



Oilatech™
Young People...Enterprise...Employment...

NURTURING ENTREPRENEURSHIP AMONG ARAB YOUTH

CREATING LOCAL ECOSYSTEMS TO ENHANCE
ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES

16-18 February, 2013
Hilton Hotel, Doha, Qatar

The MENA region is at a critical juncture in its development. For over twenty years, the region has had the highest youth unemployment rates in the world. Over the past decade, a large number of interventions have been developed to improve employment outcomes for young people.

While many of these interventions are thought to have benefited individual participants (few have undergone rigorous evaluation) they have not had a tangible impact on the circumstances of the region's youth overall. In the aftermath of the so-called Arab Spring, there is an urgent imperative to make tangible improvements in the opportunities and livelihoods of the region's youth.

The premise of this conference is that a more comprehensive approach to youth economic inclusion is needed, supported by the creation of local urban ecosystems that enhance youth entrepreneurship and economic opportunity at the grassroots level. Such ecosystems come about through the joint efforts of local governments, civil society and the private sector. The conference will follow the following logic thread:

- While there is an increasing number of youth interventions in the region deemed successful, few have undergone

rigorous evaluation to demonstrate and document impact. Furthermore, individual successes have not been able to reach the scale and impact needed to affect real change in the lives of youth.

- A more comprehensive approach is needed to address youth economic inclusion in the region, relying on: (1) partnerships committed to creating local urban ecosystems that enhance youth economic opportunities and (2) designing comprehensive interventions that are evaluated to encourage scale-up and replication.
- The Conference will provide a venue for mobilizing expert knowledge, exchanging ideas, and agreeing on an actionable agenda leading to the creation of new partnerships and reinforcing commitments to current platforms (such as GPYE) to test and validate innovative approaches that will unlock wider social impact.

Cross-cutting themes that should be evident throughout the conference include: gender and low-income groups. The official languages of the conference are Arabic and English; all sessions will have simultaneous translation. Main findings will be collected as tweeted ideas to be shared during the Wrap-up Session.

PRE-CONFERENCE ACTIVITIES

1. Two weeks prior to the Conference, participants will be invited to join the "Ask an Entrepreneur" webinar series, organized by the YEN Marketplace, where three young entrepreneurs from the MENA region, who have built successful companies, will present their stories and share experiences. Their stories will provide insight into how they successfully emerged from their respective local Entrepreneurial Ecosystems.

2. Before the conference, municipalities will be invited to volunteer as case studies for the event. The case studies will be developed using conceptual frameworks provided by partner institutions (YBI, RRI, AUC). In the final breakout session, participants will be tasked with working through the case studies, with the aim of focusing attention on social impact, designing holistic approaches, and developing partnerships.