

prioritization of social impact, social enterprises will contribute to both economic revitalization and social reconstruction. Social entrepreneurship is also particularly well suited to youth as it combines the desire for independence and self-actualization, but it is also relevant for a generation whose worldview incorporates a sense of responsibility that goes significantly beyond immediate family and self (See Exhibit 16).

Exhibit 16: Youth Organizations Landscape (UNDP)



Kuwait Listens: Springboard for Youth Empowerment

The Kuwaiti Government is determined to give young people a voice and to provide opportunities to influence decisions that affect them. In 2012, the Amiri Diwan launched the National Youth Project (NYP) known as 'Kuwait Listens' with the vision to enable youth to participate in the advancement of Kuwait's future vision and its strategic and developmental goals. Through the National Conversation young people agreed that governments can and should do better to engage and support them. Some young people want a more active role in shaping major government decisions and others want it to be easier to understand and connect with government. Some want to feel that government is genuinely interested in young people. The strategic goals of the Kuwait Listens project are as follows:

1. Creating communication channels between political leadership and youth groups
2. Developing positive participation methods for youth in society issues
3. Upgrading youth capabilities and skills and reinforcing their contribution to national unity
4. Identifying youth ambitious and aspirations and developing ways to enhance these ambitions
5. Identifying concerns and challenges facing youth in order to find appropriate solutions for them
6. Engaging youth and seeking their views in government programs and development plans
7. Preparing and qualifying promising future youth leadership to proceed with the development process.
8. Encouraging youth initiatives and inciting them to innovation and work in a democratic society.
9. Strengthening the national Kuwaiti identity, developing national cohesion, combating radicalism and fanaticism, and abandoning group sectarian, and tribal divisions among youth.
10. Bolstering the democratic and constitutional culture, reinforcing tolerance and diversity of views and opinions among youth.
11. Encouraging freedom of expression, laying the foundations of communication ethics and respecting individual opinions

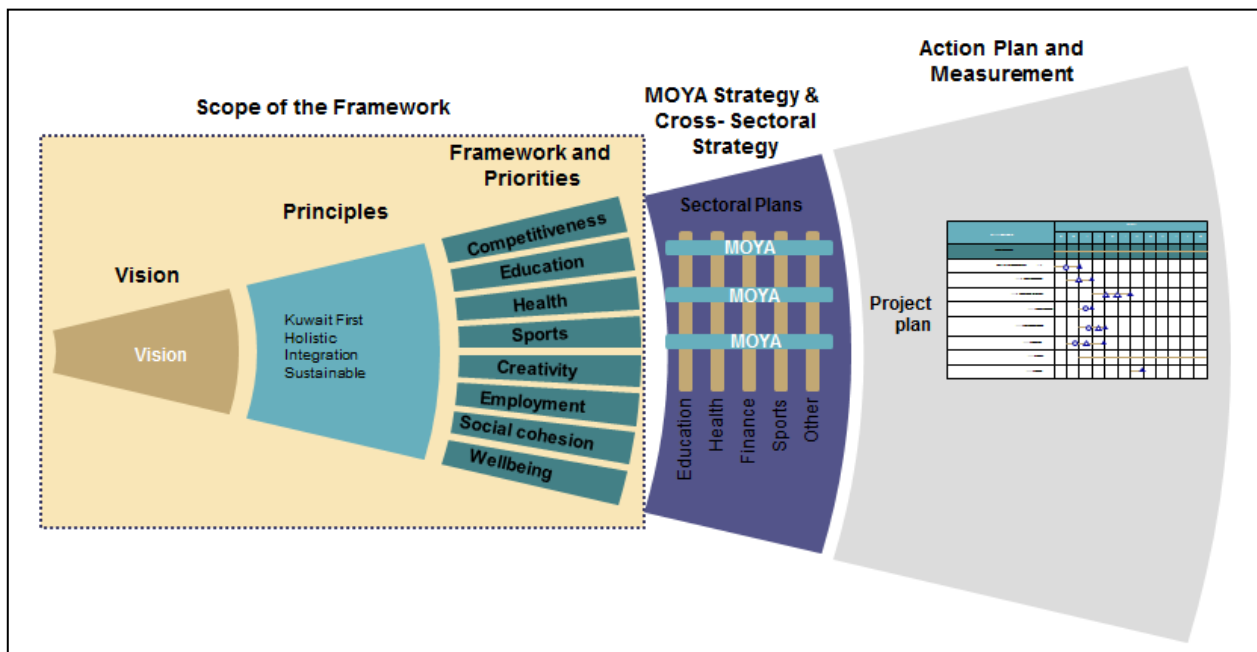
Part II: A Framework for Youth Empowerment and Mainstreaming

The Framework for Youth Empowerment and Mainstreaming **includes several elements as follows:**

- 1) A vision for Kuwaiti Youth
- 2) Principles in which the Framework are built
- 3) Framework Priorities and Objectives

It is highly recommended that this framework for youth is complemented with a comprehensive strategy for the Ministry of Youth Affairs (MOYA).

Exhibit 17: Scope of Work



Vision

The National Framework for Youth Empowerment and Mainstreaming rests aims to:

Intentionally enhance the capacities, skills and capabilities of young people through addressing their needs, promoting positive outcomes, and providing

integrated coordinated, targeted and measurable initiatives necessary for holistic development of all young people.

The desired outcome and vision is as follows:

"Towards youth that are proud of their nation's authentic values, creators, initiators and a partners in the sustainable development of the nation"

Principles

National Framework for youth Empowerment and Mainstreaming is underpinned by the following 6 principles:

Kuwait First - reinforcing a sense of loyalty, unity, cohesion and belonging to the Nation, its constitution and leadership.

Holistic - youth development initiatives must encompass all aspects of a young person's life and respond to their physical, psychological, social, economic and spiritual needs

Integration - seeks the mobilization and participation of all stakeholders. The need for different key role players such as government, civil society, national and international institutions, private and business sectors to coordinate their efforts to ensure greater impact in developing young people.

Sustainable development - young people's skills, potential, and capability must be maximized without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Shared Responsibility: The Framework acknowledges that all young people in Kuwait irrespective of age enjoy human rights as contained in the Constitution. These rights are the cornerstones of democracy and affirm the democratic values of human dignity, equality and freedom. It is important to note that there are also responsibilities that accompany those rights. This approach therefore reaffirms that youth are not only recipients and beneficiaries of services, but they are also providers. This also helps reduce the feelings of entitlement among youth.

Participation and Inclusion – service providers must design policies, strategies and programs for and with young people by sharing information, creating opportunities and involving them in decision making as active participants in their own development.

Four Pillars of the Framework: Sustainable Development

The National Framework for Youth Empowerment and Mainstreaming must be embedded in sustainable development frameworks. The Framework defines sustainability as development that **distributes the benefits of economic growth equitably, regenerating the environment rather than destroying it, and empowering people rather than marginalizing them**²². Youth empowerment in Kuwait comes hand in hand with commitment to sustainable development models. The Kuwaiti National Competitiveness Report for 2011/2012 clearly advises that the State of Kuwait should regulate public spending and social welfare policy in order to avoid the risk of large deficits in the future given volatile oil prices. The State should also be advised to avoid financing deficit on the accumulated reserves in times of high oil prices and achievement of budget surplus and preserve the 'generation fund' for sustainability of future generations²³.

²² UNDP Definition

²³ See Kuwait Competitiveness Report 2011/2012, Kuwait National Competitiveness Committee

Exhibit 18: Four Pillars of the Framework



 **Youth for National Competitiveness**

In recent years, the concept of competitiveness has emerged as a new paradigm in economic development. The Global Competitiveness Report of the World Economic Forum defines competitiveness as *"the set of institutions, policies, and factors that determine the level of productivity of a country"*

The competitiveness rank of Kuwait has been on a downward trend over the last few years. According to the Global Competitiveness Report on 2012-2013, the country ranks 37th globally after having been ranked 34th in 2011/2012. Success in a global environment is linked to the productivity of a country and its human capital development. To this end, the Framework considers the pillar of 'National Competitiveness' to challenge the youth of the nation to promote and develop improved consciousness of the value of leading productive lives through quality education, 21st century skills, employment opportunities and an entrepreneurial drive.

The Global Competitiveness Index (GCI) indicates areas that are of crucial importance to the prosperity of Kuwait, its people and its economy. Most importantly its youth, who in essence are the future of the country. Clearly, efforts need to be expended into Efficiency Enhancer Indicators and Innovation and Sophistication Indicators (see Exhibit 19) and these have been on a downward slope in the past years (See Exhibit 20 and 21).

Exhibit 19: Global Competitiveness Index

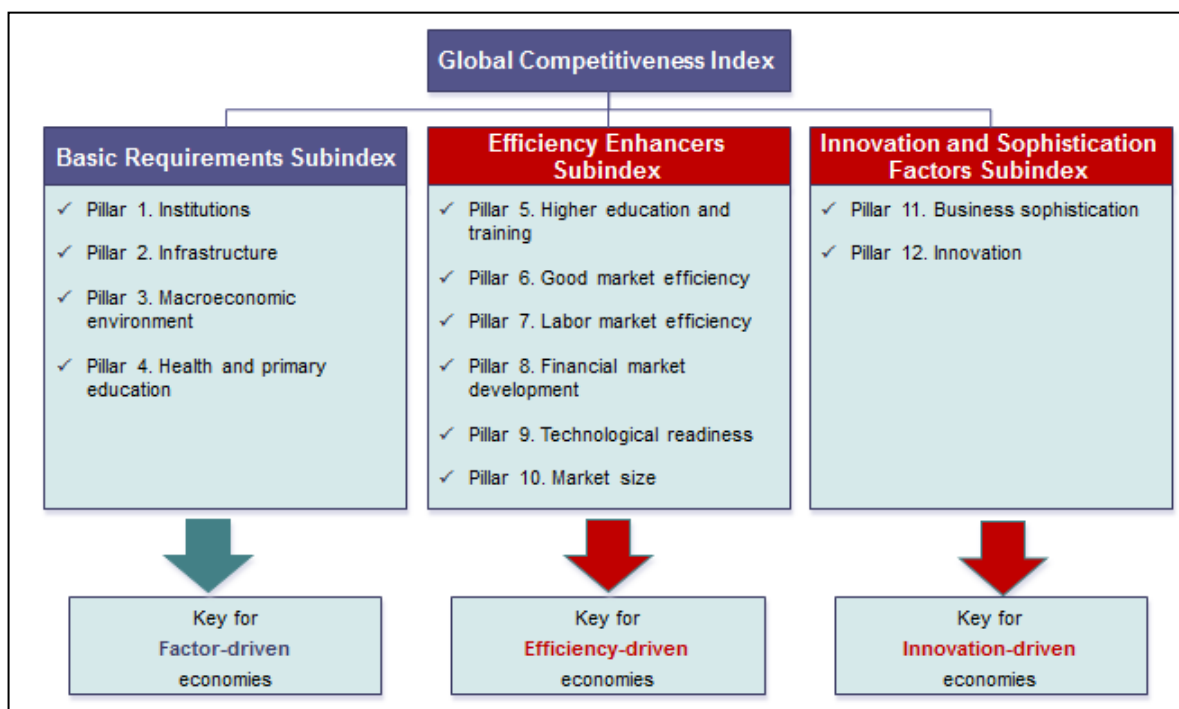


Exhibit 20: Efficiency Enhancer Indicator Raking For Kuwait

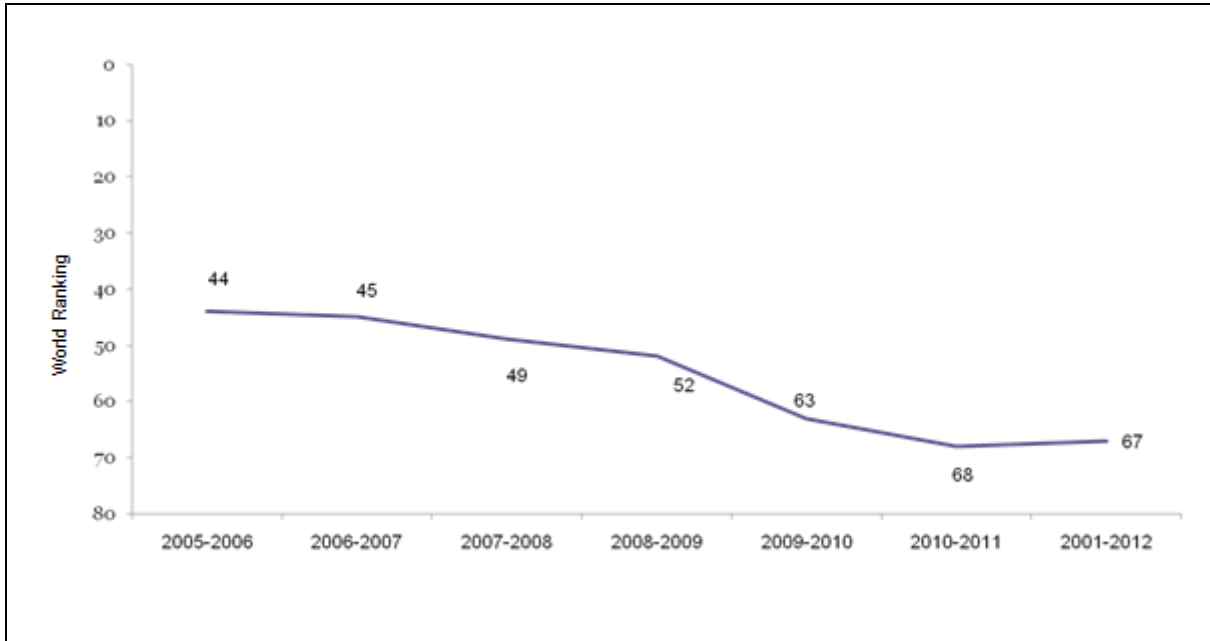
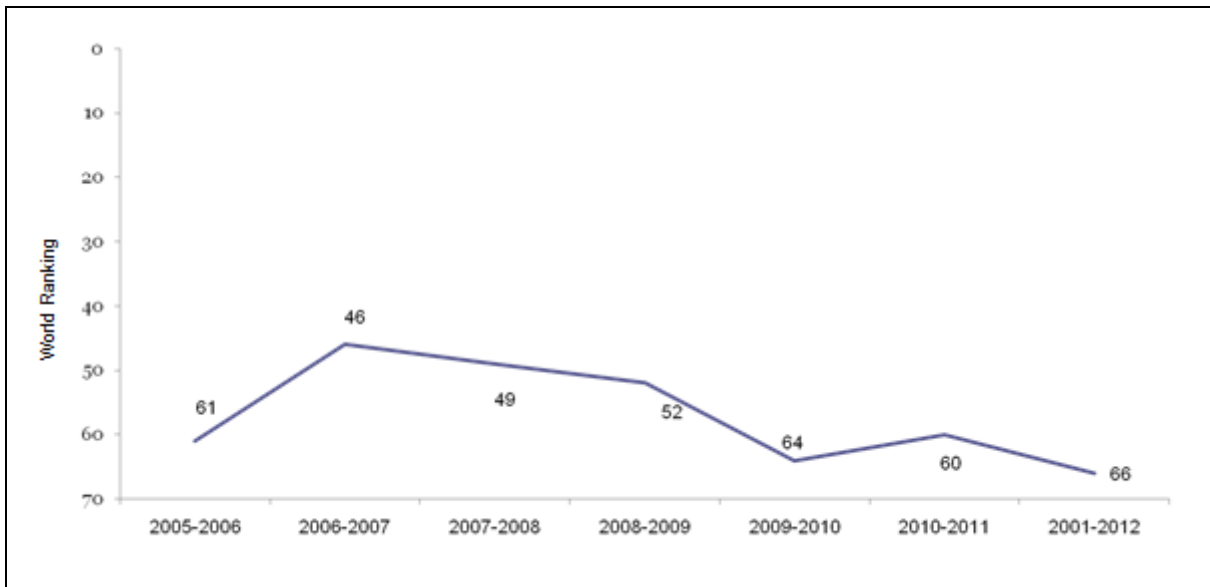


Exhibit 21: Innovation and Sophistication Invocator Ranking for Kuwait



Given the above, it is advised that youth development initiatives focus on higher education, skills development, training, innovation, job creation, research and creativity.

A Recommendation:

One recommendation is for the Ministry of Youth to launch A **Youth for National Competitiveness Campaign and Workshops**. The key objective of the Youth for National Competitiveness workshops is to strengthen the knowledge-base and unleash innovative ideas on how to positively influence the 12 key pillars of Kuwait's competitiveness index (as published by the World Economic Forum). Other objectives of the Campaign include:

- Raising awareness about the effective contribution of youth to their country's status on the National Competitiveness ladder
- Raising awareness about national competitiveness rankings and how the various indices are being measured
- Raising awareness about the sectors of economic (as well as social activity) that have been identified to drive growth and hence are potential magnets for startups

A - Education, Training and Skill Development

Strategic Objective 1: Improve Quality of Teacher Preparation and Training Programs

Operational Objectives 1:

- Collaborate with private sector and global sectors of excellence in developing new teacher education programs to reduce the country's reliance on public Colleges of Education
- Introduce or reinforce Teacher Certification and Licensing that encourages teachers to develop professionally
- Introduce and strengthen teacher training programs in e-learning and creative thinking
- Introduce the 'Teacherpreneur Model' which allows teachers to become leaders and entrepreneurs in their subject matter
- Introduce teacher training programs on adult-youth partnerships
- Conduct national survey on yearly basis 'student voice' in education
- Professionalize the teaching industry through attracting best talent to teaching (see Teach for American and Teacher First Models)

Strategic Objective 2: Improve and Enhance K-12 Curriculum

Operational Objectives 2:

- Enhance K-12 Curriculum in math and sciences
- Enhance K-12 Curriculum in extracurricular activities and subjects that require creativity
- Enhance national identity, belonging and social cohesion programs in curriculum
- Enrich curriculum with focus on extracurricular subjects in sports, creativity and innovation

Strategic Objective 3: Capacity Building for Research in Higher Education and other institutions at the Individual, Organizational and Institutional levels

Operational Objectives 3:

- Create Incentives for students to participate in research activities
- Enhance research centers in universities and link with global centers of excellence abroad.
- Build research capacity at three levels:
 - Individual: Training needs – skills and knowledge gaps
 - Organizational: Systems and resources
 - Institutional: Stakeholder analysis and Incentive structures
- Make research funds more visible to the public and/or create a research fund for youth
- Activate Libraries and public research areas

Strategic Objective 4: Improve Technical and Vocational Education in Kuwait

Operational Objectives 4:

- Stimulate enterprise based training (EBT) initiatives and internship
- Provide unemployed youth vocational training in areas that supports them in seeking high value jobs i.e. digital and creative industries, gaming, product design etc.
- Enhance skill development programs and training.

- Coordination between government, private sector players and civil society organizations to ensure that skills development programs have exit strategies linking young people to employment
- Technical and Vocational schools should enhance learning pathways and options for out-of-school youth

Strategic Objective 5: Introduce Career Education and Lifelong learning

Operational Objectives 5:

- Introduce youth to the concepts of skills development and lifelong learning
- Develop a national framework for skill development in Kuwait that cuts across sectors and identify roles of multiple stakeholders in this domain
- Develop human capacity in the career education field and train educators, youth workers and counselors in this domain
- Enhance the curriculum in schools with information about the labor market not just for the labor market

B - Employment and Productivity

Strategic Objective 1: Enhance Participation of Youth in the Economy

Operational Objectives 1:

- Government should work progressively towards realization of full, productive and decent employment for all young people.
- Government and relevant partners should develop a National Action plan on youth employment.
- Government and private sector should strengthen youth employment networks at national regional and international level
- Promote youth participation in the economy through multiple means such as self-employment, free-lance culture, home based employment, e-commerce and the social economy.
- Enhance employment opportunities of youth with special needs

Strategic Objective 2: Identify Potential Sectors that are attractive to youth

Operational Objectives 2:

- Conduct a nationwide study on potential sectors that are attractive to youth in the coming decade
- Support youth in venturing into these new sectors and create awareness about them through celebrating success stories.
- Create incubators and accelerators that support youth in specific sectors i.e. creative industry incubators, technology incubators etc.

Strategic Objective 3: Launch and support initiatives that focus on increasing labor productivity and addressing underemployment

- Increases in labor productivity are driven by technological change, improvements in efficiency, improvements in the quality of labor and capital deepening
- Continue to encourage youth to pursue a career in the private sector.
- Increase productivity in the public sector through training and capacity building
- Create accountability and incentive schemes in the public sector that are tied to performance.

C - Entrepreneurship

Strategic Objective 1: To develop future entrepreneurial generations by scaling up the country's focus on youth entrepreneurship

Operational Objective 1:

- Ensure that schools provide young people with the knowledge and skills that foster an entrepreneurial culture
- Integrate entrepreneurship, savings, financial literacy and investment culture into the education system at appropriate levels
- Government, private sector and civil societies must Provide mentorship programs and business development support services to young entrepreneurs and actively develop business linkages with youth-owned small businesses through strategies such as preferential procurement from youth owned businesses

Strategic Objective 2: Foster research about the entrepreneurship landscape in Kuwait

Operational Objective 2:

- Ensure participation of Kuwait in the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) to address the dearth of data on entrepreneurship landscape
- Incentivize research entities and universities to conduct research on youth entrepreneurship in Kuwait.
- Review best practices of youth entrepreneurship globally to build local capacity and strike international partnerships

Strategic Objective 3: Review regulations governing the practice of business to ease start-up environment

Operational Objectives 3:

- Identify major challenges facing youth when starting a business and collaborate with regulators to reduce red-tape
- Identify gender specific legal and social barriers that young women face when starting a business
- Government to actively encouraged all funding institutions and banks to design funding products aimed at supporting youth
- Leverage the corporate social responsibility trend is supporting start- ups

Canada: The Canadian Youth Business Foundation (CYBF)

Canada is a case in point where government has actively encouraged all funding institutions and banks to design funding products aimed at supporting youth. On the financial aspect, character and viability of business plan are used by Canadian Youth Business Foundation (CYBF) as a basis for lending as opposed to collateral as it is intended for youth who would otherwise not qualify for funding using conventional lending approach

The CYBF is a private sector funding organization created through a partnership between several Canadian major banks to provide start-up mandatory mentoring, financing and business resources for young Canadians. It targets young entrepreneurs between the ages of 18-34 years. The funding products provided involve Flexible Start Up Financing which provides start-up funding up to CN\$15 000 (R120 000) at low interest charges and repayment periods limited to 5 years

An Expansion Financing product is provided to those entrepreneurs whose businesses succeeded with their Flexible Start-Up Financing qualify for CN\$10 000 (R80 000) expansion finance under this program

These interventions have made Canada to register relative success on youth economic empowerment. In terms of the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) ranking of the countries with respect to the development enterprises and entrepreneurship uptake, Canada has improved its ranking from position 16 to 13 in comparison with other countries in the world



Social Cohesion is **the belief that all humans are born equal, that everyone counts and can play an active role in society. Society must ensure the welfare and well-being of all its members and to minimize disparities.** In the Kuwaiti context, the framework identifies social cohesion policies as those activities that governments, private sector and civil society organizations undertake together to promote youth development in a welfare society that is economically and environmentally sustainable. The framework must take into account the wellbeing and health of Kuwaiti youth as a first step to social cohesion. The Family unit is also fundamental. Family is the basis of Kuwaiti society. The constitution of Kuwait protects the family as stated in Article 9 "The family is the corner-stone of Society. It is founded on religion, morality, and patriotism. Law shall preserve the integrity of the family, strengthen its ties, and protect under its support motherhood and childhood".

In the youth field, the social exclusion of young people is certainly one of the most important challenges in Kuwait. Young people are confronted with multiple forms of exclusion across many sectors including healthcare, the labor market, educational structures, sports and social rights. Social Cohesion starts with the wellbeing of the individual and society. It is also about improving access and working towards the full participation of all young people in society, to cultural, sporting and creative activities. The aim is to foster solidarity between society and young people.

Health & Wellbeing

Strategic objective 1: Develop youth-friendly health related programs and services

Operational Objectives 1:

- Establish primary healthcare as a foundation for healthcare. This should involve a clear and comprehensive framework for continuing care based on the changing needs of youth in their communities
- Government in partnership with relevant stakeholders should increase youth-friendly clinics and extend their coverage, particularly in at risk areas

- Expand school health services, to be accessed by youth in schools for the purposes of accessing amongst others counseling services, mental health services etc.
- Provide information on sexuality, reproductive health and risky behavior and further provide age-appropriate information packages to the targeted youth
- Government should engage civil society organization in rendering youth development services with particular reference to sexual and reproductive health and rights;
- Strengthen the capacity of health and social service professionals to enable them to render services effectively to the young people. Consideration on prevention, management and rehabilitation of youth who are addicted to addictive substances should be made.

Strategic Objective 2: Ensure that young people are brought up and live in environments conducive to making healthy choices

Operational Objectives 2:

- Provide support to all vulnerable young people including youth at risk, youth with disabilities and young women
- Focus on the family as a unit of support and enhance community healthcare
- Implement media awareness campaigns to promote healthy lifestyles
- Develop a comprehensive program to reduce tobacco consumption, including Sheesha and smokeless products

Strategic Objective 3: Reinforcing Kuwaiti Family Cohesion

Operational Objectives 3:

- Develop programs for youth to strengthen marriage and family ties
- Develop a system of marriage counseling and support for young divorcees
- Develop programs to enhance parent child relationships
- Develop early detection system of child abuse and domestic abuse
- Develop capacity development and awareness to support families in their finances
- Implement measures to help empower women and balance work-life responsibilities

Sports

Strategic Objective 1: Increase consistently the number of young people developing sport as a habit for life

Operational Objectives 1:

- Raising public awareness and interest towards sports
- Generating opportunities to participate in all sports levels whether recreational, amateur, professional, athlete
- Implement a sports and physical activity participation survey to collect information on duration, frequency and nature of physical activities among youth
- Implement a sports for all campaign in Kuwait
- Enhance school sports facilities and capabilities
- Implement individual talk behavior change interventions that provide tool for goal setting and self-motivation and support performance of youth in sports.

Strategic Objective 2: Ensure adequate, appropriate and accessible sports and reaction facilities

Operational Objectives 2:

- Ensure accessible sports facilities for young women and youth with disabilities
- Develop a network of accessible high quality open spaces and reaction network facilities that target that meets the needs of the public and is environmentally sustainable
- Determine a balance between new facilities and enhancing existing ones
- Develop an updated electronic data base of sports and reaction facilities and develop a gap analysis and projected future demand

Strategic Objective 3: Increase sports talents identification and Management

Operational Objectives 3:

- Develop a national athlete development model
- Develop a strategic management plan and capacity building for coaches
- Improve talent identification models in federations, club and schools

Kuwait has a rich history and tradition in advancing the creative arts. Indeed, Kuwait is considered a leader among GCC countries in propelling the creative art. To this end, *Creativity* is one of four main pillars in the Framework. By creativity the framework considers three key dimensions:

- Developing and embedding creative skills among youth in partnership with relevant institutions
- Boosting and supporting the creative industry and landscape in Kuwait
- Support SMEs in Creative and Digital industries

As early as 1973, Kuwaiti government established the National Council for Culture, Arts and Literature (NCCAL) to lead the development of the arts and culture scene in the country. The NCCAL is currently developing a national strategy for its operations. The Framework will benefit from aligning its goals with the NCCAL strategy to maximize impact.

The terms ‘creative industries’ and ‘creative economy’ are both relatively new and do not yet have fully settled definitions. However, Kuwait can learn best practice from countries like the UK, Germany and other emerging economies like Malaysia and Estonia. Creative industries earn their profits from the creative skills of their workforce and the generation of intellectual property (ip). Intellectual property law is the catalyst that transforms creative activity into creative industry. The creative industries do not, however, operate in isolation. They sit at the center of a web of connections with other industrial sectors, and are a source of innovation for the wider economy, particularly through design, branding and advertising. They also have an important role to play in urban regeneration and community cohesion. Creative Industries are key because Kuwait is in a transitional period where it needs to shift the skills of its workforce from low skill low wage cycle to a high skills and value adding job.

Another area which this Framework considers within the creative industries is Digital Content Creation. Digital Content technology is transforming traditional knowledge industry structures, business models, and ways of doing things and is forming an important activity in its own right. Creating digital content strategies of increasing importance to national governments. Particularly in cases where cultural and linguistic heritage is highly valued, these programs demonstrate the commitment of the public sector to providing the type of digital content desired by the citizenry. The digital content industry is one of the main pillars for the knowledge-based economy and could provide many opportunities for investing in ICT in the Arab region. According to the Latest ESCWA report on Arabic Digital Content "The end user/consumer segment of content is also expected to grow due to the growth of interest in social networks for political and social reasons. This trend has enhanced in the region in the last two years. It is evident that the potential for a digital content industry in the region is high. A gap between what can be done and what is available should provide incentives to governments and the private sector to promote growth and development of digital content industries and services in the region". The Framework not only aspires to reach end uses but to develop a generation of Kuwaiti youth that are able to benefit from this trend, create their own content and also creates high value adding jobs for themselves and their society.

ESCWA: Propelling Arabic Digital Content Industry

The government should be a major prime mover in the initial phase of creating this industry. It has to address and take action on the following issues:

1. Giving priority to local innovation and technology (e.g. enhancing R&D and innovation in content development, networks, software and new technologies)
2. Enhancing the value chain and tackling business model issues (e.g. developing a competitive, nondiscriminatory business environment)
3. Substantially enhancing substantially the infrastructure, especially the basic fixed-line infrastructure, wiring residential areas and promoting broadband (e.g. technology for digital content delivery, standards and interoperability)
4. Enhancing business and regulatory environments that balance the interests of suppliers and users, in areas such as protection of intellectual property rights and digital rights management, anti-trust mechanisms, giving advantage to local, innovative e-business models
5. Respecting intellectual property rights and ensuring adherence to copyright law and anti-piracy regulations, while avoiding creation of monopolies
6. Facilitating and encouraging the establishment of funds and venture capital mechanisms to support start-ups and SME's; – Encouraging universities and training institutes in introducing courses in topics related to digital content and initiate scholarships and funding programmes for this purpose;
7. Integrating and coordinating at the regional level; – Fostering the role of governments as major users of digital content (e.g. digitization of public services, etc), giving advantage to local developers and service providers;

To this end we have identified several strategic objectives:

Strategic Objective 1: Developing a youthful generation empowered by "Creative Skills"

- Ensure the development of open spaces for artists and creative to learn and share experiences
- Create a "National Creativity Skillset Council" to support with planning for development of creative skills among youth
- Inspiring the next generation of creative talent and equipping them with the right skills and information

- Increasing and enriching pathways, so that talent from all backgrounds can enter and prosper in the Creative Industries
- The current ICT syllabus should be reformed with computer programming and other creative subjects properly embedded in the classroom.
- Embed the principle of Fusion in education and skills
- Establish a single careers resource for the Creative Industries

Strategic Objective 2: Propelling Creative Industries in Kuwait

- Build stronger partnerships between Higher Education and the Creative Industries
- Develop a Creative Industry strategy for Kuwait

Strategic Objective 3: Support SME Development in Creative Industries and Content Creation

- Develop professional development programs and nurturing the business leaders of the future
- Reducing the bureaucratic burden for business startups
- Support the development of special incubators for the creative industries

Leadership and Voice

The aim of this pillar is to address the dimension of youth voice - how to engage youth in leadership and decision. **Youth voice refers to the ideas, opinions, involvement, and initiatives of people considered to be “young”²⁴.** It is the engagement of young people as leaders and decision-makers in planning, projects, programs and organizations. Youth voice is about considering the perspectives and ideas of young people, respecting what everyone has to say, taking risks, listening, sharing and working together. When young people are truly engaged as leaders and decision-makers, young people, adults and organizations benefit. Most importantly

²⁴ Youth Voice: A Guide for Engaging Youth in Leadership and Decision Making in Service Learning Programs, Learn and Service America

perhaps, in the context of Kuwait, Youth are typically seen as consumers or recipients of service. The aim of leadership and voice pillar is to allow youth to provide service, rather than receive it. Young people have an opportunity to become valued partners and contributors - "resources" - in their communities through **Youth Civic Engagement** - This is the process of engaging youth in affecting policy and taking action on issues in their community.

Kuwait as a democratic country in the GCC has recently taken serious efforts towards 'youth inclusive policies'. For example, in 2012 The National Youth Program (NYP) was announced with the aim to create channels of communication between the political leadership and youth, identify youth aspirations, concerns and challenges, and offer appropriate solutions from their perspective, in addition to encouraging positive youth participation in community related causes. In 2013, the government has taken an additional step forward by establishing a Ministry of Youth Affairs (MOYA) with the aim to advocate, set policies, regulate, and measure youth development in the country.

To this end the Framework identified the following objectives:

Strategic Objective 1: Create channels of communication between political leadership and youth in Kuwait

Operational Objectives 1:

- Conduct a study on the current available channels of communication with leadership and their effectiveness
- Enhance development of programs that support adult youth communication i.e. youth parliaments, youth committees, student associations

Strategic Objective 2: Enhancing efficiency of the Not For Profit (NFP) sector servicing youth

Operational Objectives 2:

- Smarter regular ion for the NFP sector through developing a one stop shop, ensuring accessible information
- Develop quality data on the potential economic contribution, scale and impact of this sector
- Transfer best practice from international organizations working in this domain
- Building the sector capabilities to support innovation through professional development of its workers and volunteers

Strategic Objective 3: Improve and enhance the involvement of youth in the Not for profit Sector, civil societies and NGOs in Kuwait

Operational Objectives 3:

- Consider a National Campaign for youth volunteering
- Removing impediments to volunteering to maximize the contribution of volunteers
- Explore options that expand business support programs to NFPs engaging in social enterprise activities
- Establish a special center that connects youth led social enterprises

Advancing Youth Leadership and Voice through the Not- For- Profit (NFP) Sector

The NFP sector in Kuwait consists of a few hundred organizations with a wide range of activities, ranging from traditional Islamic charitable societies -some of which operate internationally - to smaller mutual benefit groups involved in supporting the community. According to UNDP, the sector as a whole is comprised of:

- Associations for the collective benefit (70).
- Philanthropic organisations and charitable institutions (29).
- Workers syndicates and federations (41).
- Professional groups and unions (18).
- Chambers of commerce and industry.
- Sports clubs and Olympic committees (28).
- The cooperative sector (47).
- Endowment foundations in support of voluntary and charity activities.
- The Foundation for Scientific Progress, political groups and organizations (15), besides individual distinguished initiatives.

Kuwait's public benefit NGOs operating in the NFP sector are regulated under Law No. 24 of 1962 concerning Public Utility Associations and Clubs. Under this law and its subsequent amendments, the responsibility for registering and monitoring public benefit NGOs and societies lies with the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor (MoSAL). In 2005, the Department for Charitable Societies and Foundations within MoSAL helpfully produced a Guide Book, in Arabic and English, containing copies of all laws and decisions relating to charitable work in Kuwait. When registering with MoSAL NGOs are required to provide a copy of their constitution, aims, activities and sources of income²⁵.

There are two significant features of the sector:

- 1) A substantial amount of Kuwaiti private humanitarian and development aid which flows to poor countries, mainly in Africa, through its international charities.
- 2) The volunteer culture is both strong and well embedded in youth groups in Kuwait. This can be harnessed to develop both leadership and voice skills through community service.

Although the Government is supportive of the achievements of its active charitable sector, traditionally the Kuwaiti government has limited its involvement to the provision of annual subsidies (ranging between KD 12,000 and 230,000) and or

²⁵ Other governmental bodies have an interest in the effective regulation of Kuwaiti charities operating internationally, for example the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which monitors Kuwaiti NGO activities overseas and the Central Bank of Kuwait, which follows up on international money transfers

material support in kind, for example the donation of land on which to build a center, and overall supervision. **As yet there is no explicit government vision for the sector or plan for its development.**

NGOs operating and all forms of in new institutions operating in the NFP sector need to be seen as **development partners**. In many countries, NGOs have become the main service providers where the government public sector is unable to fulfill its traditional role. Many NGO's have moved beyond the 'gap filling' initiatives to 'capacity building'. NGO's have the capacity to innovate and adapt more quickly than national governments. Although this may undermine government initiatives in the short run, a partnered scaling up of their activities will assist in imparting and transferring their knowledge and techniques to the public sector. For example, in Australia the NFP sector alone contributed \$34 billion to Australia's GDP and 8% of employment in 2006-2007.

The future and potential of this sector essentially rests on its ability to engage the community. In particular its youthful community. NFPs also need what all businesses need:

- A sound a supportive regulatory system
- Clear governance and accountability'
- Stimulate social innovation by pushing for social enterprises
- Relationship building and strengthening cooperation between sectors
- Professionalizing workers in the sector

Part III: Implementation Plan

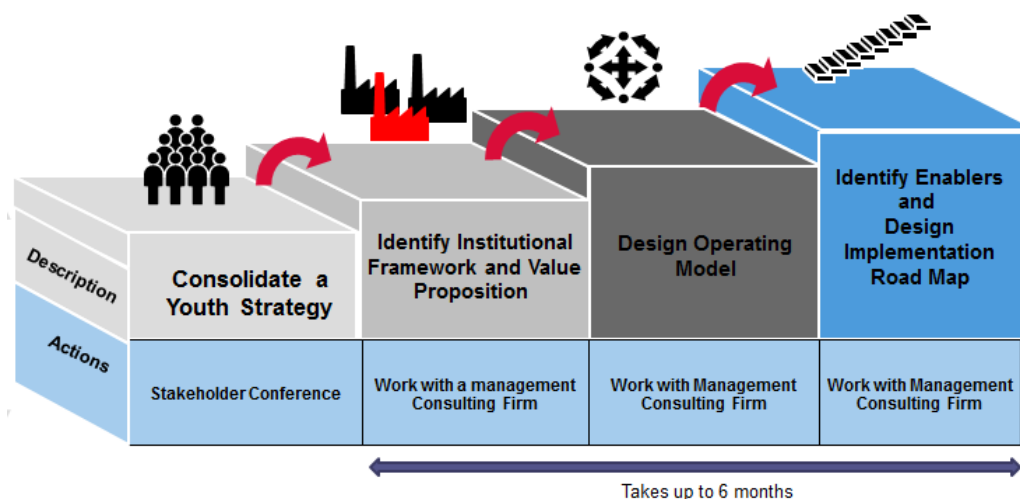
The Government of Kuwait will have to identify an estimated yearly cost to achieve the strategic objectives of the Youth Strategy and to implement its recommended programs, activities and events. The Current Framework recognizes the importance of planning, coordination and collaboration among the various government and non-government institutions involved in the implementation of youth development programs in order to realize strategic and operational objectives as well as to achieve efficient utilization of scarce resources.

Thus, the Framework proposes that the Ministry of Youth Affairs **will have overall responsibility for the coordination of the Strategy implementation, monitoring, evaluation and review.** It will do this in collaboration with other Ministries, civil society organizations and other stakeholders including young people.

To assist this collaboration, the Ministry of Youth Affairs (MOYA) is advised to embark on the following challenging tasks towards a full implementation (See Exhibit 22):

1. Consolidate a Youth Development Strategy
2. Identify Institutional Framework and Value Proposition
3. Design Operating Model
4. Identify Enablers and Design Implementation Road Map

Exhibit 22: Next Steps for MOYA



Consolidate a Youth Empowerment Strategy (YES)

The Youth Empowerment Framework is the first step towards consolidating a youth strategy. However, given the political climate in Kuwait it is advised to invite all potential stakeholders to contribute to the final Youth Empowerment Strategy (YES). In order to achieve this first milestone two key steps need to be taken: First is the *Stakeholder Conference* and second is *Monitoring and Evaluation* procedures.

Stakeholder Conference

The stakeholder conference is an important part of a stakeholder engagement strategy. Indeed, it is important to gain stakeholder buy-in for the youth strategy. The term “Stakeholder” can refer to an individual or a collective of people. A stakeholder is anyone with a vested interest in, or who will be affected by, the program. They are both internal and external to the organization (See Exhibit 23):

- Before the Conference: MOYA needs to identify relevant internal and external stakeholders to be invited. Stakeholder engagement is "the systematic use of strategic activities, such as communications, face-to-face interaction, change management techniques, and feedback opportunities, to influence stakeholders' perception, change their behavior, gain buy-in, and help drive a business objective or defined outcome". The Conference is one effective kickoff mode of stakeholder engagement.
- After the Conference: MOYA will be able to consolidate the Youth Empowerment Strategy (YES) and also gauge stakeholder segmentation matrix (See Exhibit 24).

Exhibit 23: Defining Stakeholders

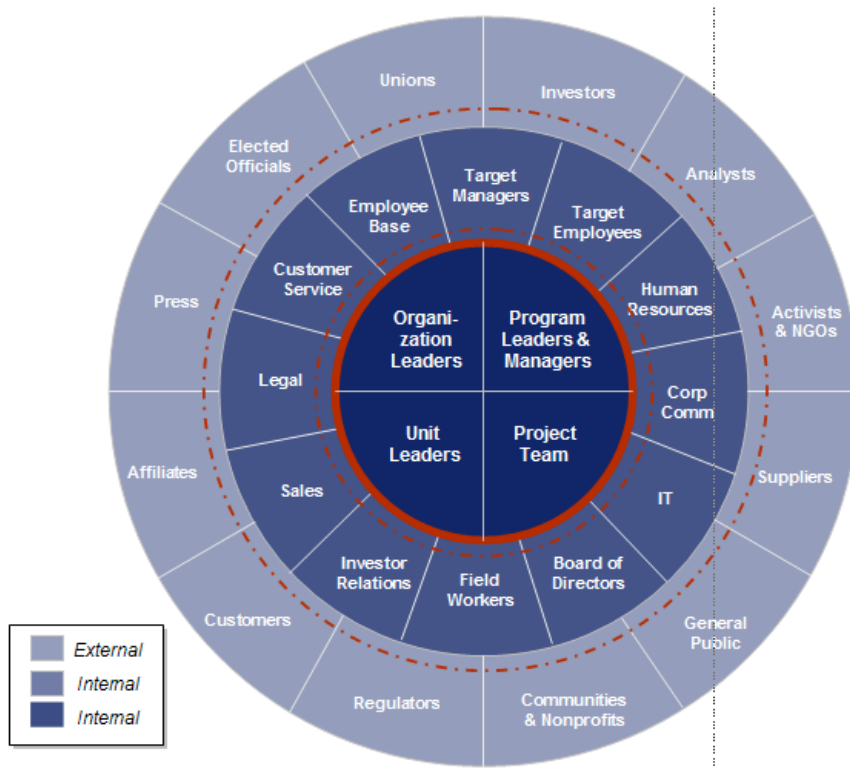


Exhibit 24: Stakeholder Segmentation Matrix



- Peripherally Impacted Groups: Groups who may observe changes and need to be informed
- Targets: Groups who will be impacted by the change
- Agents: Groups who need to be involved in the day-to-day implementation of the change
- Champions/Sponsors: Groups who need to legitimize the change effort (often divided into "initiating" and "sustaining" sponsors)

Monitoring & Evaluation

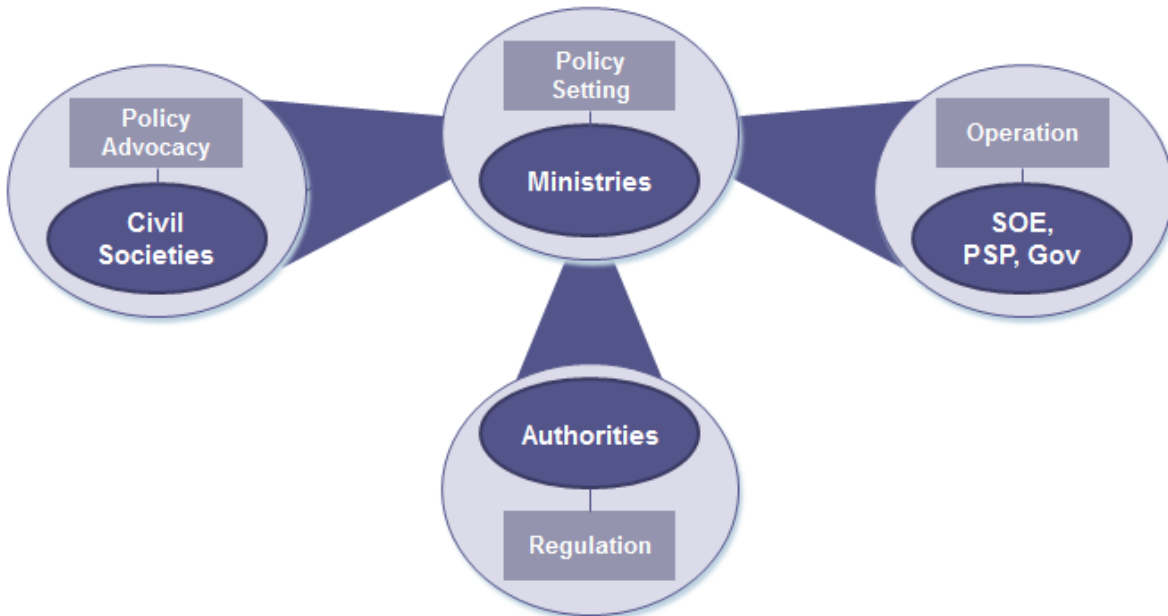
The National Framework for Youth Empowerment and Mainstreaming considers monitoring and evaluation (M&E) as an integral part of ensuring that progress on achievement of the Strategy objectives is tracked and consistent evaluation of the is ensured. Monitoring and evaluation is, therefore, aimed at ensuring youth developmental targets as spelled out are systematically reached and it is also a mechanism for making key role players accountable to the youth population on delivery of their mandate. The implementing role players will use these tools and objectives in their internal monitoring and evaluation process by providing regular reports on policy and program performance to the Undersecretary of Youth Affairs. Successful M&E requires that capacity is built to carry it out meaningfully. This involves government making the appropriate budget allocations, enlisting the required skilled human resources and taking action to ensure the commensurate institutional empowerment.

Identify Institutional Framework, Role and Value Proposition

To define the role of MOYA and positioning vis-à-vis other government entities. The Ministry will have to identify a management consulting house that will conduct the following:

- Benchmark 2 to 3 similar Ministries of Youth and derive lessons learned by identifying the following: Role and responsibilities of the entity, Governance and ownership (look at both PPP and fully publically owned models), Operating model including organization structure and governance and Services offering.
- Identify the positioning of MOYA within the Institutional landscape in Kuwait and develop its value proposition
- Identify the potential list of services that can be performed by the Ministry (See Exhibit 25)

Exhibit 25: Potential Roles of MOYA



Design Operating Model

The objective of this step is to develop the operating model of MOYA, including its high-level organization structure and governance framework. It is also important to identify the most suitable model of private sector participation by assessing benefits, disadvantages as well as feasibility of a range of PPP models from highest to lowest private sector.

Identify Enablers and Design Implementation Road Map

The objective of this step is to identify the key enablers, define the potential alliance models and list potential partners, to develop the implementation roadmap and design the Project Management Office PMO responsible for driving the implementation.

Conclusion

The National Youth Empowerment and Mainstreaming Framework is a preliminary study that focuses on holistic development of young people in Kuwait with the aim to develop a more comprehensive Youth Empowerment Strategy (YES) after consolidating stakeholder views. In order to implement the strategy fully, it must be integrated into the government's policy planning frameworks, both in terms of strategic planning and resource allocation. The document has also attempted to link youth development with the broader economic and social developmental needs of Kuwait with the aim to improve its national, regional and global competitiveness standing. Kuwait is a country with great potential; this document is a first attempt to unleash the potential of its youth for the prosperity of their nation.