



SHARE - NET
JORDAN



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**Online Knowledge Node for Population
and Reproductive Health Researches**

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Introduction :

The Higher Population Council is pleased to present to you the fifth issue of the bi-annual publication in English and Arabic, the population research database after it was developed and renamed to knowledge platform for population and reproductive health studies SHARE-NET JORDAN, with funding support from Share-Net International Netherlands.

This issue highlights key accomplishments made in the first half of 2017, including the population research and studies which has been issued or are in the process of being issued, as well as research capacity building activities and latest local and international reports on population and development as part of HPC's efforts to keep researchers, decision-makers, policy makers, program developers, service providers and research entities updated of local and international developments in this field.

With funding support from Share-Net international Netherlands, the population research database website has been updated in Arabic and English as part of HPC's efforts to modernize the website and make it more interactive. The updates included establishing direct interface with research centers and academic institutions and procuring a video conference system to conduct conference calls with partners outside Jordan and online trainings at HPC. Moreover, the data storage capacity has been increased from 10 to 15 terabytes to back up HPC websites, services and hardware, and marketing and promotional materials were produced for the Promise website.

A meeting for the Share Net Project steering committee was held in February to overview the achievements of the project in 2016 and the activities set to be implemented in 2017. The meeting also discussed feedback by HPC on the Share Net

Project assessment report and the key outcomes of the participation of the project coordinator and a steering committee member in the annual work meeting for the Share-Net Project, which took place in the Netherlands in February.

During the first six months of this year, HPC concluded a study and policy brief on "Child Marriage in Jordan" in Arabic and English, a study on "Entrepreneurship Trends among Youth Entering the Labor Market and the Enabling Institutional Environment in Jordan", a policy brief on "Enhancing Entrepreneurship Trends Among Youth Entering the Labor Market and the Enabling Institutional Environment in Jordan", and a study and a policy brief on "Integrating the Concepts of Work, Vocational Work, Entrepreneurship and Innovation in School Textbooks in Jordan". Moreover, HPC conducted a roundtable on launching the Share-Net project and the "Child Marriage in Jordan" policy brief, as well as another roundtable on the role of Jordanian Parliamentarians in Achieving and Investing in the Demographic Window of Opportunity.

Currently, HPC is preparing a study and policy brief on the "Demographic Characteristics of Syrians in Jordan and Opportunities to Address Challenges in the Jordanian Labor Market Caused by the Crisis" in addition to a policy brief on the Friendly health services for Youth in reproductive health.

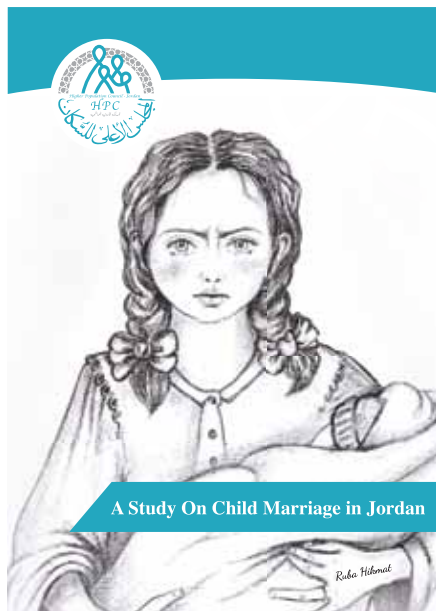
Moreover, Share-Net Netherlands is implementing a project that aims to establish an interactive online platform to support reproductive health research, in cooperation with stakeholders from various sectors and facilitate building and sharing reproductive health knowledge. HPC has prepared information on its achievements in the Share-Net project for the first and second issues of Share-Net international.

First: Studies and Reports Conducted by HPC in the First Half of 2017

• Study on “Child Marriage in Jordan” in Arabic and English :

As part of its efforts to enhance the demographic characteristics of the country and help create an enabling environment for demographic transition, HPC completed a study in Arabic and English on “Child Marriage in Jordan” with funding support from the Danish Center for Gender, Equality and Ethnicity (KVINFO).

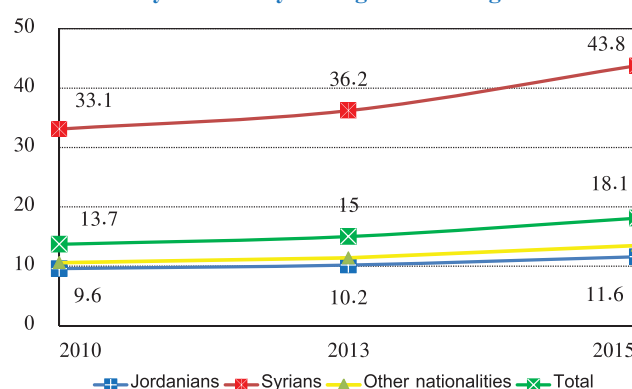
The study aims to determine the extent of the problem, its chronological and geographical trends and its impact on individuals, families and society, and identify areas of program and policy interventions.



The study highlighted the chronic trends of child marriage in Jordan. The red line in the graph below demonstrates an upward trend in the percentage of underage marriages of Syrian females to total marriages of Syrian females, increasing from 33.1 % in 2010 to 43.8% in 2015

at an average of 3888 cases per year. It also shows a slight increase in the percentage of Jordanian females who are married under age 18 to total marriages of Jordanian females since 2013, rising from 10.2 percent in 2013 to 11.6 percent in 2015.

Figure: percentage of females married under the age of 18 by nationality and age of marriage



Source: Department of Statistics, 2015
Population and Housing Census 2015

• Child Marriage in Jordan: Policy Brief in Arabic and English

HPC prepared the “Child Marriage in Jordan” Policy Brief ” in Arabic and English to identify the size, causes and consequences of the problem, review international experiences in dealing with it and propose Six policies to address the issue in Jordan. The proposed policies in order of priority are:

1. Address female school dropout rates and make education through the secondary level mandatory.
2. Prepare and implement a comprehensive awareness plan on child marriage and its negative consequences.
3. Provide financial support and family counselling and awareness to families that opt to

marry off their daughters due to poverty and limited financial means.

4. Cancel the exception in paragraph (B) Article (10) of the Personal Status Law.
5. Develop child marriage prevention and treatment programs and services.
6. Develop a national strategy for limiting child marriage.

• “Entrepreneurship Trends Among Youth Entering the Labor Market, and the Enabling Institutional Environment in Jordan Study”

HPC has completed a study to identity entrepreneurship trends among youth entering the labor market (last year students of universities, community colleges, vocational training centers) as well as the limitations of an institutional environment.

The study tackled various issues such as

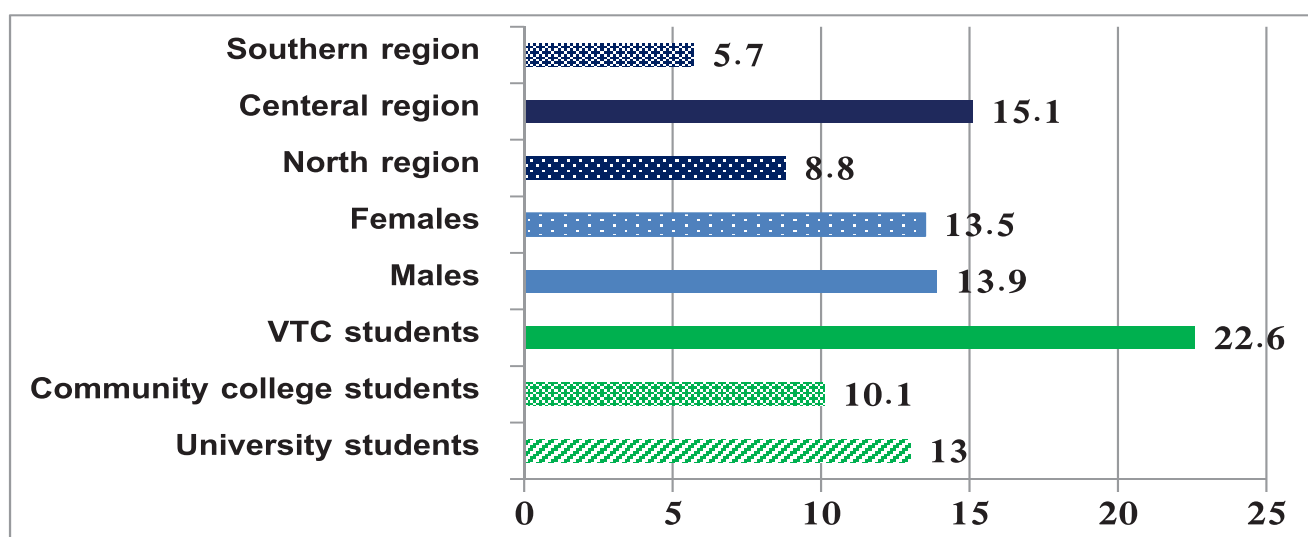
attempting to identify the trends among last year university, community college and vocational training students who are expected to join the labor market.

The study also surveyed entities that foster entrepreneurship such as incubators and other initiatives. Current entrepreneurs were also surveyed to identify the main challenges they face and their point of view regarding the enabling environment that they aspire for.

The fourth area which the study focused on pertains to legislation affecting entrepreneurship.

The study mainly concluded that only an average of 11,5% of youth entering the labor market in Jordan wish to set up their own business. Percentages varied as illustrated in the figure below:

Figure illustrating the percentage of youth entering the labor market and wishing to set up their own business:



• Policy Brief “Enhancing Entrepreneurship Trends among Youth Entering the Labor Market and the Enabling Institutional Environment in Jordan”

HPC has completed a policy brief on enhancing entrepreneurship trends among youth entering

the labor market in Jordan and the enabling institutional environment in Jordan. The policy brief assessed entrepreneurship trends among youth, obstacles faced by young entrepreneurs in Jordan, provided an overview of institutions that support entrepreneurship in Jordan and presented recommendations by entrepreneurs to promote

entrepreneurship in Jordan.

The policy brief analyzed four proposed policies for overcoming the obstacles facing entrepreneurship: Establishing a high council for supporting entrepreneurship, amending legislation to support entrepreneurship, facilitating access to finance, establishing a financial umbrella for entrepreneurs and promoting the entrepreneurship culture.

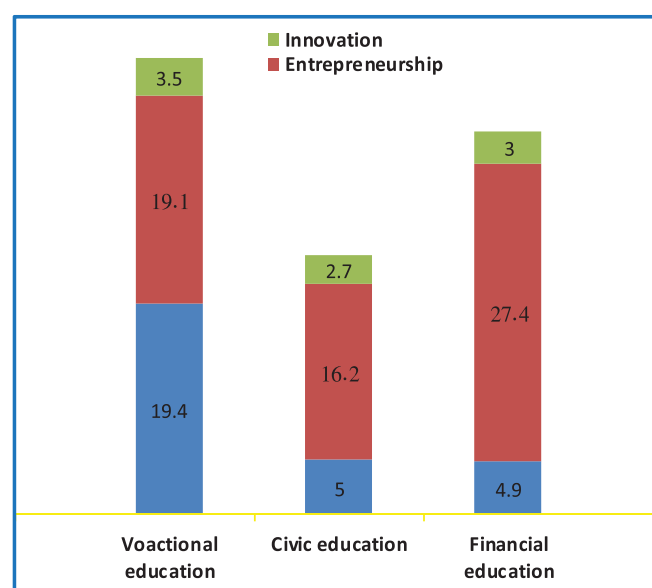
The selected policy option was establishing a high council for supporting entrepreneurship as it would organize and coordinate all efforts within a comprehensive and integrated framework that helps identify and take advantage of clear economic opportunities for businesses to meet market demand. This policy option goes hand in hand with the second policy option of amending laws and legislation to support entrepreneurship so as to codify the conditions, licensing requirements and criteria.

• Study on “Integration of the Concepts of Work, Vocational Work, Entrepreneurship, and Innovation in School Textbooks in Jordan”

In cooperation with ESCWA and the Ministry of Education, HPC carried out a study on the integration of the concepts of work, vocational work, entrepreneurship and innovation in school textbooks in Jordan to assess to which extent these concepts (knowledge, values and skills) are embedded in (vocational education and civic education) textbooks for the 4th to 10th grades, the financial education textbook for the 7th, 8th and 11th grades and the educational outputs for financial education for the 9th and 10th grades

through content analysis. A list of 63 proposed concepts was developed covering three main areas: work and vocational work, entrepreneurship, and innovation. The results of the study were as follows:

- The vocational education textbooks integrated the concepts the most out of the three groups of textbooks.
- The concept of innovation was the least frequently integrated concept across all textbooks.
- Entrepreneurship concepts are reflected well in the three groups of textbooks as the Ministry of Education has recently introduced a financial education textbook into school curricula.



• Policy Brief “Integration of the Concepts of Work, Vocational Work, Entrepreneurship, and Innovation in School Textbooks in Jordan”.

HPC prepared a policy brief on the integration of the concepts of work, vocational work, entrepreneurship and innovation in school textbooks in Jordan to assess to what extent these concepts are

integrated in Jordanian schools curricula. The brief concluded that there is a need to reinforce and increase the integration of the concepts of work, vocational work, entrepreneurship and innovation in Jordanian school textbooks to increase love for work and entrepreneurship among youth and proposed four policies to do so:

- Enrich school curricula with concepts and practices of work, entrepreneurship and innovation.
- Raise awareness of workers at basic education schools of the importance of providing and enhancing vocational and entrepreneurship education.
- Reinforce love for learning among students by developing education strategies, which are based on motor and manual skills and activities.
- Teach creative and systematic entrepreneurial thinking and provide the suitable environment for unleashing the creative potentials of students, and encouraging new methods for problem solving through informed programs and trainings.

• Annual action plan monitoring and evaluation report of the outputs and inputs of the reproductive health / family planning strategy for 2016

The 2016 monitoring and evaluation of the strategy included an analysis of national KPIs for achieving the results of the strategy and the actual national interventions of partners and required activities to implement the interventions.

- The report listed the key challenges that delayed the timely accomplishment of

certain strategic interventions including weak public private partnerships, lack of financial allocations for reproductive health initiatives in the budgets of national agencies, lack of human resources especially in terms of female providers of reproductive health services and forced migrations into Jordan and their impact on national priorities.

- The steering committee for the national strategy for reproductive health / family planning (2013-2018) discussed the findings of the report during its meeting at the HPC head quarters. The meeting was attended by members of the committee and liaison officers from concerned national entities.

Second: Studies and Research Underway

• Study and policy brief on “The Demographic Characteristics of Syrians in Jordan and Opportunities for Addressing Challenges in the Jordanian Labor Market due to the Refugee Crisis”

This study aims to better understand the demographic characteristics and skills of Syrians in Jordan in order to propose mechanisms and policies to address challenges in the Jordanian labor market caused by the Syrian refugee crisis to serve all sides and mitigate the effects of the crisis on the demographic transition phase. The main objectives of the study are:

- Help set mechanisms to mitigate the impact of the Syrian refugee crisis on the Jordanian labor market and the resulting increase in unemployment rates among Jordanian youth.

- Identify mechanisms to maximize benefits from the Syrian workforce to boost economic development.
- Set mechanisms to provide job opportunities for Syrian refugees so that they do not compete with Jordanians for jobs.
- Help prepare the suitable legislative environment to provide Syrian refugees with access to the job market.
- Benefit from the expertise and skills of Jordanians and Syrians in building local expertise and support establishing new partnerships and professions and expand existing ones.
- Identify mechanisms for limiting unorganized labor.
- Identify mechanisms to enhance an enabling environment for Syrian investments in Jordan.

The study is still underway and is expected to be completed by end of 2017.

A steering committee was formed for the purpose of this study consisting of representatives of relevant national institutions including the Ministry of Planning and International Development, the Ministry of Labor, the Department of Statistics, the National Center for Human Resource Development, the Vocational Training Corporation, the International Labor Organization, and the United Nations Development Program/Jordan/

• Friendly health services for Youth in reproductive health: Policy Brief

This policy brief aims to propose and test policies that address gaps and challenges facing the provision of youth friendly health services, especially

in the field of reproductive health. It also aims to address the causes as to why demand for these services by youth is not high. The policy brief is expected to answer the following questions:

- Why is the number of youth using reproductive health care centers low?
- Is there a social need for youth friendly reproductive health centers?
- To what extent are comprehensive reproductive healthcare services for youth available?
- What reproductive healthcare services do youth need?
- What are the service delivery protocols for youth-friendly reproductive healthcare?
- How prepared are public, private and volunteer healthcare centers to provide youth-friendly reproductive healthcare services?
- What are the local and international best practices and experiences in providing youth-friendly reproductive healthcare services?
- Which entities play a key role and considered by youth to be trustworthy and reliable in providing reproductive healthcare information?
- Which measures should be taken to provide and improve reproductive health services for youth?

The policy brief is expected to be completed by end of November 2017.

Third: Research Capacity Building

• Workshop on “Qualitative Research and Project Report Writing”

To build national capacities in conducting research and studies, HPC held a four-day training workshop from 16 to 19 December, 2017, in

cooperation with Share-Net Netherlands and representatives of Jordanian universities and institutions. Through this workshop, HPC aims to build the capacities of Jordanian universities and research centers in preparing studies and writing reports for reproductive health projects to support knowledge-based policy making and evidence based practices and maximize benefits from grants for the studies, and enhance the qualitative research skills of participants.



Fourth: Participation in local and international conferences and events

- HPC participated in the Commission on Population and Development 50th Session by the United Nations Department for Economic and Social Affairs in New York on April 3-7, 2017 under the banner “Changing Population Structure and Sustainable Development”

At the session, HPC Secretary General presented a paper on Jordan’s position towards “Channing Population Age Structures and Sustainable Development” focusing on how achieving sustainable development is linked to population, specifically the age structure of the population, as it depends on investing in the great potentials of youth in the

field of advanced technology and innovation. The paper also explains that achieving sustainable development requires enhancing gender equity and the empowerment of women in all areas and putting in place enabling legislation and policies especially considering women’s low economic participation rate, which did not exceed 13 per cent in 2016 despite the higher levels of education.

- HPC participated in the annual work meeting for Share Net Netherlands project in Amsterdam in February. At the meeting, the Share Net project coordinator in Jordan made a presentation on the achievements of Share Net Jordan and learnt about the achievements of other partner countries and the main challenges facing them. The future objectives of each partner country were overviewed as well during the meeting.

- HPC participated in the 2017 Arab Forum for Sustainable Development: Implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, Eradicating Poverty and Promoting Prosperity in the Region.

Held in Rabat, Morocco in May, the event discussed the implementation, follow up and review of the 2030 agenda for sustainable development in the Arab world. The topic of the forum was selected in line with the high-level political forum on sustainable development held in New York on July 10-19, 2017 under the title “Eradicating Poverty and Promoting Prosperity in a Changing World”. During the event, HPC gave a presentation on sustainable development goals, investing in the demographic window of opportunity in Jordan, and the Syrian refugee crisis.

- HPC participated in a population policies advocacy workshop in Turkey in May 21-25, 2015 at the Leadership Training Center.

The workshop tackled the concept of advocacy, its goals and philosophy, overviewed all types and forms of advocacy campaigns and discussed steps to prepare for advocacy campaigns including impact mapping, research, advocacy strategy planning, advocacy campaign design and advocacy campaign work plan implementation.

- Roundtable meeting to launch the Share Net Project and Child Marriage in Jordan Policy Brief.

HPC held a roundtable discussion session to launch the Share Net Project and the “Child Marriage in Jordan” policy brief on May 24, 2017 with the participation of the Netherlands Embassy in Jordan and the representative of the Share Net Netherlands Project, Bianca Tolboom. Attended by 66 participants from different Jordanian universities, government and private institutions and civil society organizations, the roundtable discussion discussed the goals of the project’s knowledge platforms and their presence in the Netherlands, Bangladesh, Burundi and Jordan. Moreover, the roundtable overviewed the steering committee, which has been formed comprising all concerned international institutions with the project and the cooperation between HPC and Share Net Netherlands to implement various activities that support population issues and policies. The discussions also tackled child marriage in Jordan and its main trends and conse-

quences on girls and society and the main proposed policies and procedures to limit the spread of this phenomenon.



- Roundtable meeting on the “Role of Jordanian Parliamentarians in Achieving and Investing in the Demographic Window of Opportunity”

HPC held a roundtable discussion on April 16, 2017 on the role of Jordanian members of parliament in achieving and investing in the demographic window of opportunity. The event shared with members of the upper and lower houses of parliament a proposed framework for



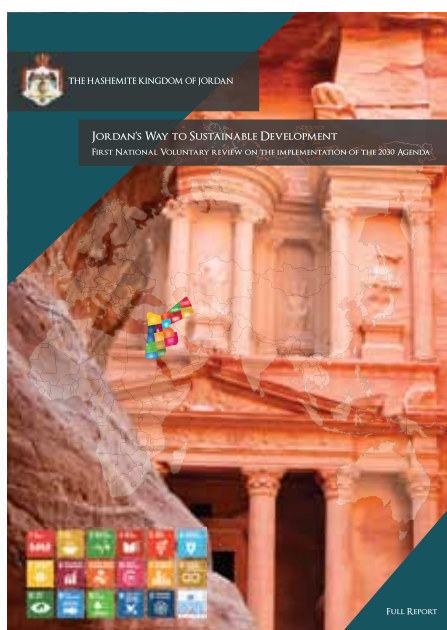
cooperation between the parliament and HPC to advocate the allocation of the necessary financial resources for population issues and the implementation of legislation that supports the achievement and investment in the demographic window of opportunity by 2040.

One of the key issues highlighted by the discussions was that while the majority of international grants and funds go to supporting refugees in Jordan, parliamentarians can act as facilitators with international donors to ensure support for programs which aim at serving the Jordanian population. During the discussions, HPC expressed its desire to gain the support of heads of parliamentary committees for the policies and programs of HPC to deal effectively with population related challenges.

fifth: Latest local and international reports on population issues

• Jordan's Way to Sustainable Development: First National Voluntary Review on the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda

The Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation prepared this report with support from the UNDP Country Team in Jordan, including non-resident and regional agencies. The Higher National Committee on Sustainable Development provided overall strategic guidance and supervision for the preparation of this report.



The methodology for preparing this first national voluntary review was based on the same guiding principles adopted by Jordan to strengthen ownership of the sustainable development goals. This includes enhancing ownership of goals, benefiting from previous experiences, involvement and innovation. The report mainly includes:

- Review of the current roadmap which includes the various priority action points such as raising awareness of the sustainable development agenda to reinforce national ownership, mapping goals and indicators with national planning frameworks, mainstreaming international plans, mainstreaming into local and subnational plans, enhancing national statistical systems and access to data, gender mainstreaming, enhancing institutional mechanisms by building on and strengthening existing frameworks and structures for development coordination and planning in Jordan such as committees and task forces and their linkages, SDG costing, internal and external financing, enhancing monitoring and evaluation systems and a roadmap for national capacity development and provision of technical support in all aspects of implementing the 2030 sustainable development agenda.
- The report briefly tackled SDG1 (no poverty), SDG 2 (no hunger), SDG 3 (Good health and well-being), SDG 5 (Gender equality), SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure), in addition to other priorities for Jordan such as SDG 4 (Education), SDG 6 (Water), SDG 7 (Energy), SDG 8 (Prosperity and decent work), SDG 13

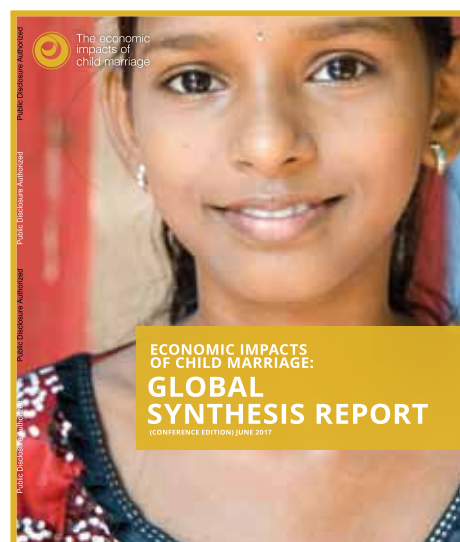
(Environment and Climate Change), and SDG 16 (Justice, Human Rights and Participation) based on the five key themes articulated in the 2030 sustainable development agenda: (People, Planet, Prosperity, Peace and security, and partnerships).

- The report also covered all methods for implementing the 2030 sustainable development agenda. Jordan has taken several measures to increase internal funding and optimal utilization of available resources by linking capital expenditures with the executive development program (the national plan), thereby ensuring that funding is directed towards the sustainable development agenda by mainstreaming it into national plans.
- The report highlighted a number of challenges, learnt lessons and key recommendations derived from the workshops held on the sidelines of the national voluntary review to help with the implementation of the SDG roadmap in the next years. The main challenges which were indicated were regional conflicts and the Syrian crisis, access to financing for development, decrease of foreign trade, the need to enhance national statistical systems, and the need for coordination among governmental and private agencies and genuine partnership with the private sector and the need to build capacities and raise awareness of sustainable development goals.
- The report reviewed the proposed measures within each pillar of the roadmap. These measures represent the broad outlines of a

national plan which will be development to coordinate efforts of national and international agencies involved in the implementation and monitoring of the 2030 sustainable development agenda.

2. Economic Impacts of Child Marriage : Global Synthesis Report

The World Bank, in cooperation with the International Center for Research on Women conducted this study with funding support from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the Children's Investment Fund Foundation, and the Global Partnership for Education. The study focused on the impact of child marriage in five areas: fertility fertility and population growth; health, nutrition and violence; education and learning; labor force participation, earnings and productivity; and impact on decision making and investments. The results of the study showed that child marriage has a wide range of negative impacts on girls, children, families, communities and societies through a variety of costs on economics at large. The key findings of the study include:



- Combating child marriage will have a significant positive impact on the education of girls and their children in the future and will help women have less children and increase her projected income and the well-being of her family later in life.
- While child marriage rates (marriage under the age of 18) decreased in many countries over the last thirty years, the rates are still very high. In 25 countries covered by the study, it has been found that at least one woman of every three women marries before the age of 18 and that one of every five women gives birth to their first child before the age of 18. The United Nations confirms that around 700 million women around the world marry before the age of 18, and only 14% of girls in the Arab region marry before turning 18 years old.
- Estimates show that fertility increases by 26% for girls who marry under the age of 13 compared to those who marry at 18 or after. This means that ending child marriage will decrease total fertility rates by 11% on average in these countries, thereby significantly reducing population growth over time.
- In Niger, which has the highest rates of child marriage in the world, the population may decrease by 5% by 2030 if child marriage and early pregnancies were prohibited. On the other hand, gains from reducing fertility rates in Uganda will equal USD 2.4 billion, and around USD 1 billion in Nepal.
- The report explained that banning child marriage will also decrease death of children under the age of five and stunting. Globally, reports show that gains from reducing child mortality rates and malnutrition will exceed USD 90 billion annually by 2030.
- Other important gains highlighted by the report from ending child marriage is the expected increase in the income of women in the labor market. The income of women who marry under age is on average 9 percent less than that of women who marry later due to the impact of child marriage on education. In Nigeria, this equals USD 7.6 billion of forgone income and productivity each year.
- Marrying off girls under the age of 18 perpetuates gender discrimination, encourages early and repetitive pregnancies, favors the education of boys over the education of girls and denies girls the opportunity to gain vocational and life skills. Child marriage is also an economic survival mechanism as families opt to marry off their daughters at an early age to reduce their economic burdens.
- The report confirmed that one of the best ways to avoid child marriage is for girls to pursue education. Every year of secondary education reduces the likelihood of a marriage under the age of 18 by 5 percentage points or more. Conversely, the likelihood of girls failing or

spending less years in schools increases compared to their counterparts who do not marry at an early age.

- On the other hand, the likelihood of dropping out of school and completing less years of education is significantly higher for child brides by comparison to girls who marry in later years. This affects the education and health of the children of child brides and their ability to secure income.

The report concluded that:

governments would achieve benefits such as budget savings as a result of reducing expenditure on basic education, health services and other services. In many countries, the drop in population growth from ending child marriage will help governments achieve budget savings in education by 5 percent or more by 2030.