

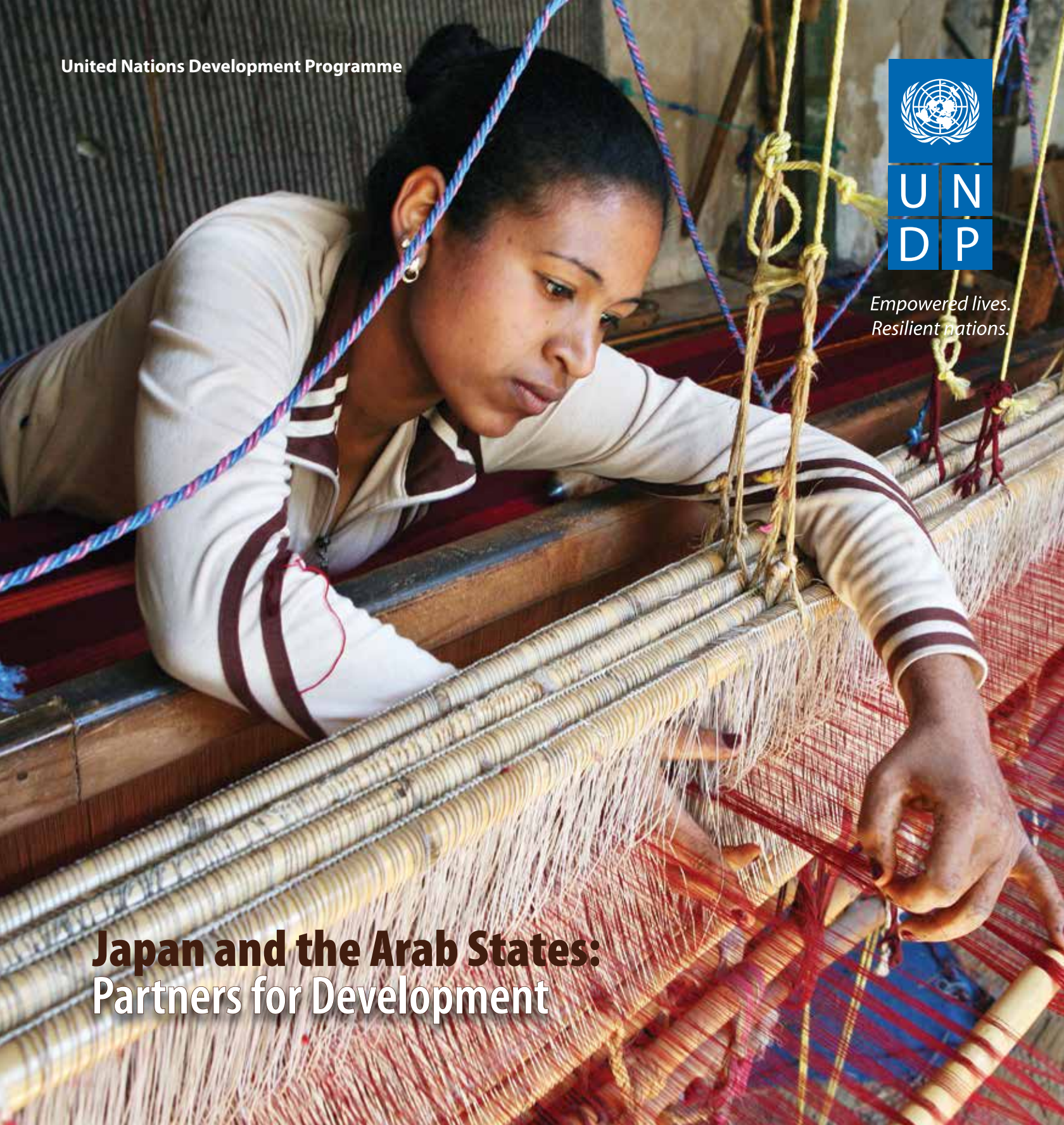
United Nations Development Programme



UN
DP

*Empowered lives.
Resilient nations.*

Japan and the Arab States: Partners for Development



A Partnership for Growth, Peace and Stability

UNDP's presence in the region covers the following countries and territories:

Algeria
Bahrain
Djibouti
Egypt
Iraq
Jordan
Kuwait
Lebanon
Libya
Morocco
Saudi Arabia
Somalia
Sudan
Syria
Tunisia
United Arab Emirates
Yemen
Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People

MOROCCO: A woman weaves with a traditional loom in a workshop in Fes el Bali. Photo: Dieter Telemans/Panos Pictures

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Text: Laila Saada

Over the past decades, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Government of Japan have developed an important partnership, anchored in the belief that without peace, security and stability in the Arab region, the advancement of human well-being cannot be achieved. Together, we have worked to ensure a balanced approach to better the livelihoods of men, women and children in the Arab states.

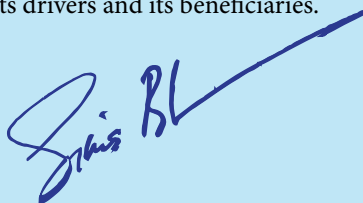
Today's Arab region is full of opportunities. The political turmoil that has plagued the region over the past two years has galvanized millions of young people and unified their determination to change their destiny and secure their future. People in the Arab states are more aware today of their rights and are eager to seize opportunities to move forward and improve their lives. This is where UNDP's Regional Bureau for Arab States finds its mission: to accompany change and help the region meet its challenges.

Youth employment has taken priority throughout our programmes in the Arab states. The region has been weighed down by alarmingly high rates of unemployment, especially among women and people with disabilities. As we work across the main areas of development—poverty reduction, democratic governance, crisis prevention and recovery and environment and sustainable development—youth remain at the heart of our work.

Whether we empower women to participate in nation-building like Libya and Yemen, or we facilitate the inclusion of former combatants and warlords into productive communities such as the village of Mazmoun in Sudan, or whether we educate the young on climate change and energy efficient lifestyles like our work in the oasis of Tafilalet in Morocco, together we strive to harness the wealth of human energy and high hopes that this region has to offer. You will see these stories illustrated in this publication.

In 2013, UNDP and the Government of Japan marked two decades of cooperation to promote development in Africa through the Tokyo International Conference for African Development (TICAD). Nine UNDP offices in the Arab region are located in Africa and have benefited from this partnership. We believe that there is a real possibility for a Tokyo International Conference for Arab Development.

As recent events across the region have reminded us, development is not only about economic growth or the up-and-down of financial data. Development has a human face. It is about dignity, voice and justice, with people at its core, both as its drivers and its beneficiaries.



Sima Bahous

*Assistant UN Secretary-General and
Assistant Administrator and Regional Director for Arab States*

Japan Funds to UNDP Projects in the Arab States in 2012 and 2013

2012			2013		
Country	Project	Amount in US\$ Million	Country	Project	Amount in US\$ Million
Algeria	Youth Employment Generation	0.50	Egypt	Employment Creation in Public Works	5.60
Djibouti	Development of Agro-Pastoral Farming System in Rural Communities	1.00		Strengthening Good Governance: Social Contract Centre	2.00
	Emergency Preparedness and Response Disaster Risk Management	0.50		Strengthening Democratic Process	2.00
Egypt	Youth Employment Generation	0.50	Jordan	Mitigating the Impact of the Syrian Refugee Crisis on Jordanian Vulnerable Host Communities	4.00
	Consolidating Electoral Practices and Institutions	1.00		Youth Employment Generation Programme	2.00
	Employment Creation Programme in Public Work	5.50	Morocco	Strengthening Public Services	0.20
	Strengthening the Cairo Regional Centre for Training on Peacekeeping in Africa	0.50	Somalia	Capacity Building of Police Force and Peacebuilding Programme	7.30
Jordan	Youth Employment Generation	0.50		Solar Applications to Improve Energy Security	1.00
Libya	Strengthening UN Coordination in Humanitarian Efforts	0.35		Capacity Building for Border Security	1.50
	Early Recovery for Sustaining Humanitarian Gains	0.46	Sudan	Support for Disabled People, Returnees and Their Communities	1.00
	Support to Transitional Governance Structures	5.05	Syria	Capacity Development of Infrastructure Damage Assessments	0.50
Morocco	Youth Employment Generation	1.00	Tunisia	Improving Governance of Drinking Water Supplies in Rural Areas	1.00
Somalia	Enhance Food Safety and Introduce Biogas Technology in Sheikh	0.35		Support to the Electoral Process	1.00
	Support to Somalia Police Force	5.20		Strengthening Public Services	1.00
	Rehabilitation and Reintegration of Youth Affected by Conflict	6.03		Support for Effective National Integrity System	0.25
Tunisia	Youth Employment Generation	1.50		Support for Development of Crisis Management System	2.58
	Support to National Dialogue and Constitutional Process	7.60	Yemen	Support to Elections	2.00
	Supporting Emergency Employment and Private Sector Development	2.30	occupied Palestinian territory	Construction of Electrical Substation for the Jericho Agro-Industrial Park	0.58
Yemen	Youth Employment Generation	2.00		Construction of the Administration Building in Jericho Agro-Industrial Park	0.40
	Support to Presidential Election	1.14	Total		\$35.91
occupied Palestinian territory	Construction of the Administration Building in Jericho Agro-Industrial Park	1.09			
Total		\$44.52			

Source: UNDP



UNDP Somalia

Boosting Economic Growth

Securing livelihoods and ensuring access to education and healthcare services have been at the centre of UNDP's mission to reduce poverty around the world.

In the Arab region, the unmet needs of a young population that still suffers from the highest rates of unemployment can no longer be ignored. In some countries, over 30 percent of youth in the labour market cannot find a job. In **Yemen**, for example, 50 percent of the unemployed are young people.

UNDP is strongly committed to youth employment projects across the region. Tens of thousands of young people, especially women in rural areas, have been trained for the job market. Many are currently successfully employed.

The Government of Japan has been working with UNDP on poverty reduction programmes and access to basic services such as healthcare and education in the region for several years. For instance, the range of successful employment and food generation programmes through the Green Jobs projects in North Africa attests to our common goal of seeking higher living standards. UNDP initiatives have further empowered thousands of young people to jump-start their businesses and secure lucrative jobs.

▲ **SOMALIA:** In 2013, UNDP, through its poverty alleviation and livelihoods programme, provided funds to some internally displaced persons (IDPs) in the Kooshar IDP Camp in Burao, Somaliland. The programme helped them to start their own rickshaw business or "motorized camels," as they like to call them.

In the region,
by 2011,
92 percent
of children were going to
primary school, up from
85 percent in 1999.

5 million
jobs were created
in **Iraq**.

1,200
young men and women
found employment and
started small businesses
as a result of UNDP's Youth
Economic Empowerment
project in **Yemen**.

JORDAN: Employment Programme for New Graduates

Like many young students in Jordan, Yousef El-Mughrabi, 23, was full of plans for his future. Living in Ma'an, a southern Jordanian governorate where one in four people live in poverty and one in five is unemployed, El-Mughrabi's dream was a simple one: securing a respectable job that could open the door for a better tomorrow for himself and his family.

Although he graduated with good grades in 2010, he was not equipped with the required skills for the job market. "My certificate was not enough," he says. "People were telling me jokingly that graduates have three options after university: to exit Jordan by land, air or sea. But I do not want to leave."

He participated in the UNDP-supported training programme for recent graduates seeking employment. The programme additionally places trainees in internship programmes in the private sector, making them significantly more employable. This programme is part of a larger UNDP initiative launched in April 2012, in partnership with the Government of Japan, dedicated to finding jobs for young people living in Arab countries.

El-Mughrabi distinguished himself as an outstanding public relations intern for tourism in Ma'an, where he now serves as the Deputy Director.

"You could never imagine how much difference the training and internship made in my life," Yousef says enthusiastically. "They finally unlocked the door to employment."



UNDP Tunisia



UNDP

Up Close: Egypt

Some 300 kilometres north of Cairo, in one of the many narrow alleyways that connect citizens to Alexandria, Egypt's second largest city, Mohammad Khamis El-Said puts the finishing touches to his latest wood art design on his computer.

El-Said is deaf. He learnt woodcarving from his uncle at a very young age. However, due to his handicap, coupled with his lack of marketing and basic accounting knowledge, his work was almost always exploited. El-Said did not know how to promote his craft and make a decent living.

Unemployment rates in Egypt have reached 13 percent, affecting more than 77 percent of Egyptian youth. To address this, in March 2012, UNDP launched the Youth Employment Generation project, which aims at providing the necessary training for young entrepreneurs like El-Said to start up their own businesses.

"The training changed my life and opened up new horizons for a promising future," said El-Said, now 25. "I started creating designs using my computer and marketing them online."

ALGERIA: Towards the end of 2012, UNDP, in partnership with the Government of Japan, launched an employment project called *Força*, which means "opportunity" in Arabic, to introduce young job seekers to civil society employment opportunities. The scheme currently employs 100 young men and women. The project was launched with a design contest for its logo among art students. Nadia Fekhar, the logo contest winner walked away with a new iMac computer.

TUNISIA: In the Southern provinces of Mednine and Tataouine, Tunisia, where resident communities have been severely affected by the turmoil in neighbouring Libya, UNDP, in partnership with non-governmental organizations, coached recent graduates to successfully launch their enterprises. Trained to sew, Zahra Tlig, has just signed her first business deal.



UNDP Algeria



UNDP Libya

Building Inclusive Societies

In the wake of the series of popular uprisings that have swept the Arab region over the past two years, UNDP responded to the urgent call for political reform, and for transitional governments to effectively meet the aspirations of men and women, including youth, who envision their future in a more inclusive and just political system in their respective countries.

UNDP's work has a special focus on electoral assistance, access to justice and support to national dialogue, to include the voices of people who had been traditionally overlooked.

In partnership with the Government of Japan, UNDP embarked on a range of projects that aim to educate and empower citizens, especially those from poor communities to raise their concerns and become active participants in this historic and dynamic process.

Impressive results have been achieved in several countries. **Egypt, Libya, Tunisia** and **Yemen**, for example, have witnessed a number of milestones in this short but challenging period of transition.

▲ **LIBYA:** Candidate Radhya Bourawi is elated to have voted after a three-hour wait.

In **Egypt**,
76,000
national identity
cards were issued to
women in rural
areas.

1,700
women in **Tunisia**
were trained
on democratic
processes and
citizenship.

In the region
women's share
of seats in parliaments
rose from
2.6 percent in 2000 to
12.7 percent
in 2013.

YEMEN: Training for production of biometric identification cards.



Up Close: Yemen

UNDP

Elham Sarhan wears a badge of courage underneath her headscarf: small bump on her forehead after she was hit by a rock during an awareness-raising tour in January 2012, just one month prior to the early presidential elections. Her visits were organized by UNDP to prepare women in rural areas for the first crucial elections after almost 33 years of former president Ali Abdullah Saleh's rule.

Despite her injury, Sarhan pressed on to other training sessions, her conviction never waning.

"Nobody stops me," she said. Sarhan is head of the Women's Unit at the Supreme Commission for Elections and Referendum in Yemen. "This isn't just a job, this is a rights issue. I take these issues personally, not just because I'm a woman but because they are human rights as well as women's rights."

Sarhan's scar reflects the complex struggle for women's rights in Yemen. More than 65 percent of rural women are illiterate. "Education is key," she said on her unrelenting campaigning efforts. "Women need to be empowered."

Through programmes supported by UNDP and run by Sarhan and the Women's Unit, more than 250,000 of the four million registered women voters in Yemen, cast their ballots in the early presidential elections in February 2012.

UN Women/Caitin Maiké Kohl



"Every woman needs to give her opinion," says Shaine Mohammed from Giza Governorate. Mohammed is one of five million women in Egypt who does not have an identity card (ID). Since the launch of the Woman Citizenship Initiative in 2012, in collaboration with UN Women, two million women are expected to have their IDs that will empower them to vote, and obtain birth certificates for their children and register them for school.

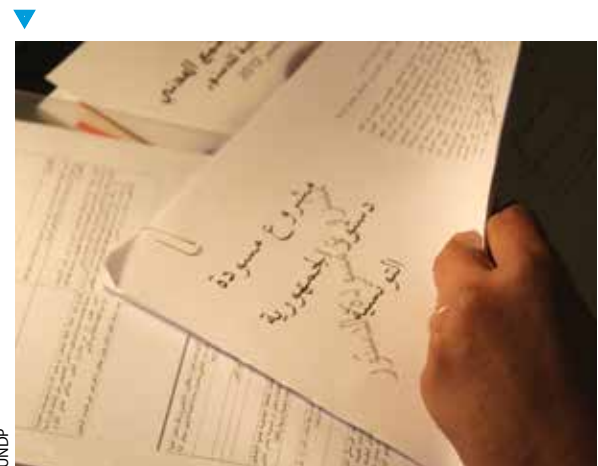
LIBYA: Breaking Barriers for Voter Awareness

UNDP helped invest in the future of Libya's fledgling democracy in the run-up to the 2012 congressional elections, the first in 60 years. Training of a core group of civic educators enabled them to educate youth on voting and public participation: half a million university students and 18,000 members of the Libya Scouts Organization.

The **My Voice for Her** campaign launched with civil society organizations, helped ensure that 1.3 million women in Libya registered to vote. Breaking the barriers in a male-dominated society, 629 women candidates stood for elections in July 2012. UNDP supported 170 candidates; eight of them are currently elected members to the National Congress

"Youth were at the heart of the revolution in Libya," said Baba, who received her training from UNDP to conduct awareness sessions on constitutional issues. "We young people have to play a role in the transition of this country to a sustainable democracy."

UNDP organized a public debate in July 2013 to address the needs of youth as well as their role in the constitutional process in Tunisia. UNDP also helped produce a song, called *Enti Essout* (You are the Voice), which became the unofficial anthem of the elections. The song was written, composed and performed by a group of young artists on the contemporary music scene who retain strong Tunisian roots and encourage other young people to participate actively in rebuilding a new Tunisia.



UNDP



UNDP Iraq

Ensuring Human Security

More than any other phenomenon, conflicts in the Arab region have stripped people, communities and countries of the choices they need to build better lives for themselves and plan for a better future. They have rolled back hard-won development gains and rendered progress on long-standing challenges all the more difficult to attain.

Poverty, political turmoil and repression have all pushed youth across the region to seek alternate routes to survival: piracy in **Somalia**, gangs in **Sudan**, and confrontations with Syrian refugees in **Jordan**, to name a few.

▲ **IRAQ:** With \$18 million funding from the Government of Japan, UNDP turned the Fallujah Maternity and Children's Hospital from war debris in 2004 to a modern structure that now boasts state of the art diagnostic, treatment and operating equipment.

In 2012, **Jordan** was declared the **first** country in the Middle East to attain mine-free status.

In the region nearly

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