ANALYSIS OF YOUTH APPROACHES IN THE MENA REGION

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES OF YOUTH PARTICIPATION
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<tr>
<td>AWRAD</td>
<td>Arab World Centre for Research and Development</td>
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<td>BMZ</td>
<td>Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung</td>
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<td>CEYP</td>
<td>Spaces for Civic Engagement and Youth Participation (Egypt)</td>
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<td>CoE</td>
<td>Council of Europe</td>
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<td>CoMun</td>
<td>Coopération municipale – gouvernance locale et participative au Maghreb</td>
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<td>CSP</td>
<td>Civil Society Programme (Palestinian Territories)</td>
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<td>EKCYP</td>
<td>European Knowledge Centre for Youth Policy</td>
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<td>EU</td>
<td>European Union</td>
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<td>EVS</td>
<td>European Voluntary Service</td>
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<td>FASPAR</td>
<td>Facilitating Social Participation of Palestinian Refugees</td>
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<td>GIZ</td>
<td>Gesellschaft für internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH</td>
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<td>LAS</td>
<td>League of Arab States</td>
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<tr>
<td>MEDA</td>
<td>Euro-Mediterranean Partnership</td>
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<td>MENA</td>
<td>Middle East And Northern Africa</td>
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<td>MoE</td>
<td>Ministry of Education</td>
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<td>NEETS</td>
<td>Young People Not In Education, In Employment Or Training</td>
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<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non Governmental Organisation</td>
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<td>NSC</td>
<td>North-South Centre</td>
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<td>NVC</td>
<td>Non Violent Communication</td>
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<td>PYNCR</td>
<td>Palestinian Youth Network for Citizenship and Reform</td>
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<td>PDP</td>
<td>Participatory Development Programme in Urban Areas (Egypt)</td>
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<td>UNFPA</td>
<td>United Nations’ Population Fund</td>
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<td>UNICEF</td>
<td>United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund</td>
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<td>YANNI</td>
<td>Young Arab Analysts Network International</td>
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<td>YCC</td>
<td>Youth Create Change (Palestinian Territories)</td>
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<td>YFJ</td>
<td>Youth Forum Jeunesse</td>
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

MAIN CONSIDERATIONS

The present study first and foremost aims at providing the Go-MENA work stream with an evaluation of different GIZ youth approaches in MENA countries with regards to governance and youth participation mechanisms. It further proposes recommendations on how to develop new innovative approaches for youth participation in decision-making processes on the local, national or regional level.

The research gathered information from ten programmes in four MENA countries. Whereas some of these programmes are youth specific, others integrated a youth dimension into their more global programmes.

In addition, this study encourages the integration of youth as a cross-cutting issue into existing projects without having to invent new programmes, but rather with an idea of mainstreaming youth participation throughout GIZ governance programmes and practices.

This study is an invitation to regard youth as an integral part of the society, and to involve young people in all fields of community life by accompanying them towards local governance and participation in decision-making at all levels.

The study analyses GIZ programmes in the MENA region, which have been working between 2011 and 2015. Therefore, the particular context of the Arab Uprisings, and its direct impact on youth and on youth work, need to be taken into account. More than ever, young people have stated their willingness to be involved in changing their societies in order to become more democratic and inclusive.

HOW TO READ THIS STUDY?

This study was written in a style permitting various forms of reading. Depending on the readers’ need and link to the subject, one can choose to read the full report, or to select certain parts of it. The chapters are complementary and independent at the same time. At all moments in the report, the reader should take into consideration that some of the recommendations, but also mentioned challenges or practices can be country specific and are therefore not valid or relevant for all MENA programmes.

The summary of the main findings below provides an overview of the key points taken from all chapters and country programmes analysed. They are composed of general recommendations addressed to the GIZ in relation to youth programmes, and more specific recommendations concerning various areas of intervention.

Although the recommendations primarily address the GIZ, they could also provide relevant guidance and ideas for civil society organisations or structures wishing to emphasize or develop their youth work approach on youth participation.
The introductory chapter on youth participation proposes theoretical concepts and models often used in youth work to explain and practice youth participation. This chapter can be used as such to introduce the concept in GIZ teams, in youth clubs, NGOs or any setting wishing to work on youth participation. The models presented can also serve as indicators to measure the current level of youth participation, and to define the ideal level for a project.

The first chapter on current state of affairs is a "zoom in" into GIZ programmes that have integrated a youth dimension, either exclusively through youth programmes, or by adding a youth perspective into more global programmes. This chapter situates the study into its context, and then proposes a critical overview of the analysed programmes in the Palestinian Territories, Tunisia, Egypt and Yemen. Readers will be able to find more detailed information about country programmes, but also possible ideas and practices to reproduce or import into own realities.

In order to give a more complete picture on youth work in the MENA region, the second chapter offers an overview of MENA youth work practices in other international organisations. Various intervention perspectives, topics and strategies are described, with links for further information on each of these programmes. This chapter ends with a recommendation concerning possible cooperation and complementarity between these organisations, with a focus on the role of GIZ in this matter.

After having provided the readers with information about what exists, the third chapter on challenges, opportunities and successful practices suggests a summary of points to take into account when working on youth participation. The challenges are divided into structural, logistical, socio-cultural, youth specific and political challenges. Some solutions or alternatives are offered, but the challenges mainly serve as questions to be raised by programme coordinators when developing youth participation programmes. For this, ANNEX ONE (Template for needs based assessment) and ANNEX TWO (How to check if your project has a youth participation dimension) can be useful tools. The paragraphs on opportunities and successful practices build on the GIZ programmes and projects ran so far and underline what makes them special, unique, innovative or particularly inclined towards involving young people in decision-making processes. In taking a first step towards youth mainstreaming and using quality standards, programs might find it useful to conduct a youth audit with the help of ANNEX THREE (Questions for a youth audit) This will enable an assessment of the current status of work with youth..

All in all, this study combines the knowledge and practical experiences about youth participation with a regional focus, while proposing elements for design of new programmes and possible improvements. Finally, it aims at providing inspiring thoughts, new ideas, motivation and critical point of views for anyone wishing to develop youth programmes or to integrate a youth dimension into already existing programmes in the MENA context.
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ANALYSIS OF YOUTH APPROACHES IN THE MENA REGION

Many programmes show their success in the flexibility and adaptation to the local context. Therefore, standardizing youth work practices within MENA GIZ programmes could be risky and lead to resistance of local partners. What works in one context does not necessarily work in another. GIZ should maintain its expertise in cultural and contextual specificity and its proven competence to run contextually adapted and integrated youth programmes.

In order to optimise impact and sustainability of programmes and projects, a system of ongoing monitoring and evaluation of youth projects is needed. This should not be limited to GIZ offices, but involve local partners, NGOs and youth themselves.

Combining top-down and bottom-up approaches into one programme is the safest way of reaching sustainable change and cooperation in society. Programmes like YCC (LGP), working both at Ministry level and in the community in order to get them to meet up, should be reproduced in other settings and programmes.

GIZ programmes have the potential of fostering intercultural dialogue and enabling communities to get in touch, exchange, meet and deconstruct mental barriers. Programmes enabling refugees and non-refugees to meet (FASPAR, Palestine) or younger and elder people to cooperate, should be further developed, as they include a peace-building and conflict transformation dimension.

GIZ should pay particular attention to the inclusion of all groups of young people, with a special focus on marginalised groups (e.g. refugees, women, and rural youth). This can be achieved through programmes targeting these groups in particular (FASPAR, Future for Palestine, CEYP), or through programmes including marginalised youth into mainstreamed youth programmes in order to include them and make sure their voices are heard. This is still a big challenge, as GIZ cooperates only with youth who is part of a formalised, registered organisation. Various ways of involving non-organised young people should be explored.

As mentioned in the report, less is sometimes more. Small local initiatives can have a great impact on a community, without necessarily bringing change at national level or demanding many resources. In the case of Yemen for example, a project bringing together 40 young people for training can lead to a multiplying effect and bring sustainable change in the community in relation to the place and legitimacy of youth.

GIZ should consider starting participation projects from an earlier age: if children learn to express ideas and to be involved in small decision-making processes, it becomes easier to motivate them as youth to take an active role in community decision-making, and they develop their self-esteem in a way to become critical, responsible and engaged citizens.

GENERAL FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS
Good infrastructure and comfortable working conditions are important elements for quality youth work. GIZ has combined this aspect with the training and capacity building dimension in the project “Future for Palestine”. This mode could be reproduced in other contexts, by creating a space in which quality work can then be ensured.

Strategic action plans for local youth participation need to be developed with youth, by asking about their needs, and making sure the youth involved is representative of all young people.

Campaigns are a way to attract many participants, get governments involved, and pass a strong message and join/create networks. GIZ could consider developing thematic campaigns on topics identified through needs analysis with young people, and in close cooperation with Ministries and civil society organisations. This would increase the visibility of their work and enable local structures to create synergies and cooperation around common values. For example, the campaign against sexual harassment in Egypt was a great example of cooperation between young people and decision makers on a common objective. Particular attention should be given to regional campaigns over common topics. These are ways to address difficult issues or taboos in societies across the region, which would not be addressed by one country specifically, but can enable various MENA countries to join around one cause defined by young people (e.g. campaign against weapons, campaign against hate speech, etc.)

Youth participation should be included as a transversal element of GIZ programmes. This can happen on one hand by adding a youth participation dimension into any type of programme. Additionally, GIZ should adopt an internal youth participation approach by ensuring that young people are involved in project planning, development, implementation and evaluation in GIZ projects. This would create a sense of coherence and give more credibility to the organisation.

Youth participation should be addressed through the development of new or continuation of on-going youth programmes. However, it would be essential to also develop more possibilities for adding youth dimensions to GIZ programmes from different sectors in order to provide youth a transversal place in all topics related to society development and democratic transformation processes.

An in depth-study should be conducted by GIZ on all actors involved in youth policy development and youth participation in the MENA region over the five past years. This should include international, regional and national organisations and networks. Based on the results, an international consultative meeting with actors from all fields and countries could be organised in order to agree on strategies and individual added values, competences and areas of intervention. This would allow a complementarity of tools and expertise, an exchange of views on practices, and a common added value in future interventions on the topic of youth participation and local governance.
TRAINING AND CAPACITY BUILDING

GIZ tends to organise trainings and capacity building in separated groups (e.g. Ministry of Education, teachers, students). Merging the target groups by organising common, mixed training courses would be highly recommended. This would create some common ground for cooperation and also contribute to de-constructing psychological barriers and to start cooperation on new grounds. In this spirit, GIZ could consider organising so called “50/50 courses” bringing together municipality representatives and two to three young people from each municipality, who would be mentored by the representative. This could create long-lasting relationships and contribute to engaging young people into decision-making at local level.

Young people are very motivated and keen to learn. However, non-formal education training is not always recognised, is not paid for and does not replace access to employment. A form of recognition for training and capacity building in non-formal education contexts should be set up by GIZ, through certification or the production of training portfolios which could serve participants in their future careers.

Most of the time, training is not enough. Application of the training with appropriate coaching and mentoring support is essential to render the learning process useful.

Finally, GIZ needs to provide training on youth mainstreaming and youth issues to GIZ staff. In most of the programmes analysed within this study, none of the coordinators have benefited from such training or been provided guidelines. This would reassure GIZ coordinators and encourage them to develop the youth dimension of their work further,
RESEARCH

In the MENA region, there is still a lack of research on youth needs in general and the situation of youth in regard to particular themes. Youth led youth research should be encouraged and piloted by GIZ. This research could serve as a basis for developing youth policies at national level.

YOUTH POLICY

It is difficult to reach sustainable changes in relation to youth participation and local governance without having a clearly recognised national youth policy. GIZ can play an active role in accompanying, counselling and mobilising governments to develop such youth policy, for example in Tunisia. In the absence of pro-youth governments, this work can still be conducted with civil society in strengthening their lobbying efforts.

As mentioned by some of the coordinators of the analysed programmes, difficulties also arise because of a lack of country specific youth policies for GIZ. In order to be successful, national contexts in the MENA region need to be taken into account.

Youth Councils are being developed in various regions/countries in MENA. Together with other international organisations, GIZ could monitor and support the development and process of newly set up youth councils and ensure that they run in a youth participation-friendly way. Trainings for youth council members could be organised on a regular basis.

Allocating a youth representative in the municipality is very helpful to ensure the sustainability of contacts and cooperation- Ideally, this appointed person should be young themselves- This would create a job opportunity with training and a proof that youth is trusted and considered competent. However, this needs to be considered according to the local context. As mentioned by some of the country coordinators, employed staff is sometimes attached to a certain political family in the municipality, thus loosing a certain level of impartiality and freedom to act in the interest of all young people.

Youth policy briefs, as implemented by the PYNCR programme, are a way to develop youth policy through youth based research with a participatory approach.

(1) This link can be interesting when working on youth policy: http://www.youthpolicy.org/
VISIBILITY AND COMMUNICATION

Young people are connected worldwide. Although some regions still have difficult access to Internet, most young people find ways to share ideas, thoughts, and opinions online. GIZ should create more online spaces for communication between young people from different contexts and countries on particular topics. In that way, young people could communicate about the advancements of their projects and inspire each other.

Clearly structured websites on GIZ programmes in the language of the beneficiaries are important tools to provide visibility about what GIZ is doing. This can be used by the project itself, but can also serve as a basis for other international organisations to combine/adapt their work to what is already being done.

In the same way than the common network, GIZ programmes should inform each other about what is being done in the field of youth participation. This report gives a first overview, but there are surely more unknown initiatives and projects, which could benefit others and could benefit from other programmes’ feedback and ideas. The established GC21 platform can be used for an exchange on useful manuals, training guidelines, etc. Palestine has started setting up regular cross-sectorial youth meetings between the various GIZ programmes.

GIZ should make positive experiences and initiatives more visible—what works also motivates others to join. Challenges are often underlined, but successful projects and success stories should be shared, ideally through the voices of young people themselves. Online tools or videos should be made available for young people to share their experiences about the impact of GIZ programmes on their everyday lives.
NETWORKING

Networking is an essential part of GIZ work and should be even more developed.

Networking between local partners and NGOs. Since the Arab Uprising, many new youth organisations and civil society organisations have been created. Knowing who exists and who does what would be an added value for all, as it would avoid duplications of projects, it would broaden the scope of potential partnerships and would create synergies. GIZ could take a central role in gathering such information.

Networking between GIZ offices and programmes. Sometimes, various GIZ programmes operate in the same country without really working together or cooperating. There should be more inter-programme cooperation in order to share resources and build on each other’s experiences. For example, YCC and Future for Palestine took place in the same municipalities, which enabled a longer involvement of participants and links between the programmes.

In Palestine, a youth working group was created by all GIZ programmes. Each programme nominates one representative, so that the various programme coordinators meet on a regular basis to exchange information, share experiences, etc. Such working groups should be set up in all MENA countries.

Networking between beneficiaries. Young people, teachers, municipality employees, can all strongly benefit from networking between each other. Whereas this happens within one country or between MENA countries, the exchange of expertise, competence and information can only be beneficial. Formally created networks like the teachers’ network in Palestine, or informally created networks like in Yemen, can be powerful tools for engaging participants, especially in situations where physical meetings are difficult. The GIZ could develop a facilitated online space for young people from the various GIZ programmes to exchange and develop common cooperation initiatives. Potential study visits or common training gatherings could be envisaged. This would both motivate the beneficiaries to get further involved, and would foster intercultural learning and exchange of practices between young people in the MENA region. However, in order to be successful, such a project requires a staff member working on it.
INTRODUCTION

Children and youth constitute the majority in many countries in the MENA region. Despite this fact, young people still do not participate in decision-making processes at the local, regional or national level. Their right to meaningful participation is not yet recognised. Consequently, it is important that international development cooperation acknowledges children and youth as a separate and quantitatively strong group, which needs special attention while at the same time, offers great potential. Active engagement of young people in society and decision-making processes are indicators for effective public participation and good governance especially with regard to political stability, accountability and social inclusion. Since many projects of the German Development Cooperation in the MENA region and beyond, already touch upon these issues or would like to enhance their capacities in this field, the objective of the Go-MENA youth work stream is to support existing as well as new programmes through profound information, regional exchange and innovative approaches.
The Arab Uprisings in various countries of the MENA region in the past years have put youth at the forefront of claiming change and speaking out for more justice and democratic governance. Young people expressed their opinions and showed that they could be important partners in shaping inclusive democracies. These impulses need to be kept alive and sustained, and young people need support to continue the battle they have started.

Go-MENA is the newest Governance Sector Network covering all MENA countries in which GIZ is engaged and links all governance related programmes including peace and security related projects in the region. It was launched in 2014 and currently has a membership of 26 programmes in 12 countries in the region and in Germany. The network aims at promoting exchange of expertise on a regional level taking the specifics of MENA post the Arabellion into consideration. One of its work streams is the youth work stream, for which this study was conducted.

The study looks at GIZ programmes within the Go-MENA youth network which either have run youth specific programmes, such as YCC or have integrated a youth dimension into their global programmes.

In the introductory part of the report, a short conceptual explanation is given to youth participation. In the first chapter, the study analyses ten GIZ programmes with a youth participation dimension, looking at their strengths and weaknesses.

In the context of international development, it seemed important to add a second chapter on the work of other international organisations working in the MENA region. This chapter enables the reader to see particularities and possible synergies, but also shows what the specificities and particular strengths of GIZ are in the region.

The report further provides the readers with a third chapter on challenges to youth participation within GIZ programmes and underlines existing opportunities. Concrete recommendations are given to GIZ, and more specifically to the Go-MENA youth work stream in order to develop innovative ideas and improve already existing programmes on youth participation.

Finally, in the three annexes, templates for developing youth participation projects, conducting needs assessments with/for/by young people and running a youth audit are proposed as practical tools for project managers/programme officers interested in working on youth issues and youth participation.

As mentioned above, the main findings are first and foremost addressed to the GIZ Go-MENA network and GIZ offices in charge of developing new programmes in the region. However, this study can also be shared with local partners and youth NGOs working on the topic of youth participation in order to get new ideas about what already exists.

The research took place between January and June 2015. Altogether, ten programmes in four MENA countries were analysed. These were Egypt, Palestinian Territories, Tunisia and Yemen.

The study was composed of two parts:

- Desk based research with the help of the Go-MENA youth work stream who provided all documents, reports, brochures available on various programmes with a youth dimension;

- Personal interviews with GIZ officers working on the programmes in order to complete the information from the desk based research.

This selection is certainly limited in scope and not representative of all youth initiatives and programmes including a youth participation dimension.
SHORT THEORETICAL CONCEPT ABOUT YOUTH PARTICIPATION

SHORT THEORETICAL CONCEPT OF YOUTH PARTICIPATION
The concepts of youth participation and local governance are used at international level, in various contexts, and sometimes with very different understandings of what they mean in practice.

Some definitions of youth participation as follows:

- “In a nutshell participation means to be involved, to have tasks and to share and take over responsibility. It means to have access and to be included”\(\text{(1)}\)

- “A programme attitude or a strategy that encourages youth to express their opinions, to become involved, and to be part of decision-making processes at different levels.”\(\text{(2)}\)

- “Participation is about talking and listening, expressing your own views and listening while others express theirs. It can mean working together for a situation or a course of action. Participating doesn’t just mean becoming a young activist, it can also mean taking advantage of opportunities that are being offered, like joining clubs to learn a new skill or groups that feel strongly about an issue.”\(\text{(3)}\)

- The Revised Charter on the Participation of Young People at Local and Regional Life of the Council of Europe defines youth participation as follows:

  “Participation in the democratic life of any community is about more than voting or standing for election, although these are important elements. Participation and active citizenship is about having the right, the means, the space and opportunities and where needed the support to participate and influence decisions and engaging actions and activities so as to contribute to building a better society.”\(\text{(4)}\)

These definitions put a clear accent on various important aspects of youth participation, underlining various areas of use or main elements to consider.

They all underline the following core elements:

- Taking part and being involved
- Having responsibilities
- Participation is more than political involvement

It could be interesting to ask GIZ MENA offices to reflect on these definitions, identify the one they feel their approach is closest to, or maybe develop their own, more adequate one. The way youth participation is understood and practiced does of course impact on the programmes and projects developed.

There are very different levels of involvement of young people. The two models presented in this analysis give an idea about levels of youth participation, their limitations and the opportunities they provide to young people.


\(\text{(2)}\) Golombek, S. (2002): What works in Youth Participation: Case studies from around the world, P8

\(\text{(3)}\) Discussing global issues: what is participation? UNICEF, United Kingdom, 2004, P.1

\(\text{(4)}\) The revised European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life, Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe, (2003)
MODEL ONE: The three-lens approach to youth participation

This model looks at youth participation involving youth in three ways:

Youth projects should be initiated:
- For young people (young people as beneficiaries)
- With young people (young people as partners)
- By young people (young people as leaders)

As simple and obvious as this model may seem, it contains a very challenging part, which is the third dimension on youth as leaders. Very often, youth participation projects are developed by adults for young people and not always including them. However, it is still rare to see young people taking the lead in identifying needs, developing a project proposal, taking care of the budget, planning, coordination and running of the project.

As we will see in this study, this is probably even more the case in the MENA region where cultural traditions tend to provide a leadership role to adults, and a role of learner, who needs to be guided, to young people.
MODEL TWO: The participation ladder of Roger Hart.

Roger Hart developed a so-called “ladder of children’s participation” which illustrates the different degrees of involvement of children and young people in projects, organisations or communities.

In the manual “Have Your Say”(6), this ladder is presented in two different ways.

In this model, Hart demonstrates eight different forms of participation that he ranks from “young people manipulated” to “shared decision-making”. The first three steps of the ladder are considered as “non-participation”, as young people are used in different ways (manipulation, decoration, tokenism). These forms of “non-participation” can often be seen in political campaigns and meetings where young people are invited, asked to wear special T-shirts, but not asked for their opinions.

From rank 4 to 8, young people are involved in decision-making in different ways. Depending on the project, the capacities of the young people and the support they get, their participation can go from being informed about a project FOR young people to young people being consulted about a project, up to young people being carriers or co-carriers of the project. It is important to underline that in Hart’s perspective, the highest level of youth participation is not reached by young people doing everything alone. It is rather a form of shared decision-making, where young people are considered as equal partners and co-create with adults.

This model, however, is sometimes criticized as being too hierarchical. It is true that depending on situations, youth participation does not always have to be rank 8 on the ladder, but could also be consultation of young people or any other forms.

Rung 8 Shared decision making
Rung 7 Young people led and initiated
Rung 6 Adult initiated, shared decision making
Rung 5 Young people consulted and informed
Rung 4 Young people assigned and informed
Rung 3 Young people tokenised (NON PARTICIPATION)
Rung 2 Young people as decoration (NON PARTICIPATION)
Rung 1 Young people manipulated (NON PARTICIPATION)

In order to respond to this critique, an alternative way of presenting Hart’s participation ladder was developed as follows:

Here, different levels of youth participation can be valid and useful at various times. Young people do not always need to initiate and run projects together with adults. Sometimes, they can be consulted about an issue without having direct influence. The key factor in this process is transparency. If young people are clearly told that their participation in a certain programme or project will be limited to being consulted, it is more acceptable than if they are given the wrong impression that they are leaders in the project/programme. Defining roles and responsibilities early on minimises the chances of raised expectations.
In which areas can young people participate?

Very often, when we think about youth participation, we think about sports and leisure, high school representatives, summer camps or youth clubs. However, in a youth participatory society, young people are considered as full citizens, and should therefore be involved in decisions concerning all spheres of society. They are equally concerned about health, education, employment, transport, urban planning, etc.

Therefore, youth participation needs to be seen as a transversal approach throughout all areas of society. Young people should be invited to participate in decisions concerning citizen’s everyday lives, just as adults represent the citizenry in municipalities.

The United Nations General Assembly identified the following four areas of youth participation:

- **Economic participation** (employment and work, reducing poverty, economic development, etc.)
- **Political participation** (authorities and governments, power, policy making at local, regional, national level)
- **Social participation** (involvement in life of local communities, addressing local challenges)
- **Cultural participation** (art and expression)

The conceptual approach of participation in German Development Cooperation promotes three aspects of participation:

- **Democratic participation** (enabling citizens to participate in a living democracy)
- **Process participation** (involving stakeholders in the identification, planning and evaluation of programmes and projects)
- **Institutional participation** (anchoring participation in rules, standards and legislation)

In the programmes described in this report, all three dimensions can be found.

Youth participation does not just happen overnight. It needs to be introduced into people’s minds, into policy making at all levels, and into young people’s culture of living and thinking. It needs to be developed with young people at all stages of changing democracies and societies. But youth participation does not only happen in youth projects or programmes. Young people are equally concerned by all topics of societies, and therefore a youth dimension can be introduced in any programme, without it having to be a youth programme.

In view of this, the GIZ has two ways of enhancing youth participation in its programmes:

- Mainstreaming a youth dimension in any GIZ programme in the MENA region
- Developing a youth participation dimension in already existing youth programmes

At this stage, and on the basis of the programmes analysed for the purpose of this study, it can be said that youth participation within GIZ is rather still considered as belonging to youth programmes only, and that the mainstreaming aspect could be further developed. Some good examples, like the CoMun programme in Tunisia, will be provided throughout the report.

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(8) Toolkit “Get Youth on Board”, Youth Participation, Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ), (2010)
PART ONE
GIZ CURRENT STATE OF AFFAIRS
ANALYSIS OF YOUTH APPROACHES IN THE MENA REGION

PART ONE. GIZ CURRENT STATE OF AFFAIRS

GIZ Go-MENA SECTOR NETWORK

Go-MENA is the newest Governance Sector Network covering all MENA countries in which GIZ is engaged and links all governance related programmes including peace and security related projects in the region. The network aims at promoting exchange of expertise on a regional level taking the specifics of the MENA region post the Arabellion into consideration. Go-MENA thereby seeks to search and find suitable answers for the existing regional challenges and identify potentially occurring new governance challenges in the region. Ultimately, Go-MENA improves the quality of programme approaches and strengthens impact and results of the programmes. Networking occurs through vibrant knowledge sharing and innovation management via Global Campus 21 platform. Go-MENA was launched in May 2014 and is growing ever since with a current number of 26 participating programmes in 12 countries including Sector Programmes based in Germany with a total of 140 participants.

YOUTH WORK STREAM IN Go-MENA

Children and youth constitute the majority in many countries in the MENA region. Though, young people still do not participate in decision-making processes on the local, regional or national level. Their right to meaningful participation is ignored; youth are being left behind feeling powerless. Consequently, it is important that international development cooperation acknowledges children and youth as a separate and quantitatively strong group, which needs special protection while at the same time, offers great potential. The objective of this work stream is to support existing as well as new programmes through profound information, regional exchange and innovative approaches

- Objective I: A pool of youth experts exists within GIZ MENA
- Objective II: Best practice collection for the role of youth in Governance in the MENA region has been identified
- Objective III: Recommendations for the design of innovative youth programme approaches and aspects of quality assurance have been given

In all MENA countries analysed in this study, children and youth constitute between 30% and 65% of the overall country population. However, in all countries, the active participation of young people in decision-making, be it political, social or at community level, is limited.

Young people are not trusted or given legitimacy by decision makers. Cultural aspects imply that children and youth have to listen and obey to elders, learn from them and benefit from their expertise, rather than being consulted or perceived as important partners in the shaping of societies.

The recent revolutions in the Arab world were mostly led by young people seeking for change and expressing the need to be involved in decision-making. As a consequence, many international donors, national NGOs and stakeholders started developing programmes and projects aiming at developing and encouraging the participation of young people in decision-making.

The approach used and the structural support encountered varies greatly from one context to another. But the willingness of young people to contribute to social change was found equally in all GIZ youth programmes.

GIZ YOUTH APPROACH

One of the objectives of the GIZ in relation to youth is “realising the Rights of Children and Youth in German development cooperation.”

The GIZ has a two-fold approach to youth work: On one hand, youth projects can be a stand-alone sector, taking into consideration the specificity, particular needs and vulnerabilities of young people. At the same time, the GIZ aims at mainstreaming youth beyond it being one thematic sector or target group, but rather managing to have a transversal approach to youth dimensions in all GIZ programmes. Thus, youth should not be seen only as a group in
relation to youth topics, but considered a part of all topics of development in societies. For GIZ, the integration of youth throughout all programmes would therefore be intended.

Youth work as a **cross-sectorial topic** is taken into account in the following areas:

- **Prevention** (youth violence prevention)
- **Protection** (protection from exploitation)
- **Promotion** (youth development, youth and sport, youth employment)
- **Participation** (youth councils, training of youth facilitators/promoters, youth parliaments)
- **Youth Policy advice** (overarching over all sectors)

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1. **Youth Law**

2. **Policies on Youth and their cross-sectorial Harmonisation**

3. **Youth Action Plans (national to local Level)**

4. **Umbrella Associations of Youth Officers & Networks**

5. **Structures of Participation (Youth Parliments & Councils)**

6. **Political Key Actors (Ministries, Parliament, Authorities, etc.)**

7. **Youth Organisations (national to local Level)**

8. **Youth Centres**

9. **Youth Officers & Directors of Youth Centres**

10. **Youth Promotors & Youth**
How about the age definition of youth within the GIZ? As it can be seen in the programmes analysed in the context of this study, the age definition of youth varies greatly from one country to another, and sometimes even from one programme to another within the same country.

The BMZ position paper on Rights of Children and Youth (2011) defines children as aged from 0-18 years, and youth, following the UN definition, as 15-24 years. However, the GIZ specifically mentions that national laws should prevail in the definition of youth as an age group.

Between 2002 and 2012, the GIZ conducted various country analyses on youth rights (Palestinian Authority in 2012). A study commissioned by the BMZ aimed at “supporting GIZ projects in analysing a given country’s state and non-state structures and capacities that influence the implementation of young people’s human rights”. This analysis served as a basis for drafting, implementing and evaluating solid programme approaches in national contexts.

In 2013 to 2014, the GIZ launched a pilot project on social integration of young people in the MENA region, in cooperation with Tunisia, the Palestinian Territories and Morocco. The project focused on youth participation and aimed at developing and disseminating innovative approaches for the social integration of youth in the MENA region. The project brought together an online space, as well as face-to-face exchanges on youth participation and promotion for youth professionals.

All in all, youth play a major goal in GIZ DC programmes in all countries. However, the important youth population rate in the MENA region leads GIZ to give young people particular attention and to focus on mainstreaming youth in all programmes in the region, while at the same time taking into account the specificity and particular needs of young people in each national context.

ASSESSMENT OF GIZ PROGRAMMES IN THE MENA REGION

The table below gives an overview of the GIZ programmes analysed in the framework of this study. As can be seen, not all programmes are specifically developed on/for youth, but many of them have integrated a youth dimension into their running programmes.

(1) Information extracted from the presentation “The sector project “Realising the Rights of Children and Youth in German development Cooperation” by Britta Kalla
### Local Governance and Civil Society Development Programme (LGP): Youth Create Change (YCC) - Palestinian Territories (West Bank and Gaza)/Jordan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program/Project</th>
<th>Main Topics/Fields of Intervention</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Approaches/Practices</th>
<th>Youth Program/Youth Dimension</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participatory Development Programmes in Urban Areas (PDP): Egypt</td>
<td>A two-year fast track measure under the PDP to promote informal area youth involvement in decision-making processes with their local authorities.</td>
<td>2011–2013</td>
<td>Establishment of youth networks (Youth fast track)</td>
<td>Youth dimension in general programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spaces for Civic Engagement and Youth Participation (CEYP)</td>
<td>Empowerment of youth through enhancement of civic engagement, by establishing a framework to create an enabling “space” through targeted measures with the youth center management, focusing on gender mainstreaming through empowerment measures for girls and young women</td>
<td>2012-2016</td>
<td>Collaboration with youth initiatives in developing a training manuals to enhance civic engagement and youth participation</td>
<td>Youth programme</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Local Governance and Civil Society Development Programme (LGP): Youth Create Change (YCC) - Palestinian Territories (West Bank and Gaza)/Jordan

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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local Governance and Civil Society Development Programme (LGP): Youth Create Change (YCC)</td>
<td>Local decision-making of young people, Pilot project in 12 municipalities</td>
<td>2013–2015</td>
<td>Youth municipal employee appointed; Youth centres set up; Youth representatives appointed and trained; Annual youth action plans and youth budget</td>
<td>Youth programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilitating Social Participation of Palestinian Refugees (FASPAR)</td>
<td>Palestinian refugees in the Palestinian Territories, Lebanon and Jordan: Identity of refugees, Psychosocial support, Youth participation and community planning</td>
<td>2014–2017</td>
<td>Relationship building with refugee camps, Relationship building between camps and surroundings, Political interventions within the camps</td>
<td>Youth dimension in general programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palestinian’s Citizens Civil Society Programme (CSP): Palestinian Youth Network for Citizenship and Reform (PYNCR)</td>
<td>Network Advocacy and lobbying on youth issues to enhance youth participation in decision-making</td>
<td>2012–2015</td>
<td>Research and policy briefings on youth themes in all areas (health, education, employment)</td>
<td>Youth dimension in general programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program/Project</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES (WEST BANK AND GAZA)/JORDAN</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Future for Palestine (FfP): “Schools as Rooms for Creating Visions of Future—Enhancing Learning and Teaching Environments”</strong></td>
<td>Enhancing Learning and Teaching environment by training teachers, students and partners</td>
<td>Overall programme: 2008–2015 Youth dimension: 2013–2015</td>
<td>• Capacity building of teachers, partners and students on life skills and curriculum based contents • Development of an online teacher’s exchange network • Development of youth led student’s school pilot projects</td>
<td>Youth dimension in general programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Coopération Municipale – Gouvernance Locale et participative au Maghreb (CoMun)</strong></td>
<td>Municipal learning networks: Strengthening cities as actors for change via responsive services and citizen participation</td>
<td>2008–2018 Youth dimension since 2012</td>
<td>• Stakeholder analysis on the topic of Youth Participation in Tunisian Municipalities • Ideas competitions in municipalities • Common training courses for municipalities, youth centers, NGOs and young leaders on youth participation (in order to set up local youth action plans) • Set up of a thematic network of cities on youth participation</td>
<td>Youth dimension in general programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TUNISIA</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Good Governance Cluster: Youth and conflict management (in cooperation with TAMKEEN)</strong></td>
<td>Youth and conflict management</td>
<td>2011–2012 (four months)</td>
<td>• Training courses • Online forum on peace and conflict • Youth initiatives development</td>
<td>Youth project funded within broader programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Good Governance Cluster: Youth in peace-building and political participation (in cooperation with FAD)</strong></td>
<td>Youth in peace-building and political participation</td>
<td>2011–2012</td>
<td>• Training courses for youth • Training manuals on political participation • Networks of youth between cities • Set up of a youth council in the cities+ train them</td>
<td>Youth project funded within broader programme</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Yemen</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Good Governance Cluster: Together we build (in cooperation with Nida Foundation, Igad Foundation for Development, Dar al Insaf for Justice and Development)</strong></td>
<td>Strengthening the involvement of rural youth in decision-making at local level</td>
<td>2013–2015</td>
<td>• Identifying needs of young people in rural communities • Presenting results of analysis to local councils • Training youth and local councils on generic skills</td>
<td>Youth project funded within broader programme</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The results are not exhaustive, as they are based on programmes developed, reported and documented between 2011 and 2015. New programmes, which are currently being developed, are not taken into account. Neither are programmes for which the Go-MENA Network did not receive any documentation by the start of the study.

Skype meetings with focal points and regional programme coordinators were useful in completing information about challenges faced, opportunities and planned follow-up of certain projects. All GIZ regional offices that had youth programmes in the past are planning to continue the previous programmes or are in the process of developing new ones this year. Some programmes are also under development in Lebanon and Morocco, but as they were not exclusively focusing on youth, but rather on communities or families as a whole, it was decided not to include these in the present report.

In this chapter, you can find a short analysis with overall description, main achievements, challenges and possible improvements for the various youth programmes that were implemented between 2011 and 2015.

**EGYPT**

**Participatory Development Programmes in Urban Areas (PDP): Developing capacities through youth-led social projects**

**Overall description**

The Participatory Development Programme in Urban Areas (PDP) was launched as an Egyptian-German development measure in 2004 and is currently in its third implementation phase (2010-2018). It is jointly implemented by the Egyptian Ministry of Urban Renewal and Informal Settlements (MURIS) and the GIZ on behalf of the BMZ.

The PDP focuses on the upgrading of informal areas in the Greater Cairo Region by introducing and supporting the implementation of participatory methodologies for urban upgrading with public administration and civil society organisations to improve service provision and thus living conditions in an integrated manner to alleviate urban poverty. The programme has youth and women as the two main target groups. Consequently, the approach to upgrading is to involve youth in the planning and implementation processes of the programme.

The PDP’s youth participatory approach involved various steps in the process:

1. **Youth Fast-Track Measure (2011–2013):** four youth networks were established and fifty young people trained in order to become representatives of youth residents in their urban community. A sustainable dialogue was established between local officials and young people.

2. **Local Area Dialogue Committees:** In each area, four young people were elected to sit on the Advisory Board advising on implementation of small scale measures.

3. **PDP participatory approach:** Youth participated in PDP surveys enabling PDP to then respond to EU calls for proposals, firstly on employability, and then, in a second step, on satisfactory public services and youth offers.

4. **Developing capacities through youth led social projects:** In this approach, which will be running from 2014–2017, young people are not anymore end beneficiaries, but actors of their own projects. Established youth networks set up social enterprises in order to respond to community needs through youth led initiatives. PDP supports the project firstly as a mediator between youth and stakeholders, and secondly through technical, financial and organisational support. This innovative approach aims at creating sustainability through economically thriving, sustainable, financially independent community projects ran by youth networks.
Main achievements

- By developing initiatives built as a **business model**, young people are not anymore short-term volunteers, but recognised social partners in community development. This can contribute to their self-esteem and the recognition of their legitimacy by stakeholders and local partners; although this has not yet been fully implemented, it is the idea behind the project.

- Developed initiatives are based on real, **identified community needs**. Youth initiatives coming from outside the community can be linked to address issues inside the community, which contributes to more realistic and needs-based projects, with a higher chance to be sustainable.

- The PDP shows a clear development from capacity building and training of young people to **engaging youth in concrete decision-making** and responsibility in partnership with local officials.

Challenges and possible improvements

- **Volunteering** is considered a **luxury** in some poor, urban areas where young people cannot afford to invest time in unpaid projects without any employment perspective. This contributes to excluding a certain group of people from the opportunity to get involved in the project, thus focusing on a certain youth elite, which is not representative of urban youth.

- Although the project gives high priority to **women's participation**, the challenges linked to security can sometimes make their on going, long-term participation difficult.

- The project is implemented at local level without a bottom up approach influencing youth policy at national level.

- It is not clear whereas the networks in various urban areas communicate with each other and share practices, or if each initiative stays **isolated**. Cooperation and building on each other’s experiences would be highly beneficial for all young people and communities involved.

- General **security** issues can keep youth networks from regular meeting opportunities, especially at night time.

Spaces for Civic Engagement and Youth Participation (CEYP)

This project aims at enhancing civic engagement and participation of marginalised groups, especially women and youth, through the development and promotion of selected **youth initiatives**, the **support of mediators and actors** in the field of youth work and the creation of **safe and attractive spaces** for young women.

The project is a direct response to identified challenges and needs of young people, such as lack of spaces for youth participation, and lack of protected, meaningful and supportive youth services. The project is funded within the framework of the German Foreign Office’s Transformation partnership Programme and thus is experiencing annual commissions since December 2012.

Main achievements

- 24 **youth centres** were rehabilitated and selected for the development and implementation of trainings and initiatives;
• **Training of trainers** (ToT) were organised for trainers affiliated to the Ministry on Youth and Sport on active citizenship, civic engagement, non violent communication (NVC) and youth participation; over 35 trainers participated in the TOTs who trained in return 382 young men and women on civic engagement and community participation.

• **48 youth initiatives** were developed in different youth centres.

• A training of trainers on WenDo (self-awareness and self-defence) was organised and 12 female trainers were trained who in turn trained 104 girls and young women in youth centres.

• Over 750 girls and young women participated in *Igmadi events* (one-day event focusing on strengthening women and girls through music, Zumba fitness, self-defence sessions and awareness raising information.

• 308 Boys and girls participated in *art workshops* during which their awareness on sexual harassment was raised.

• The Ministry on Youth and Sport and civil society organisations has developed a *national campaign against sexual harassment* named “Better Society without Sexual Harassment”.

• The campaign was kicked off in December 2014 through the music festival “Raise your Voice” that was attended by over 2800 participants and called for people to raise their voice against sexual harassment.

• The project responds to identified needs at *grassroots level in combination* with interventions at the *national level* taking the actions further.

**Challenges and possible improvements**

• A major challenge is related to the **short-term commissioning** of the German Foreign Office, which does not facilitate long-term capacity building approaches where trainees can be followed up on and supported over a longer time span.

• **Upscaling** this, the project’s activities to more areas in Egypt requires high financial, logistical and human resources.

• To which degree are young people involved in the actual proposal of activities and project ideas? What is the place of girls and women in decision-making? Are young people **beneficiaries or decision-making partners**? Youth and youth initiatives were major partners in the development of the training manuals and provision of the civic engagement trainings. One major outcome of the trainings was that the trained youth came up with project/initiative ideas for their communities. However due to the short project span, technical assistance could not be provided for the implementation of the activities.

• **Training** sessions on NVC, citizenship and participation should be offered in **mixed groups**, bringing governmental representatives and young people together in order to reach a more transversal approach – representatives of the government (Ministry) were part of the training and at the end of the training representatives of the governorate as well as they joined the training and the evaluation of the suggested youth initiatives. However, there was no focus to further elaborate and facilitate the implementation of the initiatives.

• In order to create an enabling environment for youth in the youth centres, the capacities of the **management and staff** needs to be increased.
Conclusions on youth programmes in Egypt

The high percentage of young people in Egypt, the high level of urban informal areas, combined with the increasing amount of insecurity, makes youth interventions particularly challenging, and at the same time highly needed. Young women are particularly vulnerable through the permanent insecurity they face and the increasing number of sexual harassment cases reported.

The GIZ programmes developed for young people in Egypt, are promising through the potential for inclusion of all youth that they offer: Young women, as well as marginalised youth, have a place and an important role to play when it comes to local governance and youth participation. But local initiatives in Greater Cairo are not enough: the programmes need upscaling throughout the country, possibly with parallel strategic contact-making at governmental level, in order to protect young people and give them a space to grow and develop their country in transition. Finally, more networking between regions, programmes and young people can only be beneficial in the process of generalising habits and new forms of participation.

Therefore, it is essential that the GIZ youth programmes continue to empower and accompany young people in their transition to autonomy and active participation at local level, thus aiming at contributing to the development of an inclusive and protective youth policy at national level. Youth is still often perceived as a threat in Egyptian society and by the elder generation. The full potential of young people, their creativity and willingness to develop and bring change need to be triggered through professional target group oriented approaches so that Egyptian society can benefit from young people’s competences and contributions.
PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES

Various youth programmes have been implemented in Palestine between 2011 and 2015, with various priorities and target groups.

The three GIZ youth programmes evaluated in this study are

- LGP with “Youth Create Change”/YCC (West Bank and Gaza)
- FASPAR (West Bank, Gaza and Jordan)
- CSP (West Bank and Gaza)
- Future for Palestine (West Bank)

These programmes vary greatly in terms of approach, methodology and target group, but have in common the focus on enabling Palestinian youth to actively participate in decision-making and community change in their societies.

Youth Create Change (YCC)

Overall description

The YCC project is part of the LGP programme “Local Governance and civil society development programme”. It was set up in 2013 as a pilot project in 12 municipalities, with the aim of “encouraging the participation of youth in the local community by enhancing their roles in decision-making”.

While the LGP programme intervenes at all levels, from regulatory frameworks at governmental level to local good governance and municipality level, YCC is set mainly at the bottom-level, reaching out for young people and facilitating their access to local decision-making by creating sustainable structures.

Main achievements

By June 2014, YCC had achieved most of its objectives for the first phase of the project, amongst which:

- A municipal employee is a focal point for youth issues (youth officer) was appointed in each pilot municipality
- A youth centre was made available in almost all pilot municipalities
- A group of 180 youth representatives (youth promoters) was appointed and trained in all pilot municipalities
- An annual youth action plan (YAP) was designed in all pilot municipalities by youth promoters in cooperation with the municipal council
- An annual youth budget was allocated for youth initiatives in all pilot municipalities
- The project is planning its next phase by enlarging its scope to further municipalities. A training manual and a methodology guide were developed in order to facilitate the multiplying effect. Furthermore, this pilot project aims at contributing to the development of a national youth policy with Ministries
- The action plans developed foresee that a group of youth leaders will be appointed for two years, and then replaced by a new group of young people
- This project touches upon all levels of society for local governance and youth participation. In this way, it combines both a top-down and a bottom-up approach, which is very promising for bringing long term, sustainable change and the development of a consciousness at all levels of society about the importance of involving youth

Challenges and possible improvements

- The project does not explicitly foresee the involvement of marginalised youth. Thus, it is not clear how the 180 young people were selected and got the information about this opportunity. In order to make the project even more representative of
young people’s needs, young people from various areas and backgrounds need to be involved and trained.

- The role of young people in the municipal council sessions is not clear. It is important to ensure that they are not just invited to observe or consulted, but can actually express their opinions and be involved in decision-making.

- Appointing a youth officer in the municipality is a great idea. However, this position needs to be sustained and ensured on the long term. Ideally, young “youth promoters” trained over two years should have the possibility to develop further, for example by taking over the youth officer position in the municipality. This would ensure that young people are represented by young people, and would show that the involvement in this project has a real, measurable impact. Furthermore, this would ensure continuity in the relation between the municipality and the group of youth promoters.

Facilitating Social Participation of Palestinian Refugees (FASPAR)

Overall description

The GIZ FASPAR programme aims at providing concrete possibilities for refugees to take actively part in society in order to develop new perspectives for themselves and their communities. Cooperating with its strategic partner UNWRA, it targets refugee communities at large, but also includes specific youth projects, in particular self-help initiatives and capacity building of young refugees. FASPAR works with Palestinian refugees in the Palestinian Territories, in Lebanon and in Jordan.

The projects targeting youth in the past years, were mainly small local initiatives and micro-projects aiming at developing young people’s self-esteem and thus active participation, working on their identity and creating linkages within the refugee community and with the non-refugee community.

On a macro-level, some of the projects should lead to generalized strategies within UNWRA (for example curricula framework for psychosocial support within UNRWA or strategies for TVET and the Infrastructure and Camp Improvement Programme, etc.).

With regard to youth, the FASPAR programme focuses mainly on three areas of intervention:

- Identity of young refugees
- Psychosocial support
- Youth participation in the community

FASPAR interventions act at three levels:

- Relationship building within refugee camps (organisational level)
- Relationship building between camps and surroundings
- Relationship building between refugees and host communities and governments

Some examples of youth-focused projects and initiatives, which are being implemented within the FASPAR programme, are:

- “Jeerah” Project Talbieh (Jordan): This project supports a group of young people with trainings in rap music and therefore focuses on the identity of Palestinian refugees in Talbieh, with the aim to connect with contemporary Palestinian and Jordanian cultures. Through the various trainings, Talbieh’s youth do not only gain technical knowledge, but also learn how to express themselves in creative, non-violent ways and develop individual life perspectives.

- Musical Dialogues Talbieh (Jordan): This project aims at enabling youth to express themselves through dances and music, by learning to play traditional instruments.
in order to develop their sense of self-identity and self-respect. This project involves 80 young people by now. A small music school was created, young people created a band and play within Talbieh and outside. Whenever possible, they are joined by non-refugee youth.

- **Innovation Hub “Hand in Hand” (West Bank):** This project aims at creating social and cultural networks between refugees and non-refugees in the Westbank. In order to achieve this, a hub was established in Ramallah by the partner organization REFORM. Former projects of REFORM that were supported by GIZ led to the development of a network of 700 activists who were trained on conflict transformation and community work, and involved in social activities. The youth developed an action plan for future cooperation and better “living together”. The hub can be seen as a community cohesion instrument that will establish participatory platforms based on basic human needs, intellectual pluralism and applied research methodologies to deal with contradictory situations within the Palestinian context. It is a centre for social participation as well as a co-working space and a place were especially young people can be provided with services that match job seekers with labor market.

- **Hakuritna – A rooftop farming project (West Bank):** The project has been developed as a response to the interests of the key project participants – a youth group in Al Fawwar refugee camp – and is being implemented on the roof of the Popular Committee building. The youth group is responsible for the management of the rooftop-farming project. The aim of this project is to create a demonstration rooftop farm in Al-Fawwar Refugee camp so that the camp community can gain knowledge how water saving farming methods work that they can easily adapt for their own homes. Furthermore, the products of the farming project can be used for example by the production kitchen of the Women Programme Centre in order to provide healthy food for the community and schools. The project falls within the FASPAR programme to promote social participation within and between refugee and non-refugee communities in Palestine. As such, the project has a significant social component beyond the technical aspects.

FASPAR includes many more small-scale projects targeting children or communities as a whole, without focusing specifically on youth. It is important to mention that the projects are all developed in close partnership with local NGOs or Community Based Organisations (CBOs), so that the scale of the project also depends on local capacities available.

**Main achievements of FASPAR programme**

- Closer cooperation of inhabitants within camp communities.

- Generalised collaboration with UNWRA on improved psychosocial support structures within UNRWA in order to have organised and standardized psychosocial support with defined quality criteria in refugee camps but also regarding improvements in the infrastructural and solid waste management field of UNRWA.

- Opportunities for young people to come up with own initiatives and project ideas and get supported.

- Intensive work on identity and belonging as well as intercultural dialogue.

- FASPAR shows the possibility of bringing real, sustainable impact to community life through small, micro-level cooperative projects which use one particular tool to address more complex topics such as intergenerational dialogue, communication, conflict transformation and living together. These small-scale initiatives are also encouraging for young people who have many ideas and might dare to take more initiative and develop own projects if these are small, manageable and realistic. Finally, these projects contribute highly to the development of knowledge, skills and attitudes.
Challenges and possible improvements

- As mentioned before, small-scale projects are sometimes more attractive and can bring change in a smoother way. However, the quantity of projects and initiatives launched within FASPAR do not clearly indicate how/if there will be any follow-up. In this way, it is difficult to ensure a long term impact of change, and projects risk to stay nice memories of individuals, limited interventions without common memory.

- It would be interesting to regularly link up the projects with each other, so that for example participants in Gaza can realise that they are part of a bigger programme, which also works with youth in Jordan or Lebanon. This would enable a link between local and global youth work, and make young people involved in large-scale initiatives by working in their communities. A blog or webpage could be created for this purpose.

- Many young people are highly politicized, which is understandable in their local context. This, however, makes youth work involvement in meta-themes such as conflict transformation, youth participation or social inclusion challenging, as it requires a change of working approaches and objectives. Therefore it is important to use simple, youth friendly approaches and methods, and to clarify the added value of such involvement to young people from the very beginning, in order to enable them to discover new alternatives of community participation.

Civil Society Programme (CSP)

Overall description

In the Palestinian Territories, the GIZ supports the Palestinian Youth Network for Citizenship and Reform (PYNCR) in their set-up of a network advocacy and lobbying unit, focused on youth issues in the Palestinian territories. By supporting this programme, GIZ aims at enhancing youth participation in decision-making processes, in reinforcing the voice of civil society and empowering youth as human rights advocates.

The initiative foresees the development of a range of policy briefings on topics defined by the board of PYNCR, composed of various Palestinian youth NGOs.

PYNCR is currently comprised of 45 network members from Jerusalem, West Bank and Gaza. The first policy brief related to access to university education for people with disabilities, which looked at some of the many challenges that People with Disabilities (PWD’s) face when accessing university and made a number of recommendations to various policymakers and stakeholders including relevant ministries within the Palestinian Authority (Ministry of Education and Higher Education; Ministry of Social Affairs; and Ministry of Transport); Palestinian universities; Palestinian civil society; and international donors.

The research itself was carried out by PYNCR, with the active participation of young disabled people throughout the process.

The launch of the policy brief should take place in September/October 2015, and be the starting point for the advocacy strategy based on the briefs recommendations.

The research for the second policy brief has recently begun with the general topic being youth and Jerusalem.
Main achievements

Although the project is still at its beginning, some clear opportunities can be identified:

- The project responds to a research gap on youth issues in Palestinian society: there is very little research on youth topics. These will give theoretical and evidence based results which can then be used for lobbying at policy level.

- Most research is conducted by young people and students themselves.

- The results of the briefings will be transformed into recommendations addressed to key policy makers and stakeholders, who will be lobbied by the network.

- The network involves 45 organisations throughout the Westbank, Gaza and East Jerusalem, creating a unified voice for young people in an environment of almost constant division.

- The study takes into account the situation of young people in marginalised areas and attempts to priorities the needs of young people. It also takes into account the situation of a marginalised group within youth, disabled young people.

Challenges and possible improvements

- Due to the difficult political situation of the Palestinian Territories, it is never possible for members of the network to meet and work together; therefore, greater online communication is needed.

- Board members are rarely young people themselves. Most youth NGOs are still ran by adults; if youth participation is to be taken seriously, then youth representation should be found on the Board.

- How can more visibility of the project be assured in order to allow youth NGOs to join or follow the developments?

- In how far do youth NGOs or networks have the capacity or the resources to implement long-term strategies?

- In how far will the policy briefings be taken into account by policy makers and lead to concrete reforms?

- The policy briefings raise strong hopes in young people who participate. In how far will these be met in concrete follow-up actions? It will be important to focus on small steps and to underline step-by-step successes in order to make the project long lasting and sustainable.

Future for Palestine

Overall description

The project “Schools and Rooms for Creating Visions of Future - Enabling students by enhancing Learning and Teaching Environments” is part of the programme “Future for Palestine”, which was established in 2008 with the support of the Federal Foreign Office. The youth dimension in schools was added to the programme in phase III in 2011, and finished with the end of phase IV in February 2015. The overall program aimed at improving the living conditions in marginalised West Bank areas with special refer to education, health, culture and youth.

The project involved two main dimensions:

- Construction of infrastructure for public service delivery
- Capacity building for youth, teaching staff and ministerial school supervisors
The school component of the project aimed at enhancing the quality of teaching and learning environment through:

- Teacher training on educational methods, activating learning and IT skills for class preparation as well as science training
- Setting up a teacher's exchange network
- Students training on social and life skills
- Development of local youth pilot projects within schools
- The project was implemented in six pilot schools in marginalised, rural areas suffering from isolation and military occupation

Main achievements

After the end of phase IV of this project, the following achievements deserve to be underlined:

- The project targeted schools in marginalised, rural and difficult to access areas in the Westbank. This enabled particular groups of youth and teachers to benefit from capacity building, which is often limited to accessible, urban areas. The fact of running these successful projects in these particular areas convinced the Ministry of the added value of such project in these particular contexts.
- In all six schools, the project had a multiplying effect: teachers and directors trained other teachers and developed the project further at their own initiative.
- The trustful relationships between teachers, directors and students and local community improved.
- An online exchange network for teachers was created and will be taken up further by the Ministry of Education.
- Throughout the project, teachers were regularly accompanied and followed by local trainers so that they had a chance to reflect on and question certain practices without being left alone. The use of video materials to film classes before, during and after training was a great tool to measure change and impact.
- The fact that students developed their own pilot project for improving the schools contributed to the development of their self-esteem and feeling of ownership towards the life of the school.
- All projects were based on real community based needs identified by the school staff together with the students.
- Finally, the project phase IV took place in the same municipalities as the YCC project, which enables links between GIZ projects and creates a sense of coherence and possible complementarity between projects.

Challenges and possible improvements

- The occupation situation as well as logistical and transport constraints made it difficult for some teachers and students to participate in the training sessions.
- An online network needs to be maintained and facilitated in order to keep it alive and useful. The Ministry of Education could potentially take up a leading role in further developing this tool. However, online exchange might not be sufficient. It would therefore be essential to organise regular meetings between teachers in order to keep the developed dynamics alive and keep exchanging on a more practical level.
- Teachers, principals, students and Ministry representatives could be trained in common rather than in separate sessions. This would ensure coherence and would contribute to further group cohesion through the sharing of common experiences.
Conclusions on GIZ youth programmes in Palestine

The GIZ in the Palestinian Territories offers a great variety of programmes ranging from local community based initiatives to national governmental cooperation for reforming the youth policy approach in Palestine. The top-down approach, combined with bottom-up initiatives and transversal regional projects allows to touch upon the whole range of Palestinian Youth, involving young refugees and non-refugees, student communities, schools and marginalised youth.

However, most of the GIZ programmes in the Palestinian Territories work independently from each other, without clear link or communication between programmes. This internal cooperation could be enhanced in order to create additional synergies and enable a form of intercultural dialogue between the diverse target groups of the three programmes. Possible interactions between beneficiaries of the programmes, through physical meetings and/or online platforms or blogs, could enable an exchange of point of views and experiences, and potentially lead to new project ideas.

- The Palestinian GIZ programmes in the field of youth participation and local governance offer great opportunities for various reasons:
  - First of all, they involve a wide range of partners at all levels of society: NGOs, local authorities, Ministries, UNWRA, community centres.
  - Secondly, they reach a wide range of young people from various target groups: Refugees in and outside of the Palestinian Territories, students, young people in cities and rural areas.
  - Thirdly, they offer a wide range of themes, working methods and approaches: Creativity, school interventions, political participation, music and arts, Identity and belonging, psychosocial support.
  - Finally, the Palestinian example shows that youth participation can both be enhanced by developing youth specific programmes and/or by integrating a youth dimension into broader, more general programmes.

This broad field of intervention ensures the inclusion of a wide group of young people in GIZ programmes, which is a very positive aspect of the work.

The Palestinian example is one of the most developed programme interventions in the MENA region, with long lasting partnerships with well trained, efficient and self-sufficient partner NGOs and thus, with a high chance of sustainability of initiatives after the end of GIZ support.
TUNISIA

Coopération Municipale – Gouvernance locale et participative au Maghreb (CoMun)

Overall description

The programme “Municipal Cooperation – Local and participatory governance in the Maghreb region” was set up in 2008 and supports the reinforcement of local authorities through municipal learning networks in Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Lybia and Germany on questions linked to urban development and municipal governance. The main aim of the programme is to reinforce and encourage innovation strength in cities as actors for change via responsive services and citizen participation.

The CoMun programme works with cities which were faced with democratic claims during the 2011 revolution and wish to integrate young citizens in local issues. Therefore it addresses youth participation with a local democracy and citizen participation lens.

So far, Tunisia is the only country in the CoMun programme family which offers specific support to municipalities on the topic of youth politics. Therefore this study focuses only on Tunisian results. The mentioned support to municipalities on youth politics comprises the following areas:

- Stakeholder analysis on the topic of Youth participation in Tunisian Municipalities
- Idea competitions in municipalities
- Common training courses for municipalities, youth centers, NGOs and young leaders on youth participation in order to set up local youth action plans
- Set up of a thematic network of cities on youth participation

CoMun in Tunisia

Tunisia, through the Revolution in 2011, has a particular situation with own challenges when it comes to youth participation. The Tunisian society is in transition, and so is the youth policy and the forms youth participation can take in the country.

Overall, young people became very sceptical towards politicians and administrations. Also, youth clubs and youth NGOs, often led by representatives of the former government, and thus related to old, non-democratic and non-youth friendly structures. Young people face a form of mistrust and demotivation and an image of young people as those who still have to learn. Many feel that they went very involved in the revolution and were betrayed, or instrumentalised, and are not seen as partners by decision-makers. This particular context makes the work on youth participation challenging.

Within this context, the CoMun programme needed to find ways to support its partner cities to motivate youth, gain their trust and provide a transparent and inclusive approach. As a consequence, CoMun offers easily implementable, tangible and visible measures in order to make young people feel that local politics have opened up and that they their ideas and commitment for local change are welcome.

As a starting point, the CoMun programme conducted a stakeholder analysis on the topic of youth participation in the city in 2012. Among its main findings were a lack of trust in the capacities of young people to develop and implement meaningful projects, a lack of dialogue between local stakeholders, and a lack of funding and infrastructure for youth participation.

Therefore, “Youth in CoMun” in Tunisia started with the instrument of an idea competition for youth initiatives, meaning that the municipality launches a call for micro-projects and selects several of them in a transparent process. These selected projects are entirely led by the young people, including budget responsibility, address other young people and integrate those in a participative manner in the implementation. The cities noticed a considerable improvement of the trust between young people and municipality, as well as practical networking of the involved youth.
Common training courses for municipal staff, youth center staff, NGO representatives and young leaders are about to start with the participation of 15 cities. These aim at reinforcing the local capacities to set up local *youth action plans*.

In the framework of its cooperation with the Federation of Tunisian Cities, CoMun offered a number of international and national *exchange opportunities* with innovative projects in order to enhance the knowledge on youth participation, such as study trips, city-to-city exchanges, working group meetings and conferences. These activities are aiming at creating a common understanding of youth participation and could in the long run lead to a national multi-stakeholder network.

**Main achievements**

- The newly established *Tunisian constitution* establishes a frame to introduce participative governance at local level, and explicitly mentions youth participation. This will of course facilitate the development of a participative culture and support young people in making their voices heard.

- A *study* was conducted to map the situation of youth participation in Tunisian Municipalities. This study serves as a solid basis for the proposal of responsive projects and initiatives. Furthermore, all levels of decision-making, from local to national, were involved.

- The *“ideas competitions”* initiative was successfully implemented in various municipalities throughout the country, with a sustainable budget allocated by the municipality in some cases. A guide for municipalities who wish to try this instrument is being developed.

- As a result of a city-to-city exchange between Muenster and Monastir, the municipality of Monastir has created a *municipal youth council*, based on the concept of its German sister city.

- One strength of the Tunisian model is the fact that training courses on local youth participation are run in *mixed groups*, enabling young leaders, NGO representatives, youth center and municipal staff to work and learn together. This contributes to long-term trust building and to a feeling of coherence of skills development, which can be very beneficial in the future of the project.

- The CoMun programme has a clear, very well structured and updated *website*, which enables visibility and constant communication on project developments. The project uses social media such as facebook, youtube and twitter in order to reach young people with its activities.\(^{(2)}\)

**Identified challenges and possible improvements**

- Many NGOs developed after the Arab Spring, so that the overall picture of involved partners and fields of intervention remain difficult. *Many organisations* work on similar topics, without knowing each other. Cooperation would be beneficial in most cases and would allow young people to gain more impact at local, regional and national level.

- Although the Tunisian constitution has clearly mentioned the importance of fostering youth participation, there is still *no youth policy* developed in Tunisia. This makes the work on the ground more difficult, as youth organisations cannot refer to existing legal frameworks to support their requests.

\(^{(2)}\) [http://www.co-mun.net](http://www.co-mun.net)
• Gap between generations. In Tunisian society, previous generations are not used to see young people involved in decision-making. Young people are consulted and taken more seriously since the Arab Revolution, but most structures and organisations are still led by adults, thus demotivating young people to get engaged and participate.

• In most cases, municipalities don’t have staff and experience for work with youth or with NGOs. Moreover, they are not allowed to hire, as Tunisian administration is already overstaffed. Identifying a young, communicative and motivated staff member as a counterpart for young people stays a challenge in most municipalities.

• The competition of ideas is a successful initiative, but young people are not involved in the Jury making the selection on the projects. In this way, it is again adults who decide on youth initiatives. In order to avoid this power-imbalance, young people or youth-NGO representatives should be involved in all decision-making processes as far as it is in line with the legally defined municipal competences.

Conclusions on GIZ youth programmes in Tunisia

The CoMun programme provides a rich opportunity for MEDA countries to bring their expertise and experiences together in order to contribute to a common development of local governance and youth participation throughout the regions. Whereas Algeria and Morocco have not yet implemented youth specific projects and action plans, Tunisia planned concrete steps for the development of actions at local, regional and national level. The multidisciplinary, global approach chosen should enable young people to feel a growing impact and possibility to really get involved in the development of their civil societies. This programme provides a great opportunity for MEDA countries to link up, network and use existing experiences to develop more youth participation by taking into account the specificity of each national/regional context.
In Yemen, more than a third of the population is under 30 years of age. Youth organisations or existing civil society organisations were most of the time absorbed by political parties, so that the concept of youth participation is very poorly developed. Furthermore, there is no recognised structure or status for youth in the State constitution. The following projects were developed in this particular, challenging context.

In 2010, the GIZ launched the first phase of the Good Governance Cluster (GGC) programme. This programme works with governmental as well as non-governmental partner organisations. It supports projects in three fundamentally important areas for good governance: gender and human rights, transparency and accountability, conflict management and communication.

The three youth projects mentioned below are projects funded within the Good Governance Cluster. They are therefore independent from each other, supported by the GIZ, but ran mainly by the local NGOs who applied for them.

The GGC is now in its second phase since 2013 and will end in 2015.

**Tamkeen: Youth and conflict management**

**Overall description**

The project was developed within the framework of the Good Governance Cluster in cooperation with the NGO Tamkeen in 2011 after the upraise and reconciliation phase in Yemen with an aim to help youth understand and analyse conflicts in order to develop new, peaceful visions on conflict transformation and the role of youth.

The project brought together young people from various regions in Yemen through:

- two training courses
- One online forum on peace construction and conflict analysis
- Youth initiatives development

Participants were young people who were already involved in training or civil society organisations and could be involved in dialogue with decision-makers.

**Main achievements**

- A group of 50 young people were trained through the two courses.
- Young people developed and moderated online discussion groups: this newly created space enabled them to exchange about their ideas and opinions on conflict freely, and to enter dialogue with conflicting parties. The fora were led by youth, for youth and with youth, and thus were real participatory spaces.
- Young people from different regions in Yemen got an opportunity to meet and work together.

**Challenges and possible improvements**

- The critical security situation, as well as logistical challenges, made the training conditions difficult and sometimes kept the organisers from focusing on the training contents.
- There is a lack of trained professionals on conflict transformation in Yemen, as well as a lack of policy makers interested to join the process.
In order to be sustainable, the developed fora would need on-going moderation and updating. Can this be ensured and possibly financially supported?

The project was a "one-shot" activity, with no follow-up and continuation for the young people involved.

The role of youth in peace-building and political participation

Overall description

The project took place within the Good Governance Cluster programme in cooperation with the NGO FAD in 2011-2012 as a response to the Arab Revolution with the aim of increasing youth participation through the establishment of a national network of trained young people. Participants aged 18-30 were trained on conflict transformation, human rights education, gender and communication. Particular importance was given to the involvement of girls.

Young people were selected through application forms, which were broadly disseminated through various networks and channels, including political parties, NGOs and individual youth.

The programme included the following steps:

- Training young people on conflict transformation, youth participation, communication and gender
- Developing 2 training manuals on political participation
- Creating networks of youth between two cities
- Creating a youth group for the set up of a youth council in each of the cities
- Training of the youth council on local governance topics

A second phase of this project was planned and accepted by GIZ under GGC2. Unfortunately, due to the current political situation in Yemen, the project could not be implemented and is currently on hold.

Main achievements

- A local youth group with three representatives was established in each of the cities.
- The youth group members developed a campaign against armed weapons.
- The statutes of the youth council were created; at this stage, the youth council as such was not formalised yet.
- GIZ showed a high level of flexibility in adapting the initial projects to the final target group and resources available. This flexibility contributed to the success of the project.

Main challenges and possible improvements

- The particular political situation in Yemen impacted on the possible participation of young people to this project. For example, young people involved in political parties were sometimes not allowed to take part in this training initiative.
- Young people have a negative vision of decision-makers, which demotivates them to engage in programmes aiming at local cooperation.
- Young people in Yemen have a very low consciousness of leadership, participation and democracy, which made the creation of a youth council and its potential mandate and impact challenging.
Selected youth council members would need **continuous training and coaching** on management and administration as well as on decision-making; the real decision-making potential of a weak youth council can be questioned.

There is a **lack of identified trainers** able to run such trainings in Yemen; Training of trainers would be an asset, possibly with a mid-term dimension and a study visit abroad.

The tradition of **volunteering** is not well developed in Yemen, so that young people were questioning their involvement and possible payment.

The selection process was done through existing networks and thus reached only organised youth. It would be important to find ways to also involve disadvantaged, **unorganised youth** motivated to participate.

**Together we build: “Strengthening the involvement of rural youth in decision-making at local level”**

**Overall description**

This project falls under the “Good governance cluster second phase”, a programme on capacity building for governance reforms in Yemen”, which started in 2013 and will continue until the end of this year. The project was developed in close cooperation with Igad Foundation for Development, Dar al Insaf for Justice and Development and Nida Foundation. Each of these foundations worked to coordinate with one of the governmental Agencies (Ministry of Local Administration, Ministry of Youth and Sport and Taiz Governorate).

It aims at **involving rural youth** in the process of identifying challenges of young people in their communities and in finding ways to address these needs. The results of the needs analysis are then to be presented to local councils and community members. On a long term, this programme aims at involving rural youth in youth participation processes, policy-design and decision-making in their communities.

180 young people from six districts were **trained** in June 2014 on generic skills for this exercise. Participants were selected through application forms disseminated through various networks. Additionally, districts could nominate individuals.

In a second phase, three additional districts replicated the experience. This time, the trainings involved both members of the local councils and young people, which contributed to developing **synergies** and possible **cooperation ideas**.

In order to ensure institutional and political support, letters were sent to **governmental agencies** in order to inform them about the project and seek their support. Most agencies sent directives to local councils advising them to support the youth projects. These letters facilitated the access to meetings with local councils during the process.

**Achievements**

- In the Yemeni context, it was a high achievement to **involve rural youth** from six districts into such a training and research process.

- The developed **needs analysis** gives a good picture of the situation of young people and communities.

- Through this exercise, the young people involved were valorised and recognised by the community as **potential partners** in decision-making.
First contacts were established between young people and local councils. These are essential in the process of breaking psychological barriers and prejudice and in developing a work relationship.

Training courses in the second phase mixed the target groups, which makes the training situation more realistic and enables all actors involved to raise their concerns and explore common solutions.

Sending letters to the governorate to inform them about the project was a good way of getting official support and of linking local and regional levels. This gives an additional legitimacy to the project, as it is supported and encouraged by governmental agencies.

Here again, the project followed fixed quality criteria as defined by the GIZ, but at the same time showed a high level of flexibility in adapting the process to the target group involved.

An important number of girls were involved in the project.

Young people and local councils from different districts created links and exchanged experiences.

The project was constructed and conducted with the high expertise and involvement of three local NGOs who know the field, the situation of young people and therefore could guide the process from their point of view. This gave authenticity and credibility to the project.

The project reached out to districts in which no other international organisation is currently working, thus reaching out to rural youth in very remote areas. This is an advantage of a fund-based approach, as it supports local NGOs in the continuation of their quality work in rural, isolated areas, even in times of critical security contexts.

Challenges and possible improvements

In this project, it is not clear who developed the questionnaires: it would be important to involve young people in all stages of the project, including its preparation and evaluation.

The selection process was done without clearly defined criteria. Whereas some participants applied, others were directly nominated. Here again, the question on the accessibility of this project to vulnerable youth remains.

Although the project reached out to a higher number of districts, it limited the amount of respondents in each district, and thus the representativity of the survey. In the future, the variety of districts should be maintained in order to keep an inclusive approach towards rural youth, but at the same time resources for survey collection in each district should be increased. This would enable to get survey results that could provide GIZ with a representative picture on young people’s needs.

Although young people were selected through an application process, most of them are very inexperienced in skills related to human rights, participation and local governance.
Conclusions on youth programmes in Yemen

The political situation of Yemen, combined with its very weak economic situation and its large population, make youth approaches very challenging. However, the youth projects developed by local partners with the support of GIZ enabled young people and local councils to develop a consciousness and an understanding of local governance and to develop skills for better youth participation in decision-making processes. By adapting the process to local needs and limitations, the programme managed to develop some interesting directions for the further development of youth policy work at governorate and national level. In Yemen, the inclusion of girls and women in youth participation projects must stay a priority. In the coming years, investing in comprehensive training of trainers for Yemeni youth will be an important priority in order to ensure the development of inland capacities and thus to ensure the sustainability of youth work programmes and initiatives.

The reports on the youth projects in Yemen emphasize the importance to adapt to the needs and capacities of local communities. Therefore, the programmes in Yemen need to start at a more basic training and awareness raising level on topics related to youth participation, conflict transformation and local governance than in other countries in the region. The GGC programme, through funding local NGOs, provides great opportunities for needs based youth projects involving young people in civil society development with the support and expertise of local partners.
PART TWO
INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS
AND THEIR YOUTH APPROACHES
IN THE MENA REGION
Many international organisations beyond the GIZ work on local governance and youth participation in MENA or MEDA countries.

Activities focus on four main areas:
- Capacity building and training
- Development of educational materials
- Youth policy development
- Research

Whereas many of these organisations, especially at European level, cooperate and build partnerships, some overlaps and similar interventions are being led without always ensuring an overall visibility and coherence.

Again, the list of actors mentioned here is not exhaustive, but corresponds to those who could be reached through this study or of whom concrete documentation on existing past and present youth programmes could be identified.

**Council of Europe**

The Council of Europe is an intergovernmental human rights organisation created in 1949 and based in Strasburg, France. It counts 47 Member States on the European continent, and has been developing strong relationships with other regions in the world, including the MEDA region, on the promotion of human rights, democracy and the rule of law.

**The Youth Sector**

The Council of Europe’s youth sector has a long history of cooperation with the MEDA region, through training programmes, development of educational materials and youth policy support. The Council of Europe trains youth workers, NGO representatives and young people on human rights education, intercultural dialogue and youth participation in the 47 Member States of the Council of Europe and in the South Mediterranean, in close partnership with local and national youth organisations and international partners.

Various activities include:

- **Euro-Arab training course** 2009–2010 with youth leaders/youth workers from both sides of the Mediterranean on youth participation organised with the League of Arab States. In 2009–2010 the two institutions held a long-term training course on leadership and youth participation using non-formal education. This course brought together youth from both sides through three residential seminars in the North and South Mediterranean as well as e-learning and project development. Other training courses organised tackled the topics of human rights education, intercultural dialogue and youth policy cooperation.

- In close cooperation with the League of Arab States (LAS) and the European Youth Forum (YFJ), the Council of Europe organised the Euro–Arab youth forum twice. The next Forum is planned to take place in Strasbourg in 2015.

- The Council of Europe youth programme contributes to the implementation of objective four of the EU youth programme (promotion of democracy) by capacity building of youth leaders and enabling them to link up with local and national youth policy initiatives.

- The training Kit “Mosaic”(1) on youth work in the Mediterranean was published in 2011 and is also available in Arabic. The newly edited manual “Compass: Human rights education for young people” is currently being translated into Arabic.

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The Youth sector has a long-term expertise on the topic of youth participation. The revised charter on the youth participation of young people to local and regional life (2007) served as a basis for the development of the training manual “Have your Say”, providing concrete proposals and support for developing local youth participation projects in cooperation with municipalities. Although this manual is not specifically related to the MEDA/MENA region, most of its contents can be transferred and adapted for the purpose of increasing the youth participation of young people in MENA.

**The North-South Centre**

The North-South Centre of the Council of Europe (NSC) based in Lisbon, Portugal, aims at promoting dialogue between North and South, fostering solidarity and raising awareness of global interdependence.

The Centre fulfils a dual political role of representing “the voice of the South” within the Council of Europe and of promoting and transmitting the values of democracy and human rights that are central to the Council of Europe’s mission in neighbouring regions. The Centre strives to promote gender empowerment, youth participation and democratic consolidation through intercultural dialogue in cooperation with civil society, local authorities, governments and parliaments.

The NSC organises the yearly Mediterranean University on Youth and Global Citizenship (MedUni), in cooperation with the Tunisian National Youth Observatory. This event enables youth from both sides of the Mediterranean to meet, develop cooperation ideas and create networks. The last session partly focused on capacity building on structural participation in democratic processes. A third session is planned in 2015.

**Partnership programme between the Council of Europe and the European Commission in the field of youth**

In 1998, the Council of Europe and the European Commission decided to take common action in the field of European youth worker training. Both institutions therefore initiated a Partnership agreement, with the aim “to promote active European citizenship and civil society by giving impetus to the training of youth leaders and youth workers working within a European dimension”.

This agreement has since been renewed several times and additional agreements were initiated in the fields of “youth research” and “Euro-med co-operation”.

- In March 2012, following the revolution in various Arab States, the partnership organised a seminar in Malta on “Empowerment of youth organisations and youth-led civil society initiatives in the South–Mediterranean framework”(2). Participants formulated concrete recommendations on how to support and enhance youth participation after the Revolution.

- The results of the Malta conference fed into the Symposium ‘Arab spring: Youth participation for the promotion of peace, human rights and fundamental freedoms’, in August 2012 in Tunisia. This symposium was organised in cooperation with various international stakeholders and aimed at raising awareness and establish understanding of needs identified by young people in Malta, by supporting a structured dialogue between civil society, policy makers and international stakeholders.

(2) The report of the Malta conference can be found [here](#).
Finally, in November 2013, a seminar on ‘youth and citizenship’ was co-organised by the CoE-EU Partnership, UNFPA, and The League of Arab States in order to look at concrete models and experiences of youth participation in various contexts in both regions, South Mediterranean and European. It discussed the role and the status of youth organisations, youth movements and young people engaged in formal and non-formal participation structures.

- Dissemination of capacity-building manuals, including the training kit “Mosaic” on Euro-Mediterranean youth work and the youth policy manual.

- A particular attention is given to making knowledge based information on participation and inclusion of young people in the MEDA region accessible through the European Knowledge Centre for Youth Policy (EKCYP).

- A pool of researchers and experts in the region initiated within the EU-Council of Europe South Programme 2013 should be further developed through the EKCYP. The platform will further provide knowledge about young people’s contexts and youth policy in the South Mediterranean region and further support the development of the pool of expertise. The gathering of knowledge will mainly focus on the thematic fields of youth participation and social inclusion.

World Bank

The World Bank through its mandate works exclusively with governments.

Youth cooperation falls under one of the World Bank’s priority areas “social and rural development”.

- Cooperation activities are taking place with Tunisia and Jordan, but also with Iraq, Morocco and Lebanon.

- Sector assessments have been conducted in these countries on barriers to social inclusion, participation and employment.

- A large-scale study on social inclusion of young people in Tunisia has been conducted. This study provides a detailed description of the needs and aspirations of young Tunisians and identifies specific categories of excluded youth, with a particular focus on so called NEETS (young people who are not in education, in employment or training).

- The World Bank, together with other international stakeholders, is in the process of supporting the creation of National Youth Councils in the States of the region in order to increase the relevance of youth policy and the participation of young people in decision-making.

British Council

The British Council has 70 years of experience in supporting sustainable change and improving people’s lives in the Middle East and North Africa.

- From 2011-2014, the British Council MENA ran the project Young Arab Analysts Network International (YANNI) aiming at supporting the process of democratic transition. The development of a network of young policy analysts and youth-led policy initiatives helped to increase young people’s skills and realisation in

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(3) Further information on the EKCYP is available on following link: http://pjp-euco.coe.int/en/web/youth-partnership/knowledge/-ekcyp

(4) The full report of the World Bank on social inclusion of youth in Tunisia can be found here.
the power of evidence based analysis as a claim for change. Training was also provided to young people from diverse backgrounds to meet and exchange views. Programme participants launched their own platform, the MENA Policy HUB, to promote policy debates between Moroccan youth and decision makers. Since 2013, the hub has held ten training events across Morocco with YANNI alumni delivering workshops focusing on policy making and analysis to young people. Policy briefs have been developed by the participants on entrepreneurship, education, employability, governance, sustainable energy and economic development.

- The Tunisian branch of the British Council is supporting the well-known Young Arab Voices programme. This programme is a regional project, jointly launched by the British Council and the Anna Lindh Foundation, which aims at developing skills and opportunities for youth-led debate across the Arab region.

- The Tunisian and Moroccan British Council offices further established a network of young policy analysts. Members are selected through a competition of policy briefs and benefit from training and internship opportunities.

- The British Council organises the yearly Hammamet conference (in close cooperation with other partners) aiming at the exchange of knowledge and networking amongst youth leaders and senior leaders from Northern Africa and the UK.

**League of Arab States**

The League of Arab States (also known as the Arab League) is a voluntary association of independent countries whose population is mainly Arabic speaking. It seeks to strengthen ties among the member states, coordinate policies, and promote common interests. The League of Arab States is an important partner in the support and sustainability of civil society initiatives at local, regional and national levels in the MENA region.

- The League of Arab States emphasizes the role, strengthening, and empowerment of Arab youth, and endorses young people as a principal factor in the development of the Arab region. For this purpose, a League of Arab States Youth Forum is held annually. This event enables youth NGOs in the region to network, exchange experiences and develop recommendations on youth work in the region.

- The League of Arab States supports the Arab Youth Platform, an umbrella organisation for Arab youth NGOs. This includes the development of an online platform in order to support exchanges of ideas among youth NGOs in the MENA.

- The League of Arab States, together with other stakeholders, is involved in the development of a pool of regional youth researchers.

**United Nation’s Population Fund (UNFPA)**

UNFPA is working on four main areas in the MENA region:

- Evidence based policy making curriculum: On the basis of the training curriculum on youth policy developed by the Partnership programme between the European Union and the Council of Europe in the field of youth, UNFPA is adapting the document specifically for youth policy making in the Arab States region.

- Advocacy on a specific goal on young people in the post 2015 development agenda:

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(5) More information about the Arab voices programme can be found [here](#).

(6) More information about the Hammamet conference series can be found [here](#).
UNFPA supported the Arab Development Youth Forum in Dubai in 2014, which resulted in the “Dubai Call to Action on young people in post 2015 development agenda”. A national follow-up consultation is currently being conducted in eight countries of the region among all youth NGOs and civil society organisations. A 48h **movie festival** was organised in the context of the post 2015 agenda.

- Capacity building and civic engagement of young people: Following a commonly developed workshop on young people and civic engagement (together with the Partnership programme between the EU and the CoE), a manual on youth civic engagement was developed and will be used in upcoming training courses.

- UNFPA is currently assessing the situation of vulnerable youth in the context of the Syrian crisis. The study involves Jordan, Lebanon, Syria and Turkey.

**EuroMed Youth Programme (European Union)**

The Euro-Med Youth Programme is a *regional* programme set up within the Barcelona process. The objective of Phase IV of the programme is “to support and strengthen the participation and contribution of youth organisations and youth from the Euro-Mediterranean region towards the development of civil society and democracy”. Beyond the 27 Member States of the EU, the programme involves eight Mediterranean countries, namely Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestinian Authority and Tunisia.

The programme promotes the *mobility* of young people and the *understanding* between people through three types of actions:

- Euro-Med Youth Exchanges
- Euro-Med Youth Voluntary Service
- Euro-Med Youth Training and Networking

Youth organisations from the MEDA regions apply through the National youth Councils for *grants* to run their *own training courses or exchange programmes* funded by the Euromed Youth programme. In the past years, the Euromed Youth programme has constituted one of the main funding opportunities for youth NGOs from MEDA countries.

**SALTO-Youth EuroMed**

SALTO youth is a network of eight *Resource Centres* working on European priority areas within the youth field. It provides youth work and training resources and organises training and contact-making activities to support organisations and national agencies within the frame of the European Commission’s Youth in Action programme and beyond. One of these resource centres is SALTO-Youth EuroMed.

SALTO-YOUTH EuroMed supports and reinforces the Euro-Mediterranean Youth cooperation by offering *trainings, events, educational tools* and practices, support to the *EuroMed Youth Units*, the network and its partners. They provide training for *European Voluntary Service (EVS)* accreditation, training courses on youth work and gender as well as on various other topics.

- In 2014–2015, they ran a series of *studies on youth work* in the MENA regions. So far, studies were published on Morocco, Tunisia, Palestine, Israel and Jordan. These studies give an overview on the challenges of young people in these countries as well as on youth work initiatives and partners in the field, with concrete recommendations on how to contribute to further develop youth participation.

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(7) You can find information about the Euromed Youth Programme and funding opportunities [here](#).

(8) More information about SALTO-YOUTH EuroMed can be found [here](#).

(9) The studies can be downloaded or ordered [here](#).
USAID

- In 2011, USAID contributed to a study conducted by the Arab World Centre for Research and Development (AWRAD) on youth and local government and prospects in Palestine. The report\(^{(10)}\) gives a detailed overview on the situation of young people in the Westbank and Gaza concerning youth participation, and shares concrete initiatives and project ideas in order to contribute to enhance youth participation.

- The project "youth shadows local councils" was developed in the Palestinian Territories with the development of a practical guide on the development of local councils as a result of this pilot project. The guide gives an overview on good practices with concrete, step-by-step actions to be taken in order to develop partnerships between young people and local authorities in decision-making.

Anna Lindh Foundation

The Anna Lindh Foundation is an inter-governmental institution bringing together civil society and citizens across the Mediterranean to build trust and improve mutual understanding. It runs the largest network of civil society organisations involved in the promotion of intercultural dialogue across Europe and the Mediterranean, bringing together around 4000 organisations across 43 countries of the Union for the Mediterranean.

The Foundation develops programmes and resources for educators and youth leaders, with a focus on promoting dialogue skills and intercultural citizenship learning.

- The intercultural citizenship handbook\(^{(11)}\) is a tool developed for educators, providing concrete tools on how to address citizenship in a playful way with children and youth. The handbook covers both theoretical and practical aspects of intercultural citizenship learning, including practical case studies from across the Mediterranean region.

- The Anna Lindh Grants Programme supports innovative projects involving jointly civil society organisations and networks from the South and North of the Mediterranean. Twice a year, calls for proposals are launched on civil society development and Good Governance\(^{(12)}\).

Voices of Young Refugees in Europe (VYRE)

Voices of Young Refugees in Europe is an international network that was created by young people, with young people and for young people in 2008. Following an international seminar entitled "being a young refugee in Europe today", organised by the Council of Europe in 2006, 30 young participants, partly refugees and partly young people working with refugees, decided to create their own network in order to make the voice of young people heard.

VYRE aims at positively changing the lives of young refugees/exiles through unifying their voices in order to influence social and policy change at national, European, and global levels and to realise their equal human rights and dignity.

By today, VYRE counts over 100 individual and organisational members all over the world. It regularly organises study sessions and conferences, and counts as a pioneer on questions related to youth participation, social inclusion and access to social rights of young refugees.

\(^{(10)}\) The detailed report can be found [here](#).
\(^{(11)}\) The citizenship handbook can be found [here](#).
\(^{(12)}\) The Anna Lindh calls for proposals can be followed [here](#).
Although VYRE hasn’t yet run any projects in the MENA region as such, it has become an important partner in the arrival and welcome of refugees coming from MENA to Europe.

In the current massive vague of refugees arriving in Europe, VYRE sees its primary role in accompanying unaccompanied minors and young refugees in their social integration, by ensuring their equal access to rights and possibility to live in dignity and safety.

CONCLUSIONS ON OTHER INTERNATIONAL ACTORS WORKING IN THE YOUTH FIELD IN MENA

On one hand, the sample of practices and organisations gathered in this report shows the high level of expertise and interest. On the other hand, it shows how to invest in the development of democratic citizenship and youth participation in the MENA region.

Whereas European organisations tend to focus more on Euro-Mediterranean cooperation, some actors such as USAID or the Anna Lindh Foundation play an important role in developing on-spot expertise and sharing existing practices.

All in all, the interventions focus on four main areas:

- **Youth research** and evidence-based information (Salto studies, UNFPA, EKCYP) in order to respond with needs based practices and approaches.

- **Youth work, training and education** (Council of Europe, European Commission, Salto) in order to develop skills, ensure capacity-building and bring young people from different areas and regions together.

- **Networking** (Anna Lindh Foundation, League of Arab States) through a collection of expertise and experts in the region and a common pool of initiatives and ideas, young people can work together and build on already existing projects and initiatives.

- **Youth policy** (USAID, World Bank): The creation of local youth councils and the cooperation with governmental sectors plays an important role in shaping sustainable, democratic good governance structures involving youth in MENA countries.

Some synergies and cooperations between these partners exist. Nevertheless, a lot of actions are being taken in parallel without consultation with other actors in the field, which can have various negative consequences:

- Governments have different approaches/institutional partners, without being able to formally focus on one.

- Young people get are overload with training opportunities from various actors on the same topics, which leads to demotivation or “training tourism.”

- Strategic planning is done on an individual basis, rather than organising strategic plans with all international and national stakeholders involved.

- In the various studies provided, the national civil society organisations mentioned for partnerships are often the same ones. Their visibility, competence and networking skills make them ideal partners for international organisations, thus taking the opportunity of other potential civil society partners.

- Most of the programmes described, focused, although involuntarily, on an elite of young people. Those would have direct access to information, would, in certain cases, be able to communicate in English or French, and would, for some of the programmes, benefit from visas to travel abroad. This poses the question of the accessibility of these programmes to vulnerable, disadvantaged or less educated youth, and their important role in shaping democratic societies.
Recommendation

An in-depth study should be conducted on all actors involved in youth policy development and youth participation in the MENA region over the five past years. This should include international, regional and national organisations and networks.

Based on the results, an international consultative meeting with actors from all fields and countries could be organised in order to agree on strategies and individual added values, competences and areas of intervention. This would allow a complementarity of tools and expertise, an exchange of views on practices, and a common added value in future interventions on the topic of youth participation and local governance.

As one of the key actors in various MENA countries, over years, and with a big network of local partners and contacts, the GIZ could possibly take a leading role in the process of conducting this study and collecting information.

This would ensure the respect of quality standards in collecting data and it would enable the GIZ to orientate the study towards its own goals and needs, so that future GIZ programmes can benefit from such study results.

Finally, this exercise would provide GIZ with further visibility amongst international actors in the field and contribute to its leading role in development work.
PART THREE
CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES TO YOUTH PARTICIPATION IN GIZ PROGRAMMES
MAIN CHALLENGES

These challenges were identified on the basis of the programmes analysed above. They are, first and foremost, challenges faced by GIZ in running youth participation programmes, but as a natural consequence, they are also challenges faced by most young people and NGOs in the field.

Whereas each country and political, social and economic context has its own specific challenges, some seem to be transversal throughout youth programmes in the MENA region. Therefore, this chapter lists the main identified challenges, which in some cases are general, and otherwise specifically attributed to a particular country or programme.

For many of these challenges, GIZ and local NGOs and civil society do find very creative and innovative solutions, which are often very specifically related to the local knowledge and understanding of the situation and therefore cannot necessarily be transferred to other realities.

STRUCTURAL CHALLENGES

- **Lack of trust in public decision-makers**

  In all analysed country programmes, young people expressed a lack of trust towards public authorities. Very often disillusioned through the consequences of the Arab Spring or the overall political leadership, young people are sceptical when it comes to the potential interest of decision makers to listen to youth and involve them in decision-making. They feel that youth is not taken seriously or considered as possible partners in decision-making processes. Active work on re-creating dialogue seems essential in order to overcome this challenge.

- **Long term involvement of local partners**

  Very often, successful programmes are highly linked to successful cooperation with local partners. In order to ensure long-term impacts and development, it is important to maintain partnerships, which can be trusted and have contributed to common developments. In some cases, partner organisations have an important turnover in staff, which makes long-term cooperation and planning difficult. On the other hand, international organisations tend to cooperate with the same local organisations, which not only creates doublings and sometimes a work overload for these NGOs, but also prevents other NGOs with potential from becoming active in international cooperation programmes.

- **Recognition of training and non formal education**

  In the MENA context, youth work, training and non-formal education are not always recognised and valued. There is no diploma or recognition of developed competences, and this can keep young people from participating in the great variety of proposed non-formal education programmes. Unemployed youth cannot afford unpaid investment of their time, and on the other hand non-formal education and training programmes often replace formal education or access to employment. This “poor” position given to such education and training programmes could be partly resolved by developing non-formal education recognition tools, such as portfolios or curricula with detailed training certificates.
Those would serve as a support for work applications and render participation in such programmes more valuable and useful. At the same time, it would possibly allow a greater range of young people to participate and become active, and prevent "training tourism" from the same young people again and again.

However, this does not solve the problem of disadvantaged young people who need to support their families and for whom investing time in such unpaid programmes remains a non-accessible luxury.

• Separation of target groups

Often trainings and initiatives are proposed for decision-makers or for young people, but in separated groups. This is a pity, cooperation and trust starts by shared spaces, times and activities. In order to ensure the creation of a sustainable, friendly and bilateral cooperation, existing barriers need to be taken down. Common training programmes are a great way of ensuring that young people and decision-makers look into the same direction, learn about the same things and get to know each other as partners without hierarchy.

As an example, in 2005, after a big earthquake in Northern Morocco, UNICEF offered “back to school training programmes”. These included information about earthquakes, relaxation, psychosocial rehabilitation and support. UNICEF purposely chose to mix pupils, teachers, directors and even inspectors in these same training units in order to share their feelings and needs after the catastrophe. This approach contributed to developing closer, trustful relationships and accelerated everyone’s going back to school.

In the same spirit, the Council of Europe organises so-called “50/50 training courses on youth participation”, bringing together young people and local authorities from the same cities. These are trained together and work on concrete follow-up projects in their local municipalities. Coming back to GIZ youth programmes in MENA, such 50/50 constellations could be envisaged as a way to ensure follow-up and implementation of training contents.

• Ensuring ownership of the projects after GIZ support ends

As for many international organisations, GIZ programmes are developed in close cooperation with local partners in order to ensure a transmission of competences and enable sustainability after the end of the programme. However, programmes are also supported financially and with human resources, which cannot always be carried in the same way after the end of the programmes.

• Lack of measurement for impact of projects

This point is directly related to the previous one: For the programmes analysed in this study, the long-term impact is not always clear and sometimes difficult to measure. After the end of the programmes (for example in the case of FASPAR in the Palestinian Authority and in Jordan), new programmes start and the link to the previous ones is either not clearly defined or simply non-existent. If we take the concrete example of summer camps, organised three years in a row, it would be interesting to know if these camps contributed to more involvement
of youth in local youth work or NGOs and also in which other ways participating in these camps could have been beneficiary beyond the actual two weeks of fun and enjoyment. It is important to explicitly clarify how programmes have an impact on the long-term well being of young people, even after the end of the GIZ supported programmes.

• Access to information and transparency for young people

One of the main claims of young people during the Arab Revolution was clear access to information and a transparent system of decision-making, state budgeting and management of the country. Again, this can only be underlined as a main need for any youth programme to be developed. Young people have become very sceptical about any structure related to local or national governments. It is important to ensure that ALL young people, independently of their geographical, social or cultural situation, can have equal access to information. This includes the information about existing training courses or youth programmes and the opportunity to participate. So far, in many cases, young people are recruited through NGOs and existing networks, thus excluding non organised youth that do not have access to such kind of information.

• Youth councils as inclusion or exclusion mechanisms

In various GIZ youth programmes, local youth councils are being created. This approach is also supported by various international organisations (such as the World Bank) as a tool to ensure youth participation in decision-making. However, one could argue that creating parallel, youth specific decision-making structures does not include young people in mainstream decision-making systems, such as the local councils of a municipality. Therefore the risk is given of providing a superficial impression of influence while only creating second-hand consultative bodies with no decision-making power. In order to avoid this frustration, the link between youth councils and local councils needs to be clearly defined, as well as the mandate of young people and their concrete roles and possibilities in decision-making.

• Lack of existing youth policies in some countries

Trying to develop youth friendly societies and to improve youth participation in countries where no clear youth policy exists is indeed a real challenge. Young people and international organisations cannot refer back to texts or set up legislations on the rights and contributions of youth. Therefore, the GIZ, together with other international organisations, can play an important consultative role in countries like Tunisia in the setting up of youth policies.

• Lack of trained trainers in some countries

This challenge was particularly encountered in the case of Yemen. Developing capacities of young people without having access to local expertise and trained human resources makes sustainable programmes even more difficult. If GIZ programmes want to ensure a continuity of their work after their intervention, training local staff and local trainers on issues related to human rights education, youth participation, peace building and local governance is an urgent priority. Such training would need to take place over a longer period of time, possibly with trips to other MENA countries with strong local expertise (Palestine or Tunisia) in order to develop long lasting competences and ensure a multiplying effect.
LOGISTICAL CHALLENGES

• Funding, human and financial resources

These points have already been mentioned above as clear potential challenges to long-term sustainability of youth programmes. It can be found in the chapter structural challenges.

• Access to comfortable working conditions

Depending on the context, transportation or even access to electricity are not always guaranteed and make the qualitative work difficult. In Yemen for example, it was difficult to ensure participation of young people in the district who were too far away and could not easily access the training venue. Although these challenges are logistical, they are also partly structural and therefore difficult to overcome.

• Visibility of projects and initiatives

In the global world we live in, and in the context of an organisation like GIZ, communication and visibility to the outside are essential parts of the work. Maintaining updated websites with information about existing programmes, initiatives and activities ensures more accessibility to a wider range of young people, and enables other organisations and structures in the same or other countries to find information and network. The CoMun website(1) provides a great example of an updated tool with various documents and reports on latest developments of youth activities.

(1) www.co-mun.net/tunisie/promotion-des-jeunes
YOUTH SPECIFIC CHALLENGES

Beyond structural and logistical challenges faced in youth programmes, some specific youth related challenges could be encountered.

• Definition of youth

The study showed a wide discrepancy in the age of the target groups in youth programmes. The GIZ bases itself first on the UN definition of youth aged 15-24, but strongly emphasizes the need to adapt youth programmes to the national youth definitions of the countries involved. Therefore, in the programmes of the study, young people involved vary from 15 to 35, with all possible combinations. Sometimes the age is even defined differently within one country (YCC/FASPAR). Although this differentiation makes a general GIZ youth definition difficult, the great flexibility and adaptability to the local context chosen by GIZ is an important success factor and should therefore be maintained.

• Motivating young people to be involved on a voluntary basis

The high socio-economic pressure put on young people, combined with economic crisis, high rates of unemployment and more and more youth unemployment of highly educated young people contribute to a decrease in volunteering. Young people need to get involved in projects with prospect and potential employment opportunities, and prefer to invest their time in small jobs or continued higher education. Therefore, volunteering needs to be valorised again, which can partly happen through recognition of volunteering and training activities.

• Create false hopes

This is one of the strong ethical risks of youth programmes, and maybe even more so in the MENA region than somewhere else. As a matter of fact, many young people feel cheated by the Arab Revolution, which they strongly participated in. Lots of young people mention that the revolution was stolen from them, and feel disillusioned about any other form of investment in societal change. On the other hand, young people stay active and hopeful, ready to engage in creating more democratic societies. It is therefore important that the youth programmes proposed are transparent, realistic and only promise what they can really offer, in order to not provoke wrong expectations and additional frustration amongst young people. Getting involved with municipalities, for example in a programme like YCC, should come along with a clear communication about the added value, the expected outcomes and also the limitations of such involvement;

• Reaching out to marginalised youth

This remains one of the biggest challenges for most international organisations, and also for GIZ programmes. Although the GIZ cooperated greatly with local NGOs and partners, these have already existing networks of engaged young people, who are connected and involved in proposed programmes and activities. Through these processes, non organised youth, disabled youth, or rural youth is often automatically excluded, not purposely, but simply because information does not reach them. In Yemen, the initiative to go out on the street and address random young people was an interesting trial to involve everyone, just by communicating and informing youth. However, this approach requires major time efforts and cannot be followed in every district or
neighbourhood. Additionally, programmes are not always adapted to disabled youth, be it through the venue itself or through the activities involved. One way to go about this challenge would be to concretely target NGOs working with minority groups in order to ensure participation of these youth groups in each and every youth programme.

- **With young people, for young people or by young people?**

When looking back at Hart’s ladder of participation, it becomes clear that real participation is not always easy to reach. In most youth programmes, young people are end beneficiaries and can then be involved in already set up action plans, structures or programmes. However, if the GIZ wants to ensure real youth participation, young people should be involved in defining and setting up the programme from the very beginning, starting from the identified needs, the definition of aims and objectives, the set up of the budget, the contact making with partners, etc. This process could be accompanied by GIZ. It would be a great learning opportunity for young people and a proof of full-fledged youth participation for GIZ. The CSP initiative in Palestine is a close step into this direction. The network was set up by youth NGOs and young people were selecting the themes of the research. Young people then draw the research themselves. It is clear that this approach is not the easiest since it requires additional time and a more horizontal functioning, but it can also be very promising in legitimising the work on youth participation at local level as well as it can serve as a good practice for governments.

- **Dilemma between fields of participation**

Another important challenge, not specifically related to GIZ programmes, but to youth participation programmes in general, is whether young people are invited to participate in “youth issues” exclusively (eg. sports, leisure), or whether young people should participate in transversal decision-making, concerning all topics of society and citizen’s well being. This includes health, local infrastructure, urban and rural planning, education, employment, etc.

- **Long term planning is difficult for young people on the move**

Youth is often defined as a group in transition, from childhood to adulthood, from education to employment, and thus also from parent’s home to autonomy. In this phase of massive changes, asking young people to engage in long-term projects and take on responsibility in two years mandates or other tasks is challenging. Young people tend to live in relation to upcoming opportunities, with a particular mobility dimension for young people from the MENA region, who seek for studies or employment abroad. These factors need to be taken into consideration when starting long term programmes, possibly by involving more young people in the initial stage and training a bigger group of youth than will eventually be involved.
SOCIO-CULTURAL CHALLENGES

• Level of education/consciousness about human rights, youth participation and democracy

In emerging post-dictatorial societies like the MENA region, the concepts of human rights, youth participation and democracy can have a negative connotation or be totally new concepts in people’s mentalities and training conceptions. This needs to be taken into account when developing programmes in a way not to frighten young people or their parents. In the Council of Europe youth activities, the invitation letters to young people are sometimes formulated in a more general way, avoiding “Human Rights” in order not to block young people in their visa requests or avoid potential conflicts with decision-makers. Developing a consciousness about these terms and values takes time, and local sensitivity needs to be taken into account. This is also particularly true in critical political contexts of countries under occupation, such as Palestine, where the consciousness about Human Rights might be highly developed within the Palestinian society, but might as well lead to difficulties in implementing sustainable youth programmes from the Israeli governmental perspective.

• Lack of self-esteem

Young people in search of a future and opportunities can be strongly lacking self-esteem. Be it due to high unemployment rates, insecure political situations, poverty or social inclusion, young people in MENA contexts are not always given all the attention needed to develop a strong feeling of self-esteem and trust in their own competences. This can also be due to the intergenerational understanding that knowledge and competences are carried by elders. Therefore, any youth initiative needs to include a trust building and capacity building dimension, with opportunities for young people to see their work and engagement valorised and recognised. Particular attention should be given to young women on this aspect.

• Cultural habits regarding youth

Here again, the cultural understanding of roles and responsibilities may vary greatly from one context to another. In general, in Arabic cultures, a patriarchal approach predominates, with an implicit understanding of a relationship between knowledge and age, power and age and legitimacy and age. Young people are invited to learn to express opinions, but not to be involved in decision-making. This is also changing after the Arab Revolution as young people took an active role in the post-Revolution society building, but this conviction nevertheless prevails. In order to ensure smooth youth work and to enable young people participating, it is important to keep this context in mind and to involve elders as much as possible in programmes in order to confirm their legitimacy and convince them step by step of young people’s potential in decision-making.

• Participation of girls and young women

Although this point has been mentioned earlier, it deserves to be repeated as a point by itself. The participation of young girls and women varies greatly from one MENA programme to another, but socio-cultural
factors, as well as current violence challenges (mainly in Egypt), risk to exclude young women from youth participation opportunities even stronger. Any MENA youth programme should therefore pay particular attention to including girls and women from the very beginning with the option of close cooperation with parents, NGOs and other local partners.

• Overtrained youth

In some contexts (Palestine), young people are overtrained by local organisations, international foundations and organisations, but don’t believe in training anymore as they are looking for employment. In other contexts (rural areas in Yemen), youth is undertrained and needs basic introduction to concepts and skills before starting to work on youth participation. Here again, the importance of adapting the programmes to local needs and specificities rather than trying to develop a regional approach can be seen.

• Clashes between interest groups

Involving all young people in a particular context is very challenging. Therefore, proposing a variety of projects and programmes for various target groups in the same local context can be a solution. This could be seen in the case of the women’s club set up in the framework of the FASPAR programme in the Palestinian territories: young men used the club for their hip hop workshops, which soon felt as an invasion for the young women, and lead to important conflicts. Particular spaces need to be given to particular groups with particular needs.

• Vision/position of youth work

A further challenge is related to the overall approach and training of professionals related to youth work (social workers, staff in ministries, directorates, and NGOs). There is little awareness on how youth work could be fostered and improved and what target group oriented activities could look like. Further developing the role of the youth worker profession with specific training and adapting it to young people’s needs could create an important potential for development.
POLITICAL CHALLENGES

• Political and security issues

The particular political context of each of the countries involved in this study needs of course to be taken into account. While in some cases, long lasting curfews can prevent young people from participating in activities, in other cases high risks can be involved for young people. This is particularly the case for young women in Egypt, where sexual harassment has become a strong issue and stops young women from traveling too far or daring to move by themselves. In the case of the CSP programme in Palestine, youth NGOs from Gaza and the Westbank can only meet through Skype or Internet, but do not have the possibility to have common planning meetings and to work in close cooperation. All these factors influence the quality and the possibilities of youth work programmes, and need to be given particular attention in the planning. For example, venues and meeting times should be adapted in a way to ensure easy access in secure conditions.

• Violence (institutional, structural, individual)

Violence is an issue by itself and needs to be dealt with and targeted in youth work in MENA. First of all, there are various forms of individual violence, such as sexual harassment against women mentioned above, armed groups or conflict situations (Yemen, Palestine). Adding to this, some forms of institutional violence can be felt by youth if participating in certain programmes or joining movements felt as “betraying” by other youth. Finally, the current situation young people face in most of the countries involved in the study is a form of structural violence which can be found in all areas of their lives as eg. education, employment, health, transport, security or freedom of expression. Here again, any youth work programme should be aware of these factors in order to adapt programmes and create the safest environment that is possible.

• Youth centres can be very political

The vision of a youth centre we might have as a neutral place for youth exchanges and development can be seen very differently. As it can be the case in Palestine or in Tunisia, youth centres can be very political. They can be seen as places where particular political youth groups meet and plan their actions against other political groups. This can make international youth programmes difficult, as the place needs to be dis-engaged and re-defined as a youth work place to address issues related to all young people, such as youth participation, human rights education or peace building.

In the same way, youth clubs and youth centres are sometimes instrumentalised by politics. In Tunisia, young people complained about the fact that former governmental representatives took over the leadership of youth centres after the Revolution, thus leading to disengagement and scepticism of young people in relation to getting involved.

• Political exclusiveness

The example of Yemen can be given to illustrate this challenge. In some cases, political parties forbid their young members to join GIZ training courses. This can partly be interpreted as a fear of alternative ideas,
but also as a lack of knowledge and understanding about such training opportunities, and a way to avoid confusion amongst youth. In the case of Yemen, this was greatly dealt with by approaching political parties and involving their youth branches in the selection of participants.

The long lasting experience of GIZ in the region and its cooperation with local partners has ensured a high quality approach to youth work and youth participation. However, keeping in mind these challenges and integrating them into the work strategies and the definition of youth programmes, with the specificity of each country and context, can only be an asset to improve and sustain effective youth governance and youth participation.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUTH PARTICIPATION IN GIZ PROGRAMMES

The GIZ youth approach has taken into account most of the above-mentioned challenges and developed programmes directly or indirectly are tackling these. Its closeness to local actors, its combination of top-down and bottom-up approaches and its deep knowledge of the working fields enable GIZ to develop tailored programmes with particular, innovative opportunities. The opportunities listed here do not only concern youth programmes as such. They also take into account the youth dimension which can be integrated in governance programmes or interested programmes from other sectors in MENA, thus proving that youth participation can also happen outside of exclusively youth-designed programmes and projects. These points could partly be seen as quality criteria, which contribute to the success of GIZ programmes and deserve being mentioned when cooperating with other institutions in the field of youth participation in MENA. The following points have been noticed within this study, but do not have the pretention to be exhaustive.

• Expertise of civil society organisations

The MENA region counts an exceptional number of civil society organisations, NGOs, associations, and also networks. This creates great opportunities to target wide ranges of the population, and to develop responses through needs based approaches and projects. When the youth clubs and NGOs create networks and cooperate, they manage to cover a wide variety of fields and provide a mainstreaming of the youth dimension in community work. This is, for example, the case of the PCMR network developed in Palestine. On the other hand, such networks also provide an overview of what is lacking. Thus, showing which expertise needs to be further developed, which is potentially over-represented, and how a society can make sure that all needs of young people can be recognised and addressed;

• Research on youth participation

Proper youth work and youth inclusive societies require cooperation at three levels:
  • Youth work and civil society
  • Youth policy and governmental approach
  • Youth research

This third dimension of research is essential in basing any intervention on facts and figures, and giving certain legitimacy to programmes or projects. The PYNCR is providing youth research on various themes related to youth: the themes are identified by youth NGOs, the research is conducted by young people, and thus can be presented to decision-makers with some evidence, enabling theoretical arguments and at the same time, motivating youth to become mobilised.
• Flexibility of GIZ projects

Projects can rarely be implemented as planned, due to local constraints or environmental changes. Permanent re-adaptation and flexibility are needed in order to reach the objectives and keep the target group motivated. Various GIZ employees interviewed in the frame of this study underlined the great adaptability and flexibility of GIZ in their programme implementation. When things could not be ran as initially planned, GIZ officers showed creativity and looked for alternative, more accessible responses, which was highly appreciated by local partners and ensured that quality work could be done. This point can also be considered partly as a sense of cultural awareness and a sense of professionalism, which entails permanent adaptation to new contexts and situations. In the current political unstable context of many MENA countries, this state of flexibility can only be an asset.

• Cultural sensitivity

Most projects showed the importance of being culturally sensitive: Reaching the parents to enable young girls to participate, dos and don’ts, language use, negotiation skills are assets. This further reminds us of the importance of keeping programmes context specific. Although some initiatives can be used and adapted in other contexts, the cultural specificity of each context, not only national, but also regional and political, need to be taken into account. For example, in Yemen, it was important to cooperate with political parties, whereas in other contexts this was rather to be avoided.

• Working at all levels (national-local and vice versa local-national)

One main opportunity provided by GIZ youth programmes is the transversal, trans-level approach. Starting to raise awareness on youth participation both from a bottom-up and a top-down approach and thus addressing all levels and all actors in society, highly raises the chance for an inclusive change in paradigm and a process of integration of youth as important actors of society change. The YCC programme in Palestine is a great example: Young people are being trained at municipality level, as well as local authorities whereas at governmental level, the GIZ accompanies decision-makers in the development of a youth policy. This is an ideal approach for sustainable youth participation.

• Capacity building of local staff

Understanding the necessity to build capacities and develop competences of all actors in society, starting from local staff, including teachers, trainers, or municipal staff, is an important step in changing mentalities and encouraging a societal change where all actors related to youth and young people develop their consciousness about the importance of including youth and enhancing local governance. This is also the key in ensuring sustainability and independence from international actors.

• Self-help initiatives

Self-help initiatives, as proposed in most MENA youth programmes, can appear as small-scale projects, but seem to bring a high, significant change in local communities. The initiatives directly address self-esteem, thus ensuring that the beneficiaries can develop a feeling of ownership of the projects, adapting them to their perceived real needs without being “consumers” of ready-made external projects. Although there are no studies on the impact of self-initiatives in the Go-MENA programme, we can be sure that they are an essential step towards youth participation and youth-lead long-term leadership and initiative.

• Work at structural level to secure follow-up and future project support

One important dimension of youth participation projects involves securing that the structural conditions are set for quality work to take place. Of course, one can argue that good youth work can take place in the street, without any material. But this would not ensure sustainable local governance and especially, it would not easily contribute to youth being
seen as relevant partners by local authorities. Therefore, GIZ efforts to invest in the creation of youth centres, youth clubs in refugee camps, as well as institutional structures such as youth councils in municipalities, is a way to fix some standards for qualitative, long lasting youth representativity. It is also a way of legitimising young people and taking youth work seriously. The example of Egypt, with young people developing small entrepreneurial businesses, shows how far the structure of supporting a project is important, and again, how this structure needs to be adapted to local contexts and realities.

- **Programmes in schools**

GIZ also has some programmes in schools (FASPAR Jordan, Future for Palestine, West Bank). These programmes focus on inclusive competence development, not just focusing on knowledge, but also including space for skills and attitudes. This is an essential dimension, as it involves children at a younger age, and furthermore, it aims at changing formal education systems that do not provide space for participatory attitudes, critical thinking, creativity, debating and experiential learning. The GIZ programmes in schools provide a great opportunity for youth to develop a culture of child and youth participation, which can then become “normalised” and continued after school through the involvement in various youth work contexts.

The “Future for Palestine” project offers a unique opportunity to involve all actors of the school system into a systemic change process by training principals, teachers and students, who then train others. This approach is promising for bringing sustainable change and has the advantage of developing a common ownership of school as a “second home”. Eventually, the success at school level has repercussions on the Ministry, who thinks of taking up some aspects of the follow-up.

- **Intercultural dialogue**

In a socio-political context like the current one, intercultural dialogue is, more than ever, essential. The GIZ Go-MENA network is an ideal platform for such dialogue between regions, between groups (refugees and non-refugees) and sometimes between countries. The platform as such enables youth workers and GIZ offices in the various countries to share experiences and knowledge about youth participation. The CoMun programme in itself provides a great platform for networking, sharing and cooperative learning. This is an excellent way to change perspectives and learn about oneself and from each other. This dialogue also involves intergenerational dialogue, as provided in projects like “paint your camp”. Young people do not always feel understood by elders in their ambitions, visions and expectations. Cooperative projects enable young people to share experiences with elder generations, to prove their competences and to break down barriers and prejudices. Finally, the programmes like YCC, foreseeing study visits to European countries, are a great way to motivate partners, but also to learn by seeing other approaches and working methods, which can be an inspiring factor in the development of local governance at local level.

- **Working with refugees**

In view of the current situation in the MENA region, working with refugees is more than ever an essential dimension. Young refugees should be taken into account as a particular group with special needs. Having had to leave their homes, security, friends, social fields of action and professions, they are particularly vulnerable. In addition, when reaching refugee camps, they are often treated as “refugees”, a category by itself, with a complete loss of their identity and of the fact that they are young people, who like to go out, have fun, flirt, dance, listen to music, learn and dream.

GIZ programmes such as FASPAR in Jordan and Palestine have integrated youth programmes in their overall programmes for refugees. By enabling young refugees to develop their own projects and become active in their communities, they contribute to the development of their self-esteem. Young people also play an important role in creating bridges between members of the community, but also with people from outside the refugee community. The
GIZ programmes act as pioneers in providing spaces for young people to develop, grow and work on their multiple identities.

**Mainstreaming youth and youth participation throughout GIZ programmes**

The CoMun programme shows a great example of how to develop a youth dimension in a GIZ programme, which is not exclusively designed for youth. Adding a youth dimension to already existing programmes can bring the advantage of involving young people in areas of decision-making and society development beyond the classical areas of leisure, sports and education. Young people have the opportunity to be part of a bigger programme, to share tasks and ideas with adults, to bring a youth dimension to all areas of the programme but without being seen as a separate entity. This brings opportunities for learning, for intergenerational dialogue, and for ensuring in a natural way that youth needs and resources are integrated. A programme does not need to be a youth programme in order to have a youth dimension and respond to young people’s needs.

**Small is sometimes good**

One additional opportunity that can be found in the Go-MENA programmes is the great variety of projects and initiatives developed. Although some happen more at macro-level, small-scale initiatives like painting the refugee camp (Palestine) or creating a music group or self-defence classes for girls (Egypt) can have a strong, long lasting impact that goes far beyond the content of the initiative itself. These projects can seem more reachable to vulnerable young people or youth that lacks self-esteem to engage in bigger projects, and can contribute to developing synergies in the community, a sense of leadership and recognition for the young people involved as well as it can be used as a fabulous platform for developing new project ideas. Therefore, small projects should continue to be developed in parallel to bigger, complex projects.

All in all, the Go-MENA programmes are constantly “on the move”, listening to youth needs and initiatives, taking into account political and social contexts, encompassing local to national to international programmes and trying to involve all young people in an inclusive common approach.

**SUCCESSFUL YOUTH APPROACHES**

This chapter was purposely called “successful youth approaches” rather than “good practices”. Practices can be good in some contexts and not adapted to other contexts, and vice versa. So the given examples are presented as successful initiatives in the particular context in which they took pace. This does not mean that they would be as successful, or surely would not be the same, in any other context.

Successful practices have in common that the challenges mentioned above, as well as the opportunities listed, were taken into account.

Some of these project ideas could therefore be replicated in other contexts with an adaptation to the needs of young people.

**Appointing youth officers in the municipalities**

The YCC project in Palestine foresees that each partner municipality in the project appoints an employed youth officer in charge of youth affairs and serving as a link between local authorities and the youth promoters. This highlights the fact that a municipality invests in youth and takes the topic seriously. This is also a way of ensuring that young people have a direct contact person that they feel comfortable in contacting and from whom they can get relevant information. The idea of developing the project further in a way to have such youth officer in each municipality is promising. These youth officers could then also be trained in regular programmes.
• Youth centres

As a continuation to the previous point, YCC also foresees that municipalities provide youth with a centre or a place for the youth work to happen. This again, gives legitimacy to young people and ensures that youth work can happen in a qualitative way.

• Competition of Ideas: Youth lead initiatives supported by municipalities

In Tunisia, as part of the CoMun programme, municipalities started organising “competitions of ideas”. Young people can apply for fundings for their youth initiatives that would benefit the municipality. These competitions were extremely successful in various municipalities, so that they have been repeated many times and have developed further in new municipalities. This approach has the advantage of ensuring that initiatives are entirely based on young people’s needs and ideas, ran by young people and thus totally participative. They encourage autonomy, a sense of responsibility and a feeling of trust from the side of the municipality.

• Online discussion fora

In Yemen, in the context of the TAMKEEN programme, online discussion fora on peace and conflict were created and animated by young people, for young people. These fora created a great opportunity for young people to express ideas and opinions without feeling embarrassed or scared, and also created a space for conflicting youth to start dialogue. The fora have been moderated by young people themselves, they constituted an ideal frame for participatory debate in a safe environment. Furthermore, the fora were directly linked to the TAMKEEN website, thus, enabling more young people to get access. Using online discussion tools seems more and more useful when wanting to address a large group of young people, including disadvantaged youth and providing opportunities for dialogue beyond the fear of being judged.

• Websites

The CoMun website and the programmes’ use of social media was already mentioned earlier in this report, but definitely deserves to be mentioned as a good example of clear communication and exchange with the outside world. Such a regularly updated website, including reports of the youth meetings, the topics discussed and the state of play of youth programmes, is not only a great way of sharing developments with other CoMun partners in other countries but also with young people looking for ways to get involved in local governance and youth participation.

• Social entrepreneurship

Finally, the PDP programme in Egypt, creating social entrepreneurship as a model for developing needs based community youth participation, is a very promising approach when it comes to combining youth work with youth employment and ensuring an impact within the society. Young entrepreneurs are paid for their investment in their community and local governance, and further, they can be seen as equal partners in local development. These social companies are a way to create economic sustainability and at the same time community development.

• Creating networks between professionals, cities, areas

Networking is always a very useful resource, as it means that everyone does not need to know everything, but can rely on a common spectrum of expertise to be shared and consulted when needed. In this way, the Future for Palestine project, which developed an online exchange network for teachers, shows a great example of how tools, resources and competences can be used in a way to be beneficial to a bigger group of people. Teachers can
share their doubts and questions, great experiences and challenges as well as methods and areas of expertise.

In a similar way, the CoMun programme offers a networking space between cities in the Maghreb, with an opportunity to build on each other’s experiences, to export practices and ideas, and to find out how it works in other contexts.

These examples of initiatives and projects are not exhaustive and do not cover the full range of great projects and initiatives tackled with the Go-MENA youth work stream. However, they seem to be projects, which could partly be reproduced with adaptation to various places and contexts in the MENA region.
Beyond the regular challenges of young people in raising their voices and participating actively, GIZ programmes face additional challenges: How to support programmes enough so that they develop autonomy and take over ownership after the GIZ support finishes, and how to increase cooperation between young people and authorities?

One important finding in this study was the need to mainstream youth participation throughout GIZ programmes, without necessarily having to create youth exclusive programmes, but by involving young people in programmes adressing societal change and development.

Young people need to be considered as full citizens who on one hand need particular attention and support, and one the other hand bring high potential and contributions to developing societies.

GIZ can play an important role in these processes, by supporting youth participation in its programmes from local to national level, by supporting governments in the development of youth policies and by enabling NGOs and municipalities to develop competences in the fields of local governance and youth participation.

Finally, GIZ has many years of working experience in the region, which also gives it some legitimacy towards other international donors. Collecting all these potentials in order to cover more fields could be an important role for the Go-MENA youth stream in the next years.
ANNEXES

ANNEX ONE

TEMPLATE - RUNNING A NEED ASSESSMENT OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN A COMMUNITY

Whether in GIZ programmes or in any other project development context, identifying the needs of a target group is an essential part of a successful project.

Even if one might be implemented in a particular context for long, or working with the target group on a daily basis, nobody can identify the needs of young people better than themselves. Their perceptions, observations, expectations and analysis combined with the expertise of project managers and organisations, are often a key combination to sustainable, successful and multiplying youth projects bring about social change.

Here come some guidelines for running such a needs assessment:

1. Define the purpose of your needs assessment

Conducting a needs assessment of any population, one needs to look for certain information in order to be able to respond to it. However, asking these questions can also raise wrong hopes and bring expectations that one will not be able to respond to. Therefore, before starting a needs assessment, it is essential to clearly define the following:

- In which context to run it,
- What are the objectives,
- What will happen with the results,
- What to expect from participants and
- How the exercise can serve them.

Full transparency of this process will avoid potential misunderstandings or frustrations afterwards.

If you are developing a new youth specific project, then this should be explained to participants. If you are adding a youth dimension to an already existing programme/project, then it is important to clarify why youth is particularly targeted, how the topic relates to youth and what a youth specific intervention could look like.

2. Find out who youth is in the community

Before running a needs assessment of young people, it is important to identify who young people are. This requires a bit of research, local networking with NGOs, authorities, and young people themselves.

- Which percentage of the community population do young people represent?
- Which age category do you consider as youth?
- How is the youth population composed? Age, sex, level of education...
- Where do the young people live? What is the scope of your assessment (city, neighbourhoods, rural or urban area...)?

3. Take the context in which you do your assessment into account

If you want your needs assessment to be efficient, you need to be aware of cultural, social and political factors that could influence young people’s participation and involvement in the process.

For example, you might avoid addressing certain topics in particular context (sexual practices, political topics).
Certain places might also influence the participation of young people in the needs assessment. If you meet in a particular area, which is identified as dangerous, some young people may not come. If the area is related to a certain political party or group, this will have consequences. If you organise meetings at nighttime, it could be that less young women participate.

All these factors are important in order to prepare and run a representative and constructive needs assessment.

4. Involve local partners

Youth organisations, youth clubs, sports clubs, schools, universities, municipalities can all be very useful partners in the preparation process of your needs assessment. Don’t hesitate to contact them in order to reach most young people possible. Furthermore, it is important to involve a group of young people from the very beginning in the preparation of a needs assessment. Make sure the group of people involved in the preparation is representative of the diversity of the target group: for example, if you want to reach refugee youth, it would be useful to involve young refugees and/or NGOs working with young refugees in order to facilitate contact making.

5. Running the needs assessment

There are various ways of running needs assessments, but some are clearly more costly than others.

With a limited budget, you will need to rely more on personal contacts or networking.

It can be useful to combine a variety of methodologies for collecting data.

This could include:
- Surveys (online over free of charge platforms, through social networks...)
- Interviews (time consuming, limited in outreach, but enable to go deeper in getting information)
- Discussion groups or workshops (gathering groups of young people in a certain setting to have a discussion on their needs)
- Using social media as a natural place for young people to go. A lot of interactive tools exist, from mind maps to fora to discussion groups, wikis, etc.

Whereas you can create a combination of all, one rule is important:

FIND YOUTH WHERE THEY ARE!

6. What to ask/how to ask?

The way questions are formulated is, of course, an essential part of the needs assessment. If you only ask young people what they need, the answers may be vague and it could be difficult for them to answer.

There is not one list of questions to ask in a needs assessment, as this depends a lot on the context, the theme, and the purpose of your needs assessment.

However, here are some tips that could be useful:

- Start from where young people are: What is your situation today? Which main challenges do you face? (In relation to education, employment, youth participation, human rights, conflict...)
- What would be needed in order to overcome these challenges? What already exists? What do you already do about it?
- What works well?

- Supposing that a miracle happened and these particular challenges had disappeared, what would be different? How would you notice? (This question comes from systemic therapy approach: by asking about what comes after a miracle one can get clear information on the wishful state and indicators on how to reach it)

- What could WE do? What could YOU do? What could be your role in addressing these challenges?

In discussion groups, young people can reflect on these questions in small groups and provide feedback.

Often, young people do not only come with problems, they also bring solutions.

7. And after...Give clear information

When young people spend time and energy participating in a needs assessment, they rightly want to know what will happen with it and how they will be informed about next steps or how their contributions will be used. Communicate clearly about the next steps, the approach, what will be or will not be possible.

Collect participants’ contacts in order to send them the results of the needs assessment. Inform them also about the decision making process in terms of which themes/areas will eventually be picked (who decides? How? Will there be a majority/minority process? Will young people be involved?)?

To summarize...

Depending on your means and resources, a needs assessment can be done at a small or larger scale. What is important is to stay clear, transparent and realistic throughout the process, to use all resources and expertise available, to keep an inclusive approach and work with a team who can reflect on the process, the target group, the results and the follow-up.

One thing is sure: A youth project will be more successful if young people have been consulted about what they need and want to change. Young people do not only want to be beneficiaries but also actors of change.
ANNEX TWO

TEMPLATE - HOW TO CHECK IF YOUR PROJECT HAS A YOUTH PARTICIPATION DIMENSION?

This template can be used by organisations/project officers/youth NGOs wanting to either develop youth participatory projects, or to add a youth participation dimension to their projects.

It can be used like a checklist in combination with the theoretical links given in the first part of the report.

This document only serves as guidelines. It does not mean that it fits as such in each context, and that all points are necessarily relevant.

This template could be used:
- At the planning stage of the project to include the youth participation dimension from the beginning.
- During the project implementation to check in how far the project is youth participatory.
- At the end of the project as a tool to evaluate the level of youth participation.

Before using this document, it could be useful to refer to the template on "needs assessment of young people".

Additionally, some methods/ideas for exploring the understanding of youth participation in your team/group before setting up a project are:

- It could be useful to reproduce the ladder of participation of Roger Hart on the floor and get all actors involved in the project to stand next to the step they think the project is at, and then where they wish the project to be. This gives a clear indication on expectations and understandings of youth participation.

- Another way of ensuring that all actors involved in the project planning and implementation have the same understanding of youth participation is to collect various definitions (for example the ones mentioned in this report), and ask people to choose the one they feel closest to/most related to their understanding of youth participation. This can be followed by a clarifying discussion and potentially, with the creation of a new, common definition.
### WHAT?

- Do you want to add a youth participatory dimension to your already existing project?
- Do you want to develop a new youth participatory project?
- Do youth participatory projects already exist in the context you work in? If yes, what would be the added value of this one? What can you learn from it?
- What forms can youth participation take in your project? How will you recognise it? Measure it?

### WHY?

- What is the added value of making the project a youth participation project (or add that dimension)?
- What do you/your organisation want to achieve through a youth participation project?
- How is youth participation understood/perceived in your organisation/context/community?
- What will it change? Facilitate? Complicate?
- What benefits of youth participation would you see in your community?
- What benefits do you already see in youth participation in your community?
- What do you want to achieve through it? What do you expect to change?
- In how far is youth considered part of the overall community?
- What justifies a particular youth dimension in your project?
- What are the biggest barriers to youth participation in your context? How can you address these?

### HOW?

- How will young people be involved in the project? At what stage? Please look at the ladder of participation and try to define where your project would be situated?
- What is the role of young people in the project? Have they been informed?
- How transparent are your aims and objectives to them?
- In how far does your project respond to young people's expressed needs?
- Are young people involved in:
  - Developing the idea
  - Planning (developing, finding partners, budgeting, organising, choosing venue, contents, guest, developing the programme)
  - Implementing (facilitating, ensuring young people's opinions are heard...)
  - Evaluating
- How can you motivate young people in a way that they stay involved in the project throughout all phases?
- How is youth perceived by the community through this project? By decision-makers?

### WHO?

- Which group of young people is targeted by your project?
- How do you reach out to young people?
- Does the project involve marginalised youth? Particular groups?
- Which area are you covering?
- How representative of the youth in your context is the group you're working with?
- How can you reach out to broader groups?
- How are adults involved?

### WITH WHAT/WHOM?

- Which resources (human, intellectual, financial, time...) do you need in order to achieve your objectives related to youth participation?
- Which resources do you already have in your team?
- Where could you get the missing resources?
ANNEX THREE

TEMPLATE - QUESTIONS FOR A YOUTH AUDIT

The quality standards will support donor agencies to mainstream youth throughout their organization and their activities. They have been developed as a tool which can be used on an ongoing basis by donor agencies and policy advisors when they are engaging in or implementing a range of activities: developing a new programme, assessing a funding application, setting up strategy and addressing gaps in internal systems. In taking a first step towards youth mainstreaming and using the quality standards, donor agencies are advised to conduct a youth audit; this will enable an assessment of the current status of work with youth. All donor agencies now possess some form of gender analysis/framework(1) that is guiding and improving the quality of social inclusion in all aspects of their work. One such example is the Department for International Development (DFID) gender manual, which provides one model for asking the right questions(2) of our own organizations: see the Box below.(3)

The audit questions below can be used in two key ways:
• firstly, to screen concept notes (seeking funding)
• secondly, they can be incorporated into social appraisal mechanisms (or pro poorchecklists) as practical ways to institutionalize youth mainstreaming.

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(1) Such as UNESCO’s Gender Mainstreaming Implementation Framework (GMIF) 2003
(2) These questions are adapted from DFID ‘Gender Manual – A Practical Guide’ (2008), p. 27. This framework is further elaborated upon in the DFID ‘Gender and Social Exclusion Analysis’ (GSEA) 2008. This focuses on three spheres of people’s lives: society, state and the market. webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/+/http:/www.dfid.gov.uk/Documents/publications/dfid-gender-manual-2008.pdf
Questions for a youth audit

Policy and Action Plans
• Is there a youth policy? When was it developed? Who was involved in its formulation? What are the arrangements for implementation and monitoring?
• To what extent are youth issues considered in other key policies? What are the arrangements for implementation and monitoring? To what extent have policy review and evaluation processes considered impact on women and men?

Leadership
• What is the attitude of senior management staff to youth issues? Who does the management consult with about youth issues?
• Which external organizations and people have an influence on the organisation? Do they take youth issues seriously?
• What are the decision-making bodies? What role do youth and older adults play in decision-making?

Capacity
• Youth focal staff/youth champions
Is there a designated youth unit/staff member? Since when? What do they do? With what resources? How effectively?
• All staff
What responsibility do staff have for youth equality issues? What training have they received? Have staff been issued with guidelines on youth mainstreaming? What is their level of knowledge and skill? Is sensitivity to youth issues included in job descriptions/assessed at interview/monitored at appraisals?
• Organisation
Does the organisation have capacity to learn from past and current activities, and use that learning to inform future interventions?

Programming and Accountability
• Is attention to youth issues included in routine systems and procedures: situation analysis, consultation, planning, budgeting, recruitment/contracting, implementation, monitoring and review procedures? How and to what effect?
• Are programmes being implemented to ensure youth get a fair share of benefits and are barriers being addressed?
• Is the organization, and are staff held to account for any youth equality policy commitments. Who by and how?

Partnerships (as part of stakeholder analysis, social appraisal, and political appraisal):
• Do partners see the organization as committed to and skilled in youth issues?
• Does the organization learn from partners and support partners to promote rights of youth
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