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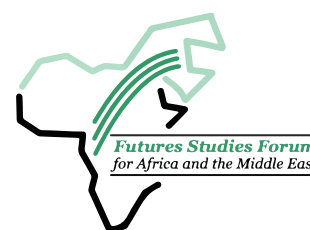
WHO'S
AFRAID OF
TWITTER?!



NORTH AFRICA HORIZONS

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The Future of Millennials in North Africa



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“..A new generation has been awakened and has learned how to network and mobilize, and as I write they have already shaken the political establishment in Egypt and Tunisia twice..” “...As the millennials enter their thirties and forties, they will have a better opportunity to shape politics directly, so that we could well see an echo effect of the 2011 upheavals in future decades.”¹



INTRODUCTION

The role of Arab youth during the wave of Arab Uprisings of 2010/11 was important in toppling long standing Arab dictators, like Bin Ali of Tunisia, Hosni Mubarak of Egypt and Moammar Gaddafi in Libya. The Arab uprisings became synonymous with a new generation of youth, who for a long period of time were excluded from the economic, political and cultural spheres in the Arab world. Youth in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) are in the process of renegotiating the social contract in which they live in. Today they are striving for their inclusion in the decision-making process within their respective regimes. They are striving to restore or renegotiate, some of the basic constitutional and social institutions in the fields of governance, economy, freedom, social welfare, culture and media and diplomacy.² How can Arab governments include youth into the political, economic and cultural spheres in their respective countries? How could young women and men in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) become catalysts for development and change in their respective countries? How can they shape the future of MENA?

To answer these questions, we need to understand who are these youths? What are their social realities and future aspirations and contributions to the region?

Trying to understand these questions will shed light on the role of the MENA Millennial generation in shaping the future of the region. **April 2015** Newsletter attempts to shed the light on the situation and aspirations of the millennial generation in MENA.

Article 1 examines the implication of the various trends being driven by the millennials, **article 2** explores the prospects for employment opportunities for the millennials, while **article 3** examines the extent to which millennials are influencing the culture of the MENA region.

References and Notes

1. <http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/News/7498/23/The-millennial-Arab.aspx>
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EDITORIAL

Since the 1960s, the role of youth in generating social, economic and political change in the world has been recognized. The role of baby boomers in generating change was essential in US politics.¹ This generation fundamentally changed American society, through challenging the old order through various means, especially through protestation during the 1968 Woodstock festival.¹

In that respect, MENA millennials³ are proving to be the baby boomer equivalent of the region. The MENA millennials view themselves as central agents of positive socio-economic change. They believe they have a stake in their country's future and have the assets and capacity to support positive change. The Arab Spring (their Woodstock moment) is the clearest expression of their power. Their demands for political change, accountability, voice, and representation has already contributed to a sweeping social change across the Region.

The pre 2011 regimes have restricted the millennials' access to the political sphere, hence their future engagement. They were either part of the regime or a pro state reformist opposition. Any voice outside those parameters was either harassed or jailed. The only available sphere for engagement was either the social media or volunteerism.

With the current transitions in the region, two types of civic engagement characterize the millennials namely: volunteerism to spawn formidable organizations or activism for political change. In this way, they are learning valuable organizational skills that — count on it — will one day be applied to politics. Another group has focused their energy on creating social enterprises venturing into new business frontiers and learning valuable business skills that prepares them for business.

Millennials are also profoundly shaping the culture of the region bringing new flavors, globalization has seen millennials in the diaspora and millennials at home weld a new cosmopolitan community while remaining firmly rooted in the traditions of Arab culture and Islam. Using social media they are stitching an alternate universe of shared ideas and values at the same time espousing tolerance and eschewing sectarianism.

Over the next two or three decades the real changes heralded by this generation will come to fruition to bring forth social change and democracy in the region. It is therefore, important that the center of power in the region namely governments, civil society and business join forces and help tip the power toward the true calling of the millennials.

Notes

1. Baby Boomers or Boomers I were defined as those born between 1945 and 1964. That would make the generation huge (71 million) and encompass people who were 20 years apart in age. It didn't compute to have those born in 1964 compared with those born in 1946. Their life experiences were completely different, attitudes, behaviors and society were vastly different. In effect, all the elements that help to define a cohort were violated by the broad span of years originally included in the concept of the Baby Boomers. The first Boomer segment is bounded by the Kennedy and Martin Luther King assassinations, the Civil Rights movements and the Vietnam War. Boomers I were in or protested the War.
2. Woodstock was the pop culture music event of the decade and arguably to this day the single most profound event in the history of music. Acts from all around the world met at Max Yasgur's Farm in Bethel, New York on August 15-18, 1969 for a celebration of peace and music. What began as a paid event drew so many viewers from across the world that the fences were torn down and it became a free concert open to the public. 500,000 youthful individuals gathered peacefully at Woodstock 1969 creating the largest gathering of human beings in one place in history. Woodstock 1969 defined an entire generation and its effects on music and American culture can still be felt today.
3. This term is borrowed from Mark Prensky to emphasize the break of the generation born between the mid-1980s and early 2000s

1. THE MILLENNIALS AND THE REMAKING OF MENA

In every society key transformative changes can be traced to an iconic generation that stood up against the establishment and bravely called for far reaching social changes. For America this was the so called Baby Boomer generation and the most iconic moment was the 1968 Woodstock concert that was a shocker to established norms and ushered the protest movements stemming from disagreements on Vietnam wars, lack of civil rights and new thinking. It has unleashed the creativity that we see today translated to information technology and the ubiquitous social media.

For the MENA region, the millennial generation will probably be described as the generation that stood up against the established order and set in motion various social and political changes

going –similar to the baby boomer generation- to remake the MENA region and fundamentally change it? Or will they fail to change the old regional order? To better understand this we will explore the drivers of change in the region being pushed by millennials and what they mean for the future of the region.

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The question then are they



The Millennials: Who are they?

The concept is borrowed from Mark Prensky to emphasize the break of the generation born between the mid-1980s and early 2000s. The key defining traits of the millennials:

- Are defined by their ubiquitous use of technology and belief that an education in technology will ensure personal future success.²
- Are impacted differently by technology according to their gender, where millennial men and women have been found to value the role and impact of technology differently in their lives. 80% of millennial males interviewed in the 2013 Telefonica Global Millennial Survey consider themselves «on the cutting edge of technology» as opposed to only 69% of millennial females interviewed. Similarly, 39% of millennial males believe technology has been influential in shaping their outlook in life as opposed to 22% of female millennials. It seems that among the millennial generation, technology also represents a new gender gap.
- Are concerned about the health of the economy as well as the planet. Many do not believe their values and beliefs are represented adequately by their governments.
- Value entrepreneurship, but express concern about the progression from school to the workplace. They believe strongly in protecting personal freedoms and are tolerant of other religious beliefs.³

Emerging Trends Driven By MENA Millennials

Millennials have come to age when two trends have taken the world on a new trajectory: globalization and the phenomenal growth in Internet and its related off-shoot technologies. Social media has created a truly global space that is open almost to all. Millennials are thus exposed to an overflow of data, ideas, culture, goods from all over the world.

According to Christopher Schroeder in his book “Startup Rising: The Entrepreneurial Revolution Remaking the Middle East”, the number of internet users in the Arab world has been growing very fast in the past five years, this situation has clear ramifications for the future. According to Schroeder, 83% of Arabs use the Internet daily, and half of those for at least 5 hours a day. In addition, 78% of Arabs said they prefer the Internet to television, and 44% say they spend less time meeting friends face-to-face than online or on their mobile devices”.⁴ The internet is where most millennials “live”. This has particular implication for the highly closed and conservative societies of MENA that traditionally had tight control on all aspects of its citizens’ lives. The millennials are the first generation to get out of this stranglehold for even the strongest of the strongmen and the most ardent conservatives has been unable to control the forces unleashed. What is not clear is what the interaction of the new forces and millennials mean. We examine some of the trends below:

Millennial's + Social Media = The undermining of the old order

Globally, millennials more than any generation have very low trust in governments. The growth of this trend has been attributed to cyber awakening that's accompanying the penetration of the internet. New sources of information enabled by internet are undermining the traditional sources that government relied on to communicate, while exposing lies and



deceptions. This is contributing to the near total collapse of public trust in public institutions and the rise of citizens taking matters into their own hands⁵. Millennials are at the vanguard of this change as the internet is the primary source of information. It is instructive that the first spark of the Arab Spring came from YouTube video by a Tunisian Hip Hop artist, El General⁶ that captured the frustration of the millennials.⁷

Dissatisfied with the political sphere of both the state and its traditional opposition, MENA millennials appear to participate in politics in more informal ways. They are 50% more likely to

participate in protests than the older generation, but substantially less likely to vote.⁸ This can explain the massive protests that marked the Arab uprising's and their subsequent disenchantment with the political developments following its end.

Yet, by succeeding to revolutionize the use of social media to become a mean for political organization and mobilization; they will ultimately be able shape the political discourse in the coming years.

governments hope to be heard by their constituents, particularly by the millennials, they will need to learn the language of social media to ensure that their constituents feel they can directly express their opinions and concerns to those governing them.

This has profound implications on governments' ability to sustain the effectiveness of their official communication channels with their citizens and residents. It is worth noting that although all

of these are two-way channels, there remains a question as to whether governments in the region view them as such, and are willing to actively solicit opinions through these channels. If governments hope to be heard by their constituents, particularly by the millennials, they will need to learn the language of social media to ensure that their constituents feel they can directly express their opinions and concerns to those governing them.⁹

Millennials + Internet + Globalization = Radicalization

The social media is the world in which the millennials live in. This has implications on how ideas are formed and consequently what motivates the millennials. A recent survey conducted by Bayt.com on Millennials in the Middle East and North Africa has shown that on average, 40% of those aged less than 35 in Egypt spend around 2-3 hours on the internet daily, compared to 43% in Morocco, 42% in Algeria and 45% in Tunisia.¹⁰ While we have pointed out that the internet allows people to get more information and thus undermines the establishment's propaganda, it also allows likeminded individuals to connect. Therefore, while internet can spawn liberalism and tolerance it can also be the perfect tool for radicalization and breeding of

on average, 40% of those aged less than 35 in Egypt spend around 2-3 hours on the internet daily, compared to 43% in Morocco, 42% in Algeria and 45% in Tunisia.

intolerance. A fact that has not been lost by Islamic State militants (ISIL) and other extremist organizations who have developed very savvy social media campaigns to specifically recruit

millennials and have succeeded-to some extent -as evident by the many young jihadists who have come to their cause.¹¹ Conversely, the same social media can be used to fight radicalization.

The social media is the future battleground for ideas and for the hearts and minds of millennials. However, MENA millennials are not just supplicants, they are engaging and asking hard questions and demanding minimum expectations.

Meanwhile, as the potential for radicalization exists, within the same media counterforces led by the millennials are emerging and shaping a different narrative.

Millennials + Social Activism = New Society

Research shows a growing interest among MENA youth in having social impact. This is best manifested in reported increases in volunteerism among the region's young people. There are indications that this generation has a strong commitment to social responsibility. All the same, a 2008 policy brief on youth in the Arab world was conducted by Dr. Barbara Ibrahim; a leading sociologist in Arab region, highlighted issues related to social innovation and strategic philanthropy, and focused on how young Egyptians are reinventing civic engagement. The brief stated that while volunteerism is the socially and politically acceptable face of youth activism, there are more basic, practical motivations for participation.

Volunteering is a legitimate reason for young unmarried females to get out of the home.

- For both men and women, these institutions provide an opportunity for social interaction in a conservative society.
- For some, an economic motive is at play, allowing young people to effectively utilize their time and to network while they seek employment.

Nevertheless, this same policy brief has concluded that MENA youth are eager to participate in improving their societies but feel excluded by the state, community leaders, and their families. When avenues of political reform are blocked, youth can turn either to social services to express civic engagement or to protest movements or more radical political action. It made the point that NGO's can harness this youthful enthusiasm by creating more opportunities for youth-led activities.¹²

Volunteerism is now a significant force. In 2008, Resala charity organization based in Egypt, had 70,000 registered members and was the largest youth-led organization in the Arab World.¹³ Organizations such as Resala represented an unprecedented kind of Arab youth activism and dynamism, Entirely founded and run by young people, the organizations use new means—the internet, TV advertising, and online social networks—to reach more traditional goals: providing social services such as running orphanages, teaching disabled children, and starting literacy programs.



Looking Ahead

Real change comes from leadership, hence it is when millennials take leadership that many of the changes that they aspire for will be materialized. The global millennials survey indicates that there is a small group of millennials (11%) that show leadership and are likely to drive global change. These leaders are defined by access to technology, a passion to participate in solving challenges facing communities and the world, and a drive to succeed. For now they see social entrepreneurship as the vehicle to achieve their goals.¹⁴



Over the next two or three decades when the millennials will be in position of power, the real changes heralded by this brave generation will come to fruition and bring forth democracy to the region.

this is not a given as there are competing forces for the heart and minds of the millennials best exemplified by extremist groups like ISIL/ISIS. Lack of jobs and meaningful opportunities to improve their socio- economic situation and quality of life, provides forage for those alternative voices. It is therefore important, that the center of power in the region namely: governments, religious order and businesses join forces and help tip the power toward the true calling of the millennials. This does not mean the adoption of empty rhetoric or propaganda but recognizing that the millennials need space to express themselves and platforms for genuine engagement with the above three pillars.

For governments, this means to establish a two way channel. That is putting in place the appropriate infrastructure in the form of e-government that can engage the millennials hand in hand with a complete change of mindset of leaders who are used to talking down to people.

For businesses, it will mean embracing more inclusive business models that can support and upscale the social enterprises that are providing meaning to the millennials.

For the **religious leaders** it means recognizing the millennials desire to rise to the true calling of the faith that is service to the poor and ethical business, hence a change in tone and discourse to use faith and its great influence to steer governments and business to providing the needed support.

References and Notes

1. It is important to note, that there are no specific statistics on millennials in North African countries. All existing data includes them as part of Africa, MENA or Arab world. Hence, the use of the term NA millennials as the common dominator among them all.
2. Telefonica, “Telefonica global millennial survey: Global Results”, 2013, <http://survey.telefonica.com/globalreports/assets/Telefonica%20-%20Global%20Millennial%20Survey.pdf> Telefónica (one of the largest integrated telecommunications companies in the world in terms of market capitalisation, and a top performing operator in the sector) in partnership with the Financial Times, which commissioned 12,171 online quantitative interviews among millennials, aged 18-30, across 27 countries in six regions. Penn Schoen Berland conducted the question survey from 11 January – 4 February 2013. Egypt was one of the countries surveyed in the MENA region.
3. 43% of millennials interviewed in MENA believe that improving access to and the quality of education is the most important way to make a difference. 68% of millennials in MENA believe they have opportunities to become an entrepreneur in their countries. Telefonica, “Telefonica global millennial survey: Global Results”, 2013, <http://survey.telefonica.com/globalreports/assets/Telefonica%20-%20Global%20Millennial%20Survey.pdf>
4. Youth: Creating & Shaping Our Future, <http://www.menasocialgood.com/>
5. Jonathan Capehart, Millennials Lack of Trust part of Global Trend, March 2014, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/post-partisan/wp/2014/03/10/millennials-lack-of-trust-part-of-global-trend/>
6. El General first recording, “Rais LeBled,” was posted to YouTube in November 2010. The song was an attack on the former authoritarian ruler, Zine El Abidine Ben-Ali, and the poor conditions in the state, including poverty, unemployment, and political and social injustices. Following the suicide attempt by Mohammed Bouaziz in Sidi Bouzid, Tunisia, which prompted the revolutionary movement, El General’s music was used in ensuing demonstrations. El General released subsequent songs, which similarly criticize the government and called for the end to Ben-Ali’s regime. Consequently, he was arrested and imprisoned by Tunisian state police. His imprisonment further propelled the popularity of his music and activists demanded his release. El General was released soon after Ben-Ali fled the country in January 2011. El General is widely considered to be one of the largest musical influences emerging from the Arab Spring and is considered to have made direct contributions to political activism during the Jasmine Revolution in Tunisia. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arabic_hip_hop
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13. Ibid
14. Interestingly 53% of millennials interviewed in Egypt believe they can make a global difference. However, only 8% of country correspondents interviewed in Egypt were actually Millennial Leaders. This proves that although they are eager to make a difference, the North African region (exemplified by Egypt) still lacks millennial leaders, and they were unable to lead change in their countries. Telefonica, “Telefonica global millennial survey: Global Results”, 2013, <http://survey.telefonica.com/globalreports/assets/Telefonica%20-%20Global%20Millennial%20Survey.pdf>

2. WHERE ARE THE JOBS FOR THE MENA MILLENNIALS?

There are currently more than 100 million people between the ages of 15 and 29 in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. They represent about one third of the region's total population.

TABLE-1: DEMOGRAPHIC AND ECONOMIC INDICATORS OF NORTH AFRICAN COUNTRIES, 2010-2015, 2050

COUNTRIES	POPULATION 2010 MILLION	RATE OF NATURAL INCREASE 2010-2015 (%)	TOTAL FERTILITY RATE 2010-2015	POPULATION 0-14 IN 2010	LIFE EXPECT AT BIRTH 2010 - 2015	POPULATION 2050 MILLIONS	POPULATION 2100 MILLIONS	GNI (PPP) PER CAPITA 2009 (US\$)
ALGERIA	35	1.4	2.1	27	74	47	40	8,110
EGYPT	81	1.7	2.6	32	74	123	123	5,680
LIBYA	6	1.8	2.4	30	75	9	8	16,400
MOROCCO	32	1.0	2.2	28	73	39	33	4,400
TUNISIA	10	1.0	1.9	24	75	13	11	7,810

Source: Susanne Schmid, Migration Potential from North Africa to Europe, http://weltbevoelkerung.org/PDFs/Schmid_Migration_potential.pdf



FIGURE-1: AVERAGE ANNUAL YOUTH POPULATION GROWTH, WORLD AND REGIONS, 1990 - 2050



Source: International Labor Conference, The youth employment crisis: Time for action, Report V, 2012. http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_norm/---relconf/documents/meetingdocument/wcms_175421.pdf

This youth bulge can be a demographic ‘gift. Young people can be engines of growth, as the source of innovation and productivity and consumption. However they need open and vibrant economies that provide plenty of opportunities into which their energies can be channeled. However, MENA has been unable to create these conditions, despite a decade that saw periods of significant growth. Youth unemployment in North African countries remains the highest in the world, reaching more than 29 per cent in 2013. This is more than twice as high as the global average. In Algeria for example, the youth (16-24) accounted for 40.9% of total unemployed population by the end of September 2014.¹

FIGURE-1: COUNTRY LEVEL UNEMPLOYMENT RATES, TOTAL AND YOUTH (15 – 24)

COUNTRIES	YEAR	UNEMPLOYMENT RATE, TOTAL (%) MALE & FEMALE	UNEMPLOYMENT RATE, TOTAL (%) MALE	UNEMPLOYMENT RATE, TOTAL (%) FEMALE	YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT RATE MALE & FEMALE
ALGERIA	SEP 2014	10.6	9.2	17.1	25.22
EGYPT	DEC 2014	12.9	9.2	24.8	32.43 - M:51.4, F:26.4
MOROCCO	2014	9.6	10.6	9.6	13.24
TUNISIA	Q1 2014	15.2	12.7	21.5	37.65

Source: Algeria: Office National des Statistiques, ACTIVITE, EMPLOI & CHÔMAGE EN SEPTEMBRE 2014, http://www.ons.dz/IMG/pdf/Donnee_Stat_Emploi_Septembre_2014_Bonne-2.pdf, Egypt: CAPMAS Quarterly Labor Force Survey, Fourth Quarter 2014, Feb 2015, Morocco: National Survey of Employment, High Commission for Planning (Department of Statistics), Q3 2014, http://www.hcp.ma/Taux-de-chomage-au-niveau-national-selon-les-tranches-d-age_a262.html, Tunis: Institut National de la Statistique(INS), Enquête Nationale sur la Population et l'Emploi, <http://www.ins.nat.tn/indexen.php>,

This is creating significant challenges and key sources of instability. Youth unemployment is now the waking nightmare for the leaders and policy makers in the region. Lack of employment opportunities can breed frustration and uprising. The Arab uprisings demonstrated, young people's patience with limited opportunities for economic participation and political engagement is finite.⁶

Though, the youth labor force is expected to decline over the coming years, but this will provide only a short-term relief, as of 2020, long-term demographic projections indicate a return of stronger growth of the youth population (Until at least 2030, the number of MENA millennials reaching working age will be greater than those retiring), making it essential that the region develops a labor market that can utilize the new entrants and benefit from the demographic dividend.⁷



MENA millennials: The Gender Dimension

Young women in MENA are confronted with a double burden: their age and their gender. In Arab countries, the conflation of these two factors has resulted in the highest regional gender gap in terms of unemployment, due to profound cultural, social and economic gender divisions. In addition, the Arab world suffers from low participation rates, meaning that fewer members of society who could be working actually are working and women more impacted.

Studies indicate that only 30% of women of working age participate in the labor market, and those who do find work are limited to low-paying jobs in the private sector, whether formal or informal. Though labor laws in some Arab countries do not explicitly discriminate against women, family laws and regulations intended to concede to women's special needs, including maternity leave and limits on working hours frequently discourage employers from hiring women⁸. Rates of MENA female engagement within the work force are the lowest in the world⁹. Young women face the highest unemployment rate of all groups with 41%. Overall the situation for women is particularly worrisome given that they only participate in labor markets in small numbers.

Women also on average, face more difficulties and obstacles in starting businesses, women empowerment is of utmost importance. The gender gap in entrepreneurship can be remedied, or at least reduced if targeted services for female entrepreneurs, with a particular focus on business information and peer-to-peer mentoring systems, were conducted.¹⁰

What Does Millennial Unemployment Mean?

The MENA millennials unemployment challenge is regional and also global. Listless youth are recruiting ground for extremists who can give them some meaning in their life. We cannot disassociate the growing number of youths from the region joining the ranks of global terror/

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extremist organizations from the high levels of unemployment. The lack social upward mobility and a profound sense of injustice push frustrated millennials to join the ranks of radical movements, as a mean to contest the status quo.

While the danger of revolution and lurch extremism have been the top concern, the biggest aftermath of lack of opportunity for employment has seen two trends- escalating rates of immigration and move towards volunteerism and social enterprise by the millennials.

Immigration

According to a recent survey conducted by Bayt.com on millennials in the Middle East and North Africa, 79% of millennials interviewed have expressed their willingness to relocate in another country to pursue their goals and career prospects. In Egypt, 79% of those interviewed and under 35 are willing to relocate, while numbers reached 80% in Morocco, 88% in Algeria, and 85% in Tunisia.¹¹ For North Africa millennials immigration is a top priority. North Africa has evolved into one of the world's leading "labor frontiers"¹² numbering **8 million** migrants, among which **4.7 million in Europe** and **2.4 million in Arab oil rich** countries.¹³ An annual migration of 200,000¹⁴ people is expected in the period between 2010 and 2020 from Southern Mediterranean Arab countries. This is creating serious big socio-political, economic and legal challenges for host countries (mainly Europe).

The result of these flows is that North African countries feature among the biggest receivers of overseas remittances worldwide.¹⁵ However, this immigration drains the region of its social capital and innovative skills that can help the region achieve the much needed development.

Entrepreneurship

The bleak employment prospects and the desire to shape their destiny has seen Millennials look to entrepreneurship as the future. In Egypt, entrepreneurship is seen as an attractive employment option by many youth. Just over half of all youth aged 15–29 said they would prefer to have their own business rather than working for pay. The preference for having a business was remarkably consistent across education, residency, and age. Despite those aspirations, figures indicate very low rates of entrepreneurship observed among young people, therefore entrepreneurship is only attractive in theory.¹⁶ But this could also be an indicator of presence of barriers to millennials entrepreneurship. These numbers have been confirmed by a recent survey conducted by Bayt.com on millennials, where 77% of those less than 35 years in Egypt prefer having their own business over being employed, as compared to 78% in Morocco, 70% in Algeria and 75% in Tunisia.¹⁷

All the same there is abundance entrepreneurial talent in MENA. Many millennial social entrepreneurs are pioneering new areas of focus, service delivery methods, or products across a wide range of sectors. These social entrepreneurs are responsible for many "firsts" in the region. Below are examples of their initiatives in the region.

Egypt - KARMSOLAR: Founded in 2011, by Ahmed Zahran, KarmSolar, winner of the Wharton University Innovation Tournament for 2012. KarmSolar has focus on the field of off grid solar innovations. KarmSolar managed in a short time to become one of the leading innovative companies in solar applications in Egypt. KarmSolar is converting diesel run operations within agriculture and industry to solar energy while making them cheaper, easier to use and economically sustainable. It is instructive that Zahran is also interested in the civil society in Egypt- he is a co-founder and a former board director of Nahdet El Mahrousa NGO that is currently one of the biggest Egyptian youth run NGOs working on youth development projects¹⁸. KarmSolar, Together with its architectural partner, Green Architecture & Urbanism, has been commissioned to create a proof-of-concept “model farm” within a larger farm in the western desert, some 200 miles from Cairo. Despite the dynamism of KarmSolar, the founder has lamented of lack of support by the government and made the point that “they are actually more of an obstacle”.¹⁹

Algeria - SmellNat – Agro food industry: This is a start-up of five young Algerian women including a chemical engineer and an electrical engineer, is a startup aimed at producing in-demand oils and bio antioxidants found naturally in abundance in Algeria. The team, made up of recent graduates Meriem Chiri, Nasma Bouchelkia, Ibtissem Hammouche, Saliha Moulfi, and Fatiha Haddou, met in school five years ago. Convincing local Algerian investors who are hesitant to support less experienced younger people has been SmellNat’s greatest challenge. As an all-female group, the SmellNat team has also had to overcome the challenge of a male-dominated entrepreneurial environment. The group now is an inspiration to other young women and to parents of potential female entrepreneurs.²⁰ Smellnat has already got 1 million Algerian Dinars (US\$ 12,700) as a winner of the Maghreb Startup Initiative.

Morocco - ANAROUZ : ANAROUZ is one of the first social enterprises in Morocco aiming to achieve sustainable women’s economic empowerment in some of the most impoverished regions of the country. Using a market based approach and a unique empowerment platform, Anarouz partners with women-led cooperatives and businesses to boost their profitability bringing sustainable incomes to their families and unleashing these women’s leadership in driving social and economic change in their communities.²¹ Manal Elattir (2822) is the founder and CEO of ANAROUZ. Before launching the enterprise, Manal was the director of the Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI) Alumni Network, a network of activists, politicians, entrepreneurs and civil society actors that worked in synergy to design and lead development initiatives in Morocco. She is also the founder of IMDAD, the first NGO to tackle social entrepreneurship for youth in the country. Manal is the new breed of entrepreneurs who have emigrated back from the west to bring positive change.

Tunisia - Saphon Energy : A Tunisian startup founded Anis Aouini, a Tunisian engineering university graduate. Saphon Energy that has developed a wind-powered energy system that also allows for effective storage of energy, enabling clients to potentially avoid the fluctuating costs of more traditional power sources. Saphon Energy was the Green Economy winner of Maghreb Startup Initiative Tunisia, receiving a prize of 10,000 Tunisian Dinars (US \$6,500).²³ Saphon is emblematic of the MENA millennials courage and passion in entrepreneurship as two of the directors (Hassine Labaied and Khalil Zouari) left very good jobs to join the startup.

The potential for entrepreneurship in MENA is huge but not without challenges. As Khalil one of the founders of Saphon Energy points out “..The Maghreb is a region with highly educated young people and a strategic position, near the European market ..”, “..but in order to create an attractive ecosystem for future entrepreneurs, the public and private sector have to sit together at the same table and rethink completely our educational model.”

Future Prospects

Paradoxically Northern Africa (and Southern Asia) stand out as the two regions with the biggest improvement in youth literacy rates between 1990 and 2008, with increases of 19% and 18%, respectively.²⁴ It has been pointed out that in many North African countries, educational attainment actually increases the risk of joblessness. For instance, the unemployment rates for those with tertiary²⁵ education are around 17.9% in Egypt (by Dec 2014)²⁶, over 22% in Morocco, 14% in Tunisia and over 11% in Algeria.²⁷

Some countries in the region, such as Tunisia, are characterized by over-qualified young people accepting relatively low wages and engaging in insecure jobs. In contrast, training systems in other countries, such as Egypt, struggle to deliver graduates with the necessary skills for finding productive jobs. The result is that many young people in the region are both over-qualified and

Lack of the right skills is at the heart of youth unemployment challenge. Thus, youth unemployment in MENA might take longer to recover due to the fact that educated youth may take a longer time to find a job that matches their skills.

under-qualified for available positions compared to countries in other regions at similar levels of development. According to the World Bank's Enterprise Surveys, labor skill levels are recognized to be one of the key constraints in Egypt (31%).²⁸

Lack of the right skills is at the heart of youth unemployment challenge. Thus, youth unemployment in MENA might take longer to recover due to the fact that educated youth may take a longer time to find a job that matches their skills.

All the same, there are trends which can catalyze the movement towards transformation that can provide the jobs needed by the millennials. Such as regional/Global initiatives supporting job creation. For instance, the partnership with the Social Good initiative headed by the UN Foundation, United Nations Development Program (UNDP), Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, The Case Foundation & Mashable, **Al-Mubadarah: Arab Empowerment** Initiative hosted the MENA+ SocialGood²⁹ 2014 Global Virtual Interactive Summit titled “Youth: Creating & Shaping Our Future”. The summit focused on how entrepreneurship is creating a space for innovation and problem-solving with youth at the forefront of driving change and development.

Looking Ahead

In a globalized world, it not clear whether proliferation of social enterprises can lead to global competitiveness. There are challenges with scalability and sustainability of social enterprises. Social entrepreneurship has its limitations and should not be perceived as a panacea for tackling development challenges. As social entrepreneurs, need engagement and support from both the government and the corporate sector in adopting their innovations on a larger scale. NA has witnessed an acceleration of social entrepreneurship among millennials in the recent years. However, those initiatives need to create synergies among themselves, as well as access to support by the private sector and official bodies.

The skills gained here can be valuable for profit business more so because skill developed can be crucial in opening up new markets that were not explored before. A more sustainable approach will be greater involvement of big businesses though inclusive business models. **Collaboration of big business with emerging social enterprises will lead to more inclusive business landscape that can sustainable tap the energies of the millennials and effect the much needed social change.**



Global Social Entrepreneurs – The MENA Millennials Social Entrepreneurs Heroes

Government can also do more to help nascent social enterprise being nurtured by the millennials; to scale beyond local causes the MENA millennials can be encouraged to venture out and advance their social entrepreneurship with the greater world. Foresighted governments or development agencies in MENA can start channeling Aid through social enterprise and recruit the millennials to be their goodwill ambassadors much like America has used the Peace Corps programs to help its youth expand their world views to develop important social skills that later become useful as they venture into employment and business.

MENA as the Global Education and Innovation Hub

Some countries within MENA have put great efforts on developing innovation and education hubs. In Qatar we have the Qatar Education City which hosts a number

The investment in developing innovation hubs in the region is one of the paths for millennials to put their skills and knowledge to use for developing their societies.

of world class universities, Masdar Institute is setting itself as a cutting edge innovation.

The investment in developing innovation hubs in the region is one of the paths for millennials to put their skills and knowledge to use for developing their societies.

Masdar Institute of Science and Technology is the world's first graduate-level university dedicated to providing real-world solutions to issues of sustainability. It was created in collaboration with the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) aiming to become a world-class research-driven graduate-level university, focusing on advanced energy and sustainable technologies. It is located in the Masdar City in Abu Dhabi, the capital of the United Arab Emirates. Within its campus, Masdar Institute is establishing an educational environment, a culture of R&D excellence, and ties with government and industry that are essential to fostering indigenous innovation, human capital and knowledge development, and a spirit of entrepreneurship and global competitiveness. Masdar Institute integrates theory and practice to incubate a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship, working to develop the critical thinkers and leaders of tomorrow seeking to be a leading renewable energy and clean technology player, by providing a test bed for the world to develop commercially viable and sustainable energy solutions, facilitating applied research for the four corporate arms of its allied Masdar group and the UAE as a whole.³⁰ These centers are putting the millennials in MENA in easy reach to cutting edge technologies and are likely to spur innovation in MENA and to create new opportunities for the millennials.

With the right incentives, the establishment of global education and innovation hubs in the region will likely reverse the brain drain trend³¹ by spurring the return of experts from the region. With new skills and new insights into how to make things work they will be what is needed to make these new hub truly transformative. It is instructive that the India's global beating ICT hubs (Hyderabad, Chennai etc) were set up with the return of Indian's expatriates who had worked in Silicon valley and other global innovation centers. These are rapidly becoming global centers of innovation in their own right attracting leading multi-Nationals to set up their innovation labs there.

Innovation hubs and MENA Millennials

Innovation hubs are playing an important role in shaping the technology and corporate scene in Arab countries in the MENA region. They are being set up in an increasing number of cities in Cairo, Tunis, Abu Dhabi, Doha and others, acting as magnets for local IT and creative industries in the region. The emergence of these innovation hubs is an expression of the growing local IT and creative industries in North African countries, where they provide physical space for local internet and IT communities, entrepreneurs and startups and creative minds. These hubs support local innovative developments by running incubation and mentoring programs, events and training, and provision of internet access and office equipment.³²

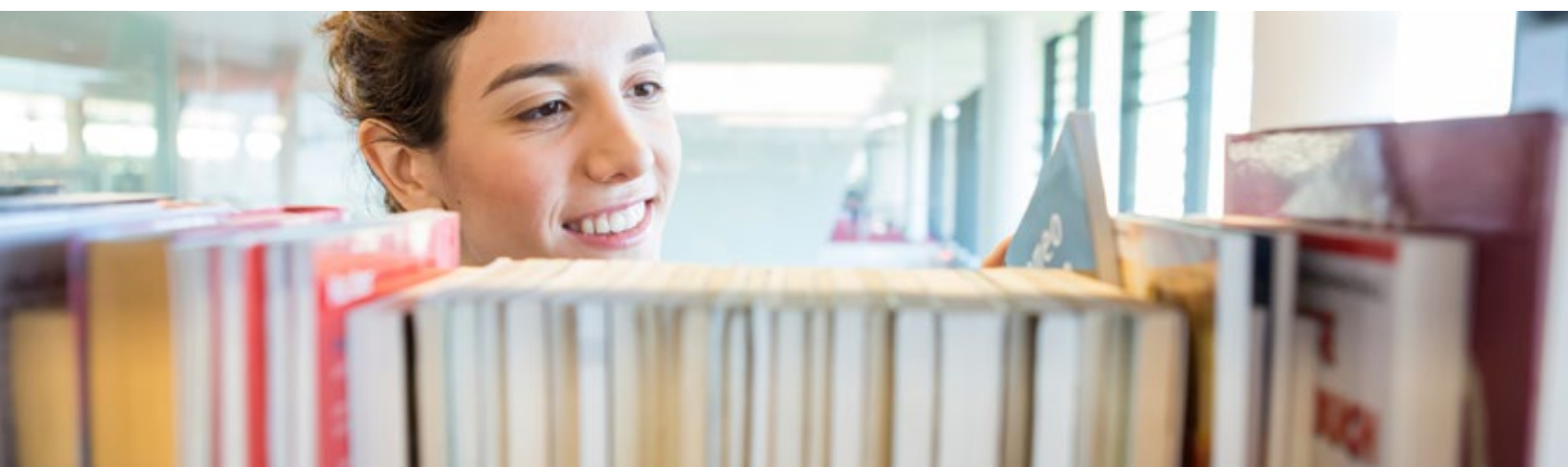
It goes without saying that the millennials with their tech savviness, their strong networking skills honed by social media and strong entrepreneurial bend are more likely to create their jobs in the future. And much like the baby boomer generation created the Silicon Valley, they will develop new innovations hubs.

As of 2009, **the World Innovation Summit for Education (WISE)** began as a little-known conference centered on debating issues surrounding education and innovation, it has brought together decision makers, influential experts and practitioners at an annual Summit in Doha, to explore groundbreaking innovations and take concrete steps to make significant improvements to worldwide education. Each year, the Summit convenes under a specific theme. With leaders from 90 countries, WISE has quickly expanded into the premier global platform and innovation hub. WISE is an international, multi-sectoral platform for creative thinking, debate and purposeful action. It has established itself as a global reference in new approaches to education. Through both the annual Summit and a range of ongoing programs WISE is promoting innovation and building the future of education through collaboration. WISE initiatives include the WISE accelerator, grants for projects around the world, an impactful online publication, and the WISE Learners' Voice, a program which connects with the very students the program is trying to reach.³

WISE has launched an education hub “**ed.hub**” to help practitioners share their knowledge and experience, building bridges between challenges and solutions. The ed.hub is a platform where experts and practitioners support each other by engaging in conversations on particular education issues. It allows thinkers and doers to connect and explore new collaborations and partnerships to tackle educational challenges. It also showcases innovative projects and successful practices that have had a transformative impact on education and societies that cover a variety of fields, a wide range of sectors and all regions of the world including the MENA region.³⁴

The MENA Universities Summit an event that forms part of a growing annual Times Higher Education world summit series, under the umbrella of the biannual THE World Academic Summit, which also includes the THE Young Universities Summit and the THE BRICS and Emerging Economies Summit. It features a consultation on proposals for a new Times Higher Education MENA University Ranking, featuring a bespoke range of metrics for the region, as well as sessions on university leadership, international research collaboration, industry-university collaboration and teaching excellence.

Phil Baty, editor of the Times Higher Education World University Rankings, said: “Times Higher Education, with its record of over 40 years of incisive journalism and its growing range of authoritative performance metrics and university rankings, has become the leading source of intelligence and insight on higher education and research globally. So we are delighted to be able to bring together, **in partnership with Qatar University**, some of the world’s most exciting thinkers – across teaching, research, business and policymaking – for high-level debate, sharing best practice and networking under our prestigious summit series. The Middle East has a dynamic and exciting higher education, research and innovation sector, with huge challenges but also huge opportunities. With some countries in the region becoming exciting global hubs for international students and making a serious investment in building research infrastructure, and with mounting evidence of serious pockets of research excellence emerging in key fields in the region, there is room for optimism that we are witnessing an exciting knowledge-fuelled revival for the region.”³⁵



Innovation hubs in Egypt

Flat6Labs Cairo fosters and invests in bright and passionate Egyptian entrepreneurs with cutting-edge ideas. Launched in 2011 as the first Flat6Labs office in the MENA region, Flat6Labs Cairo supports and encourages entrepreneurs throughout the critical first steps of development. Essentially, it helps each startup define their product, develop their core value propositions, construct a well-balanced business plan, and commercialize their enterprise in order to receive follow-on funding. By the end of the 4 months period, Flat6Labs Cairo holds a Demo Day event, where teams are given the opportunity to showcase their products to potential investors and the media.³⁶

One of the most impressive **Flat6Labs** startups that worked on enhancing education systems in the Middle East is “**Nafham**”, it is a free online K-12 crowd sourced educational platform linked to the mandated public curriculum. Nafham provides 5 to 20 minutes crowd sourced videos which are revised by professionals. Videos are explaining concepts usually taken in class using different approaches, making it easier for students to understand them. These videos are categorized by grade, subject, term and academic schedule which make the curriculum easier for students to navigate through it and get the lessons they want in seconds. The platform currently has more than 23,000 videos cover the following countries, Egypt, KSA, Algeria, Kuwait, Syria. In addition to the school curriculum, “**Taleem Horr / Free Education**” department comes to offer a number of public courses unrelated to formal education, in the basics and principles of different areas to enrich and develop the skills and knowledge of the community.³⁷

PlugandPlayEgypt is a Silicon Valley-linked company accelerator program, in partnership with Plugand PlayTechCenter, an incubator with 280+ technology start-ups in Silicon Valley. The PlugandPlayEgypt program includes facilities and connectivity, targeted mentorship, seed capital and support, as well as access to international networks.³⁸

Tahrir2 (“Tahrir squared”), is a tech-focused accelerator based in Alexandria, testing often and fostering development in stages is a central part of its plan to help Egyptian startups become autonomous. **Tahrir2** has been launched directly after the revolution, in April, 2011, the accelerator is led by Samer El Sahn, the former CEO of eSpace, one of Egypt’s most well-known software development houses, and Mohamad Gawadat, the Managing Director of Eastern and Emerging Europe, Africa, and the Middle East at Google.³⁹

Innovation hubs in Tunisia

WIKI start up: a group of Tunisian veteran entrepreneurs and angel investors who are willing to use their expertise, know-how and large network for the benefit of the entrepreneurs' community. The idea behind the launch of Wiki Start Up (WSU), the first Tunisian private business incubator, comes from the ambition to enrich a burgeoning ecosystem of entrepreneurship and innovation in Tunisia. WSU simplifies the process of launching startups namely for talented entrepreneurs by offering them the resources and assistance they need to achieve their goals. ⁴⁰

Given that most of the hubs set out in NA have mostly emerged in the past few years, it is still too early to tell how successful they will be in the future. Most of these hubs share the same challenges of limited resources, reliance on funding by donors and governance struggles, and most of them are seeking partnerships with both public and private institutions. However, once these challenges are addressed, and with continued collaboration amongst stakeholders, these hubs are expected to have a strong impact in transforming the MENA region through grassroots innovation and entrepreneurship.

Way Forward

The Arab Human Development Report of 2002 has identified ways forward to building the capabilities of MENA region in providing the needed employment in the future. Ironically, the propositions of the report still hold today, despite all the complex transitions in the region since 2011.⁴⁰ All future strategies for tackling unemployment issues need to focus on the following:

- Using and generating knowledge. Millennials are the most qualified to play that role in the future
- Enabling the private sector to partner with civil society and innovation hubs
- Utilizing the knowledge and skilled MENA expatriates either in the destination countries or their original countries to support the initiatives and innovations of the Millennials
- Regional economic cooperation among MENA countries

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3. THE MILLENNIALS AND THE FUTURE OF ARTS AND CULTURE IN MENA

Change is driven by culture as this shapes worldviews and motivations. The millennials are charting their own culture which while rooted in the Arab culture and Islam is borrowing from elsewhere and creating its own flavors and also unleashing new kinds of creativity and energy that promises to change the trajectory of the region.

The MENA millennials are slowly creating a new narrative in the region through music, theatre and literature.

The youth and millennials of North Africa have resorted to different forms of youth expressive cultures and media spaces even before the eruption of the Arab Spring in 2011. It can be traced back to a movement of transforming physical spaces to multi-cultural platforms for youth creativity. Those spaces have become hubs for cultural exchange outside the parameters of official institutions and the main stream cultural scene.

In Morocco in 2000, a group of associations and young artists convinced local authorities in Casablanca to transform a former Slaughterhouse, known to all as Lbattoir (French Aboittoirs) into a space for celebrating young artistic talents. They succeeded in converting the space into one of the first and finest cultural sites in the Arab world for cultivating, showcasing and celebrating young urban cultures. Since, the same roof has brought together young talents in fine arts, visual and sound arts, performing arts, street arts and much more. New possibilities and initiatives have been created to unlock the imagination of hundreds of children. Round tables, workshops and art sessions have been organized to introduce even younger generations to the art of expression and the power of communicating it.¹

In Egypt in 2003, El Sawy Culturewheel (Sakia) was founded as the first privately owned cultural center in Egypt, and in its twelve years of existence it became a hub and hangout for young Egyptians, foreign residents and visitors, where it provides space and an enabling environment for citizens to enjoy the arts and to make more informed choices which will lead to systemic and positive cultural and social change.

The Sakia has been described as the Hyde Park of Egypt, providing a speaker's corner in a culture where youth are usually silenced and discouraged from speaking their minds. The Sakia is a pioneer in raising social awareness and instilling behavioral changes that encourage the community to become more conscientious and adopt ethical values. Initiatives such as these and many more are redefining the meaning of youth cultures, protest and communication in North Africa.

In addition to this enabling environment, social media has created a global millennials community and allowed flows of ideas and exchange of views; thus, creating new culture and new awareness that are setting the millennials apart from other generations. In Social media that have found a medium that is away from control traditional authorities parents, society and the governments. Which has expanded exponential access to information and cultures. The same media has also given them a voice to express themselves. It was the posting of a YouTube video of a hip hop song that galvanized the political events leading the Jasmine Revolution in Tunisia.

MENA Hip Hop is probably the best expression of the millennials reshaping of the culture of the region. But much as they have borrowed hip hop from American it seems it is the style, only. While Hip Hop in America is about praising materialism and laden vulgar and misogyny messages, the MENA hip hop address social issues.² Tunisian rapper El General's song "Rais Lebled" (Head of State) deals with the corruption and poverty of young people in Tunisia. The song became the anthem of the Jasmine Revolution, similar

Using Hip Hop, millennials are fighting back against autocrats. Rappers are risking imprisonment to speak up for the disenfranchised and try to bring change to the Middle East.

to how "Yankee Doodle" was America's anthem during the Revolutionary War.³ Using Hip Hop, millennials are fighting back against autocrats. Rappers are risking imprisonment to speak up for the disenfranchised and try

to bring change to the Middle East. In Algeria, Rabah Ourrad one of the country's lead rappers, built his popularity on "breaking silence" around the leaders' corruption, greed and nepotism. Years prior to the recent revolutions that swept through North Africa and the Middle East, Moroccan youth political dissent transpired through the vibrant cultural movement known as the Nayda, or the Moroccan Movidia as others call it. Rappers like H-Kayne, Zanka Flow, Hoba Hoba Spirit, and Bigg, are among many who captured the attention of the young generation in ways no political party or ideological current could.⁴

Beyond fighting for greater rights and justice, Hip hop is addressing some of the many challenges in the region as can be seen from a quote from one of the leading hip hop artiste "...A suicide bomber thinks that when he blows himself up, he is going to change something. But the political machine just keeps going," says Chyno, drawing comparisons between a disgruntled worker who quits his job, thinking he is going to change the whole company but then is just replaced.⁵ The DAM trio has also repeatedly condemned extremism and violence—by both sides—even as their songs try to explain the context in which suicide bombing takes place. The rappers are countering the message of extremists in a media that is probably more effective than the usual cookie cutter condemnation that comes from governments and religious leaders after an incident and air strikes.

Millennials are using the same medium to defend and express their faith. As Moroccan, rapper, Soultana raps in one of her songs: ⁶

*“They said we are terrorists because we are Muslims,
Because one criminal did it wrong in the name of Islam.
Our Islam is peace, love, respect.
We are the generation calling for peace.*

Many rappers are surprisingly observant of the Islam faith, Soultana often takes a break if the muezzin issues the call to prayer while she is performing.



Hip Hop has joined MENA millennials living in the region and MENA millennials in the diaspora creating a fusion in music and culture that represents both traditions and values. The exemplar of this future is the hip-hop artist Omar Offendum. Born in Saudi Arabia to Syrian parents and raised in the Washington, D.C., area, hip-hop artist Omar Offendum uses his lyrical talents to bridge his Middle Eastern roots to his Western upbringing. He has gained considerable following in the MENA a testament that this fusion is real,⁷ even women have found voice in this medium and have been able to challenge conservative males on values religion and the role of woman in MENA.

Millennials’ attempts to express their cultural and artistic voice remain persistent, even after the 2011. Since the fall of Mubarak, Egypt has seen a proliferation of cultural initiatives which attempt to develop its contemporary culture – its art, literature, and music – as a means of interpreting the ambiguous legacy of the Arab Spring and understanding the present political uncertainty. Fostering the concept of expression and creative discourse is The Freedom Bus. This is an initiative that brings together volunteers from a myriad of social strata, including artists, NGOs and free thinkers – all travelling on a bus to visit different towns, villages and cities around Egypt. The idea is to provide an outlet for thought and a forum for discussion surrounding current social and political issues in Egypt, discussing possible solutions and methods to overcome them. Another initiative born out of the revolution is Film Collective Mosireen, which recently launched its new project, The Right of: a series of videos focusing on social issues in Egypt. The videos deliver a poignant message to both Egypt’s citizens and to outsiders, capturing both the positives and negatives of the country encouraging the necessary changes to be made. Issues covered have included housing, healthcare and labour strikes.

As well as its social campaigning, Mosireen organizes weekly screenings of films relating to social movements around the world, and offers filmmaking workshops to aspiring creatives. Mosireen lends itself as a workspace for filmmaking and editing, offering its meeting rooms for discussion and collaboration. It is an independent organization and depends entirely upon contributions and donations to keep its projects going.⁸

Music has been a key pillar of Arab cultural expression and it is now being adopted as a force for change. The Mini-Mobile Concert is an initiative in Alexandria, Egypt which aims to bring underground art and music to the streets of Egypt. This music will have a message; it will center on change. Similarly, The Nile Project works with musicians from the Nile region to curate cross-cultural collaborative musical dialogues. The idea is to build important social

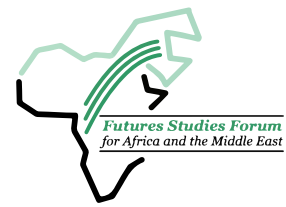
The millennials world views are now largely shaped by access to internet. The internet has helped the MENA millennials across the globe to forge a more cosmopolitan class that can transcend sectarianism that run deep the political and religious life of MENA.

connections among those residing along the river, in order to address and overcome the environmental challenges affecting the Nile and water consumption in Egypt. The Nile is a vital source of water for the country and a strategy is required to ensure that the best use is made of this supply.⁹

The millennials world views are now largely shaped by access to internet. The internet has helped the MENA millennials across the globe to forge a more cosmopolitan class that can transcend sectarianism that run deep the political and religious life of MENA.

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9. Egypt's Cultural Revolution: The Legacy of the Arab Spring, <http://theculturetrip.com/africa/egypt/articles/egypt-s-cultural-revolution-the-legacy-of-the-arab-spring/>



WHO WE ARE

North Africa Horizons is a publication of Futures Studies Forum for Africa and the Middle East (FSF), supported by Rockefeller Foundation.

FSF is a non-governmental regional organization aiming at connecting North Africa with its mother continent, and developing a common shared vision for Africa's future. Focusing on re-building connections and defining areas for future development interventions and cooperation between North Africa, Sub-Saharan Africa and the MENA region. Through conducting futures studies and facilitating knowledge sharing. For more information see: <http://www.foresightfordevelopment.org/ssf/all-pages>

This bulletin is the second quarterly publication of FSF. It is a globally- oriented, transdisciplinary periodical. Its mission is to monitor evolving trends and emerging issues in North Africa. Based on insights, scanning activities, alongside secondary research and experts' interviews. The ultimate objective is to define areas for driving change and cooperation in the region.

NORTH AFRICA HORIZONS

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