Adolescent & Youth Development Intern
UNICEF Middle East & North Africa Regional Office
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AC4 Fellow 2017
MPA – Development Practice
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LOCATION
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Amman, Jordan

Areas Served: Middle East and North Africa (blue)
Focus Area: Syria, Palestine, Jordan, and Lebanon (Purple)

CONTEXT
Percentages of young people by age groups in the MENA Region

OBJECTIVES
Youth in the MENA Region face numerous barriers to inclusion, employment, education, and overall livelihood success. At the Adolescent Development Department (ADAP) at the UNICEF Regional Office in Amman, Jordan I worked alongside consultants and directors to work towards overarching goals:

I. Build youth capacity to be resilient and prepared for the job market
II. Connect youth with helpful resources for employment, emotional wellbeing, and other forms of support
III. Advocate on behalf of adolescent and youth, an often overlooked section of the population, by generating data, platforms, and openly available information and content
IV. Enable youth to be drivers of change in the region

DELIVERABLES
1. Scoping Study: E-mentoring for MENA Youth
   - In order to connect disillusioned youth with mentors and professionals to motivate their educational trajectories, facilitate their job search, and support their psychosocial wellbeing.
   - Deliverable: Scoping study of existing e-mentoring platforms and assess their best practices for adoption by ADAP. (26 pages)

2. Participatory Action Research: Youth Training
   - In preparation for the upcoming youth training on participatory action research and subsequent implementation of community action plans, I helped to develop various research guides, how-to’s, and principles for ethical research.
   - The materials were used in a youth training in Syria this past September

3. Voices of Youth: One Stop Shop
   - In order to grow UNICEF’s Voices of resource center, One Stop Shop*, int a list of educational resources for various age groups to be published. Providing access to scholarship opportunities, online English learning games, and other trainings in Arabic. The resource has been published to the website and the resour disseminated to thousands of users.

4. MENA Youth Fact Sheets
   - Revised and updated 118 youth indicators for 20 MENA countries and collected trend data on selected indicators
   - Designed and detailed online platform and digitalization of youth data and factsheets for public use in coordination with UNICEF Headquarters

LESSONS LEARNED
Working at the UNICEF Regional Office gave me insight into the broad implications and varying contexts of the MENA Region. Though facing multiple conflicts, rising insecurity, and declining economic and social situations, there are many innovative and coordinated responses and programs implemented to assist. I am thankful that I have had the opportunity to not only gain experience in a new region, but also gain understanding of the systems in place for future development, aid, and peace building.

Through my time in Jordan I gained:
1. Knowledge on large and widespread issues affecting the MENA Region, as well as factors that contribute to the disenfranchisement of youth, and new methods and techniques that can be used to mitigate this marginalization.
2. Long-term project management and how to successfully support In addition to knowledge gained about the region and adolescent populations, I have learned how to complete and manage longer-term projects
3. The ability to become a facilitator of progress and peace, rather than my initial desire to take action myself.