UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

PROJECT DOCUMENT

Regional Youth Project, Shabab+

Project Title: Regional Youth Project, (potentially called Shabab+, pending NY clearance)
Project Number: 00141561
Implementing Partner:
Start Date: 1 Jan 2022 **End Date:** 31 December 2026 **PAC Meeting date:** March 22, 2022

Brief Description

Even before the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the social and economic integration of the 110 million youth (aged 15-29) in the Arab region was an ongoing challenge[1]. 66 percent of the population in the region is below 35 years of age, with those between the ages of 15-24[2] making up 30 percent, for whom the Arab region will require a future that provides a base for human development and social cohesion as well as a vibrant and inclusive political life.

The Regional youth project will seek to work with partners on a systems approach along two main pillars of Economic Empowerment and Civic Engagement. For economic empowerment, interventions are aimed at strengthening the enabling policy and regulatory environment for job-rich, green growth and economic transformation in the Arab region to expand opportunities for youth, while also reinforcing capacities for their effective implementation. Complementary systemic interventions will aim at developing 21st century and entrepreneurship skills of young people and connecting them to productive youth employment opportunities. For the civic engagement pillar, interventions are aimed at taking a fundamental approach to enhance policy response to youth needs that will consist in enabling deliberative processes of policy articulation between governments and youth as policy shapers. In helping to create opportunities for youth in the Arab region to unleash their creativity and leadership in civic, economic and political spheres, the project aims to harness the growing youth population and enabling young people to become agents for positive social, political and economic change- this is critical for building forward and enhancing resilience to future shocks, connected with pandemics, climate change and conflict. Overall, the project aims to co-generate a conducive environment for young people to become job creators, resilient job seekers, community builders, and policy shapers actively contributing to the positive development of the societies in which they live.

Contributing Outcome (RPD):

RP OUTCOME #4: Women and youth empowered for a more inclusive and sustainable future

RP OUTCOME #2: Governance accountability increased to foster more resilient communities

Indicative Output(s) with gender marker:

Project Outcome 1: Green growth and youth employment enabled through youth-led entrepreneurship

Output 1: Development portfolios to improve entrepreneurial ecosystems adopted by partner governments to support youth-led SDG-oriented businesses and generate youth employment in middle income countries through strengthened national institutions, laws and policies, and financial and non-financial services (GEN2)

Output 2: Youth employment in crisis settings generated through pathways for decent work, sustainable development and social cohesion (GEN2)

Project Outcome 2: Social cohesion and reinvigoration of trust in institutions and democratic processes through inclusive and open public sphere with expanded public engagement, particularly youth engagement.

Output 3: Development portfolios to novel and emerging youth-related development challenges adopted by partner governments (GEN2)

Output 4: Youth political participation in political processes strengthened and public policy and services for youth improved (GEN2)

Output 5: Digital Platform and open-source public goods enable knowledge exchange, regional and national level advocacy, and access to resources and networks to youth and partners (GEN2)

[1] UN Secretary General Policy Brief: The Impact of COVID-19 on the Arab Region: An Opportunity to Build Back Better

[2] The project acknowledges the United Nations age definition of young people as the age group 10-24 years, further subdivided into two age groups, adolescents (10-19 years) and youth (20-24 years). However, in accordance with UNDP's Youth Strategy and areas of work, plus the delayed transition into adulthood in most context in the region, the age group targeted by the project is from 18-35. Age brackets more specifically will be defined depending on the country context. Therefore, the project allows for flexibility to ensure that United Nations-supported programming is responsive to the varying needs of young people in different country contexts.

Total resources required:		**$ 49,441,295.00**
Total resources allocated:	**UNDP TRAC:**	
	Donor:	AYC: $1,657,377 TBHF:$1,000,000 DAPP:$10,000,000
	Government:	
	In-Kind:	
Unfunded:		36,783,918.00

Agreed by (signatures):

UNDP
 Print Name: Khaled Abdel Shafi, Regional Hub Manager, RBAS
Date: April 11, 2022

I. DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGE (1/4 PAGE – 2 PAGES RECOMMENDED)

Prior to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the social and economic integration of the 110 million youth (aged 15-29) in the region was an ongoing challenge.[3] The Arab States are faced with an unprecedented untapped asset represented by a demographic dividend that can shift the course development trajectories in the region. 66 percent of the population in the Arab region is below 35 years of age, with those between the ages of 15-24[4] making up 30 percent. However, this opportunity risks becoming a challenge due to social, political and economic exclusion affecting increasing numbers of youth.

The COVID-19 pandemic illustrates well the complex and multifaceted nature of the challenges facing the Arab region and development actors today. Arab states have been profoundly impacted by the pandemic as government policies to contain and mitigate the spread of COVID-19 and flatten the contagion curve have triggered economic crises that threaten hard-won development gains.[5] The costs of the pandemic layer on top of pre-existing patterns of economic growth that largely relied on the excessive extraction of scarce, non-renewable natural resources and substandard waste management. The UNDP Human Development Report 2020 makes clear that we are at an unprecedented moment in the history of our planet, translated in Arab states in unsustainable patterns of consumption and production over the past decades combined with the consequences of climate change have contributed to growing water scarcity, increased energy consumption, and associated greenhouse gas emissions, thus exacerbating land degradation and desertification and escalating food and energy import bills.[6]

For many Arab countries, armed conflict remains the largest impediment to development. Children and youth are paying the price either by loss of their lives or through displacement, loss of education, health services, and unemployment. As highlighted by the 2016 Arab Human Development Report "conflict interfere with economic development by destroying productive economic resources, capital and labour, especially within the territory of the nations where they are fought." Employment for youth in conflict countries requires tailored approaches and interventions that address the complex yet specific dynamics in each country context.

The challenges above are systemic, complex, interconnected and often unprecedented and, as the Human Development Report points out, require nothing less than "great transformations".[7] They cannot be tackled in silos.

The challenges of young people in the Arab region are presented below along two main pillars: **Economic Empowerment** and **Civic Engagement**. Although presented separately there is a direct relationship- past social contracts that have provided "stability and security in return for limits on public participation and individual economic opportunity" is increasingly showing that this approach is unable to create the number of jobs required. If left unaddressed, this can be destabilizing for development prospects. Therefore, a new social contract that both enables young people economic opportunities and civic participation as partners in development is key for building forward better.[8]

[3] UN Secretary General Policy Brief: The Impact of COVID-19 on the Arab Region: An Opportunity to Build Back Better

[4] The project acknowledges the United Nations age definition of young people as the age group 10-24 years, further subdivided into two age groups, adolescents (10-19 years) and youth (20-24 years). However, in accordance with UNDP's Youth Strategy and areas of work, plus the delayed transition into adulthood in most context in the region, the age group targeted by the project is from 18-35. Age brackets more specifically will be defined depending on the country context. Therefore, the project allows for flexibility to ensure that United Nations-supported programming is responsive to the varying needs of young people in different country contexts.

[5] UNDP (2021) Compounding Crises. Will COVID-19 and Lower Oil Prices Lead to a New Development Paradigm in the Arab Region?

[6] UN Secretary General Policy Brief (2020): The Impact of COVID-19 on the Arab Region: An Opportunity to Build Back Better

[7] UNDP Human Development Report (2020). The Next Frontier Human Development and the Anthropocene

[8] World Bank Group, World Economic Forum (2018) The Arab World Competitiveness Report

Pillar 1: Youth Economic Empowerment[9]

The Labour Market: Many young people were already impacted by high unemployment, discrimination, exclusion, restricted access to services, and the devastating effects of ongoing armed conflict in some countries. According to the International Labour Organization, youth unemployment in the Arab States[10] is the fastest growing in the world, increasing from 19.5 to 25.6 percent between 2012 and 2020[11] while in North Africa it has remained high, reaching 29.3 percent in 2020.[12] In 2020 the unemployment rate for young women was 41.8% in Arab States in Asia and 46.8% in Northern Africa.47.9%, almost twice as high as that of young men's (which was 22.6 percent in Arab States and 23.7 percent in North Africa.[13] Given the structural obstacles in accessing decent jobs, young people impacted by job losses will face challenges in re-entering the job market, compounded further by an estimated 2.7 million young people who join the workforce in the region annually. Prior to the crisis, 12.3 percent of employed youth in the region lived in moderate working poverty on less than US$3.20 per day and 13.3 percent lived in extreme working poverty on less than US$1.90 per day. This situation is expected to worsen with millions of youth at risk of plunging deeper into poverty, especially young people living in rural areas, as well as young women who will be impacted differently as they often earn less and save less. Arab women's economic participation is the lowest in the world at 20 percent [14], and "women earn on average 78.9 per cent less than men on a per capita basis. Young women have even lower participation rates reaching just 8.8% in Arab States and 11.1% in Northern Africa in 2020 Even more concerning is that the level of young people in informal employment is as high as 85 percent in Arab states (87.5 percent in North Africa), far higher than adults in the region (61 percent). Arab states have the highest gap in the world between young people and adults in terms of formality of employment[15]. These informal jobs have limited or no access to social and health insurance or credit facilities, and hence are also at risk of falling into poverty.[16] [17][OBJ] [18]Over the past decades, employment creation has been concentrated either in the public sector or in low-productivity, low skilled, informal private sector jobs, often unattractive to the increasingly educated youth. While the government-led growth and development model succeeded, for a time, in creating job opportunities and increasing employment, this model has proved unsustainable due to increasing demand for jobs and limited public resources. Other challenges include skills mismatches and investments in education with little or no impact on employment, weak policy frameworks and ineffective labour market institutions and a lack of data and labour market intermediation to inform policy development. Unemployment, inequalities, exclusion and vulnerabilities have increased the need to immediately rethink the employment and job creation pursued by Arab economies.

Skills and education: There is growing evidence of a sizeable skills mismatch in the region, as young people fail to acquire the skills needed to succeed in today's jobs, let alone for the jobs of tomorrow. "Nearly 40% of employers in the Arab region indicate that skills gaps are a major impediment to

[9] The economies of the Middle East and North Africa region may be divided into four distinct groups: high-income countries (KSA, Kuwait, Bahrain); Middle Income countries (Jordan, Egypt, Algeria, Tunisia, Morocco); Crisis contexts – Low income countries (Yemen, Somalia, Sudan, Djibouti), and Crisis contexts – Middle Income countries (Lebanon, Libya, Syria, Iraq, PAPP).

10 The ILO defines 'Arab States' as consisting of the Arab countries in Asia and reports separate statistics for North African Arab countries. We report those for Northern Africa separately where they are available from the same source to ensure consistency.

[11] ILO (2020) Global Employment Trends for Youth 2020: Arab States s, and ILO modelled estimates, Nov.2021, ILOSTAT.

[12] Youth unemployment in Northern Africa is among the highest in the world. It was 30.9% in 2012 and has only fallen slighltly to 29.3 percent in 2020. a0.ILO modelled estimates, Nov.2021, ILOSTAT.

[13] ILO modelled estimates, Nov.2021

14 Weighted average of all Arab countries according to UNDP definition, using population as weights. Unemployment data are ILO modelled estimates, Nov. 2021. Population data is the latest available from World Development Indicators.

15 ILO (2020b). Global Employment Trends for Youth 2020: Arab States. Available at: https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/documents/briefingnote/wcms_737672.pdf.

[16] UN Secretary General Policy Brief (2020): The Impact of COVID-19 on the Arab Region: An Opportunity to Build Back Better

[17] ILO modeled estimates, Nov.2021, ILOSTAT.

[18] UN Secretary General Policy Brief (2020): The Impact of COVID-19 on the Arab Region: An Opportunity to Build Back Better

business growth."[19] As highlighted by UNICEF, "the general consensus is that education systems are broadly failing to deliver the outcomes needed to advance individual and social development".[20] Reasons for the mismatch[21] range from irrelevant education and training systems to the labour market to the lack of career guidance.[22] Investment in human capital- with the youth being the demographic dividend- is required to close the region's skills gaps as well as position youth today to leverage the advances in technology for jobs of tomorrow.[23]

Entrepreneurship, Innovation, Green Jobs: A 2018 assessment of Arab countries' competitiveness carried out by the World Bank and the World Economic Forum highlighted two major issues that need to be addressed, namely improving their economic diversification away from the natural resources (and associated rent-driven economies) and strengthening the role of the private sector, particularly entrepreneurship and innovative start-ups.[24] In order to increase economic growth and diversification, and at the same time create decent jobs for both women and youth, delivering higher and more inclusive job growth, the expansion of youth entrepreneurship and business start-ups are necessary, which can increase innovation, productivity and employment opportunities.[25]

SMEs can be nerve centres for economic growth and play a pivotal role in job creation for youth, but in Arab countries this contribution is lagging. It is estimated that SMEs account for over 70% of employment globally[26] and contribute to 4 to 40 percent of GDP of Arab countries.[27] According to the International Monetary Fund, "SMEs are a cornerstone of Arab economies, accounting for over 90% of all businesses and providing a major source of new job creation."[28] However, the data also shows that existing SMEs are not reaching their potential to be able to create jobs needed. While SMEs are dynamic and growth oriented, they have not kept pace with the current wave of technological change. The adoption of digital technologies is low among SMEs in the region, only 8 per cent of SMEs have an online presence.[29] Many governments are responding by placing entrepreneurs and SME development at the centre of growth and jobs strategies to meet the needs of the young population.[30] From the perspective of youth entrepreneurship, according to the 12th Annual Arab Youth Survey, 40% of the youth aged 18-24 across the MENA region intend to start their own business within the next five years, and 46% view the private sector or their own business as their future careers.[31]

Improving the prospects of the Arab youth and women in relation to innovation and entrepreneurship requires an understanding of the socio-economic system prevailing in Arab countries. A 2019 ESCWA report notes that the region is characterized by a weak link between its education, research centers and its production system. Despite efforts of some Arab governments to encourage innovative start-ups, the business climate does not encourage innovation among entrepreneurs.[32] In most Arab countries, there is a dominance of state-owned and/or well-connected large private sector companies benefiting from good political connections and a rent/monopoly situation. The majority of Arab MSMEs are relegated to the informal sector, as they are not encouraged, and some (particularly among the micro and small) are not incentivized to enter formality. Access to credit is by far the most problematic issue in Arab countries. Despite regulations enacted in some countries in favour of financing SMEs and innovative start-ups,

[19] World Economic Forum (2017) The Future of Jobs and Skills in the Middle East and North Africa

[20] UNICEF (2017) Reimagining Life Skills and Citizenship Education in the Middle East and North Africa

[21] The skills gap exists across basic skills, such as creative and independent thinking, problem solving skills and soft skills, as well as in sector specific and functional skills, including due to low levels of technical and vocational education and training (TVET). (see source 18)

[22] ESCWA, ILO (2021) Towards a Productive and Inclusive Path Job Creation in the Arab Region

[23] World Economic Forum (2017) The Future of Jobs and Skills in the Middle East and North Africa

[24] World Bank Group, World Economic Forum (2018) The Arab World Competitiveness Report

[25] IMF (2018) Opportunity for All: Promoting Growth and Inclusiveness in the Middle East and North Africa

[26] ILO (2019) Small matters report

[27] IMF (2019) ENHANCING THE ROLE OF SMES IN THE ARAB WORLD—SOME KEY CONSIDERATIONS

[28] Ibid

[29] McKinsey (2018) Entrepreneurship in the Middle East and North Africa: How investors can support and enable growth

[30]https://www.imf.org/en/Publications/Policy-Papers/Issues/2019/12/13/Enhancing-the-Role-of-SMEs-in-the-Arab-World-Some-Key-Considerations-48873

[31] https://www.arabyouthsurvey.com/findings.html

[32] E/ESCWA/TDD/2019/TP.2. 2019 . Innovation and Entrepreneurship: Opportunities and Challenges for Arab Youth and Women

and a certain dynamism in innovative start-up early-stage funding in a handful of Arab countries, funding entrepreneurship at large is still problematic in most countries, with Egypt and the United Arab Emirates slightly better than other countries in the region.[33] According to the IMF, "the Arab World has one of the lowest shares of women-owned SMEs at 14 percent, compared to the world average of 34 percent."[34]

Addressing unsustainable patterns of consumption and production requires the engagement of SMEs to both improve the environmental sustainability of their business models and be future-forward and able to create green jobs of tomorrow. Many countries in the Arab region have already outlined in their enhanced Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and other related climate change plans (e.g. National Adaptation Plans and Long-Term Strategies) about how to transition to green and resilient pathways that help spur economic growth and job creation, while aligning with national development objectives and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). According to a 2011 Reference paper by ESCWA, League of Arab States and UNEP, "the green economy could bring a solution to one of the major challenges in the Arab region where a growing number of youth are looking for jobs."[35] While the problem has been understood since quite some time, deploying related solutions has been more of a challenge. While young job seekers would be clear beneficiaries of green growth, youth can also be the driving partners and leaders as entrepreneurs and as advocates supporting needed conducive policy reforms.

Conducive policies: Many countries in the region have enacted policies and regulations to support start-ups. Nonetheless, the degree to which these have been implemented requires further assessment. When the average score for Arab States, measured by the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor, is compared against the averaging scoring for nine high income countries that regularly top the best countries for entrepreneurs[36], it highlights the region can benefit from additional government support, projects, trainings and financing.[37]

Pillar 2: Youth Civic and Political Engagement

Overall, Arab countries have adopted multiple approaches in responding to the developmental needs of youth, ranging from mainstreaming youth in national developmental policies, to designing and implementing national sectoral strategies focusing on a specific issue.[38] For example, Bahrain, Djibouti, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Palestine, Yemen and more recently Morocco have devised policies and strategies for their respective youth population. Despite these efforts, the institutional setting of policymaking for youth has usually been restricted to one ministry (i.e. Ministry of Youth and Sports) which often have limited influence to other key Ministries, policy implementation and required resources, and governments often lack inter-ministerial coordination mechanisms on youth-related issues, civil society, or the respective youth population, making it challenging to address the issues most important to young people. In most Arab countries youth related challenges are addressed through unsustainable sectoral programs and projects, rather than by formulating national youth policies that would provide nationally-agreed-upon frameworks and realistic guidelines from which actions can be developed to enhance meaningful youth participation and [39]OBJ Even where policies do exist, implementation remains a challenge.

[33] E/ESCWA/TDD/2019/TP.2. (2019) Innovation and Entrepreneurship: Opportunities and Challenges for Arab Youth and Women

34 IMF (2019) Enhancing the Role of SMEs in the Arab World, Some Key Considerations

[35] ESCWA, LAS, UNEP Reference Paper (2011) Green Economy in the Arab Region

[36] Canada, Germany, Japan, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom & United States

[37] ESCWA, *Comparative Analysis of Civil Society Participation in Public Policy Formulation in Selected Arab Countries*, (New York, United Nations, 2010) p. 5.

[38] E/ESCWA/SDD/2014/Brief.7. Reaping the Rewards of Demographic Transitions: Investing in Arab Youth

[39] ESCWA (2010) National Youth Policies within the Framework of the World Programme of Action

Trust in institutions is low in the Arab region– inadequate service delivery, erosion of state agency and a lack of youth participation are some of the causes.[40] An ESCWA study of civil society participation in public policymaking processes has shown several challenges facing civil society in Arab countries. Those challenges include lingering political instability and the absence of a conducive political environment for the active participation of civil society, dominant tribalism in some countries and conservative values of religious forces that hinder true participation, "weak political, legal, educational, socioeconomic and cultural reforms and the lack of civil freedoms.[41] For youth more specifically, 2020 findings from the Arab Barometer show youth have little trust in governments, which are widely viewed as being corrupt, leading to a potential crisis of legitimacy in the region.[42] Young people's demand for equal access to politics and equal scope to participate in society seems to remain unsatisfied in Arab countries. According to UN data from 2011, "youth are almost entirely excluded from participation within parliaments in more than half of the Arab countries, reaching a low of 7%."[43] Despite the peak of youth activism in the wake of 2011 popular uprisings, it is evident that the large majority of young people do not engage in public life through formal avenues of political participation such as voting, political parties, or civil society organizations.[44] Also, as reflected in the findings of UNDP's Arab Human Development Report 2016, when "compared to youth in the rest of the world, Arab youth participate more in protests and demonstrations and less in civic groups and in electoral voting."[45] However, voicing discontent has not led to better lives for youth in the Arab region.

In particular, women's representation in legislative bodies in the Arab States region remains one of the lowest globally, with an average of 19.5 per cent in 2020, compared to a world average of 24 per cent.[46] However, an increasing demand for participation of young women might help increase gender balance in legislative bodies.

Disenchantment with politics has found a new outlet: Approximately four-in-ten Internet users across MENA say they use online channels and social media to obtain information about political events[47]. Two-in-ten internet users also state that they use online channels to express their opinions about politics and society. The emergence of digital platforms and tools do offer up new arenas for public discourse and pathways for increased participatory governance. Open digital tools such as the Consul platform[48] enable citizen driven participatory processes and has been deployed in urban planning in Garowe, empowering Somali communities to engage in initiating and hosting public debates on development issues, solution design, development of legislation, prioritization of development initiatives and (local) government planning arrangements, as well as enhanced participation in local government budgeting processes. In Tunisia[49], the landmark Start up act was co-created through a bottom-up deliberative process led by the entrepreneurship community consisting of a task force of entrepreneurs, investors, academics, public servants which resulted in a 20-measure law that was passed by parliament in 2018. In January 2020 in Morocco[50], the Commission spéciale sur le modèle de development launched a broad national consultation open to all Moroccan citizens, aimed at harnessing collective intelligence to inform the new national development plan. These represent hopeful signals of

[40] Arab Barometer IV (2017): Public Opinion Survey Conducted in Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine, and Tunisia, 2016-2017

[41] ESCWA (2010) *Comparative Analysis of Civil Society Participation in Public Policy Formulation in Selected Arab Countries*, (New York, United Nations) p. 5.

[42] Arab Barometer (2020) Fifth Wave of the Arab Barometer

43 ESCWA (2011) Regional Overview: Youth in the Arab Region

[44] Henri Onodera, Bruno Lefort, Karim Maiche & Sofia Laine (2020) Dynamics of engagement among youth in Arab Mediterranean countries, The Journal of North African Studies, 25:2, 280-303, DOI: 10.1080/13629387.2018.1547197

[45] UNDP (2013) Research Paper Series: Expanding Youth Opportunities in the Arab Region

[46] Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), Women in Parliament in 2018: The Year in Review (Geneva, IPU, 2019).

[47] Youth in MENA: Findings from the Fifth Wave of the Arab Barometer. Princeton University, August 2020

[48] CONSUL is the most complete citizen participation tool for an open, transparent and democratic government. https://consulproject.org/

[49] https://www.leaders.com.tn/article/24654-bottom-up-policymaking-the-tunisian-startup-act

[50] Lex Paulson (September 2021)For OECD Open Government Medium blog Participo. https://medium.com/participo/morocco-finds-a-new-source-of-policy-expertise-its-own-citizens-b92358fa08ba

how democracy can be re-imagined that would restore the social contract and enhance accountability and transparency in government.

The COVID-19 global pandemic and the ongoing climate crisis will have long-term negative effects on young people's futures. Although a powerful force to meet these challenges, this generation's potential must be unlocked. Young people's lack of civic engagement and economic opportunities can only be addressed by understanding and enhancing their pathways to learning, skills development and participation through investment, innovation and partnership.

Harnessing the growing youth population and enabling young people to become agents for positive social, political and economic change is a critical cross-cutting strategy for building forward and enhancing resilience to future shocks. This requires a whole-of-society approach that strengthens the social contract and widens participation and inclusion. Central to this is the need to unleash human potential of the youth in the Arab region for creating capabilities in the system for innovation, purpose, shared value creation, and the realization of new futures for the achievement of the SDGs.

II. STRATEGY (1/2 PAGE - 3 PAGES RECOMMENDED)

In response to the development challenges outlined above, this Regional Youth Project represents the UNDP's strategic bet on youth as the key transformative agents to achieve the SDGs by 2030. The alarming growth of structural unemployment, which has been compounded by COVID lock-down measures is a critical concern for the Arab region. The correlation between unemployment, social exclusion, lack of participation, youth poverty and social unrest and conflict has been clearly established. The shared challenges of youth unemployment, lingering political instability, and absence of a conducive political environment for the active participation of civil society in several countries necessitate a holistic regional approach. While country typologies differ across the region, similar constraints are shared by groups of countries. A regional project will provide an enabling platform for comparative analysis, facilitate cross-country solution sharing and learning, identification of sub-regional or country typology approaches and economies of scale in the delivery of interventions.

The intent of this regional youth project is to provide a dynamic framework for UNDP's key approaches to empowering youth as agents of change for inclusive growth and social development. Therefore, the approach aims at working with partners including youth for a new social contract that both addresses their needs for economic prosperity, while protecting their future through green growth, and engages youth in the civic process required to enable change. This is expected to contribute to the systemic transformation needed for the achievement of the SDGs..[51] The project acknowledges the United Nations age definition of young people as the age group 10-24 years, further subdivided into two age groups, adolescents (10-19 years) and youth (20-24 years). However, in accordance with UNDP's Youth Strategy and areas of work, plus the delayed transition into adulthood in most context in the region, the age group targeted by the project is from 18-35. Age brackets more specifically will be defined depending on the country context. Therefore, the project allows for flexibility to ensure that UNDP-supported programming is responsive to the varying needs of young people in different country contexts.

The project covers 17 countries included in UNDP Regional Bureau for the Arab States, whereas different components of the project will be rolled out in a select number of countries based on opportunities and country demand.

Lessons learnt

[51] While the UN Youth Strategy focus is on young women and men ages 15-24, the range for this project extends to 35 depending on national context and will remain flexible to ensure that programming related to the implementation of the project is responsive to the diverse needs of youth in different country contexts. The higher age range is informed by the delayed transition from youth to adulthood in many country-contexts.

The Regional Youth Project builds on the previous cycles of activity-based interventions related to the Youth Leadership Programme, formerly under the Mosharaka Project. The 2019 Mosharaka Closing Report and evaluation concluded that a more cohesive and programmatic approach that links regional and national efforts and develops an institutional foundation within each country is expected to increase projects' impact as well as its reach. Additionally, developing a robust Monitoring and Evaluation plan that sets milestones and can track progress made towards achieving those milestones over time could help better identify project results and its impact over time. The evaluation has also highlighted the importance of a diverse portfolio of partnerships in implementing a regional project in a complex and transitional environment and the need to work with other partners to "*leverage, complement and multiply*" its efforts. Finally, the main major challenge that hindered the results of previous youth-related activities under Mosharaka is linked to limited access to financial resources. In order to assure sustainability of the project, the report and evaluation highlighted the need for looking closely into diverse donor opportunities to mobilize and earmark resources for the various components on political, economic, and social participation. This can include ensuring national ownership through sponsorship by national partners by establishing sustainable revenues for youth-led initiatives.

Design and implementation principles of the regional youth project

The types of interconnected issues and nested systems described in the Development Challenge call for systemic, transformational innovation. They require a longer-term horizon rather beyond project cycles, incremental innovation, a deeper understanding of human-environmental systems and their dynamics, and the harnessing of the potential of digital as a core driver, not as a quick fix.

The project is designed to meet the increasing demand for integrated solutions to complex problems, which UNDP as the SDG integrator is well-positioned to deliver. Our model will deploy a balanced portfolio of interventions – across capacity development, technological innovation, citizen engagement, policy, finance, and other relevant levers of change.

The project is grounded in a set of principles crucial to enabling system transformation:

1. **Long-Term thinking.** A regional youth empowerment strategy needs to be embedded in visions with longer time horizons and build the social covenant necessary to scaffold large scale change. It needs to build cross-societal agreement about structural transition, as well as civic resilience against the inevitable disruptions in an age of long emergencies, such as loss of jobs as a result of large-scale degenerative business models or desertification.
2. **Systems Approach[52].** The transition required is systemic. We know that climate change for example is fundamentally a symptom of a structural problem in how we govern and how our relationships in the world are governed. Governments are looking for integrated solutions commensurate with the complexity of development challenges. Therefore, the project proposes a portfolio of interventions across multiple levers of change.
3. **Embedding Adaptability[53].** It is impossible to accurately predict every required policy response to all future challenges. Flexibility needs to be at the heart of this regional youth project. This project document is a living artefact (as opposed to a static document) that is able to adjust to real-time data, feedback, and evaluation. It needs to be parametric in scope and engineered with contingent capabilities for unpredictable evolving circumstances (e.g. macro-economic shifts, training needs as a result of shifting labour market demand, adoption of new technologies, political shifts among others). At the same time, adaptive capabilities for systematically mapping and modelling scenarios and developing policy alternatives using real-time data and alternative data sources (BI, thick data, big data, IoT) that can shape and accompany decision making on future development trajectories

[52] A system is evolving continuously through nodes, interlinkages and feedback loops. Their emerging nature requires dynamic, learning and entangled responses. Donella H. Meadows (2008), "Thinking in Systems", Chelsea Green Publishing, Vermont 2008

[53] Mikko Annala, Juha Leppänen, Silva Mertsola, Charles F. Sabel (2021) "Humble Government: How to realise ambitious reforms prudently", Demos Helsinki, Government Analysis, Assessment and Research Activities, Finland 2021

are required. During the implementation phase, an adaptive project management approach will be deployed.

4. **Collaborative Capability Development.** We are living in a global age of long, interlinked emergencies, with interconnected challenges faced by all actors in society (government, academia, industry, and civil society). The dynamic and linked nature of these emergencies will require governments to become enablers for society to work together, developing horizontal strategies and collaborative capabilities.
5. **Inclusion:** UNDP fully embraces young people's diversity in all its forms. UNDP seeks to employ and advocate methods reflective of this diversity, so that young people can achieve full engagement, empowerment, and development. It means addressing the specific needs of the vulnerable youth such as youth with disabilities, youth living with HIV/AIDS, rural youth, girls and young women, survivors of GBV, youth affected by conflict, climate change and natural disaster.
6. **Gender equality.** The project recognizes that the systematic inclusion and participation of women and the consideration of gender as central in social and economic development. It is essential to the just (re-)construction of political, legal, economic and social structures, and to the advancement of gender equality. The operationalization of project outputs is guided by the principle of gender equality and will, to the extent possible, ensure gender sensitive data-collection, analysis and project intervention design, as well as budgeting.
7. **Narrative-building**. In an era of societal fragmentation and erosion of grand narratives, there is a need to develop new, hopeful narratives that galvanize a bottom-up citizen driven vision and form the bedrock of legitimacy for change.
8. **Co-creation (Participatory approaches):** The project's central assertion is that bottom-up co-creation optimizes public policy and public service design by elevating the knowledge and preferences of "policy users", analysts and policy makers through deliberation, expert review, and inclusive participation. Policies and programmes developed through this process are more relevant, legitimate, responsive, effective, and generate knowledge in the process of design and delivery that informs future reform. This in line with the 2030 Agenda's principle of "Leaving no one behind".

   Process matters for diagnosing the causes of complex development challenges to shaping policies and interventions. The project aims to foster the values of co-creation and innovation. The process of designing the Regional Youth Project itself was undertaken with these principles in mind. Country office staff, RBAS Hub Technical staff, 45 youth-serving organizations, and hundreds of youth have informed various aspects of this project through consultation that began in 2019. Emphasis is placed on empowering the "users" or value recipients of the project by using various methods and tools, including digital tools, leveraging the best aspects of public participation and deliberation, thereby ensuring that the offer and its various components are driven by youth and are responsive to their needs.

Theory of Change

The 2016 Arab Human Development Report (AHDR) on Youth argues for a new development model in the Arab region that is fit for youth and centred around two principal pillars of building capabilities for all without discrimination and expanding opportunities, leaving no one behind. The AHDR also stresses that "the expansion in people's ability to make strategic life choices in a context where this ability was previously denied to them" is key and relates to a sense of agency, whereby Youth themselves become resolute actors in the process of change. The concept is embedded in self-reliance and based on the realization that young people can take charge of their own lives and become effective agents of change.

The two project outcomes are linked through the principle of co-creation and human centred design and the premise that creating better interfaces between the people and the government will lead to more responsive and relevant public policies and services and ultimately better development outcomes.

Outcome 1: Green growth and youth employment enabled through youth-led green entrepreneurship

Young people, including youth in crisis settings, will be decently employed in green sectors and industries, IF:

- *job creation strategies are embedded into broader inclusive growth polices and strategies and combined with specific youth employment initiatives, as youth constitute the majority of the unemployed population and growing labour force of most Arab countries;*
- *focused attention is paid to reinforcement of broad macroeconomic and sectoral frameworks in support of job-rich growth;*
- *sufficient public and private financing is directed towards green and blue economy sectors, recognizing the region's vulnerability to climate change, and if the green technologies and climate solutions are created and adapted; and*
- *ecosystem enablers are connected to provide the financial and non-financial resources for youth-led impact oriented businesses to start up and scale.*

Economic transformation in the region holds with it an opportunity to rethink the trajectory of its economic growth towards a more sustainable path. Transitioning to a more sustainable economy is a way forward to turn the crisis of ecological pressure into an opportunity for new solutions driven by policy innovation, market-based mechanisms and new markets for clean technology. This transition could create significant opportunities of new jobs in the different economic sectors, such as employment in the fields of renewable energy generation, energy efficiency, ecosystem rehabilitation and protection, ecotourism, waste management, etc., especially for young people and women. Such transition brings solutions to address the challenge of high unemployment, inactivity, and informality in the Arab region. In this context, interventions are needed to support MSMEs – considered as a main source of employment opportunities in the region – in transitioning to a more sustainable economy.

The project acknowledges the structural constraints with regard to growth and the need to reinforce broad macroeconomic and sectoral frameworks in support of job-rich growth. Private sector development and active labor market policies have to be embedded into broader growth polices and strategies and combined with specific job creation initiatives, with special attention to the youth. Shabab+ seeks to complement the efforts led by the Inclusive Growth team. In order to increase economic growth and economic diversification, and at the same time create decent jobs for both women and youth, delivering higher and more inclusive job growth, an expansion of private sector firms and SMEs is necessary. The project has identified the support of regional and sub-regional entrepreneurship and innovation ecosystems and the growth of impact-oriented youth entrepreneurship and business start-ups as a strategic intervention to increase innovation, productivity and absorbing excess labor. It proposes to implement a sequence of interventions across macro, meso and micro levels, which will range from deploying UNDP's state of the art diagnostic tools and policy-oriented research, supporting stakeholder dialogue and policy co-creation, the strengthening of national institutions and systems and coordination with intermediaries, as well as downstream business incubation and acceleration support for youth-led businesses. Stronger synergies between innovation hubs[54] and the public and private sector to support the scaling of homegrown innovation will be fostered. Emphasis will be placed on supporting hubs that cater towards local innovations that can play a role in lessening the impact of COVID-19, to embracing open innovation, and prioritizing green innovations that are intrinsically linked to national sustainable development agendas and community needs. It is expected that this stack of interventions will lead to the improvement of the operating environment across a range of relevant policy domains, including critical access to finance, and lead to the generation of employment for youth in new green sectors and industries, and contribute to the emergence of new paradigms of value creation in the region.

With still apparent scarcity of resources directed towards achieving SDGs, identifying effective, economically feasible and scalable solutions that could have systemic and exponential effects in targeting SDGs is imperative. Engaging private sector entrepreneurs in targeting SDGs is immensely important to meet 2030 Agenda commitments. In this context impact-oriented businesses play a key role in addressing problems and challenges articulated through the SDGs. UNDP Impact venture accelerators, a corporate service offer development by the SDG Finance Sector Hub, combines

[54] Innovation Hubs are concentrations of accelerated ideation and entrepreneurship support centers. Incubators are organizations that helps startup companies and individual entrepreneurs to develop their businesses by providing a fullscale range of services starting with management training and office space and ending with venture capital financing.

business acceleration programs with robust and dedicated efforts on SDG impact alignment, impact measurement and management (IMM), which is the main distinguishing feature of UNDP's venture support. It is a structured support process that enables participating businesses across various stages of life cycle maturity to innovate and develop new sustainable business models, and to grow and scale existing solutions. It is through this robust offer that this Project seeks to infuse SDG impact measurement and sustainability concepts into national and regional innovation and entrepreneurship ecosystems.

Key outputs contributing to this outcome

Output 1: Development portfolios to improve entrepreneurial ecosystems adopted by partner governments to support youth-led SDG-oriented businesses and generate youth employment in middle income countries through strengthened national institutions, laws and policies, and financial and non-financial services.

Output 2: Youth employment in and crisis settings generated through pathways for decent work, sustainable development and social cohesion.

Outcome 2: Social cohesion and reinvigoration of trust in institutions and democratic processes through inclusive and open public sphere with expanded public engagement, particularly youth engagement.
Social cohesion, and trust between the governed and governments is reinvigorated, if:

- *youth, including girls and young women and other marginalized groups, are engaging in local and national policy discussions and change processes, and leading social initiatives;*
- *youth are co-creating solutions that foster better systems and policies;*
- *greater coordination and policy coherence at central and local levels are fostered; and*
- *youth are mainstreamed into national development and sectoral plans, strategies and budgets.*

The project aims to build more inclusive models for collective action and one in which citizens act as custodians for future generations. In this age of complexity, top-down government is neither sustainable, given the scope and scale of interventions required, nor effective given the range of actors involved in our interconnected nation system. Moreover, the increased risks faced by the nation state system need bold interventions that require building legitimacy across society for such actions. One way to build legitimacy is by fostering more inclusive, transparent and accountable policy making and program implementation.

Based on the premise that creating better interfaces between the people and the government will lead to more responsive and relevant public policies and services and ultimately better development outcomes, it seeks to support Country Offices and partner governments in working towards:

- Youth engagement in public life and public policy design. Explore and promote innovative tools and frameworks for integrating a youth perspective in policy formulation and service design
- A 'whole of government' approach to youth. Enhance institutional capacities and ensure horizontal and vertical coordination across state institutions and non-governmental bodies, which is critical to ensure that all stakeholders are working in harmony towards a shared vision for youth
- Strengthened youth (serving) structures and networks (innovation hubs, national youth councils and centers, think tanks, incubators) to foster a generation of engaged and empowered citizens

UNDP seeks to deploy a two-pronged approach in building youth' agency:

- **Broad based** civic education with the aim of reaching as many young people as possible and develop the capacities of engaged cognitively sovereign young citizens
- **Deep engagement** with a select number of policy leaders /shapers, who want to lead on policy and systems change

The underlying assumption for this approach is that social change is unpredictable, influenced by the interaction of multiple layers in society, across larger time horizons. The thesis for our support is that in order to seed change, a generation of youth will have to be educated about their rights and responsibilities and equipped with the requisite skills to advocate for a future they want. The project seeks to support the emergence of young change makers, connecting young people within countries and across the region, using creative and innovative methods and tools to make their voices heard and run experiments that generate pathways for more relevant, effective and inclusive governance models over time. In line with the systems approach, the project posits that it is essential we co-build the institutional capacity to explore and lead towards opportunities that are genuinely relevant to the Arab region without trying to replicate other models and mistakes. Hence, the project will identify and work with forward thinking champions in governing bodies to engender the values and tools for co-creation and design thinking, as well as enhancing inter-ministerial coordination, planning, and budgeting across sectors, and linking youth objectives to broader national development goals, and sectoral strategies.

Engaged youth are faced with numerous risks and constraints that limit the realm of possibilities for their action. These strand across numerous domains, such as security, legal framework, funding, predominant political culture, and infrastructure. Therefore, the project is committed to conducting risk assessments with regard to the feasibility of capacity building and policy co-creation activities, to ensure no harm to project participants.

Key outputs contributing to this outcome

Output 3: Development portfolios to novel and emerging youth-related development challenges adopted by partner governments

Output 4: Youth political participation in political processes strengthened and public policy and services for youth improved

Output 5: Youth and partners' research, knowledge exchange, regional and national level advocacy, and access to resources enabled through digital platforms and open-source public goods

Delivery mechanisms

Recognizing the complex interconnected issues young people face, it is critical to take a systems approach to addressing some of the wicked problems that arise due to entrenched power lock-in, cultural, economic, technological factors and broader external drivers. This section details the approach to systems transformation and UNDP's mechanism for coordinating and delivering integrated service offers and tailored interventions.

Demand driven: Dynamic deployment of assets, capabilities, and expertise for tackling complexity

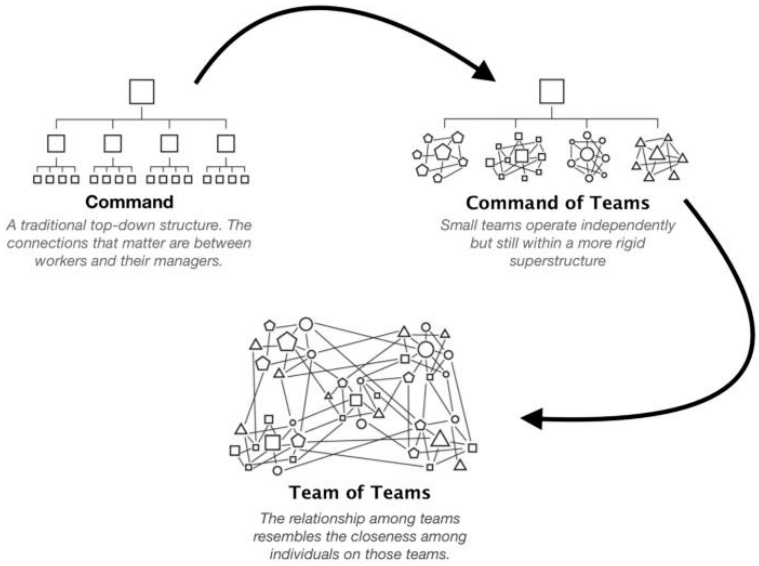
UNDP Regional Bureau for the Arab States will support UNDP country offices to develop new capabilities and explore system approaches in an iterative and collaborative process to surface insights about the governance and economic development space, draw in new perspectives, and discover new entry points for affecting systems-level change.[55] It will also support COs in the process of building a new demand and engaging with development partners around youth issues using system approaches. Finally, it will support offices in the implementation phase where the resource mobilisation efforts have been successful.

[55] Note that where there are other initiatives within UNDP to help COs (including COs in RBAS) to adopt portfolios and this project will not duplicate, but rather build on these efforts where they have been already deployed and focus on the development of youth portfolios.

Working closely with UNDP global and RBAS Innovation, Inclusive Growth, SDGi and Governance Teams, the Crisis Bureau (leveraging their adaptive management offer), the other regional projects including the Regional Electoral Support Project, the SDG Finance Sector Hub, Representative Offices (including the Nordic Representation Office, Private Sector Unit), and the Country Office Accelerator Labs, the Regional Youth Team will co-create with Country Offices new propositions for youth development for government partners grounded in a systems logic.

This entails:

1) developing capabilities to understand and analyse issues from a system perspective (as opposed to the logic of individual projects and existing organizational structures);
2) making systems less opaque;
3) design interventions that address multiple levers of change at the same time (in a portfolio logic);
4) articulate to governments and donors the value proposition of a portfolio approach;
5) dynamically manage portfolios to extract intelligence on an ongoing basis;
6) and nurture the formation of ecosystems of stakeholders working towards transformational change.



The Regional Youth Team will dynamically assemble a "team of teams"[56] in response to the youth-related challenges/support requests articulated by the Country Office and service offer defined in the Output(s).

Youth portfolio design and adaptive management

As detailed in the Development Challenge, youth are key stakeholders in the development of their societies, and it is a demographic imperative to apply a youth lens when assessing and designing interventions to address complex challenges. Questions related to the Future of Work, automation, trust in institutions, and climate change impact youth disproportionately. At the same time, UNDP's partners are starting to embrace the shift from "the science of delivery" to the "art of transformation" but are struggling to operationalise it. By positioning itself as the partner of choice to explore the complex 'how' of transformations, UNDP will build a new type of demand that goes beyond a focus on delivery of one-point solutions towards systems transform.

A portfolio approach entails designing a set of mutually reinforcing options that learn from each other and which address multiple dimensions of complex problem across multiple levers of change. A portfolio is not a static artefact, but a way to continuously generate actionable intelligence about a complex systems challenge from an integrated set of interventions. Dynamic portfolio management enables adaption to emergent and dynamic realities in complex environments (or systems) and the development of a broader set of options for decision makers to navigate a shifting context.

[56] General Stanley McCrystal. Team of Teams: New rules for engagement for a complex world. Penguin, 2015

In line with the Strategic Plan Enabler "Strategic Innovation", it will also contribute to building new human and organizational capabilities in UNDP Country Offices to articulate a policy issue from a systems perspective, understand a policy issue and generate multiple entry points, and design portfolios of interventions that address multiple levers of change. In this way, the Project will contribute to building UNDP's collective ability to deal with risks and shocks, and to rapidly learn and re-configure strategies, technology, people, and interventions (in short: our transformational capability) and will build these capabilities in our partner governments and other local partners, and financing partners.

Building on the portfolio methodologies developed and deployed across UNDP Regional Bureaux, including in the Programme of Assistance for the People of Palestine and the Tunisia country office, the RBAS Youth Team, together with UNDP Innovation teams and external partners, will work with a set of pilot countries to enhance or develop youth portfolios. Here, RBAS will benefit from the codified learning of the Innovation Facility's Deep Demonstrations[57] and spin-offs[58].

Two strategic innovation protocols will be used to engage country offices and government partners to enhance their strategic positioning vis-à-vis government partners on youth related wicked problems. Portfolio sensemaking and acceleration[59], and problem space analysis and portfolio design[60]. For more on these methodologies refer to the footnotes and the **Annex**.

Country Office cooperation and multi-country initiatives

Special attention will be paid to seeking complementarities and synergies between the Regional Project initiatives and programs and projects by the Country Office. Up-front division of labour between regional and national implementation teams will be sought, according to their comparative advantage, strength, and position to deliver on the respective components of the Regional Youth Project.

Ecosystem approach: Network of networks

The Regional Youth Project will explore new and unusual partnerships and foster existing ones. The project strategy is centred on close collaboration with specialized UN agencies, national governments, regional institutions, and civil society organizations including youth and youth-serving organizations, and networks of ecosystem enablers from the private sector, development finance institutions (DFIs); impact investors and other innovative finance support providers; social enterprises; incubators and accelerators and other business development and advisory service providers; governance innovation networks, research institutions and academia; innovation and technology companies. The project will foster and build on existing initiatives and partnerships established by UNDP Country Offices and the UNDP Regional Programme for the Arab States. More on this in the Stakeholder section below.

III. RESULTS AND PARTNERSHIPS (1.5 - 5 PAGES RECOMMENDED)

Strategic Alignment

This project is in alignment with the **UNDP Strategic Plan 2022-2025** (DP/2021/28) and contributes to Outcome 1 "Structural transformation accelerated, particularly green, inclusive and digital transitions", and more specifically Output 1.3 Access to basic services and financial and non-financial assets and services improved to support productive capacities for sustainable livelihoods and jobs to achieve prosperity. The project contributes to Signature Solution 4 on Environment that aims at

[57] Deep demonstrations are intended as inspirational examples of what is possible at the level of whole systems – including cities, sectors, countries and value chains – when innovation is orchestrated, collaborative and mission-led. Also see : https://medium.com/@undp.innovation/deep-demonstrations-the-journey-begins-34bf063477bf

[58] Spin-offs are initiatives not initially instituted and/or supported by the Innovation Facility, that nevertheless pick up on and apply capabilities, approaches or discourse (co-)developed by the Innovation Facility.

[59] https://undp.sharepoint.com/teams/RBAP/Innovation/SitePages/Portfolio-Sensemaking-and-Acceleration-Protocol.aspx

[60] https://undp-ric.medium.com/portfolio-approaches-to-tackle-complex-challenges-notes-on-an-emerging-practice-135b44ed0507

putting nature and the environment at the heart of national economies and planning, helping governments protect, manage and value their natural assets. It also contributes to SP Signature Solution 2: Governance, Output 2.4 Democratic institutions and processes strengthened for an inclusive and open public sphere with expanded public engagement. In addition, it will contribute to SP Enabler E.2 Innovation capabilities built, and approaches adopted to expand policy options at global, regional, national, and sub-national levels, and enabler 1 Digitalisation: Supporting countries to build inclusive, ethical, and sustainable digital societies. SDG 8 of the 2030 Agenda calls for the promotion of sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work, which this project seeks to contribute to. Furthermore, the civic engagement pillar contributes to SDG 16, recognizing that youth full participation in all spheres of society is a prerequisite of peace, justice and inclusion.

The project will contribute directly to the **UNDP Regional Programme for Arab States 2022-2025**, and to outcome 4 "Women and youth empowered for a more inclusive and sustainable future" and specifically to output 4.3 *Access to financial and non-financial assets and services improved to support productive capacities for sustainable livelihoods and jobs for youth*, aligned with the Strategic Plan output 1.3 mentioned above. It will also contribute to the Regional Programme Outcome 2: Governance accountability increased to foster more resilient communities.

The Project is strongly aligned with the **UN Youth Strategy** through implementing and mainstreaming youth-focused structures and mechanisms on the organizational level, supporting greater access to knowledge products, resources and informal education through the NextGen Youth Platform and capacity building, and a joint programmatic approach with ILO contributing to priority three: Economic Empowerment through **Decent Work** - Support young people's greater access to decent work and productive employment and priority four: Youth and Human Rights – Protect and promote the rights of young people and support their civic and political engagement.

In line, with the **UN Secretary General's *Roadmap for Digital Cooperation***, *Action Area 2, Promoting Digital Public Goods to create a more equitable world, and Action Area 8, Ensuring digital inclusion for all, including the most vulnerable all*, all knowledge products and tools will be open source to increase broad-based access for young people.

As detailed above, the project is testing two implementation logics. One is the multi-level approach delivering integrated solutions based on UNDP tools and methods, the other process is focused on building the capabilities for systems transformation within UNDP, partner governments and local actors. Both approaches in synergy seek to shift system dynamics and affect change over time. Therefore, Outputs will have high level expected results, which we expect to materialize into broader development outcomes identified in the Strategy.

Expected Results

By design, the youth portfolios do not predetermine specific result targets for each country but allows these to be determined by local stakeholders in response to specific country needs and opportunities and in line with UNDP's signature solutions.

This project is designed based on adaptive programming principles. Indicative regional-level results are identified below, however, delivery of expected results will depend on resource mobilization as well as risk management and mitigation. Also, activities will be defined and informed on adaptive principles. As a result, we will review our approach and the required resources on a regular basis as our learning deepens through implementation. Adaptive programming is based on the insight that development is not linear or straightforward, but rather complex, uncertain, and context-specific. This calls for national and international development actors to work differently, in ways that are based on dynamic management of portfolios for which UNDP has developed a Portfolio Sensemaking and

Acceleration Protocol[61] and adaptive management practices by the Crisis Bureau. An adaptive approach is particularly useful when working with complex problems – such as systems transformation – involving many different actors and variables. This calls for a different programming logic focused on understanding problems rather than solutions, it requires working through emergence as a project's interventions produce a variety of effects that cannot necessarily be anticipated, and it puts a premium on learning and the ability of an organization or project to adapt.

Output 1: Development portfolios to improve entrepreneurial ecosystems adopted by partner governments to support youth-led SDG-oriented businesses and generate youth employment in middle income countries through strengthened national institutions, laws and policies, and financial and non-financial services

Expected key result:

- New service offers and development propositions adopted by government to support youth-led SDG-oriented businesses and generate youth employment
- Enabling environment strengthened (policies and access to enabling resources)
- Sustainability concepts and impact measurement integrated into private sector and innovation ecosystems
- Ecosystem actors, institutions and systems strengthened
- Youth-led solutions and businesses supported, and scaling enabled

This Output defines the integrated support offer, which represents a holistic approach to supporting youth-led businesses, youth employment generation and improving the operating environment for youth-driven private sector development and green growth.

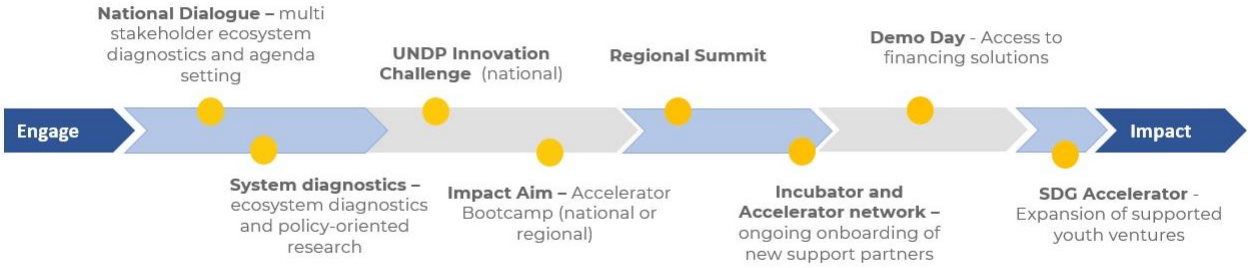
The project differentiates four types of business based on the methodology for classifying firms by Collaborative for Frontier Finance[62]: livelihood-sustaining enterprises, dynamic enterprises, niche ventures, high-growth ventures. Support will be structured based on context and type of youth-led businesses UNDP is seeking to support at country level.

The project will enable cross-regional learning from ongoing efforts to strengthen the operating environment for youth-led businesses, such as the establishment of SME helpdesks in Palestine under the auspices of the Prime Minsters Office or the network of sector specific innovation hubs in Lebanon implemented under the UN interagency Private Sector Development Programme. The Regional Hub will leverage its role as knowledge broker to enable sharing of models and approaches among country offices.

The graphic below shows the "value chain" of UNDP's support to youth entrepreneurs.

[61] For more see UNDP's Portfolio Sensemaking and Acceleration Protocol (sharepoint.com)

[62] https://www.frontierfinance.org/



Value chain of entrepreneurship ecosystem support

Activity 1.1 Macro level: Impact analysis, data collection for evidence-based policy reform

One of the major factors leading to the fragmented entrepreneurial ecosystem is the absence of data and information sharing that can inform policy making and programmatic support. Accordingly, the proposed intervention intends to collect data, which will be used to advocate for specific support and regulatory framework to improve the operating environment for youth-led businesses and youth employment. A diagnostic framework – a combination of UNDP assessment tools as well as systems mapping tools (network mapping, support mapping, and structural analysis) will be deployed to inform upstream, mid, and downstream activities as part of the regional offer.

Assessments that cover governance, infrastructure, finance, human capital, markets, support, and culture[63] dimensions may include but are not limited to:

- Review the existing macroeconomic, investment, trade and labour policies and recommend a set of policy reforms to generate new employment opportunities while promoting economic transformation including through digital economy
- Youth specific Covid-19 impact assessment focused on jobs and livelihoods, including assessment specifically targeted at youth entrepreneurs to collect data on the constraints they face in terms of access to capital, market access and competitiveness, registration and red tap constraints and ability to find employee talent in the fields they require. The objective of the assessment is to inform national plans, sector strategies, recovery policies, and budgets.
- Review of the business environment and fiscal context in which young entrepreneurs operate and provide policy recommendations in terms of tax incentives and other policy reforms
- Conduct sector and value chain assessments to identify opportunities for green growth and job creation
- Develop a framework to assess the potential for green/blue jobs creation in MSME sectors.[64]
- Investigate and design of financial vehicles that could propose innovative financial instruments of blended-finance types to catalyse the youth start-up ecosystem.
- Design of an engagement, coordination and dialogue platform between youth representative bodies, youth-to-youth economic networks, youth groups within business associations and government to identify and connect opportunities to support youth livelihoods/economic empowerment
- Support R&D activities that aim at reducing the carbon footprint of energy utilization (for example, through research grants targeting higher learning institutions)

[63] Based on benchmark study of Small Business Acts and Startup Acts in Africa conducted by Alliance Francais pour le Développement (AFD)& i4policy. 2020

[64] UNDP conducted a green jobs assessment in Lebanon in 2011, in partnership with ILO. The assessment focused on four sectors: energy, building construction, agriculture, and waste management, and not specifically on MSMEs. See: https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_emp/---emp_ent/documents/publication/wcms_168091.pdf

- Develop a framework to assess the potential for green/blue jobs creation in MSME sectors.[65]
- Assess challenges related to the integration of MSMEs into local, and SMEs into global and regional value chains and implement measures that enhance integration.

Source: Small Business Acts and Startup Acts in Africa Report. Alliance Francais pour le Développement (AFD)& i4policy. 2020

Activity 1. 2 Meso level: Fostering and enhancing national ecosystems

This activity aims at supporting national systems and institutions responsible for providing capacity building, access to resources and networks.

Expected key results:

- Establishment of the SDG Impact Coalition

The Output seeks to build a coalition to actively engage ecosystem players who are contributing to youth empowerment across the Arab region. We define the entrepreneurship ecosystem as a dynamic framework consisting of a set of stakeholders - startups, hubs, investors, academic institutions, public institutions, corporations - who interact and engage with each other to seize new opportunities, support innovation and strengthen the overall business environment for entities at different stages, sectors, and geographical locations. With a focus on youth entrepreneurship and social innovation, UNDP envisions this SDG Impact Coalition to become a powerful network connecting young impact entrepreneurs to finance, mentors, partners, support structures and markets. As a cross-regional collaboration effort, this activity will focus on working with ecosystem builders to capacitate and connects hubs, incubators and other business development service providers to enable them to provide business development services and offer seed and growth capital to scale up businesses.

Key Activities:

- Map, connect and partner with organizations across the region who work in the space of entrepreneurship, innovation and innovative finance with the aim of building a regional SDG Impact Coalition. This SDG Impact Coalition will support a pipeline of youth-led impact ventures. Initial research has been commissioned as mentioned under Output 5. Partners will be on-boarded on an on-going basis. Selection criteria will include track record of supporting

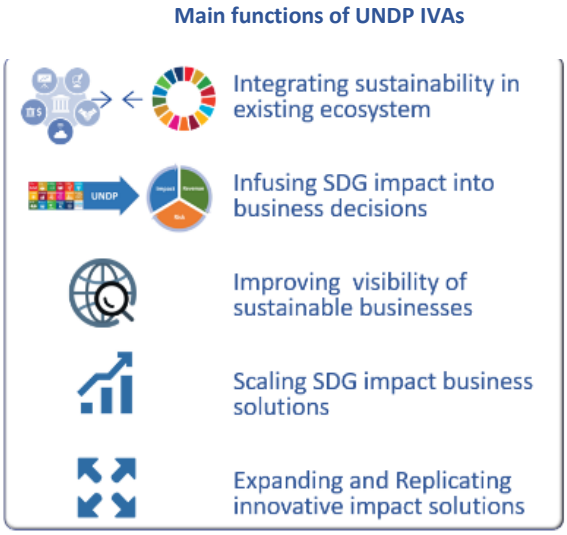
[65] ibid

youth-led ventures and the commitment to an operating philosophy that is value and impact driven.

- Design mechanisms that strengthen the links among research centers, academia and productive sectors
- create a pipeline of ventures for local and regional incubators, accelerators and funds.
- regularly convene this network of ecosystem enablers to facilitate cross-country learning and cross-fertilization of ideas, generation of synergies, transfer of technologies and scaling of solutions.

Activity 1.3 Micro level: SDG Impact oriented capacity building support to youth-led start-ups and SMEs through Impact Bootcamps and Accelerators

At the micro level, UNDP impact ventures support programs are one of the practical approaches to help enterprises to scale up effective market-based solutions to development issues, and to COVID19 related challenges. To implement these venture building support programs, UNDP works with local and regional business partners.



The focus and selection criteria will be based on the thematic areas that are prioritized in the specific country or region, as well as the results of sector and value chain and needs assessments. Typically, acceleration rounds will target areas such as fintech, smart cities and urban infrastructure, foodtech/agritech, cleantech, healthcare, edutech, gov-tech, thus addressing problems related to empowerment of vulnerable groups (women, youth, refugees etc.), financial inclusivity, climate change, water and sanitation, plastic pollution etc. The method of building a pipeline of innovative business ideas, start-ups or scale stage ventures will be an Innovation Challenge.

UNDP has developed 3 major conceptual elements for impact venture accelerators[66]: 2 primary IVA models designed for businesses at various stages of lifecycle maturity and impact advisory service on SDG alignment for external business accelerators.

66

1. The **Impact AIM model** is designed to provide structured assistance to *seed, early growth, growth and Series A stage*[66] ventures to develop and exponentially scale-up their businesses and positive impact through alignment with and targeting the SDGs.

2. The **SDG Accelerator** is targeted at established post-revenue companies and offers a business innovation journey anchored in human-centered design thinking aimed at developing and scaling sustainable business solutions (products, services, business models) for achieving the SDGs. It accelerates innovative business solutions embedded in the challenges described in the underlying targets to the SDGs.

3. **SDG alignment and Impact Measurement and Management Advisory**
UNDP has developed an SDG-Alignment Toolkit specially for venture accelerators. It is built on the strengths of existing impact measurement and management frameworks: aligns with UNDP SDG Impact, IMP, incorporates UNDP BCtA ImpactLab IMM tools and GALI's accelerators performance assessment approach. The Toolkit include such components as SDG Impact Forecasting, Risk Matrix, Impact Scaling, A-B-C Classification, Value for Money Analysis etc. SDG Alignment and IMM and dedicated toolkit application are both the main distinguishing features of UNDP Impact Venture Accelerators and signify core offerings in the advisory service to accelerators seeking to amend their programs with impact factoring approaches. This offer will be extended to SDG Impact Coalition partners identified through Activity 5.2

Targets: The project will support at least 17 Impact AIM programs in 10 countries, and 54 of SDG Accelerators in 8 countries, while at least 17 SDG Impact Coalition partners will benefit from advisory and capacity building on SDG alignment and impact measurement. IVA programs will support 660 youth-led businesses. A rollout strategy will be devised in consultation with the Finance Sector Hub Senior Advisor /Global lead UNDP Impact Venture Accelerator and Chief Economist Inclusive Growth /RBAS and will be informed by the regional ecosystem scan described under Output 5, Activity 5.3.

Output 2: Youth employment in crisis settings generated through pathways for decent work, sustainable development, and social cohesion.

Expected key results:

- Framework for creating development scenarios in crisis settings and pathways for recovery and decent work
- UNDP/ILO joint youth employment in crisis portfolios developed and activated

The aim of this output is to build antifragility[67] for countries to adjust, learn and deeply grow in fragile and transition settings and create productive and decent work opportunities for young people. There is a need to build the capabilities for a nation to thrive in uncertain environments so that planning isn't focused on the next crisis, whilst repairing the damage from the last one. It is particularly challenging to provide hope for a better future in crisis settings. This output recognizes the centrality of youth in fostering stability in the fragile countries and to generate decent work opportunities for young people that will serve as positive alternatives to participation in violence and conflict. The Arab region is home to a number of countries in protracted conflict, with the root causes and drivers of which are complex and often transboundary.

It is for the above reasons that UNDP will be working with ILO, leveraging both agencies' complementary technical expertise, assets and experience to jointly lead country offices through a process of multi-stakeholder diagnostics and co-generation of a set of interventions that would trigger the shift from livelihoods stabilization to sustainable dignified work taking a systems logic as described in the strategy section. Couched in the conceptual framework and guide "Employment and decent work

[67] Nassim Taleb. Antifragile: Things That Gain from Disorder. Randomhouse, 2014.

in the Humanitarian-Development- Peace Nexus" put forth by ILO (2021) and UNDP's stabilization efforts and protecting and generating livelihood opportunities, strengthening local governance and ensuring continued service delivery, the intent is to understand the impact of fragility on labour markets and governance, to analyse the root causes of fragility and to evaluate how ILO´s and UNDP's layered interventions can help labour market actors prevent and mitigate the effects of adverse shocks on employment and decent work, foster recovery efforts and grasp opportunities for reducing fragility. Some work in the area of scenario modelling has been done through UNDP study[68] on the impact of war on development in Yemen and recovery pathways, which applied integrated modelling techniques to better understand the dynamics of the conflict and its impact on development in Yemen, using the Sustainable Development Goals lens.

Given the rise in fragility in the region, this Output will enable UNDP and ILO to offer multiple development options in contexts of crisis. It enables us to reframe intractable problems. Reframing is about considering a range of vantage points from which to 'see' the system and reflect it back to itself to unlock new possibilities. In this sense, frames are not solutions but means of expanding the palette of options that the system has available to itself for its renewal. They can help decision makers at all levels recalibrate their understanding and ability to act on complex issues[69].

This multi-country initiative will generate insights about what works for youth employment at the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus and enable cross-country learning, leading to the construction of a meta-portfolio for youth employment in crisis settings. Both agencies will leverage latest tools, including digital solutions, and approaches to include "hard to reach" and marginalized youth.

Key activities include:

- Design of joint diagnostics approach combining UNDP's sensemaking and systems mapping approaches, foresight methodologies and ILO and UNDP impact assessment tools
- Generation of recovery scenarios and options
- Design of joint portfolios of interventions across multiple levers of change

Target: Four (4) countries will be selected, based on similar operating environment and root causes of unemployment, subject to endorsement by agencies' senior management.

Output 3: Development portfolios to novel and emerging youth-related development challenges offered to partner governments

Expected key results:

- New service offers and development propositions around emerging youth-related development challenge designed
- Internal and external capabilities for systems thinking and transformation built

Cognizant of the pace and scale of change, this Output seeks to ensure that UNDP continues to provide cutting-edge advisory, platform, and decision-making services for the future of development and remains a partner of choice for governments in tackling complex, emergent policy issues related to youth.

This Output is dedicated to emerging areas of work in which the youth population has a large current or future stake, and which UNDP has not yet been able to service. Through this Output, UNDP will

[68] https://yemen.un.org/sites/default/files/2019-09/Assessing%20the%20Impact%20of%20War%20on%20Development%20in%20Yemen.pdf

[69] https://medium.com/@undp.innovation/weeknote-the-art-of-framing-3be1adca4cdf

support governments to address complex policy issues through design and delivery of a new service offering. The emerging needs from the program countries are at the heart of this, making Country Offices a critical element that drives the direction and focus of this work. CPD and UNSDCF processes present strategic moments in time for whole-of-office reflection and stocktaking, and strategic conversations. In some cases, explorations into new policy issues will be defined based on the Regional Hub's own analysis of strategic or existential risks, trends and opportunities relevant to the region, a sub-region or country and its youth population. Possible emerging trends could be the changing characteristics of the world of work and implications for education and training systems frameworks and skills; migration patterns and its multiple drivers, re-imagining food systems in light of climate-related risks to agricultural production and supply chains; or re-thinking the informal economy and designing welfare and social protection systems.

As described in the Strategy section, this implies different two types of change processes – one affecting transformational change in the partner governments around key policy problems, and the other set affecting institutional change inside UNDP so the organization can better align itself around the new mission. Through the GPN and other corporate coordination mechanisms, the Regional youth team in close coordination with the Strategic Innovation Unit / regional innovation team will leverage organizational expertise, assets and capabilities to support sensemaking and portfolio design processes, ensuring composition of a delivery team is commensurate with the various dimensions of the development challenge.

The project will offer support to both country offices and UNCTs, as well as government counterparts on youth related strategy or policy development, and through these processes seeking to build both internal and external capabilities for tackling systems transformation. Such processes might include CPD and UNSDFs, UN youth strategies, and on the side of governments national youth policies, and other relevant policies, laws, strategies and action plans.

The project will also conduct a **gender analysis to strengthen gender mainstreaming across outputs**. A gender analysis will be conducted at the outset of the project and a gender action plan will be developed to be incorporated into the work plan. Sufficient resources will be allocated to fund the gender action plan. In practice, this generally could entail adapting approaches or outreach of training to overcome barriers that face young women to ensure they can equally benefit from the project offer as well as conducting gender reflections, sensitization or training sessions to particular stakeholders or reaching out to males to gain their support in empowering young women along the areas this project seeks to implement.

Indicative activities / Targets: The project will support at least youth portfolio sensemaking processes which would generate actionable intelligence to inform the development of at least **5 portfolios** around pressing and emerging policy areas that impact a large percentage of the youth population. The project will also offer strategic innovation services to national counterparts seeking to address wicked problems where youth are the main demographic impacted. Target for facilitating these processes is 4. The project will conduct 2 gender analysis over a span of 5 years with clear action plan to integrate into workplans.

Output 4: Youth political participation in political processes strengthened and public policy and services for youth improved

Expected key results:

- civic engagement capacities of young people, especially young women, to equip them with the tools and skills required to lead change within their societies, and to facilitate their application across a range of real-life policy issues and reform processes

- network of formal and informal youth (support) structures expanded, and organizational capabilities developed that provide civic education and support to young policy shapers and community builders

- capacities of innovative public officials developed with a view to engendering the value of human-centered policy design and enabling them to facilitate deliberative processes of policy co-creation with relevant stakeholders, such as youth, and strengthen public governance arrangements (institutional and legal) for youth in public life at the central and sub-regional level

- regional support network of peers and a movement of changemakers, inclusive of young women changemakers, fostered

- different models and practices for participatory decision making through supporting public policy processes tested, and patterns and codify lessons learnt distilled where possible

Cognizant of the varying contexts in the region and space for civic participation, a menu of options for interventions are required that can be deployed in a modular, sequenced manner and adapted and adjusted to a given operating environment and tailored to country-specific needs and constraints.

Activity 4.1 Identifying and strengthening formal and informal youth support structures
This activity is aimed at growing UNDP's network of formal and informal youth (support) structures. This includes NGOs/CBOs, as well as national youth councils officially mandated to implement youth programming and its network of youth centers. It also seeks to strengthen organizational capabilities and staff capacities to provide community builders with requisite support to develop social innovations and launch them in their communities. This may entail project management, proposal writing skills, financial management, as well as building coalitions of stakeholders and mobilizing young people for project design and implementation.

4.2 Civic engagement and SDG awareness training

This activity will ensure that training materials empowering young people's civic engagement and contribution to the SDGs is integrated as a component of the regional framework as three inter-related curricula will be rolled out in 17 countries over the course of the 5-year project cycle. The curricula on the following topics are grounded in the UNICEF led MENA Life Skills and Citizenship Education Initiative (LSCE) framework towards the achievement of the SDG 4: "Emotional Intelligence and Leadership Skills," "Youth Civic and Political Participation," and "Climate Change and Environmental Awareness" have the overall objective to equip a new generation of young leaders to unleash their potential to become social innovators, and a powerful force for change in their communities, countries and the region at large. The materials will be used by youth-serving organizations (YSOs) to increase the knowledge, skills and attitudes of young women and men in the Arab region between the ages of 19 and 29 years old (up to 35 years old in certain contexts). The process of launching the curricula in all 17 countries will be initiated with an onsite training of trainers implemented by the Regional Youth Team in 2022, and further delivered and monitored at the Country Office level with regional support.

Target: 17 countries and 20,925 beneficiaries over 5 years

Activity 4.3 Regional civic education and skills development training, and changemaker capacity development [70]

This activity provides region-wide expertise and peer-to-peer training on research, writing, advocacy, critical thinking, and policy, among other topics. This activity is implemented with youth (-serving) organizations and centers, which serve as a "hub" for youth to receive training, meet, connect, research, and collaborate. It connects each hub to others across the country and region, fostering national and

[70] Based on North Africa Policy Initiative (NAPI) Hub & Spoke model

regional support networks among youth and providing youth with access to safe community working spaces with key forms of logistical support.

The initiative will consist of 6 training sessions a year in 6 countries, and the hosting of regional policy debates and roundtables within the country and across the region to facilitate connection, cross-fertilization and formation of groups, movements, and organizations around key issues relevant to youth. Expansion of this support offer will be done incrementally and in line with demand, opportunity space and appropriate risk analysis. Final target countries will be determined based on the results and recommendations from the baseline assessment on youth civic and political participation in the Arab region, which was commissioned at the time of the drafting of this document.

Target: 13 countries and 4000 beneficiaries over 5 years

Activity 4.4 Policy and social innovation incubation programme[71]

This activity offers a deep dive policy incubation programme (7 months) for young people who wish to be part of an intensive programme to acquire skills in research, writing, and advocacy capacity and receive tailored mentorship and facilitation of structured touch points with stakeholders and policy makers along the policy formulation journey. The policy issue is chosen by the young changemaker and represents a major societal challenge they have identified. The aim is to stimulate debate around popular issues and to facilitate the emergence of young leaders who will engage with decision-makers by articulating operational policy proposals. All selected leaders are trained, coached, and supported through a multi-stage programme cycle to build their capacity and help them produce rigorous, well-written, and credible policy briefs. At the end of each cycle, a Policy Briefing Paper Launching Forum will be organized with donors, local, national, and international decision-makers, activists, and journalists in order to discuss the specific recommendations and how to translate them into practice.

This initiative will be rolled out on demand but in at least 5 countries within the life cycle of the Project.

Target: 75 beneficiaries over 5 years

Activity 4.5 Support to public policy co-creation and deployment of innovative civic tech tools[72]

The Project will work with a network of public policy innovators to design, test and deploy frameworks and protocols for inclusive bottom-up policy reforms and public service design driven by local communities of “policy users” (the people affected by public policy), bringing together governments, experts, and citizens to re-imagine the way governments and citizens interface, leveraging online and offline civic tech to engage the hardest to reach. This activity is expected to produce a conceptual framework for public policy deliberation, which includes 1) methodology and process design for bottom-up policy co-creation with contextualized tools to engage the affected communities, 2) provision of support to local coalition of policy shapers and overall public policy reform process; protocols that abstract from the experience of given policy issue/instrument and create a guide for undertaking a similar process in a different context; User guide for various (online and offline) civic tech tools to crowd in stakeholder voices that can be deployed in different contexts, particularly contexts with limited civic space, large societal inequities, and lack of access to digital spaces.

Target: The project target is to support at least 5 national or subnational bottom-up participatory public policy or public service design processes over the project lifecycle. In year 5 codified lessons learnt from supported public policy processes will be abstracted into a (1) framework and protocols.

[71] Based on North Africa Policy Initiative (NAPI) Young Policy Leaders model

[72] Based on Innovation for Policy Foundation (i4policy) framework

Activity 4.6 Training of public officials on policy innovation process

Build capacities of innovative public officials with a view to engendering the value of human centred policy design and enabling them to facilitate deliberative processes of policy co-creation with relevant stakeholders, such as youth.

Delivery of tailored capacity building workshops for key public policy officials that have been identified as innovative change makers within government agencies deemed critical to the policy reform issue, which includes workshop design and workshop delivery as part of a policy reform process.

Target: Capacity building workshops for public officials implemented in 5 countries

Activity 4.7 Data-Driven Debates: Combining the available access to open-source data provided by the Arab Development Portal and UN ESCWA's Manara portal[73], with other existing data sources, data-driven debates, and knowledge available within the ecosystem on the regional and country level.

Data are considered to be one of the fundamental pillars of the accountability framework of the 2030 Agenda. By having access to and effectively collecting and using data, individuals, firms, and communities can become more actively and meaningfully engaged in rethinking development policies, taking fact-based positions, or leading on entrepreneurial initiatives, thereby contributing to sustainable development of their countries and regions. This activity aims to support the involvement of youth and emphasizes their role in achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at a time when data revolution continues to face a challenging infrastructure in the Arab region. Data accessibility enables youth to use, analyse, monitor and review data and policies on key development topics that affect their lives. Hence to enhance their role as active citizens, data should become more easily available to youth. Using the Arab Development Portal, Data-Driven Debates will (1) bring youth from universities and youth clubs to stimulate their interest in key development topics; (2) promote data and basic statistical literacy among youth to enable them to engage in critical debates and make informed decisions; (3) offer an enabling environment for young people's inclusive participation in the review and achievement of the SDGs; (4) show support for and encourage the adoption of open data policies.

Target: 8 cycles over 5 years

Output 5: Youth and partners' research, knowledge exchange, regional and national level advocacy, and access to resources enabled through digital platforms and open-source public goods

Key results:

- Establishment of a platform to enable cross-country learning, scaling of solutions, and for young people to access resources, mentors, networking, and funding opportunities.
- impactful communication strategy that is leveraged to support over all project's strategic direction and corresponding outputs.
- Research and publications that support interventions, approaches, and support advocacy efforts.
- Generation of knowledge products and codification of learnings as Public Goods based on quarterly learning and feedback from ecosystem stakeholders to inform and strengthen approaches, plans and activities in real time.

[73] https://manara.unescwa.org/home

- Annual regional summits that harness synergistic partnerships and coalitions to further regional youth empowerment agenda and work with the UN Issues-based coalitions on youth in the Arab Region.

A key value proposition of UNDP's work at the regional level is the ability to systematically organize its knowledge, experience and approaches as well as the convening of a cross-section of partners, and the coordination of evidence generation. Together with partners, this project intends to lead initiatives to influence regional bodies, regional and national civil society organization, private sector companies, and academia to generate a shared understanding and language around challenges, bottlenecks, risks as well as opportunities and trends that might be harnessed, synergistic partnerships and coalitions to further a regional youth empowerment agenda, innovative approaches and grassroots solutions that point to pathways for scale, and new policy frames and options. Importantly, targeted technical support will be provided to design and evaluate the various program innovations being tested at country level.

Finally, to support effectiveness and efficiency through knowledge and practice sharing while fostering a culture of learning and exchange, quarterly reflection sessions will be held with stakeholders to identify new opportunities and interventions in real-time in addition to annual regional summits- as part of the UN's issued-based coalition on youth for the Arab region- will be organized to harness synergetic partnerships and coalitions to further the regional youth empowerment agenda.

Activity 5.1 Launch and growing user base of NextGen Youth Platform

Creating and managing a virtual space in the form of a digital platform that will bring together resources, knowledge, mentoring and networks required to enable youth along their journey across the four-pathways. The platform will bridge youth engaged in the four pathways, national and regional partners including youth serving organizations, donors, incubators, policymakers, academia, external stakeholders and individuals. The aim is to create a multi-functional platform that will provide opportunities for networking, peer to peer collaboration, capacity building, knowledge exchange, resources and good practices, connecting youth with experts, with other youth in the region as well as youth-serving organizations. The platform will also showcase the work done by youth as well as by national partners, providing virtual space to track progress. Country windows will enable communication on progress made at the national level, provide activities' updates, share announcements and exchange knowledge. The platform will serve as a 'one-stop-shop' for youth and stakeholders in the Arab Region to access assets, build networks, and share knowledge. A sustainability study will be conducted with view sustainability and transition / handover to regional entity.

Target: 1

Activity 5.2 Develop and implement communication strategy

The project's theory of change stresses the power of communication to support dialogue and encourage change at both the micro and macro levels.

Successful and impactful communications are required alongside the five outputs and corresponding activities as a way to leverage greater results. Developing a communications strategy that clearly identifies priority communication goals, audiences, and its approach for implementation will equip the project. This will allow for 1. leveraging advocacy efforts for youth inclusion and empowerment and for addressing barriers at the micro and macro levels; 2. Increasing awareness of stakeholders and partners; 3. support resource mobilization efforts; 4. Strengthens interventions and project goals.

Target: 1

Activity 5.3 Conduct original research and publications

The project will commission original research in partnership with key knowledge partners from the region and beyond as necessary to ensure that programmatic interventions continue to be informed by up-to-date data, knowledge and evolving contexts. Knowledge will also be leveraged to support advocacy efforts. In the first year of the project, two key research initiatives will be commissioned: 1) Entrepreneurship ecosystem and investment landscape to help inform the development of a partnership mechanism to support the entrepreneurship pathway; 2) preliminary baseline assessment about civic and policy engagement of youth in the Arab region that is necessary to inform a region-wide, up-to-date support program tailored to country-specific needs and constraints.

Target: 6 (2 per year)

Activity 5.4 Convene regular and ad hoc learning and reflection sessions with internal and external stakeholders

Quarterly learning and reflection sessions with stakeholders within the ecosystem per pathway will allow for knowledge sharing across countries, but also within the relevant community at the country level. Bringing together the different stakeholders in an ecosystem allows for greater collaboration, identification of new opportunities, and highlight existing work where relevant. This will support the Embedding Adaptability principle stated in the section above, where learning and reflection will enable the project and its interventions to adjust to real-time feedback. These meetings also support co-creation to ensure ownership and sustainability.

Target: 4 (quarterly)

Activity 5.5 Youth delegates deployed in Country offices

Through the generous support of the Arab Youth Council, RBAS will continue to embed Youth Delegates at the country office level to support on mainstreaming youth issues and enhancing coherence of the country office youth portfolio, and contributing to cross-country knowledge transfer and learning. This is also to expose youth to the work of the UN.

Target: 14 year 1, 14 year 2, 14 year 3

Activity 5.6 Regional Summits. Under the umbrella of the Arab Region's interagency Issues-Based Coalition on youth, UNDP will work with UN agencies on cross-cutting issues and challenges concerning youth and to promote a shared agenda across governments, private sector, youth, CSO and UN which will inform meaningful progress on these issues. In year 1, the IBC will organize a Summit to establish a regional platform for joint analysis, the exchange of knowledge and good practices on the transition from learning to earning from within the region as well as to support the establishment of commitments at the national level on taking forward key building blocks to address bottlenecks in the transition.

Target: 1 per year

Activity 5.7 Regional youth Forum An annual regional forum will convene youth, policy makers, youth support organizations, other ecosystem support actors and experts to further a regional youth empowerment agenda. The aims are to generate a shared understanding and language around challenges, bottlenecks, risks as well as opportunities and trends that might be harnessed, synergistic partnerships and coalitions, innovative approaches and grassroots solutions that point to pathways for scale, and new policy frames to issues young people face. In addition, it is envisioned that these annual events will foster a Community of Practice. Activities might include capacity building master classes, dialogues, foresight exercises, policy hackathons, challenge hackathons, and design workshops.

Target: 1 per year

Resources Required to Achieve the Expected Results

The expected results will require a mix of resources. The workplan provides an overview of our current estimates of the resources required to achieve the project's objectives.

In principle, a mix of the following resources will be required:

- People (human resources, including design expertise and extra support for country office support)
- Services (such as expertise on system transformation, portfolio development, ecosystem building, communications and monitoring and evaluations)
- Logistics and infrastructure (e.g. software subscriptions and travel)
- Partnerships (see section below).

Partnerships

Strategic regional UN partnerships

Within the UND family, UNDP works closely with United Nations Development Group member (UNDG) to strengthen the role of the UNDG regional team and enable collective responses to strategic regional issues. As mentioned above, UNDP will collaborate with ILO given the two agencies complementary mandates with regard to youth employment. Likewise, through the Issue-Based Coalition (IBC), UNDP will seek to build synergies with other UN agencies like UNICEF across the developmental spectrum "from learning to earning" and in the area of youth civic engagement at regional and country level. Other UN agencies including UNESCO, UNFPA, WHO, UNAIDS will also be engaged at regional and country office levels where there are synergies and needs throughout implementation.

Strategic Regional non-UN partners

Regional actors and partners such as the Arab Youth Centre, The Big Heart Foundation/UAE, Silatech, and the Danish Arab Partnership Programme are all key stakeholders that the project team will collaborate with on related outputs to supporting youth along the two main pillars. Both using each other comparative advantage and strengthening synergies and impact for youth in the Arab region requires these and other regional partners for efficiency gains and reach.

Responsible Parties

We expect to deliver part of the Regional Youth Project's work plan through responsible parties and Long-Term Agreement holders (see Multi-Year Work Plan below). These are state-of-industry institutions who will have regional level agreements to provide expert support as per the activities outlined there. UNDP Country Offices will be able to tap into regional level agreements where needed to provide targeted support. All responsible parties named in this document have yet to pass steps 1 and 2 in the Partner Capacity Assessment tool. A list of potential partners is below. Those foreseen as responsible parties are outlined in the multi-year workplan and the responsible party matrix in the annexes. Responsible parties which are identified based on collaborative advantage will be managed at the regional level. We have prioritized identifying actors from the Global South with the requisite expertise.

UNICEF and ILO are among the partners to be engaged during project implementation, and they can be responsible parties for certain activities.

In addition to working through Responsible Parties, the project will be open to work through the whole suite of implementation modalities available to UNDP as described in the UNDP Programme and Operations Policies and Procedures.

Type of partner	Rationale for collaboration	Engagement modality
Thought leadership and expertise partners International, regional or local think tanks, research institutes, NGOs, private companies, individuals and academic institutions. National governments may also fall in this category, including through South-South models of exchange.	Collaboration in order to learn about, test or advance new ways of understanding and transforming socio-technical and economic systems.	Close collaboration through exchanges, webinars, publications. Formalized collaboration through Facility procurement of services (incl. LTA), responsible party agreements, and grants.
National partners National governments, communities, local NGOs and individuals. Including organizations led by and/or promoting the role of young women and marginalized groups.	Ecosystems locally who have a stake in and resources for affecting change. Collaboration for resource mobilisation (with government partners), data collection and learning (interviews, surveys, sensemaking) and/or as implementing partners in the Projects interventions.	Informal ad hoc engagement Formalised collaboration through partnership agreement, grants or MoU
External policy and funding allies Bilateral donors, philanthropic foundations and multilaterals	Collaboration aimed at securing support (financial and otherwise) and/or influencing their policy and funding decisions to nurture a broader alliance and influence the way they themselves change	Direct (unsolicited) outreach (in-person and virtual), webinars, publications. Formalized collaboration through funding agreements and MoUs

Expert and Implementation Partners

A list of potential partners is below:

North Africa Policy Initiative
Consul Project
Digital Arabia Network
i4policy Foundation
Open Government Partnership
School for Collective Intelligence
Flat6Labs
Global Ventures
Draper Ventures Network
Cairo Angels
Briter Bridges

National partners

For its downstream capacity building activities, the project will work with its network of local partners. A non-exhaustive list can be found in the annex.

Future partners will be prospected through mapping and research as part of phase one and will include: line ministries, youth councils, local innovation hubs, additional YSOs, and local universities.

Resource mobilization and catalytic funding

The Regional Youth Team will engage funding partners for the implementation of Outputs. Catalytic funding negotiated year by year based on results and priorities will be sought for the portfolio design and implementation of Output 2 and 3 Country offices are expected to leverage these funds to crowd in finance locally or match the Project's contribution with their own funds.

Risks and Assumptions

There are a number of risks related to implementing youth empowerment interventions in the Arab region. We distinguish between contextual risks and programmatic risks.

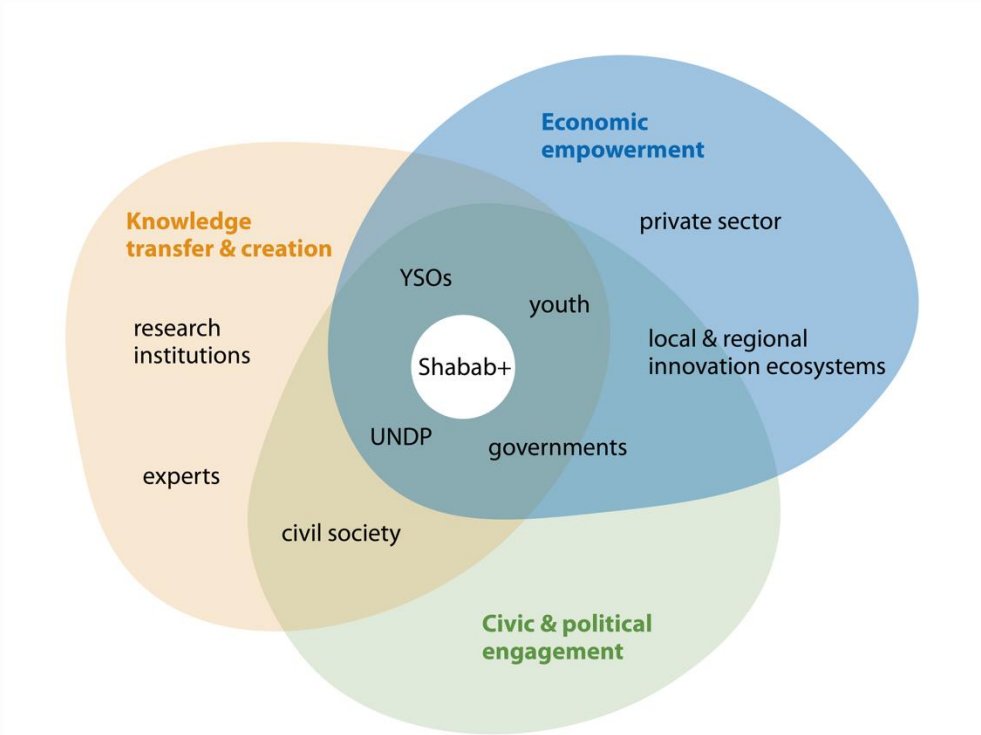
The project management team will have an important role to play in risk oversight vis-à-vis country office activities as supported – in both technical/substantive and financial terms – by the regional project. The project team will work with country offices to ensure that risks have been identified, assessed and reflected in the risk log of the project under which support (funds) have been received from the global project. This will include gender experts as needed. It will be important to flag which risks identified through country level risk assessments should be reflected in the global project risk log (allowing for risk escalation if the situation arises).

Main contextual risk: Acknowledging risks and constraints and adapting to the operating environment pertaining to youth civic engagement:

MENA countries still struggle to foster or maintain civic and political participation and to establish the dialectic relationship between governments and citizens, which are the keystones of democratic governance. Engaged youth are faced with numerous risks and constraints that limit the realm of possibilities for their action. These strand across numerous domains, such as security, legal framework, funding, predominant political culture, and infrastructure. If these risks and constraints are ignored, youth capacity building programs may be ineffective, or worse, they may endanger the safety and security of their beneficiaries. Baseline assessment for each country will be conducted with an emphasis on assessing the operating environment and feasibility of youth civic capacity building interventions to ensure risk- informed region-wide, up-to-date support program tailored to country-specific needs and constraints. Refer to the Risk log (Annex 3).

Stakeholder Engagement

The Regional youth Project has a range of key stakeholders and target groups. This section provides an overview of these and outlines principles for identifying and engaging stakeholder groups.



Local and regional innovation ecosystems

Tapping into regional and local innovative ecosystems is key to help solve development challenges around the outputs of this project. These will include existing other intermediaries such as Labs, creative hubs, and coworking spaces as well as start-ups and social enterprises. Each country will have its own unique set of diverse stakeholders that make-up the local innovation ecosystem, and some of the stakeholders listed below.

Civil society

Youth-groups, youth councils, and other youth organizations are important stakeholders that are also beneficiaries of the overall project. Extra efforts will be made to engage youth groups at various parts of the project cycle. This project gives special focus to young-women, youth with disabilities, marginalized youth, and youth in conflict and these groups will be strategically engaged to ensure the most vulnerable segments of the youth population are supported and their voices are part of the conversation.

Local youth -(serving) organizations

UNDP Arab States has been working with youth-serving organizations (YSOs) across the region to offer capacity building to youth as change-makers over the last seven years. This project will continue to work with YSOs to improve, tailor and accelerate their support to youth according to the four-pathways and based on their in-house expertise. Building the capacities of youth is part of the theory of change as one of the main approaches to address skills gaps, and 21st century skills required. Working with national partner YSOs based on their in-house expertise will further support and lean on existing national capacities available and ensure a greater number of youth are reached.

Governments

National and local government bodies and institutions are one of our main partners, as systemic change requires the direct participation of municipalities, ministries, and other governing national bodies. Policy-

makers, relevant line Ministries and public officials are identified in the theory of change as stakeholders and require levels of engagement to address barriers to youth economic and social inclusion. Government will be engaged at various programming levels in addressing policy, regulatory and legal barriers, in supporting public-private financing of youth enterprises, in consultations on national approaches and support to youth across the four-pathways, etc., As a main stakeholder deep engagement with different levels of government is paramount to both sustainability and impact.

Experts

To support this project, there will be a need to tap into both internal and external expertise across the four pathways, but also to support the portfolio approach, and other innovative organizational requirements of the project that steps away from business as usual programming. Internally UNDP has a host of experts that will meet the needs of the project including micro and macro economists, gender, innovation, climate change and environmental specialist, amongst others. There will also be a need to identify external expertise who are part of the existing ecosystems that support youth in the four-pathways. There will be a necessity to also contract experts from consulting firms- local, regional and possibly global- to address some of the more advanced requirements of the project.

Funders

Engaging with Funders as stakeholders that can also support co-creative processes is an important approach of the project. Building on both the technical expertise of the funders is as beneficial as the contribution.

Research institutions: think tanks, academia

In accordance with this project's approach and based on the theory of change, evidence-based programming and interventions require partnerships with research institutions, including think-tanks, and academia. This project requires collective action for success and leveraging the existing strengths of these entities will ensure sound research that can inform interventions aimed at achieving impact at scale.

Private Sector

Working with the private sector is built into the approach of several of the outputs of the project. Alliances with the private sector to support youth employment, access to finance, addressing barriers to youth owned MSMEs, facilitating innovations, sharing private sector expertise and technology especially as it relates to green growth, and renewable energy, engaging private sector with youth for mentorships and networking, and to support mobilizing funds at scale.

UNDP Internal

UNDP RBAS has a youth focal point system that makes-up a network of staff at the country office level that both coordinate and implement youth related programming. This network has been key to supporting the UNDP-RBAS wide coordination on youth. This approach is aligned to the UN-wide Youth Strategy.

Regional Project Teams, BPPS Technical Teams in Regional Hubs (inclusive of Innovation, Gender, Environment, Sustainable development, and Livelihoods, Communications teams, etc.), Country offices, and other relevant units within UNDP global including Youth Team/HQ: UNDP's technical expertise is the organization's main asset and this project will require working very closely with different technical experts within the region and tapping into other bureaus to ensure approaches, design and implementation meet UNDP quality standards and achieve results intended.

South-South and Triangular Cooperation (SSC/TrC)

At the regional level, UNDP is well placed to help transfer knowledge and experience across country office projects, programs and initiatives.

The project plans to enable and facilitate dialogue and learning across countries and stakeholders in the Global South interested in managing and engaging with complexity and uncertainty. This includes exploring the formation of communities of practice to enable south-south learning across governments, and peer-to-peer network of youth groups, networks and individual change makers. Second, the Project is actively identifying and seeking to engage partners from the Global South (see "Partnerships" above) and to connect their experiences and expertise with needs of stakeholders in developing countries working with complexity and uncertainty.

Digital Solutions

As mentioned in the Strategy, the project recognizes and seeks to harness new technologies and solutions as an enabler in addressing its overarching goals. Getting to a next level of citizen engagement in the transitions we face requires a next generation of platforms that enable engagement with complexity, new technology and alternative imaginings of the future. The youth team aims to collaborate with practitioners in the governance innovation and civic tech space to explore new, inclusive models and modes for collective action to re-build the social contract and enhance legitimacy, accountability and transparency in government. Under the economic empowerment pillar, digital solutions will be leveraged to support youth entrepreneurs transition into the e-commerce sector, thus fostering resilience against future shocks and expanding market access.

The project has a dedicated Output (more under Output 5 description), which seeks to set up a digital platform which would connect youth and other ecosystem stakeholders to resources, partnerships and learning opportunities. In line, with the **UN Secretary General's Roadmap for Digital Cooperation**, Action Area 2, Promoting Digital Public Goods to create a more equitable world, and Action Area 8, Ensuring digital inclusion for all, including the most vulnerable all, all knowledge products and tools will be open source to increase broad-based access for young people.

Knowledge

Learning is at the core of this project - both internally as well as outwards facing. As mentioned above, the strategy and theory of change is based on the recognition that a change in UNDPs and other actors' approach to complex systemic challenges hinges on continuous generation and exchange of learning. The Project will produce a range of learning products capturing this new way of doing development, and we will disseminate these as **public goods** - accessible to anyone.

Youth portfolios as open-source knowledge: the portfolio initiatives are intended to generate a continuous open source of intelligence about how development actors can support system transformation, useful approaches for working in new ways (e.g. on financing mechanisms and M&E) and how system transformation happens. This information is captured and made available through a variety of means, including knowledge products (see below).

Data: the project will aim to generate data and data series that help monitoring youth-related issues in a systematic way.

Dissemination and visibility: The project will, with external support, develop and implement a communications strategy to ensure that knowledge and lessons learned are accessible and influential among key audiences. Dissemination will happen through a variety of channels, including at webinars, proactive

Sustainability and Scaling Up

First, it is reflected in the Regional Youth Project's theory of change: building capacities of local systems, institutions and individual capabilities as a way to ensure that results are achieved and sustained in the long run. Second, the Project's pivot from activity-based capacity building at the micro level to addressing systemic challenges is grounded in the desire to support sustainable positive change. Third, the project's focus on leveraging Youth portfolios to generate blueprints that can be replicated across geographies helps foster sustainability and scale up. Fourth, the project's emphasis on working with local actors and fostering local ecosystems and human and physical infrastructure contributes to a sustainable handing over of programmatic interventions over time. Fifth, the Project's emphasis on generating public good knowledge products helps ensure sustainability as learning and 'muscle memory' is distributed across and beyond the organization, rather than sitting in one particular team.

IV. PROJECT MANAGEMENT (1/2 PAGES - 2 PAGES RECOMMENDED)

Maximum results with available resources are expected by using efficiency and effectiveness approaches identified below:

Efficiency: a project design based on learning, sensemaking and adaptation tends to perform better when faced with uncertainty and complex challenges. Making initial bets (drawing on different proven methods available in the market), learning from and adapting these allows for a nimbler allocation of resources, reducing the risk that funds are spent inefficiently.

Effectiveness is ensured through a number of design features. First, the project deploys a portfolio management approach where the Regional Hub's interventions (reflecting the strategy of change above) are coordinated, synergetic and learn from each other, and thereby are more likely to contribute to the intended results. Second, as mentioned, the project will proactively engage, collaborate with and leverage a range of internal and external partners which increases the likelihood that the project achieves intended results (effectiveness) and is efficient (through synergies and co-funding with partners). Third, the project's emphasis on generating capabilities across UNDP as well as fostering ecosystems of country-level stakeholders increases the likelihood that positive change will materialise and be sustained.

Project Management

This project will represent one component of the regional portfolio within UNDP's Regional Bureau for Arab States (RBAS)[74], falling under the Regional Programme. It will be operationalised in the Bureau's Regional Hub in Amman.

Oversight of the project will be provided by the Hub's Regional Program Coordinator. Operational support to the project will be provided by UNDP's Regional Hub, to ensure effective execution of activities, as well as guidance on results-based management. To ensure effectiveness of project delivery, a dedicated Project Management Team will be maintained to implement the workplan and coordinate activities. This will include project management, strategic and technical advisers, project analysts (including communications, RBM and coordination functions) and operational functions (see Section VIII Governance and Management Arrangements). The project may enter collaboration

[74] The Regional Bureau for Arab States (RBAS) has its headquarters in New York and serves UNDP regional programmes and country offices in 17 Arab countries, with the 18th located in the occupied Palestinian territory.

arrangements with other regional projects on cross cutting issues such as digital innovation, anti-corruption, elections, gender, and peacebuilding, for example.

The Project Board75 will undertake the strategic decisions related to the implementation of the activities. The Board shall also provide constructive assessment, strategic guidance and insightful directions for the project, its future development and expansion of the initiatives to ensure project sustainability. The composition Project Board will include UNDP RBAS Youth Project Manager, Selected UNDP Country Offices, Youth-Serving Organizations, and the INGO Arab Youth Center. Relevant units of RBAS Regional Programme, as well as Project staff under this project will attend the Project Board meeting as needed. For more details see Project Board TOR in Annex 4.

The project will be implemented through Direct Implementation Modality (DIM) whereby UNDP assumes full management responsibility and accountability for project delivery. Accordingly, all aspects of project implementation shall be provided in accordance with the policies, procedures and regulations established by UNDP for its operations.[76] The project will be subject to the auditing procedures laid out in the UNDP Financial Regulations and Rules, through which the UNDP Office of Audit and Investigations conducts independent, objective assurance[77]. Audit reports are published according to UNDP disclosure policies.[78]

In accordance with the decisions and directives of Member States on UNDP's Executive Board reflected in its policy on cost recovery, the project shall be subject to cost recovery by UNDP for two distinct cost categories related to the provision of support services, namely UNDP General Management Support (GMS) and Direct Project Cost (DPC). GMS is recovered generally with a minimum flat rate of 8% for contributions from donors. GMS encompasses costs incurred in providing general management and oversight functions of the organization. These costs are incurred in support of its activities, projects and programmes, and services provided, that cannot be traced unequivocally to specific activities, project or programmes. Furthermore, these costs are incurred throughout and at all levels of the organization. Direct Project Costs are linked to the specific project, are built into the project budget against a relevant budget line and represent clearly identifiable transactions.

Implementation of some activities may be through a sub-contracting of local implementation partners or responsible parties' modality, which will be executed using standard procurement procedures for transparency and best value for money.

The project may also apply a grant beneficiary mechanism for youth in line with specified themes under project outputs. In this case, funding will be awarded on the basis of clear criteria and competitive rules, with discretionary grant awards permissible under agreed policies and UNDP project execution rules.

75 As the project expands to engage more partners and potentially donors, the project board structure can be amended as needed.

[76] UNDP Programme and Operations Policy and Procedures (POPP) covering administrative services, financial resources management, human resources management, ICT, partnerships and procurement can be found at https://popp.undp.org/SitePages/Regulations%20and%20Rules.aspx

[77] Provisions relating to audit are stipulated in Article 4 of UNDP Financial Regulations and Rules found on the POPP website referenced above. Rule 104.01: "The Office of Audit and Investigations shall evaluate the adequacy and effectiveness of governance, risk management and control processes regarding the: (a) reliability and integrity of financial and other information; (b) effectiveness and efficiency of operations; (c) safeguarding of assets; and (d) compliance with legislative mandates, regulations, rules, policies and procedures."

[78] In accordance with decision 2012/18 of the UNDP Executive Board, audit reports issued by its Office of Audit and Investigations are publicly disclosed on the UNDP website.

V. RESULTS FRAMEWORK[79]

[79] UNDP publishes its project information (indicators, baselines, targets and results) to meet the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI) standards. Make sure that indicators are S.M.A.R.T. (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Time-bound), provide accurate baselines and targets underpinned by reliable evidence and data, and avoid acronyms so that external audience clearly understand the results of the project.

Intended Outcome as stated in the Regional Programme Results and Resource Framework:

Outcome 2: Governance accountability increased to foster more resilient communities

Outcome 4: Women and youth empowered for a more inclusive and sustainable future

Outcome indicators as stated in the Regional Programme Results and Resources Framework, including baseline and targets:

RPD Outcome 2: Governance accountability increased to foster more resilient communities.

Output 2.3: Democratic institutions and processes strengthened for an inclusive and open public sphere with expanded public engagement (Strategic Plan 2.4)
2.3.2. Number of regional, national, and subnational initiatives, policies, and strategies to protect and promote: (Strategic Plan 2.4.5):
Baseline: 0

Target: 15

- 5 Civil society to function in the public sphere and contribute to sustainable development
- 5 Inclusive spaces, mechanisms and capacities for public dialogue
- 5 Access to reliable information on issues of public concern

RPD Outcome 4: Women and youth empowered for a more inclusive and sustainable future.

Output 4.3. Access to financial and non-financial assets and services improved to support productive capacities for sustainable livelihoods and jobs for youth (Strategic Plan 1.3)

Indicator: 4.3.1. Number of youth benefiting from livelihood and entrepreneurial support including upskilling: (regional specific contributing to Strategic Plan 1.3.3)

Baseline line: 0

Target:

- 200,000
- female: 110,000
- male: 110,000
- persons with disabilities: 10,000

Indicator 4.3.2. Number of youth/women-led MSMEs with enhanced capacities
Baseline: 0
Target: 1325

- Female: 20% of supported businesses female led
- Persons with disabilities: 5% of supported businesses

Applicable Output(s) from the UNDP Strategic Plan:

Output 1.3: Access to basic services and financial and non-financial assets and services improved to support productive capacities for sustainable livelihoods and jobs to achieve prosperity
Indicator: 1.3.3 Number of people accessing non-financial assets:

Output 2.4: Democratic institutions and processes strengthened for an inclusive and open public sphere with expanded public engagement:
Indicator: 2.4.5 Number of regional, national and sub-national initiatives, policies, and strategies to protect and promote:

Project title and Atlas Project Number: Regional Youth Project, (00141561)

EXPECTED OUTPUTS	OUTPUT INDICATORS[80]	DATA SOURCE	BASELINE		TARGETS (by frequency of data collection)						DATA COLLECTION METHODS & RISKS
			Value	Year	Year 2022	Year 2023	Year 2024	Year 2025	Year 2026	FINAL	
Output 1: Development portfolios to improve entrepreneurial ecosystems adopted by partner governments to	*1.1. Number of countries supported through integrated macro, meso and micro level interventions*	*UNDP Country Offices, partners*	*0*	*2021*	*2*	*3*	*3*	*2*	*2*	*10*	*Annual Progress reports, donor reports*

[80] It is recommended that projects use output indicators from the Strategic Plan IRRF, as relevant, in addition to project-specific results indicators. Indicators should be disaggregated by sex or for other targeted groups where relevant.

support youth-led SDG-oriented businesses and generate youth employment in middle income countries through strengthened national institutions, laws and policies, and financial and non-financial services	*1.2 SDG Impact Coalition expanded* (0 = no existence; 1 = online data base of enablers (incubators, funds) developed/launched; 2 = 3 partners on-boarded; 3 – the Coalition is expanded)	*UNDP and implementing partners*	*0*	*2021*	*1* *1 online data base of enablers (incubators, funds)* *Objectives, criteria and management models defined* *1 partner on-boarded*	*2* *5 partners on-boarded*	*2* *5 partners on-boarded*	*3* *2 partners on-boarded*	*3* *2 partners on-boarded*	*3* *15 partners*	*Annual Progress Reports, Coalition meetings minutes and reports.*
	1.3 Number of business support organizations engaged in providing training, access to business networks, and critical technology, and enhancing competitiveness (30% of women led BDS)	*UNDP and partners*	*0* *0*	*2021* *2021*	*4* *1*	*8* *3*	*8* *3*	*4* *2*	*4* *1*	*28* *10*	*Annual progress reporting with sex-disaggregated data, trainings and workshops delivered*

	*1.4 Number of youth benefiting from livelihood and entrepreneurial support with 50-50 gender balance; Persons with disabilities **(5%)***	*UNDP and partners*	*0*	*2021*	*0*	*20,000*	*30,000*	*30,000*	*45,000*	*125,000 (50% of women and 50% of men)*	*Needs assessments, SDG impact bootcamp and accelerator surveys and interviews, on-ground assessment, workshop reports.*
	1.5 Number of young people decently employed (Women 50%; Persons with disabilities (5%))	*UNDP and partners*	*0*	*2021*	*0*	*0*	*3,000*	*3,000*	*4,000*	*10,000*	*Consultations, interviews, on-ground assessment, country-level reporting.*
	1.6 Number of youth-led businesses, MSMEs and initiatives capacitated to create jobs and expand (sex-disaggregated data; female led (20%); Persons with disabilities (5%))	*UNDP, DAPP*	*0*	*2021*	*35*	*300*	*300*	*300*	*300*	*1235*	*Annual progress reporting with sex-disaggregated data and data on persons with disabilities.*
Output 2: Youth employment in crisis settings generated through	*2.1 Number of methodologies and joint frameworks*	*UNDP*	*0*	*2021*	*1*	*0*	*0*	*0*	*0*	*1*	*Consultations with experts, relevant ToRs, methodology proposals*

pathways for decent work, sustainable development and social cohesion.	*2.2 Number of Youth employment in crisis settings portfolios*	*UNDP*	*0*	*2021*	*0*	*2*	*2*	*2*	*2*	*8*	*Annual progress reporting with examples of countries adopting youth portfolios*
Output 3: Development portfolios to novel and emerging youth-related development challenges offered to partner governments	*3.1. Number of Portfolio design methodologies adapted to context and youth focus*	*UNDP*	0	2021	*1*	0	0	*0*	*0*	*1*	*Consultations with experts, relevant ToRs,, methodology proposals*
	3.2 Number of youth portfolios of policy options developed at the CO level	*UNDP*	*0*	*2021*	*0*	*2*	*2*	*2*	2	8	*Annual progress reporting with examples of countries adopting youth portfolios* Format and design of youth portfolios may evolve over time
Output 4: Youth political participation in political processes strengthened and public policy and service relevant to youth improved through civic education and youth-led bottom-	*4.1 Number of regional partnerships to strengthen youth civic empowerment (20% of young women lead organizations, organizations with gender balanced organogram)*	*UNDP IBC on Youth Joint Framework and partnership agreements*	*2*	*2021*	*2*	*2*	*2*	*2*	2	10	*Annual progress reporting with sex-disaggregated data*

up participatory policy co-creation	*4.2 Number of formal and informal youth (support) structures with enhanced organizational capabilities*	*UNDP and partners*	*0*	*2021*	*0*	*5*	*5*	*5*	*5*	*20*	*surveys, on-ground assessments, consultations, annual progress reporting.*
	4.3 Number of beneficiaries of capacity development interventions (disaggregated by sex)	*UNDP and partners*	*4000*	*2021*	*4000*	*5000*	*5000*	*5000*	*5000*	*24,000*	*Workshops, country-level progress reports, annual progress reporting.*
	4.4 Number of youth supported through policy and social innovation incubation programme	*UNDP and partners*	*0*	*2021*	*0*	*15*	*15*	*15*	*30*	*75*	*Annual Progress reporting, Consultations, interviews, on-ground assessment, country-level reporting.*
	4.5 Number of national and sub-national policies and measures expanded for youth through participatory bottom-up processes	*UNDP and partners*	*0*	*2021*	*0*	*2*	*2*	*2*	*2*	*8*	*Surveys, consultations with experts and consultations with decision-makers*

Output 5: ***Youth and partners' research, knowledge exchange, regional and national level advocacy, and access to resources enabled through digital platforms and open-source public goods***	*5.1 Level of engagement with the regional youth platform by youth and key stakeholders* (Low= YLP alumni per invitation, UNDP youth focal points, Medium= key partners and stakeholders engaged, 15% growth in user traffic, High= all entities regional youth project network engaged, 15% growth in returning users)	*UNDP NextGen Youth Platform*	*Low*	*2021*	*medium*	*Medium*	*Medium*	*High*	*High*	*High*	*Annual traffic and usage analysis and reporting.*

	5.2 Level of outreach to key stakeholders, donors and partners through multi-platform communications (Medium: - at least 15% organic growth on social media following (annual) high: - 15% growth on social media following + project results and goals communicated to stakeholders, donors and partners using multi-platform approach	*UNDP*	*medium*	*2021*	*medium*	*High*	*high*	*high*	*high*	*High*	*Annual progress review reporting, Social Media platforms data analysis and reporting.*

	5.3 Number of knowledge products open-sourced and available to the public	*UNDP*	*1*	*2021*	*5 (3 curricula, 1 Baseline assessment of civic and political participation, 1 Environmental scan of the entrepreneurship and investment landscape)*	*4*	*4*	*4*	*4*	*21*	*Research consultants ToRs, knowledge products available online.*
	5.4 Number of COs and internal partners benefiting from regular learning and reflection sessions	UNDP and partners	*0*	*2021*	*10*	*16*	*16*	*16*	*16*	*16*	*Session reports and recordings, recommendations made.* Risk: lack of interest or time among COs to participate in sessions Sessions to have good gender-balance
	5.5 Number of Country Offices with Youth Development Delegates	*UNDP and AYC*	*10*	*2021*	*14*	*14*	*15*	*15*	*16*	*16*	*Donor reporting, annual progress reporting.*

VI. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

In accordance with UNDP's programming policies and procedures, the project will be monitored based on the following monitoring and evaluation principles:

Overall approach

Our approach to Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL)is based on developmental evaluation principles[81] and is being deployed by the Strategic Innovation Unit in BPPS, which is responsible for driving and coordinating the portfolio approach corporately. The approach is useful for guiding adaptation to emergent and dynamic realities in complex environments. We have designed the approach to assist us and our partners across UNDP and beyond to learn, reflect and adapt what we are doing in real-time. As such, the Regional Youth Project's MEL activities are positioned as an internal function integrated into the process of implementation, gathering and interpreting data, framing questions and adapting to new realities.

The project adheres to the following eight principles:

1. **Learning and adaptation focused**: focused on informing learning and portfolio related decision making.
2. **Integrated into project design and implementation**: Informs project strategy and design from get-go. During implementation helps continuously reality-check and refine portfolio strategy/logic and composition.
3. **Inclusive, collaborative and co-creative**: designed and implemented with the variety of stakeholders and beneficiaries involved in portfolio. Stakeholders collectively sensemake and decide based on learning.
4. **Direction rather than destination**: monitor and learn about how we understand the present and our general direction towards something better – not measuring progress and milestones towards a specific pre-defined goal.
5. **Continuous and iterative (start small)**: ongoing process, not stand-alone reporting exercises. Focus and methods evolve over time in response to changing learning needs and portfolio strategy. Start small and expand over time.
6. **Usefulness above rigor**: emphasis on generating useful information in real-time to inform learning and adaptation.
7. **Methodological eclecticism**: flexible use of a mix of methods, high tolerance for ambiguity.
8. **Evidence diversity**: draws on variety of qualitative and quantitative evidence. Open to unorthodox types of evidence.
9. **Measurement as starting point**: what is measured is a simplification of the complex real world and as such is only the starting point for a learning conversation.
10. **We are part of the system**: acknowledge that we are part of the system we wish to change rather than actors outside of it.

Our MEL framework and planned activities are designed to help us and our partners and stakeholders articulate and answer questions that enable us to learn and work better towards internal and external change: Enabling us to change ourselves (UNDP) to better tackle systems challenges (internal transformation) and supporting others to transform complex systems in support of the SDGs (external transformation).

[81] https://www.betterevaluation.org/en/plan/approach/developmentalevaluation

The Regional youth project's MEL activities will follow learning cycle of five steps, building on UNDPs sensemaking protocol:

1. **We articulate learning questions with partners and stakeholders**: what do we want to learn about to be able to contribute to internal and external transformation? This includes identifying *who* should participate in the process of articulating learning questions, collecting information, reflecting on data and make decisions as well as *how often* we need to collect information, make sense of it in relation to the learning questions and act based on insights.
2. **We develop measures and collect data**: identify what information we need to collect in order to (tentatively) be able to reflect on our learning questions (including data that captures the experience of women and marginalized groups). Consider a broad range of information types (not just hard statistics). Identify evidence sources and gather the evidence. Focus is on getting "good enough" information within the constraints of our timeframe and budget. We will consider and deploy an eclectic mix of methods and evidence sources.
3. **We reflect and make sense of the information with stakeholders at regular intervals**. Use it as a starting point (a simplified incomplete representation of part of a complex system) for reflection about what we are learning and its implications for the Innovation Facility, its strategy of change and work plan. During these sessions participants are encouraged to supplement, contradict or otherwise enrich the discussion with other "un-measurable" insights.
4. **We make decisions and adapt**: During (or immediately after) reflection events, the project team along with key stakeholders decide on changes required to the project based on the insights generated at reflection events. The project board approves changes beyond agreed discretion thresholds.
5. **We refine learning questions and articulate new ones**: this also happens at the reflection event and is in response to the project's evolving learning needs. It may entail changes in who is part of the process and the cycle's frequency. For instance, we may adjust or introduce new interventions in as we learn, and this, may trigger new learning questions, information needs and the involvement of new stakeholders.

The regular reflection events described above will draw on and enrich UNDPs existing sensemaking protocol[82] and may include the following:

- **Monthly reflection across 1) Youth portfolios and 2) Youth employment in crisis portfolios**: At these events we will convene relevant country office staff, other partners and stakeholders and beneficiaries in collective reflection sessions
- **Quarterly reflection sessions** with country offices and stakeholders implementing Policy Shaper, Community builder, Impact Entrepreneur initiatives
- **Ad hoc learning sessions** as needed
- **External dialogues and communities of practice**: On an ad-hoc basis we will convene other external actors, such as funders, governments and other external allies to help make sense of, share and/or act on insights emerging from the Regional Youth Project initiatives

External dialogues and communities of practice: On an ad-hoc basis we will convene other external actors, such as funders, governments and other external allies to help make sense of, share and/or act on insights emerging from the Innovation Facility's initiatives

As our learning needs and areas of interest evolve, we may need to adapt measurement tools and processes and update the results framework. As such, this project's MEL framework will be a dynamic work in progress rather than a static artifact.

[82] https://undp.sharepoint.com/teams/RBAP/Innovation/SitePages/Portfolio-Sensemaking-and-Acceleration-Protocol.aspx

This approach involves a shift in emphasis from doing MEL primarily for reporting and accountability towards MEL as a process for continuous learning and adaptation – a process which still enables reporting and accountability. The emphasis on learning and adaptation is in line with best practice programming principles in international development.[83]

The question of measuring and learning about impact is in this context still relevant. However, again with a focus on learning about when and how positive change happens and how the Regional Youth Project and UNDP as a whole can accelerate it. In this connection, we distinguish between different depths and breadths of change, ranging from early results within UNDP to more substantial impact in the country settings where we work. We also recognize that there are different routes to achieving these types of deeper and broader change. The Strategic Innovation Unit is already in dialogue with UNDPs Independent Evaluation Office and will continue to collaborate to develop new and better measures for results and impact from which the Regional Youth Project will learn as approaches and tools become available.

Monitoring Plan

Monitoring Activity	Purpose	Frequency	Expected Action	Partners (if joint)	Cost (if any)
Track results progress	Progress data against the results indicators in the RRF will be collected and analysed to assess the progress of the project in achieving the agreed outputs.	Quarterly, or in the frequency required for each indicator.	Slower than expected progress will be addressed by project management.		N/A
Monitor and Manage Risk	Identify specific risks that may threaten achievement of intended results. Identify and monitor risk management actions using a risk log. This includes monitoring measures and plans that may have been required as per UNDP's Social and Environmental Standards. Audits will be conducted in accordance with UNDP's audit policy to manage financial risk.	Quarterly	Risks are identified by project management and actions are taken to manage risk. The risk log is actively maintained to keep track of identified risks and actions taken.		N/A
Learn	Knowledge, good practices and lessons will be captured regularly, as well as actively sourced from other projects and partners and integrated back into the project.	At least annually, biannually	Regular focus groups and interviews with the beneficiaries of the project to inform the decision making. Relevant lessons are captured by the project team and used to inform management decisions.		USD 5,000 (roundtables, focus groups, interviews)
Annual Project Quality Assurance	The quality of the project will be assessed against UNDP's quality standards to identify	Annually	Areas of strength and weakness will be reviewed by project		N/A

[83] See for instance Overseas Development Institute (https://www.odi.org/our-work/adaptive-development), OECD (http://www.oecd.org/coronavirus/policy-responses/managing-for-sustainable-results-in-development-co-operation-in-uncertain-times-c94f0b59/), DFID (https://apolitical.co/en/solutionarticle/how-to-be-adaptive-lessons-from-3-years-at-dfid) and USAID (https://usaidlearninglab.org/learning-approaches/adaptive-management).

	project strengths and weaknesses and to inform management decision making to improve the project.		management and used to inform decisions to improve project performance.		
Review and Make Course Corrections	Internal review of data and evidence from all monitoring actions to inform decision making.	At least annually	Performance data, risks, lessons and quality will be discussed by the project board and used to make course corrections.		N/A
Project Report	A progress report will be presented to the Project Board and key stakeholders, consisting of progress data showing the results achieved against pre-defined annual targets at the output level, the annual project quality rating summary, an updated risk long with mitigation measures, and any evaluation or review reports prepared over the period.	Annually, and at the end of the project (final report)			N/A
Project Review (Project Board)	The project's governance mechanism (i.e., project board) will hold regular project reviews to assess the performance of the project and review the Multi-Year Work Plan to ensure realistic budgeting over the life of the project. In the project's final year, the Project Board shall hold an end-of project review to capture lessons learned and discuss opportunities for scaling up and to socialize project results and lessons learned with relevant audiences.	Specify frequency (i.e., at least annually)	Any quality concerns or slower than expected progress should be discussed by the project board and management actions agreed to address the issues identified.		USD 15,000 (Project board annual meeting)

Evaluation Plan[84]

Evaluation Title	Partners (if joint)	Related Strategic Plan Output	RPD Outcome	Planned Completion Date	Key Evaluation Stakeholders	Cost and Source of Funding

[84] Optional, if needed

Final Evaluation	TBD	Output 1.3: Access to basic services and financial and non-financial assets and services improved to support productive capacities for sustainable livelihoods and jobs to achieve prosperity	Outcome 2: Governance accountability increased to foster more resilient communities. Outcome 4 Women and youth empowered for a more inclusive and sustainable future	January 2027	Youth, youth serving organizations, governmental institutions, youth ministries	USD 50,000; Project budget
Midterm Evaluation	ILO			July 2024		USD 50,000; Project budget

VII. MULTI-YEAR WORK PLAN [8586]

All anticipated programmatic and operational costs to support the project, including development effectiveness and implementation support arrangements, need to be identified, estimated and fully costed in the project budget under the relevant output(s). This includes activities that directly support the project, such as communication, human resources, procurement, finance, audit, policy advisory, quality assurance, reporting, management, etc. All services which are directly related to the project need to be disclosed transparently in the project document.

EXPECTED OUTPUTS	PLANNED ACTIVITIES	Planned Budget by Year					RESPONSIBLE PARTY	PLANNED BUDGET		
		Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5		Funding Source	Budget description	Total

[85] Cost definitions and classifications for programme and development effectiveness costs to be charged to the project are defined in the Executive Board decision DP/2010/32

[86] Changes to a project budget affecting the scope (outputs), completion date, or total estimated project costs require a formal budget revision that must be signed by the project board. In other cases, the UNDP programme manager alone may sign the revision provided the other signatories have no objection. This procedure may be applied for example when the purpose of the revision is only to re-phase activities among years.

Output 1: Development portfolios to improve entrepreneurial ecosystems adopted by partner governments to support youth-led SDG-oriented businesses and generate youth employment in middle income countries through strengthened national institutions, laws and policies, and financial and non-financial services *Gender marker: GEN 2*	1.1 Activity Data collection and impact analysis; sector, value chain and other analytical work; and policy dialogue in 10 countries	$100,000.00	$1,900,000.00	$2,000,000.00	$2,000,000.00	$2,000,000.00	UNDP National Statistics Offices Ministries of Planning / line ministries	TBD	Contractual services Consultants	$ 8,000,000.00
	1.2 Activity Strengthening national and regional innovation and entrepreneurship ecosystems and institutional capacity in 10 countries	$ 50,000.00	$ 500.00	$ 500.00	$ 500.00	$ 500.00	UNDP	TBD	Contractual services Contractual services	$ 52,000.00

									Consultants	
									Contractual Services	
	1.3 Activity Business development support (50 SDG impact Incubation and acceleration programs) for youth-led ventures and MSMEs in 10 countries	200,000	$4,800,000	$4,000,000	$4,000,000	$2,000,000	UNDP Flow Riyada Social Innovation Injaz DOT Lebanon	TBD	Contractual services Consultants	$ 15,000,000.00
	MONITORING							TBD	Staff	$ 50,000.00
	Sub-Total for Output 1									**$ 23,102,000.00**
Output 2: Youth employment in crisis settings generated through pathways for decent work, sustainable development and social cohesion. *Gender marker: GEN 2*	2.1 Activity Design joint methodology for systems analysis and design of scenarios and youth employment portfolio	$50,000	$50,000	$50,000	0		UNDP ILO External partners with specialized skills and experience (through RPA, LTAs)	TBD	Consultants Contractual services	$ 150,000.00

									Consultants	
							UNDP		Consultants	
	2.2 Activity Provide advisory services, pooling in of international and external expertise, and seed funding towards implementation of 4 portfolios		$400,000	$400,000	$400,000	$400,000		TBD		$ 1,600,000.00
							ILO		Seed funding for portfolio activation	
	MONITORING							TBD	Staff	$ 5,000.00
		Sub-Total for Output 2								**$ 1,755,000.00**
Output 3: Development portfolios to novel and emerging youth-related development challenges offered to partner governments *Gender marker: GEN 2*							UNDP		Contractual services /RPA	
	3.1 Activity Portfolio-sensemaking and design of portfolios addressing strategic youth related development challenges in 8 countries	$50,000	$200,000	$200,000	$200,000	$100,000		TBD		$ 750,000.00
							ILO		Staff	
							External partners with specialized skills and experience (through RPA, LTAs)			

							UNDP		Contractual services /RPA	
	3.2 Activity Activation of youth portfolios, testing and learning		$400,000	$400,000	$400,000	$800,000	ILO External partners with specialized skills and experience (through RPA, LTAs)	TBD	Staff Seed funding for portfolio activation	$ 2,000,000.00
	3.3 Activity Gender Analysis and action plan	45,000	0	45,000	0	0	UNDP	UNDP	Consultants	$ 90,000.00
	MONITORING								Staff	$ 5,000.00
		Sub-Total for Output 3								**$ 2,845,000.00**
							UNDP		Consultants	
Output 4: Youth political participation in political processes strengthened and public policy and service relevant to youth improved	4.1 Activity *Develop civic engagement capacities of young people*		$1,000,000	$1,000,000	$1,000,000	$1,000,000	YSOs	TBD	Contractual services	$ 4,000,000.00

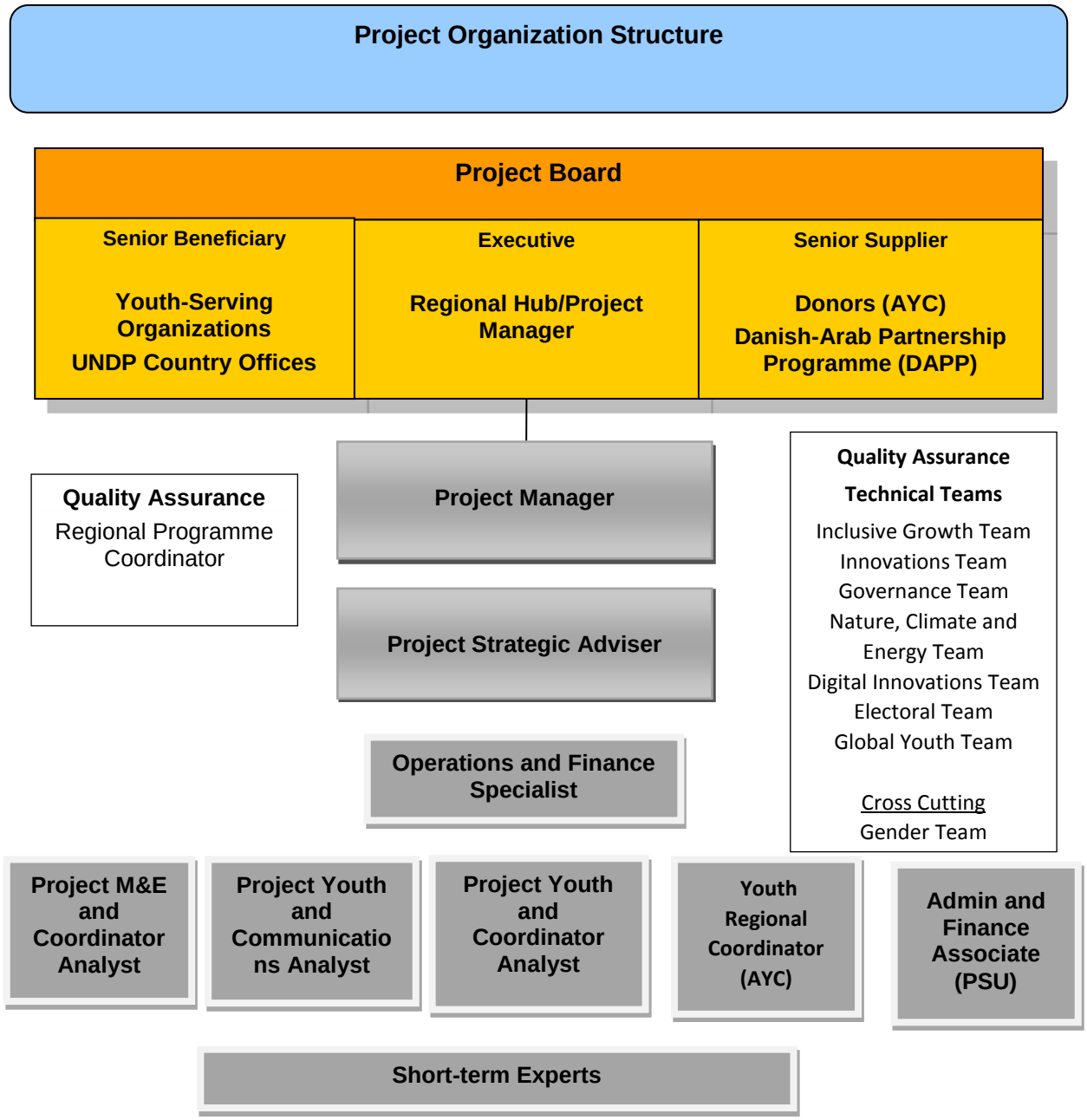
through civic education and youth-led bottom-up participatory policy co-creation *Gender marker: GEN 2*						National youth centers CBOs Inno Hubs		Contractual Services	
								Consultants	
4.2 Activity *Develop organizational capabilities of formal and informal youth (support) structures*		$1,000,000	$1,500,000	$1,500,000.00	$1,500,000	UNDP	TBD		$ 5,500,000.00
								Contractual services	
						UNDP			
4.3 Activity *Foster a regional peer to peer support network*		$250.00	$250.00	$250.00	$250.00	North Africa Policy Institute	TBD		$ 1,000.00
								Contractual services	
						Innovation 4 policy foundation (i4policy)		Consultants	
4.4 Activity *Build capacities of innovative public officials on human-centered policy and service design*	$50,000	$250.00	$250.00	$250.00	$250.00		TBD		$ 51,000.00

						Open Government Partnerships		Development of training material, guidance, tools	
4.5 Activity *Strengthen public governance arrangements (institutional and legal) for youth in public life at the central and sub-regional level*		$1,500,000	$1,500,000	$1,500,000	$1,500,000	UNDP	TBD	Consultants	$ 6,000,000.00
						UNDP		Contractual services	
4.6 Activity *Support deliberative bottom-up policy reform processes*		$400,000	$400,000	$400,000	$400,000	Innovation for policy foundation (i4policy) School for Collective Intelligence Open Government Partnerships		Consultants	$ 1,600,000.00
4.7 Activity *Data-Driven Debates*		$100,000	$100,000	$100,000	$100,000	UNDP	TBD		$ 400,000.00
MONITORING							TBD	Staff	$ 50,000.00
	Sub-Total for Output 4								**$ 13,602,000.00**

Output 5: Youth and partners' research, knowledge exchange, regional and national level advocacy, and access to resources enabled through digital platforms and open-source public goods *Gender marker: GEN 2*	5.1 Platform development and maintenance	$ 80,000.00	$ 50,000.00	$ 100,000.00	$ 100,000.00	$ 100,000.00	UNDP	DAPP TBD		$ 430,000.00
	5.2 Communications internal and external	$30,000	$35,000	$20,000	$20,000	$20,000	UNDP	TBD		$ 125,000.00
	5.3 Research and public goods	$50,000	$100,000	$150,000	$150,000	$150,000	UNDP	TBD		$ 600,000.00
	5.4 Experts/Consultants	$60,000	$70,000	$80,000	$80,000	$80,000	UNDP	TBD		$370,000
	5.5 Youth Delegates	$552,459	$552,459	$552,459	$552,459	$552,459	AYC	AYC		$2,762,295
	5.6 IBC collaboration and events	$100,000	$100,000	$100,000	$100,000	$100,000	UNDP	UNDP		$500,000
	5.7 Regional UNDP Events	$150,000	$150,000	$150,000	$150,000	$150,000	UNDP			$750,000
Youth project management	Positions	$500,000	$500,000	$500,000	$500,000	$500,000				$2,500,000
Evaluation *(as relevant)*	Midterm Review + EVALUATION							TBD	Consultant	$ 100,000.00
		Sub-Total for Output 5								**$ 8,137,295.00**

General Management Support (GMS)										
TOTAL										**$ 49,441,295.00**

VIII. GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS



IX. LEGAL CONTEXT

This project will be implemented by UNDP ("Implementing Partner") in accordance with its financial regulations, rules, practices and procedures only to the extent that they do not contravene the principles of the Financial Regulations and Rules of UNDP. Where the financial governance of an Implementing Partner does not provide the required guidance to ensure best value for money, fairness, integrity, transparency, and effective international competition, the financial governance of UNDP shall apply**.**

X. RISK MANAGEMENT

For Direct Implementation Modality (DIM)

1. UNDP as the Implementing Partner will comply with the policies, procedures, and practices of the United Nations Security Management System (UNSMS.)

2. UNDP as the Implementing Partner will undertake all reasonable efforts to ensure that none of the project funds are used to provide support to individuals or entities associated with terrorism and that the recipients of any amounts provided by UNDP hereunder do not appear on the list maintained by the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1267 (1999). The list can be accessed via http://www.un.org/sc/committees/1267/aq_sanctions_list.shtml. This provision must be included in all sub-contracts or sub-agreements entered under this Project Document.

3. Social and environmental sustainability will be enhanced through application of the UNDP Social and Environmental Standards (http://www.undp.org/ses) and related Accountability Mechanism (http://www.undp.org/secu-srm).

4. UNDP as the Implementing Partner will: (a) conduct project and programme-related activities in a manner consistent with the UNDP Social and Environmental Standards, (b) implement any management or mitigation plan prepared for the project or programme to comply with such standards, and (c) engage in a constructive and timely manner to address any concerns and complaints raised through the Accountability Mechanism. UNDP will seek to ensure that communities and other project stakeholders are informed of and have access to the Accountability Mechanism.

5. In the implementation of the activities under this Project Document, UNDP as the Implementing Partner will handle any sexual exploitation and abuse ("SEA") and sexual harassment ("SH") allegations in accordance with its regulations, rules, policies, and procedures.

6. All signatories to the Project Document shall cooperate in good faith with any exercise to evaluate any programme or project-related commitments or compliance with the UNDP Social and Environmental Standards. This includes providing access to project sites, relevant personnel, information, and documentation.

7. UNDP as the Implementing Partner will ensure that the following obligations are binding on each responsible party, subcontractor, and sub-recipient:

    a. Consistent with the Article III of the SBAA *[or the Supplemental Provisions to the Project Document]*, the responsibility for the safety and security of each responsible party, subcontractor and sub-recipient and its personnel and property, and of UNDP's property in such responsible party's, subcontractor's and sub-recipient's custody, rests with such responsible party, subcontractor and sub-recipient. To this end, each responsible party, subcontractor and sub-recipient shall:
        i. put in place an appropriate security plan and maintain the security plan, considering the security situation in the country where the project is being carried.

ii. assume all risks and liabilities related to such responsible parties, subcontractor's and sub-recipient's security, and the full implementation of the security plan.

b. UNDP reserves the right to verify whether such a plan is in place, and to suggest modifications to the plan when necessary. Failure to maintain and implement an appropriate security plan as required hereunder shall be deemed a breach of the responsible parties, subcontractor's and sub-recipient's obligations under this Project Document.

c. In the performance of the activities under this Project, UNDP as the Implementing Partner shall ensure, with respect to the activities of any of its responsible parties, sub-recipients and other entities engaged under the Project, either as contractors or subcontractors, their personnel and any individuals performing services for them, that those entities have in place adequate and proper procedures, processes and policies to prevent and/or address SEA and SH.

d. Each responsible party, subcontractor and sub-recipient will take appropriate steps to prevent misuse of funds, fraud or corruption, by its officials, consultants, subcontractors and sub-recipients in implementing the project or programme or using the UNDP funds. It will ensure that its financial management, anti-corruption and anti-fraud policies are in place and enforced for all funding received from or through UNDP.

e. The requirements of the following documents, then in force at the time of signature of the Project Document, apply to each responsible party, subcontractor and sub-recipient: (a) UNDP Policy on Fraud and other Corrupt Practices and (b) UNDP Office of Audit and Investigations Investigation Guidelines. Each responsible party, subcontractor and sub-recipient agrees to the requirements of the above documents, which are an integral part of this Project Document and are available online at www.undp.org.

f. In the event that an investigation is required, UNDP will conduct investigations relating to any aspect of UNDP programmes and projects. Each responsible party, subcontractor and sub-recipient will provide its full cooperation, including making available personnel, relevant documentation, and granting access to its (and its consultants', subcontractors' and sub-recipients') premises, for such purposes at reasonable times and on reasonable conditions as may be required for the purpose of an investigation. Should there be a limitation in meeting this obligation, UNDP shall consult with it to find a solution.

g. Each responsible party, subcontractor and sub-recipient will promptly inform UNDP as the Implementing Partner in case of any incidence of inappropriate use of funds, or credible allegation of fraud or corruption with due confidentiality.

Where it becomes aware that a UNDP project or activity, in whole or in part, is the focus of investigation for alleged fraud/corruption, each responsible party, subcontractor and sub-recipient will inform the UNDP Resident Representative/Head of Office, who will promptly inform UNDP's Office of Audit and Investigations (OAI). It will provide regular updates to the head of UNDP in the country and OAI of the status of, and actions relating to, such investigation.

h. Choose one of the three following options:

Option 1: UNDP will be entitled to a refund from the responsible party, subcontractor or sub-recipient of any funds provided that have been used inappropriately, including through fraud or corruption, or otherwise paid other than in accordance with the terms and conditions of this Project Document. Such amount may be deducted by UNDP from any payment due to the responsible party, subcontractor or sub-recipient under this or any other agreement. Recovery of such amount by UNDP shall not diminish or curtail any responsible party's, subcontractor's or sub-recipient's obligations under this Project Document.

Option 2: Each responsible party, subcontractor or sub-recipient agrees that, where applicable, donors to UNDP (including the Government) whose funding is the source, in whole or in part, of the funds for the activities which are the subject of the Project Document, may seek recourse to such responsible party, subcontractor or sub-recipient for the recovery of any funds determined by UNDP to have been used inappropriately, including through fraud or corruption, or otherwise paid other than in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Project Document.

Option 3: UNDP will be entitled to a refund from the responsible party, subcontractor or sub-recipient of any funds provided that have been used inappropriately, including through fraud or corruption, or otherwise paid other than in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Project Document. Such amount may be deducted by UNDP from any payment due to the responsible party, subcontractor or sub-recipient under this or any other agreement.

Where such funds have not been refunded to UNDP, the responsible party, subcontractor or sub-recipient agrees that donors to UNDP (including the Government) whose funding is the source, in whole or in part, of the funds for the activities under this Project Document, may seek recourse to such responsible party, subcontractor or sub-recipient for the recovery of any funds determined by UNDP to have been used inappropriately, including through fraud or corruption, or otherwise paid other than in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Project Document.

Note: The term "Project Document" as used in this clause shall be deemed to include any relevant subsidiary agreement further to the Project Document, including those with responsible parties, subcontractors and sub-recipients.

i. Each contract issued by the responsible party, subcontractor or sub-recipient in connection with this Project Document shall include a provision representing that no fees, gratuities, rebates, gifts, commissions or other payments, other than those shown in the proposal, have been given, received, or promised in connection with the selection process or in contract execution, and that the recipient of funds from it shall cooperate with any and all investigations and post-payment audits.

j. Should UNDP refer to the relevant national authorities for appropriate legal action any alleged wrongdoing relating to the project or programme, the Government will ensure that the relevant national authorities shall actively investigate the same and take appropriate legal action against all individuals found to have participated in the wrongdoing, recover and return any recovered funds to UNDP.

k. Each responsible party, subcontractor and sub-recipient shall ensure that all of its obligations set forth under this section entitled "Risk Management" are passed on to its subcontractors and sub-recipients and that all the clauses under this section entitled "Risk Management Standard Clauses" are adequately reflected, *mutatis mutandis*, in all its sub-contracts or sub-agreements entered into further to this Project Document.

XI. ANNEXES

1. **Project Quality Assurance Report**
2. **Portfolio sensemaking and design approaches**
3. **Downstream youth support and 4 pathways graphic (illustrative)**
4. **Risk Analysis**
5. **Problem Trees informing Theory of Change**
6. **Project Board Terms of Reference and TORs of key management positions**
7. **Social and Environmental Screening Template**
8. **Capacity Assessment:** Results of capacity assessments of Implementing Partner (including HACT Micro Assessment)
9. **Project Approach Info Graphic**

1. PROJECT QUALITY ASSURANCE REPORT

https://intranet-apps.undp.org/ProjectQA/Forms/Design?fid=12658&year=2021&ou=H05&pid=00141561&fltr=PROJECT

2. Portfolio sensemaking and design approaches

Portfolio sensemaking and acceleration[87]

The UNDP sensemaking and acceleration protocol is and adaptive management and learning tool. It enables UNDP to evaluate the cohesion and interrogate the relevance of a country office's current portfolio of activities through the lens of the shared intent related do youth development outcomes, and re-calibrate in response to external change and emerging demands. Strategic points in time to facilitate this process are the Country Program Documents and UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks (UNSDCF). Eight (8) country offices are scheduled to develop CPDs in 2022. The protocol can be applied to a country office portfolios but also to government portfolios of policies, interventions and programs related to youth, thereby enhancing inter-ministerial coordination, and greater coherence within government programs.

The Protocol enables actors:

- to start to draw more deliberate links between projects, assets, capabilities and relationships in the portfolio, looking to accelerate impact on the ground by aggregating them
- to identify possible leverage points in the system where the country office is not currently working but should to affect systems change

In an environment that is incentives driven (donors provide earmarked funding for discrete projects according to their priorities), where portfolios and available envelopes of funding often grow organically over time, this means a fundamental shift towards deliberately connecting and shaping interventions so that they can learn from each other and aggregate their effects over time.

Portfolio design[88]

A more expanded methodology is the portfolio design process. The portfolio approach[89] is focused on outcomes or larger missions it seeks to achieve, for example, decarbonizing the national economy by 2050, zero plastic use in Cairo by 2030 or re-engineering the national education system. It entails a participatory multi-stakeholder process of analysing the context-specific framework conditions and challenges and generating a shared understanding of the problem space and transformational outcomes stakeholders are looking to achieve. With a premium on the social process and shared ownership, strategic arguments to support decision making and commitment to transformative action are generated, leverage points or portfolio positions in the system are identified and a coherent portfolio with the necessary breadth and depth is co-created. Portfolio positions[90] may include social innovations or innovations in finance, technology, policy governance and citizen engagement, education and other levers of change. This gives UNDP the ability to design with and offer to government and other partners a wider set of policy options capable of facilitating change within the system itself as opposed to coming up with a series of 'quick fixes' and incoherent interventions.

Understanding the ecology of a problem space will highlight and structure demand for technical support and expertise country offices require, which will reinforce and create greater coherence of the Regional Hub's youth portfolio.

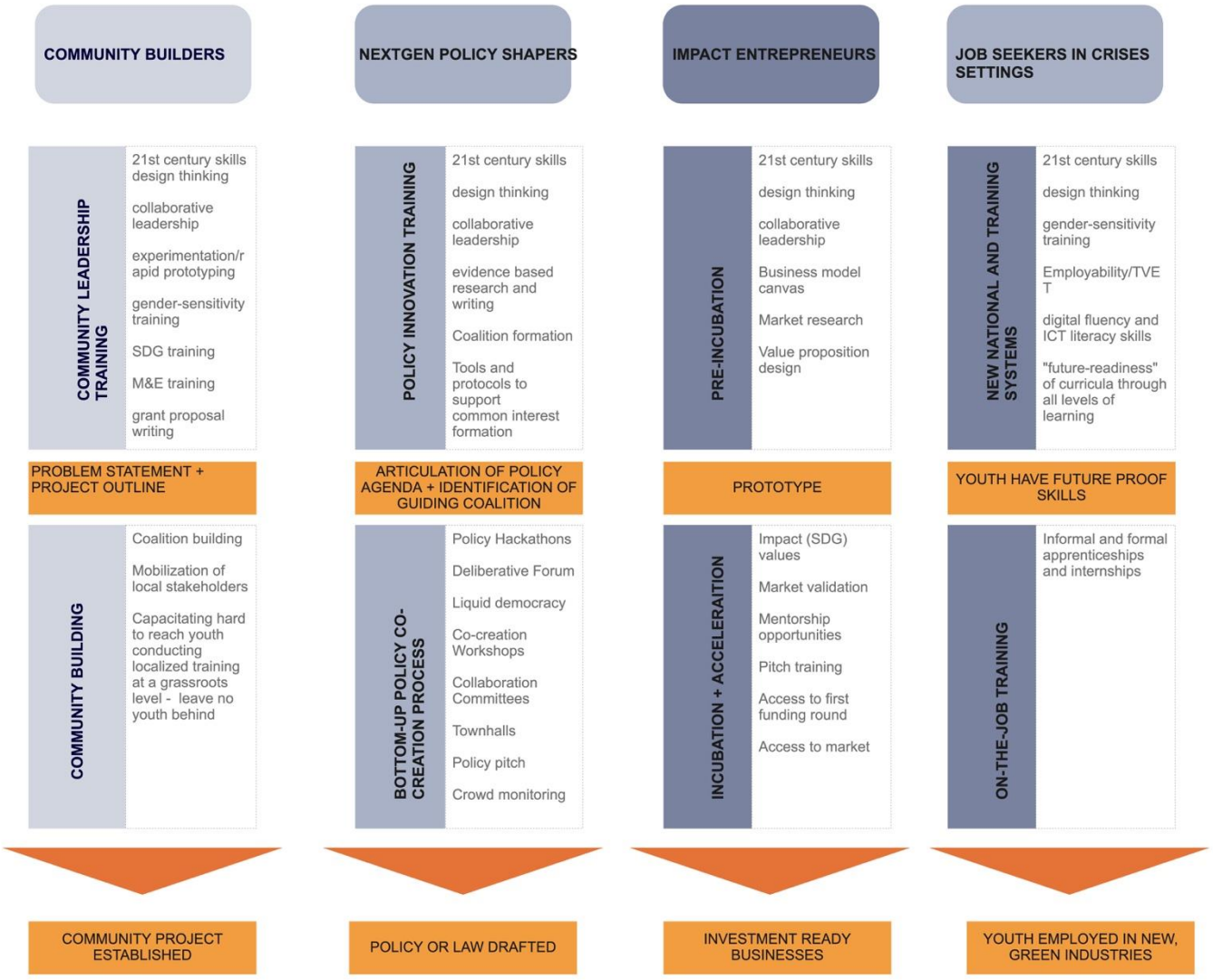
[87] https://undp.sharepoint.com/teams/RBAP/Innovation/SitePages/Portfolio-Sensemaking-and-Acceleration-Protocol.aspx

[88] https://undp-ric.medium.com/portfolio-approaches-to-tackle-complex-challenges-notes-on-an-emerging-practice-135b44ed0507

[89] https://medium.com/in-search-of-leverage/saving-the-world-a-portfolio-approach-e73d7853b893

[90] Definition by EIT Climate-KIC is supported by the EIT, a body of the European Union

3. Downstream youth support and 4 pathways graphic (illustrative)



4. Risk Log

#	Description	Risk Category	Impact & Likelihood = Risk Level	Risk Treatment / Management Measures	Risk Owner
1	Civic engagement capacity building activities cannot be implemented due to political constraints to civic space and subsequent risk to participants safety	Political	This would impact only allowing partial implementation in the effected country that will require careful re-strategizing. **likelihood** 3 **impact** 4 Risk Matrix Moderate	*Interventions will be designed based on landscape assessment and integrate context-sensitive approaches.*	Regional Programme's Youth Team
2	*Lack of interest by government and country level entities in systems transformation and long-term investment*	Political	This would impact sustainability and longer-term impact **likelihood** 3 **impact** 4 Risk Matrix **Moderate**	Dedicated efforts in advocating and positioning will be prioritized.	Regional Programme's Youth Team
3	*On-going or new conflict impact ability implementation*	Social and Safety and Security	Conflict is likely to halt implementation of all activities. **likelihood** 3 **impact** 5 Risk Matrix **Substantial**	*Frequently monitor national-level political and social developments and put in place mitigation strategies to continue implementing to degree possible.*	Regional Programme's Youth Team
4	Selection of beneficiaries and lack of community	Social	This will delay implementation as efforts to mitigate and build	Community vetting and strategic communication messaging clear	Regional Programme's Youth Team

	ownership can create community tensions		confidence and trust will be necessary likelihood 2 impact 4 Risk Matrix **Moderate**	messages	
5	Interventions create conflict among market actors	Social	This will create reputational and relationship risks likelihood 1 impact 2 Risk Matrix **Low**	Interventions will integrate conflict sensitive approaches into value chain analyses and interventions	Regional Programme's Youth Team
6	Lack of accessibility prevents implementing partners from working in certain regions or municipalities	Social	This will delay implementation as efforts will be slowed or halted. likelihood 3 impact 3 Risk Matrix **Moderate**	Working remotely through local partners and working effectively with state administrations at both the planning and implementation levels.	Regional Programme's Youth Team
7	Global Pandemic prevents organisation of events, meetings and capacity-building sessions as well as delays the implementation	*Environmental*	This will delay implementation as efforts will be slowed or halted. likelihood 3 impact 4 Risk Matrix **Moderate**	Delivery of events, meetings and training sessions virtually or through hybrid approach. Strengthening partners' capacity to implement and deliver virtually.	Regional Programme's Youth Team

8	Focus on execution overshadows learning in the constantly shifting external context with fast paced change and given the scale of policy problems	*Operational*	This will delay learning and ability to be agile to changes. likelihood 4 impact 4 Risk Matrix **Substantial**	Dedicated 'workstream' in to learning. This includes multiple levels from individual deep demonstrations (interventions), across interventions and Facility as a whole, as well as wider UNDP and with partners. Emphasis on generating useful insights that enable teams at country level and elsewhere in UNDP to improve how they work to achieve results.	Regional Programme's Youth Team
9	Funding mobilized is not sufficient to implement all activities, leaving gaps.	*Financial*	This will delay ability to make larger impact the project seeks. likelihood 3 impact 4 Risk Matrix **Moderate**	Create resource mobilization strategy and update as the context requires.	Regional Programme's Youth Team

5. Problem Trees informing Theory of Change

Young people do not meaningfully and impactfully engage in civic & political life
Immediate causes
Youth lack mechanisms to exercise active citizenship
Limited space for civic life & associations
Lack of trust in permanent institutions
Underlying causes
Lack of knowledge of how to participate in decision-making processes
Youth not mainstreamed at institutional levels
Lack of youth policies, or weak implementation when present
Lack of mechanisms for youth participation
Insufficient civic & 21st century skills education
Perception of young people as problems /agitators
Revolutions have not resulted in meaningful change
Distortion of free speech, polarization of public debates & opinion, rise of social media platforms
Root causes
Prioritization of livelihoods generation over political participation
Differences by social class, sect, or religion, and political affiliation or ideology more pertinent and divisive issues
Clientelism and formal structures dominated by elder men
Rise of economic hardship and volatility
History of conflict and limited space for opposition, sectarian political system
Patriarchal societal structures
Social norms related to gender

High unemployment & low rate of high-growth start-ups
Immediate causes
Lack of availability or low maturity of business support services
Lack of future-focused macro-policy support to (green) entrepreneurs, including access to finance
Limited possibilities of young people to become entrepreneurs
Underlying causes
Underdeveloped, disconnected, limited presence of incubators
Lack of data & labour market information to inform policy development
Limited investment & funding
Lack of innovation
Brain drain - high-skilled diaspora
Low entre-preneurial culture
High fragility of labor markets & employment (vulnerability, working poverty, informality)
(M)SMEs are relegated to the informal sector
Weak policy frameworks & ineffective labor market institutions
Lack of entrepreneurial education & mismatch of skill (education vs market)
Low shares of women-owned SMEs
Root causes
Limited public resources
Lack of incentives to register (M)SMEs
Low adoption of new technologies, digital divide
Increasing demand for jobs
Limiting social norms related to the role of women in employment or as entrepreneurs
Regulatory frameworks that inhibit risk-taking ventures as well as import/export of products and services
Reliance on extractive industries + poor job growth
Shrinking public sector jobs
Ongoing social & political turmoil
Growing youth population

6. Project Board TOR

Terms of Reference | Project Board
"Regional Youth Project: Shabab+"

I. BACKGROUND

The regional youth project Shabab+ aims to work with partners on a systems approach to strengthening the enabling policy and regulatory environment for job-rich, green growth and economic transformation for youth in the Arab region and reinforce capacities for their effective implementation; developing 21st century and entrepreneurship skills of young people; helping to connect them to productive youth employment opportunities; and enabling the adoption of a deliberative processes of policy articulation between governments and youth as policy shapers. In helping to create opportunities for youth in the Arab region to unleash their creativity and leadership in civic, economic and political spheres, the project aims to fundamentally shift societies' perception of youth as assets for regional transformation and social cohesion. It will co-generate a conducive environment for young people to become job creators, resilient job seekers, community builders and policy shapers actively contributing to the positive development of the societies in which they live. The project duration is through December 2024.

This Regional Youth Project represents the UNDP's strategic bet on youth as the key transformative agents to achieve the SDGs by 2030. The alarming growth of structural unemployment, which has been compounded by COVID lock-down measures is a critical concern for the Arab region. The correlation between unemployment, social exclusion, lack of participation, youth poverty and social unrest and conflict has been clearly established. The cross-border dimension of both youth unemployment and the lingering political instability and the absence of a conducive political environment for the active participation of civil society in some countries necessitate a holistic regional approach. While country typologies differ across the region, similar constraints are shared by groups of countries. A regional project will provide an enabling platform for comparative analysis, facilitate cross-country solution sharing and learning, identification of sub-regional or country typology approaches and economies of scale in the delivery of interventions.

The intent of this regional youth project is to provide a dynamic framework for UNDP's key approaches to empowering youth as agents of change for inclusive growth and social development. Therefore, the approach to working with partners including youth for a new social contract that both addresses their needs for economic prosperity, while protected their future through green growth, and engages them in the very civic process required to enable change is expected to contribute to the transformation needed for the achievement of the SDGs.

Special attention will be paid to seeking complementarities and synergies between the Regional Project initiatives and programs and projects by the Country Office. Up-front division of labor between regional and national implementation teams will be sought, according to their comparative advantage, strength, and position to deliver on the respective components of the Regional Youth Project.

The Regional Youth Project will explore new and unusual partnerships and foster existing ones. The project strategy is cantered on close collaboration with specialized UN agencies, national governments, regional institutions, and civil society organizations including youth and youth-serving organizations, and networks of ecosystem enablers from the private sector, development finance institutions (DFIs); impact investors and

other innovative finance support providers; social enterprises; incubators and accelerators and other business development and advisory service providers; governance innovation networks, research institutions and academia; innovation and technology companies. The project will foster and build on existing initiatives and partnerships established by UNDP Country Offices and the UNDP Regional Programme for the Arab States.

The project will work towards two specific objectives:

Outcome 1: Green growth and youth employment enabled through youth-led entrepreneurship

Young people, including youth in crisis settings, will be decently employed in green sectors and industries, if job creation strategies are embedded into broader growth polices and strategies and combined with specific youth employment initiatives, as youth constitute the majority of the unemployed population and growing labour force of most Arab countries; and if focused attention is paid to reinforcement of broad macroeconomic and sectoral frameworks in support of job-rich growth, and if sufficient public and private financing is directed towards green and blue economy sectors, recognizing the region's vulnerability to climate change, and if the green technologies and climate solutions are created and adapted; and if ecosystem enablers are connected to provide the financial and non-financial resources for youth-led impact oriented businesses to start up and scale.

Outcome 2: Social cohesion and reinvigoration of trust in institutions through inclusive and open public sphere with expanded public engagement, particularly youth engagement.

Social cohesion, and trust between the governed and governments is reinvigorated, if youth, including girls and young women and other marginalized groups, are engaging in local and national policy discussions and change processes, and leading social initiatives, and if youth are co-creating solutions that foster better systems and policies, and if greater coordination and policy coherence at central and local levels are fostered, and if youth is mainstreamed into national development and sectoral plans, strategies and budgets.

II. PURPOSE OF THE PROJECT BOARD

The project is implemented by UNDP as implementing agency in accordance with UNDP's Direct Implementation modality (DIM). With this arrangement, the project will take advantage of experiences and lessons learnt through existing project platforms under the Regional Programme of UNDP Regional Bureau for Arab States (RBAS) in implementing this project.

The multi-dimensional challenges in the Arab region require the establishment of a strong and operational network between stakeholders to ensure proper information sharing, and the ability to organize effective and efficient responses.

Considering the above, the Project Board will undertake the strategic decisions related to the implementation of the activities. The Board shall also provide constructive assessment, strategic guidance and insightful directions for the project, its future development and expansion of the initiatives to ensure project sustainability.

II.a Composition and organization of the Project Board[91]:

1. The Project Board will be comprised of UNDP RBAS Project Manager, Selected Youth Serving Organizations, and funding partners including the Arab Youth Center and the Danish-Arab Partnership Programme. Other will be included as the portfolio approach expands its resource mobilization efforts.

91 As the project expands to engage more partners and potentially donors, the project board structure can be amended as needed.

2. Relevant units of RBAS Regional Programme, as well as Project staff under this project will attend the Project Board meeting as needed;
3. The Project Board will meet on a regular basis to oversee the progress of the activities and provide strategic guidance including the approval strategic direction of programme interventions, budget and reporting;
4. Minutes of meetings will be prepared by UNDP RBAS RP Youth Team and shared with all the parties.

Members of the board will act on their professional capacity as representatives of the organizations, and will serve for the period of the project duration.

II.b Functions and responsibilities:

The Project Board will carry out the following functions and responsibilities:

- Provide overall guidance and direction to the project, ensuring it remains within any specified constraints;
- Provide strategic direction for the regional activities;
- Assist in advancing the objectives and goals of the project;
- Offer intellectual guidance and act as a resource person;
- Advise on the overall regional context affecting political, social, economic and cultural dynamics in the Arab region and its Member States;

The Project Board is responsible for directive guidance for the project and holding periodic reviews. In order to ensure UNDP's ultimate accountability, the final decision-making rests with UNDP in accordance with relevant regulations, rules, policies and procedures. Project review by the Project Board will be carried out in the mid-year of the project or as necessary. Project Board meeting(s) will be carried out virtually if holding in-person meetings are not possible. The review report will include detailed information on the status of project implementation and the achievement of project outputs and outcomes. Regular updates will be shared with Project Board members in due time.

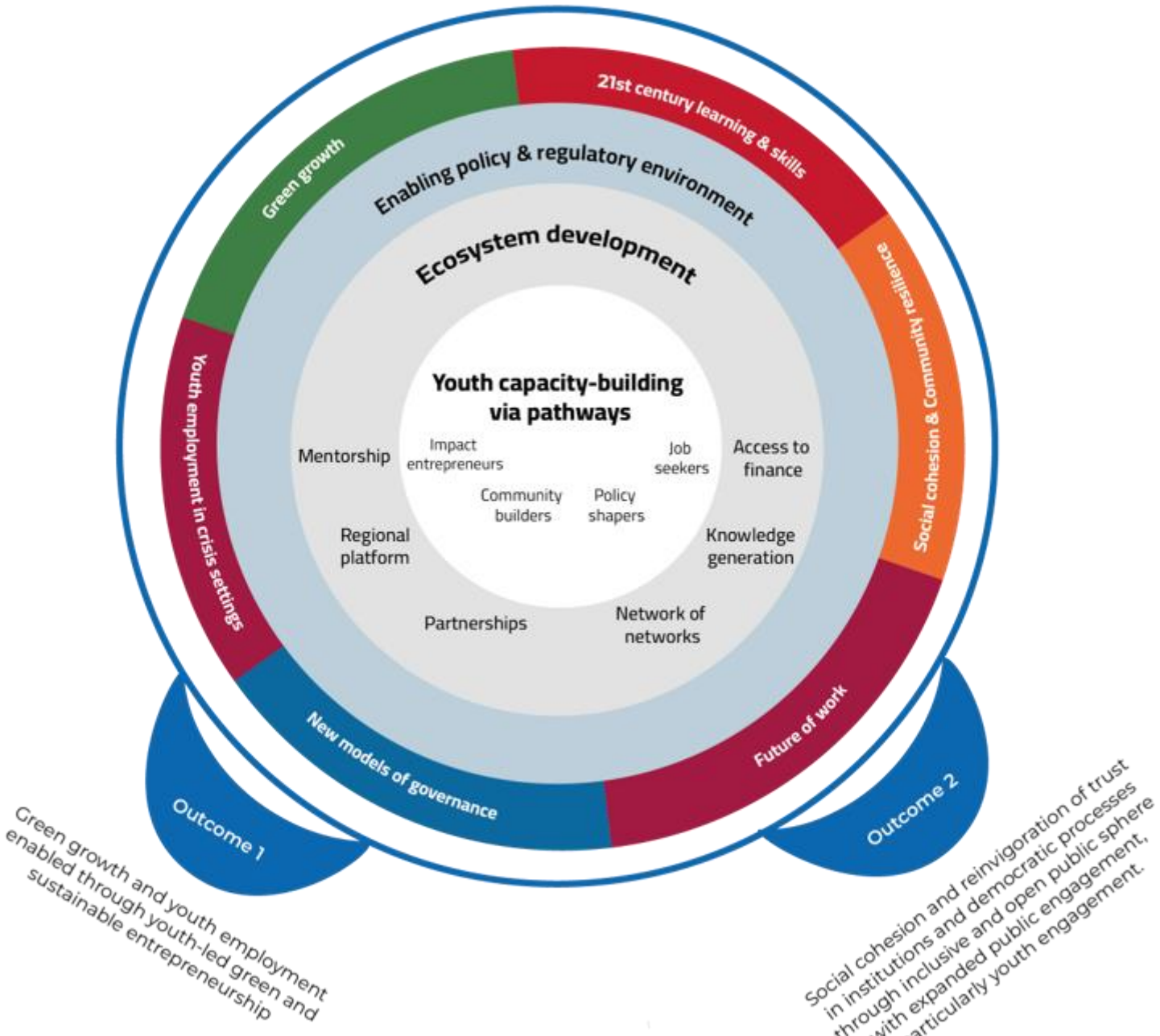
Board members:

- UNDP RBAS: RBAS RP Coordinator, Paola Pagliani, RBAS RP Youth Project Manager, Linda Haddad
- UNDP Country Offices: Morocco (Chafika Affaq and DRD), Lebanon (Nada Sweidan and DRD), Egypt (Abdelhamid Ezzat and DRD), PAPP (Nader Atta and DRD)
- UNDP Global: Global Youth Team (Noella Richards)

- Youth-serving Organizations:
    a. Riyada for Social Innovations, Mona Itani, Director
    b. Injaz, Samar Dani, Director
    c. FLOW, Majd Khalifeh (Ms.), CEO

- Arab Youth Center: Dana Ibrahim, Project Coordinator
- Danish-Arab Partnership Programme, Representative TBC

9. Project Approach Info Graphic


Green growth
21st century learning & skills
Social cohesion & Community resilience
Future of work
New models of governance
Youth employment in crisis settings
Enabling policy & regulatory environment
Ecosystem development
Youth capacity-building via pathways
Mentorship
Impact entrepreneurs
Job seekers
Access to finance
Community builders
Policy shapers
Regional platform
Knowledge generation
Partnerships
Network of networks
Outcome 1
Green growth and youth employment enabled through youth-led green and sustainable entrepreneurship
Outcome 2
Social cohesion and reinvigoration of trust in institutions and democratic processes through inclusive and open public sphere with expanded public engagement, particularly youth engagement.