

GENERATION IN  
**WAITING**

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*The Unfulfilled Promise of  
Young People in the Middle East*

NAVTEJ DHILLON

TARIK YOUSEF

*editors*

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## *Foreword*

STROBE TALBOTT

*President, Brookings Institution*

The 2009 inauguration, and leadership transition in the United States, has brought with it the promise of new energy and a change in U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East. Under President Barack Obama, U.S. policy in the Middle East is no longer dominated by the “war on terror.” Instead, a new relationship is being defined on the basis of mutual respect and partnership, as the president outlined in his speech to the Muslim world at Cairo University in June 2009. Along with the traditional focus on diplomacy and defense, this partnership promises to elevate economic development in the Middle East, promoting education, employment, and economic growth.

At Brookings, we believe that this approach holds the potential to both further prosperity in the Middle East and secure U.S. strategic interests. One of the least understood features of the Middle East is that it is the youngest region in the world, with a majority of its population under the age of thirty. Unfortunately, too many young men and women remain trapped by low-quality education and unemployment, growing vulnerable to poverty and exclusion. As these challenges grow, the United States should reaffirm its commitment to promoting economic development across the Middle East.

The convergence of American and Middle Eastern interests in social and economic development is not new. The export of American higher education to the region, for example, has contributed to the rise of prominent academic institutions—such as the American Universities of Beirut and Cairo—which have produced many of the region’s leaders. Today, strong demographic pressures and an increasingly competitive global economy call for deeper and sustained cooperation between the United States and the

Middle East in building human capital and expanding opportunities for ordinary people.

*Generation in Waiting*, edited by Navtej Dhillon and Tarik Yousef, is the latest demonstration of our commitment at Brookings to playing our part in charting this course. This book provides a comprehensive analysis of the economic challenges confronting Middle Eastern societies and their young citizens. The work of the Middle East Youth Initiative is part of an ambitious and progressive portfolio of research advanced by the Wolfensohn Center for Development at Brookings and the Dubai School of Government. The Initiative focuses on promoting the economic and social inclusion of young people in the Middle East.

As policymakers in the United States establish new strategies of American engagement in the Middle East, *Generation in Waiting* brings a number of important and timely issues to the fore that often are left out of foreign policy debates. For example, in Iran, understanding the pressures that young people exert on the education system and labor markets helps us gain a better picture of the internal dynamics between the country's current regime and its citizens. In the Palestinian Territories, we can recognize that a solution to the conflict must entail a viable economic plan that responds to the needs of a growing young population. Finally, this volume's stark depiction of life in Yemen, one of the poorest countries in the Middle East, reveals a population on the brink and one that is in severe need of greater development assistance.

The Middle East Youth Initiative's in-depth research on the state of young people in the region must be taken into careful consideration in our quest to preempt future security risks in the region and to seek peace in the Middle East. By working with our partners in the Middle East, the United States can help create a brighter future for current and future generations and begin to restore those invaluable qualities of leadership, credibility, and compassion to the American image in the Muslim world.

## *Foreword*

H.E. DR. ANWAR MOHAMMED GARGASH

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Successful and progressive societies are defined by their ability to improve the quality of life for every successive generation. The Middle East faces a momentous challenge to ensure that today's youth and children, the largest segment of the population, have more opportunities than their parents and are able to contribute fully to the region's stability and prosperity.

Over the last four decades, many countries in the region have made impressive human development gains, paving the way for healthier and more educated generations. However, rather than emerging as an empowered generation, too many young lives in the countries discussed here are locked in a frustrating state of dependence on their families and governments. *Generation in Waiting* captures these trends. As this book argues, the quality of education in the region is often low, leaving young people unprepared to compete in the global economy. Young job seekers endure high rates of unemployment and long periods of waiting before securing employment. Furthermore, young people are experiencing deteriorating job quality as many of them start their careers in informal, low-wage jobs. In turn, young people are unable to allocate enough financial resources to marriage, family formation, and independent living.

Over time, policymakers across the region have come to recognize these problems, and many programs and policies have been established to target such obstacles. Higher education in the West Bank and Gaza has adapted creatively to a difficult security environment. Al-Quds Open University, for example, now provides distance learning to approximately 46,000 Palestinian students, making it the largest higher education institution in the West

Bank and Gaza. In Jordan, education reforms are changing curriculum and teaching methods to equip young Jordanians with a broad range of skills. In Egypt, early evidence shows that housing policy reforms have made it easier for young men to afford rental apartments and, therefore, cover one of the principal costs of marriage.

While such initiatives demonstrate real achievements, no country in the Middle East, despite unprecedented recent economic expansion, can claim to have sufficiently addressed the fundamental challenges facing its young citizens. Middle Eastern countries need to reform the basic institutions, which all too often work against the interests of young people. These reforms include: modernizing education systems so students gain relevant skills; expanding the private sector as the engine of job creation; curtailing and reducing the appeal of public sector employment so young workers avoid spending years waiting for government jobs; improving financial markets so young people can access credit to start businesses or purchase homes; and encouraging young people to contribute to society through civic participation.

Today, as Middle Eastern economies are coping with an ailing global economy, we fear that young people will bear the costs of the current downturn. The region's youth unemployment rates are already among the highest in the world, and with the slowdown in growth, young people's employment prospects risk worsening. While a tough economic environment might make reforms more difficult, policy responses pursued by Middle Eastern countries during the downturn will determine whether their young citizens will be able to exploit opportunities when the global economy recovers. Thus, it is critical that countries double their efforts to create a skilled and entrepreneurial work force and to expand the role of the private sector while reducing the appeal of public employment.

Given the changing economic landscape and the need to better understand the lives of young people, this volume, edited by Navtej Dhillon and Tarik Yousef, makes a timely contribution. Since 2006 the Middle East Youth Initiative, a joint program of the Wolfensohn Center for Development at the Brookings Institution and the Dubai School of Government, has collaborated with some of the best scholars across the region to illuminate the complex economic challenges faced by young people.

By bringing together perspectives spanning the Middle East, *Generation in Waiting* provides a truly regional picture of how young people are coming of age. It not only portrays their current plight, but also makes the case for better policies if the Middle East is to avoid squandering its most valuable resource.

## ABOUT THE MIDDLE EAST YOUTH INITIATIVE

The Middle East Youth Initiative (MEYI) is a joint project of the Wolfensohn Center for Development at the Brookings Institution and the Dubai School of Government. The first policy research program of its kind, MEYI is devoted to promoting the economic and social inclusion of youth in the Middle East. The initiative's main objective is to accelerate the regional policy community's ability to better understand and respond to the changing needs of young people in the region. By creating an international alliance of academics, policymakers, and youth leaders from the private sector and civil society, MEYI aims to develop and promote a progressive policy agenda.

The Middle East Youth Initiative has embarked on a new partnership with Silatech—a regional initiative funded by Her Highness Sheikha Mozah bint Nasser Al-Missned of Qatar—that seeks to promote large-scale job creation, entrepreneurship, and access to capital and markets for young people. The Middle East Youth Initiative and Silatech will work toward generating solutions in critical youth areas by promoting new knowledge, innovation, and learning across borders.

The Wolfensohn Center for Development at the Brookings Institution was founded in July 2006 by James D. Wolfensohn, former president of the World Bank and a member of the Brookings Board of Trustees. The Center analyzes how resources, knowledge, and implementation capabilities can be combined toward broad-based economic and social change.

The Dubai School of Government is a research and teaching institution focusing on public policy in the Arab world. Established in 2005 under the patronage of H. H. Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, vice president and prime minister of the United Arab Emirates and ruler of Dubai, the school aims to promote good governance by enhancing the region's capacity for effective public policy.



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## *Introduction*

The Middle East has been characterized as being in the grip of two great games.<sup>1</sup> In the first game, the interests of Middle Eastern nations and western powers intersect to shape geopolitics. The second game—less visible in our daily headlines—involves people and governments trying to advance economic development. But today, a third game, even less well understood, is being played out in the Middle East. This is the *generational game* in which the largest youth cohort in the Middle East’s modern history is striving for prosperity and thereby shaping politics.

In recent years, the Middle East has come to be defined by a series of dichotomies: democracy versus authoritarianism; Islam versus secularism; and economically successful versus stagnant. No matter what the fault lines, they all share a generational dimension. It is the young who are pressing against existing economic, political, and religious institutions and norms and forging new ones. This generational game is unfolding in a competitive global economy where young people in the Middle East seek the affluence and openness enjoyed by their peers in other parts of the world.

Over the past two decades, the demographic transition in the region has resulted in a young working-age population that is now the most important resource for Middle Eastern economies. Generally, a large working-age population, and proportionally fewer dependent children and retirees, can free up resources and increase savings, creating better economic and social outcomes. In this regard, there has been tremendous progress: the high mortality and illiteracy rates of past generations have given way to a gener-

ation that is healthier and more educated. There have been large gains in more equitable distribution of education between women and men.

However, development in the Middle East is proving uneven, bypassing the majority of young people. Previous generations benefited from free education, public sector job guarantees, and strong state support in the form of subsidies and entitlements. But for those born in the 1980s and later, these institutions, which once ensured intergenerational equity and social justice, are no longer working. The severity of demographic pressures have strained public sector employment and subsidized education systems. Even if these institutions could accommodate the youth bulge, they are not well suited in a world where innovation and entrepreneurship are the drivers of economic growth. As a result, young people in the Middle East are falling further behind their peers in other parts of the world, such as East Asia.

Today in the Middle East, education systems are failing to provide relevant skills, and labor market prospects for young workers are deteriorating. Young women are gaining more education but face widespread exclusion from the labor market. Delayed marriage is becoming a common phenomenon in some countries as young people face obstacles to family formation posed by unemployment, high costs of marriage, and lack of access to affordable housing. Together, these deficits are weakening economic mobility for current and future generations.

With this book, it is our objective to promote a better understanding of the material struggles of young people, which are bound up in larger questions about the Middle East's economic development and politics. This volume brings together perspectives from eight countries to analyze how young people are transitioning to adulthood and to elucidate how institutions are shaping these transitions. Our hope is that this volume will be viewed not within the narrow context of demography or security but rather within a larger agenda of inclusive development in the Middle East. The ultimate goal is to convince policymakers that reforms that tackle the disadvantages of younger age groups can potentially reduce the inequities that exist across income and gender.

## Choosing a Framework to Study Young Lives

A number of theoretical frameworks have been used to analyze the lives of young people in different countries and regions. The most common are the neoclassical economic framework of human capital formation and the sociodemographic framework of life course.<sup>2</sup> The former stresses the impor-

tance of education and skills of young workers and their contribution to productivity and growth. The latter considers individual transitions and trajectories and their relationship to institutions and historical periods.<sup>3</sup> In addition, the concept of *social exclusion* has been adopted to understand the factors that prevent certain groups from fully participating in the normatively prescribed activities of the society in which they live.<sup>4</sup>

More recently, international organizations have put forth policy frameworks. The World Bank's *World Development Report* of 2007 highlights the opportunities for accelerated economic growth and poverty reduction that can occur when policies and institutions that influence the human capital development of youth are strengthened.<sup>5</sup> A report by the National Research Council in the United States focuses on the extent to which rapidly changing global forces affect youth transitions in developing countries, specifically the transitions to five key adult roles: adult worker, citizen and community participant, spouse, parent, and household head.<sup>6</sup>

In this volume, we build on these frameworks, taking the most relevant aspects of each and applying them to the Middle East. Three major features of our framework are as follows. First, we depart from the traditional approach of studying facets of young people's lives, such as education or employment, separately. Instead, we assess three major interdependent transitions: education, employment, and family formation. Here we pay special attention to marriage where possible, given the availability of data, because social norms in the Middle East make the transition to family formation critical to full social inclusion.

Second, we recognize that individual transitions and trajectories are part of a life course, which is often shaped by the history, economy, politics, and culture of Middle Eastern countries. Events, time, and geography, as well as the agency of individuals, modify and influence transitions. This realization leads us to recognize how life courses have varied across historical periods and national contexts.

Finally, throughout this volume, we stress the importance of institutions and the incentives they generate in influencing young people's transitions. We define institutions as rules and regulations that govern the education system; markets for labor, credit, and housing; and nonmarket institutions such as social norms.

Through this framework, it is our hope that policymakers and future researchers will see the lives of young people in a more interconnected way and recognize that young lives are institutionally patterned. In using this framework, this book marshals the best available data and evidence to elu-

cidate the lives of young people. While it contributes to a better understanding, it also exposes the limitations of our knowledge given the lack of high quality and available data in the Middle East.

### Generation in Waiting: Structure of the Volume

This volume contributes to the growing interest in young people as they relate to development policy and practice. The chapters that follow attempt to provide a comprehensive assessment of the three major transitions of young people in eight Middle East countries.

In chapter one, Navtej Dhillon, Paul Dyer, and Tarik Yousef place the transitions of young people in a larger historical context, arguing that the challenges facing young people today in the Middle East did not exist a generation ago. They argue that previous generations faced a *traditional life course*, prevalent in mostly rural Middle Eastern societies, where the transition to adulthood was mediated by family and the community. An expanded role of state institutions between the 1950s and the 1980s paved the way for the *welfare life course*, where governments provided education, employment, and protection for citizens. Young people born since the beginning of the 1980s have faced a weakening welfare life course while at the same time a new life course has not yet fully emerged.

The authors provide a synthesis of how young people's transitions have become more complex and uncertain. While high demographic pressures and volatile economic growth have undermined the prospects of young people, Dhillon, Dyer, and Yousef emphasize the central role that existing institutions have also played in hindering economic development for the young.

In chapter two, Djavad Salehi-Isfahani and Daniel Egel posit that the discontent of young Iranians is receiving much attention from outsiders but that the understanding of the economic and social environment shaping their lives is limited. They present a detailed picture of Iran's fertility boom and bust from the 1970s to the 1980s that has paved the way for a youth bulge. In 1995 Iran had 13 million residents aged 15 to 29; this population is set to peak in 2010 at 20 million. Iran's reduction in fertility now presents the country with a "demographic gift" that can drive economic growth.

A foundation for human capital development is already in place in Iran. Salehi-Isfahani and Egel show that average years of schooling have doubled in a generation. However, young Iranians confront a highly competitive and exclusionary education system, where students compete to win the "university lottery." Once out of school, young Iranians confront unemployment

and long waiting times for a first job. Transitions to employment are hampered by a rigid labor market that is ill prepared to absorb a labor force expanding by 3 to 4 percent a year. Faced with bleak employment prospects and high costs of marriage, young Iranians are forced to delay marriage and remain dependent on their families.

Salehi-Isfahani and Egel argue that the postrevolution “social contract” must be reformed and that the most severe necessity for this reform emanates from the large youth population and its continued exclusion. Some steps in this direction have been taken: the size of public sector employment has declined; public sector payroll freezes have been implemented; and recent changes in the 1990 labor law exempted small and medium-size firms from restrictions on hiring and firing. But there is still a way to go before Iran’s education, labor, and marriage institutions can change to take advantage of the country’s demographic gift.

In chapter three, Ragui Assaad and Ghada Barsoum show that the transitions of young Egyptians are being shaped by the recent changes in Egypt’s economic and social environment. Starting in 2004, an economic revival led to a drop in unemployment rates. However, poverty levels remain unchanged because of the rapid growth of low productivity and nonwage employment. Young workers have been most affected by these changes, enduring the lowest earnings and the slowest increase in real earnings.

Assaad and Barsoum identify access and quality as two major challenges facing the education system. Young girls in Upper Egypt and youth from low socioeconomic backgrounds are highly vulnerable to early school dropout and nonenrollment. They identify the Egyptian labor market as grappling with three trends: it is increasingly young, has more females entering the labor market, and is made up of highly educated job seekers. As the youth bulge peaks, the number of new entrants in the labor market increased from 400,000 per year in the late 1970s to around 850,000 per year in the early 2000s. Assaad and Barsoum conclude by assessing the effectiveness of recent education and labor market reforms.

In chapter four, Edward Sayre and Samia Al-Botmeh turn our attention to the acute rupture between demographics and development in the West Bank and Gaza: a rapidly growing youth population with diminishing economic prospects. Sayre and Al-Botmeh posit that in the past Palestinian workers had two main sources of employment. Israel once provided a third of all Palestinian jobs, but in recent years the Israeli labor market has been closed to Palestinian workers. In addition, Palestinians once migrated to the Gulf States for work, but those jobs are now dominated by South Asian

migrant workers. As a result, young Palestinians face a protracted transition to employment. Highly educated Palestinians face diminishing prospects: the unemployment rate for 20- to 24-year-old university-educated men stands at 36 percent in the West Bank and 64 percent in Gaza.

Sayre and Al-Botmeh conclude that the public sector and international aid cannot create sufficient opportunities to absorb the burgeoning youth population. Fiscal strains will eventually force the Palestinian Authority to curb the expansion of its already large public sector, and no amount of aid can single-handedly stimulate growth and development. The authors underline the importance of lifting restrictions on the Palestinian economy and allowing freer movement of goods and labor into and out of the Palestinian Territories. In the absence of these preconditions being met and maintained, young Palestinians will be confined to a grim future.

In chapter five, Jad Chaaban focuses on Lebanon's post-civil war generation—a million strong between the ages of 15 and 29. He argues that Lebanon takes pride in its human capital, which is the only comparative advantage it has over its resource-rich neighbors. After the end of the civil war in 1990, Lebanon embarked on ambitious reconstruction efforts and record spending on education and health. However, these investments have not resulted in improved outcomes for the young. Educational inequities are large, with youth in poorer regions having lower enrollment rates than those in the cities; unemployment for young people is higher compared with adults; and emigration rates are alarming, with one-third of youth reporting a desire to emigrate.

Chaaban contends that political instability and the proliferation of conflicts, including the 2006 Hezbollah-Israel war, have created an unpredictable environment for young Lebanese. Persistent expectations of future conflict breeds apathy among the young, who see little point in setting long-term goals. Lack of opportunities has resulted in high levels of migration, perpetuating the vicious cycle of underdevelopment by draining the country of its human capital. In this context, Chaaban makes several recommendations for promoting greater economic and political inclusion of youth, such as improving access to education for students from poorer regions and encouraging public-private partnerships that employ young people.

In chapter six, Taher Kanaan and May Hanania provide a compelling analysis of the state of young people in Jordan. Kanaan and Hanania remind us that Jordan's recent history is characterized by sudden changes in territory, population, and economic shocks emanating from conflict in neighboring countries such as Iraq. They illustrate how the 1991 Gulf War,

the second Palestinian intifada of 2000, and the U.S. invasion of Iraq in 2003 have led to an influx of migrants into Jordan. This coupled with an average population growth rate of around 2.7 percent among Jordanians has endowed the country with a major asset—its human capital. To tap into this asset, Jordan must create over 50,000 new jobs every year just to maintain current unemployment levels.

However, Kanaan and Hanania point out that Jordan is far from meeting this challenge. The recent period of positive GDP growth has not only failed to create enough jobs, but the jobs created have not been of sufficient quality to meet the expectations of an increasingly educated labor force. The majority of new jobs have been in the construction sector, and these have largely been taken by foreign workers. Women remain marginalized, experiencing high levels of unemployment. Bleak employment prospects are having an impact on prospects for family formation: the median age of marriage is increasing for both men and women, especially since access to independent housing has become more difficult during the recent real estate boom.

Kanaan and Hanania provide extensive analysis of recent reforms in the education and employment sectors. They argue that despite these reforms, Jordan's political, social, and economic institutions still must evolve considerably to meet the needs of its large youth population. An education system that continues to prepare youth for public sector employment must be fundamentally changed. Furthermore, to cope with high labor market pressures, the economy must invent new engines of job creation given that the public sector and migration are insufficient.

In chapter seven, Brahim Boudarbat and Aziz Ajbilou paint a portrait of a young generation in Morocco coming of age as their country grapples with three major challenges. First, the arrival of the youth bulge coincides with poor macroeconomic performance and sluggish economic growth, which has limited the opportunities for young citizens. Second, Morocco has undergone rapid urbanization during the last four decades, putting pressure on urban labor markets. Finally, persistent poverty continues to affect the young, especially in rural areas.

Through better education and access to decent employment, many young Moroccan men and women in this generation are more empowered to break the trap of poverty and social exclusion. Access to education has significantly improved, and the gender gap in primary education has narrowed. Even unemployment has been slashed in the past few years. But these improvements also mask new disparities. According to Boudarbat and

Ajbilou, repetition rates in primary education are among the worst in the Middle East. Despite more investments in secondary education, Morocco's secondary enrollment rates remain low compared with countries with similar income levels. Transitions to work are defined by high unemployment and long durations of unemployment, especially among secondary and higher education graduates.

Boudarbat and Ajbilou argue that youth unemployment can no longer be seen as a business cycle phenomenon. While the spike in unemployment among educated youth results from the contraction of the public sector in the 1980s, it has mutated into a structural problem and a source of growing social tensions. The Moroccan government has responded with a proliferation of initiatives, such as the reform of the Moroccan labor code, to promote investment and the creation of special development zones. Still, according to Boudarbat and Ajbilou, the government's responses have been piecemeal and seldom evaluated to measure impact.

In chapter eight, Nader Kabbani and Noura Kamel focus on Syria's transition from a public sector–led economy toward a “social market” economy as the country becomes a net oil importer in the near future. Young people and their growing education, employment, and housing needs are an important impetus for these economic reforms. But because they prefer public sector jobs, they are also the source of resistance.

The challenge for Syria, argue Kabbani and Kamel, will be to build and sustain support for market reforms among members of the young generation who will be the benefactors of this change. What is first needed, the authors say, is reform in the education system. The mismatch between the skills of job seekers and the needs of employers is reflected in exceptionally low returns to education. In Syria, an additional year of schooling is associated with a mere 2 percent increase in wages compared with an average 10 to 15 percent increase globally. As part of the economic reforms, labor market outcomes for young workers will need to improve. Kabbani and Kamel show that youth unemployment has declined from 26 percent in 2002 to around 19 percent recently. Although many employed youth have found jobs in the private sector, the lure of public sector employment remains strong, especially among young women.

These employment preferences have an economic and social rationale: young women earn higher wages in the public sector; for men public sector jobs provide the stability and prestige necessary for marriage and family formation. While the Syrian government has reduced public sector employment and allowed private sector competition in many sectors, a number of

recent initiatives may reinforce the appeal of government jobs. Public sector wages have increased repeatedly since 2000. Unless retrenchment policies accompany efforts to better align public sector wages and benefits with a thriving private sector, queuing for government jobs will continue and support for economic reforms will weaken.

In chapter nine, Ragui Assaad, Ghada Barsoum, Emily Cupito, and Daniel Egel concentrate on Yemen—the poorest country in the Middle East and one that faces deficits in both human development and natural resources. Given the continuing high fertility rate of over six children per woman of child-bearing age, Yemen’s population is one of the youngest in the Middle East: over 75 percent of the population is under the age of 25. The authors argue that with a dwindling supply of natural resources, low levels of human development, and high levels of poverty, Yemen risks losing a generation to poverty.

The authors show that Yemen has some of the poorest education indicators in the world with low enrollment and widespread illiteracy. Poor educational attainment, low retention, and poor standards in education quality are pervasive throughout the country, but they have a disproportionate effect on young women in rural areas. The Yemeni labor market is defined by limited employment opportunities in the formal sector. Youth employment is primarily confined to informal employment, which offers limited job security and few opportunities for career advancement. A high incidence of migration to urban areas within Yemen and internationally reflects the extent to which youth and families must travel in search of gainful employment.

In response to these challenges, the Yemeni government has undertaken a series of reforms designed to increase school enrollment and promote job creation in the private sector. Adoption of the National Children and Youth Strategy in 2006 reflects the government’s commitment to improving the status of youth in Yemen. However, these efforts are constrained by a severe shortage of resources and limited institutional and administrative capacity. To begin to redress these shortcomings, the authors call on the international community, both in the West and among Yemen’s richer neighbors, to increase aid and assistance to Yemen.

In the concluding chapter, Navtej Dhillon and Djavad Salehi-Isfahani focus on how Middle Eastern countries are responding to the problems of their young citizens and draw attention to major gaps in the current approach. They argue that more investments in schools, training programs, and subsidies targeting young people, while well-intentioned, do not address the

underlying causes of social exclusion. They interpret the difficulties faced by young people as a consequence of failures in key market and nonmarket institutions. Transitions of young people are influenced by several interconnected markets such as education, labor, credit, housing, and marriage. For a new life course to emerge for Middle Eastern youth, institutions and key markets must be reformed.

Dhillon and Salehi-Isfahani outline ten institutional features of Middle Eastern economies and societies that hold the potential for furthering prosperity and equity for the young generation. They argue that reforms can happen and that demographic pressures are already serving as a major impetus. They also propose principles for guiding future policies and programs. In this sense, the book ends with a meditation on not only the plights of young people, but also on ways in which public policy can improve their lives.

## Notes

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