

Introduction

Within the general framework of the third Arab Knowledge Report 2014 comes this report on “Youth and Localisation of Knowledge in the UAE”. It sheds light on one of the most important issues facing the Emirati society, namely integrating the youth and enabling them to actively contribute to the transfer and localisation of knowledge. This process serves as a springboard for the establishment of the knowledge society in the UAE and acts as a window to wider horizons for sustainable human development. The biggest challenge in creating this society lies in the process of building the human being, or the knowledge capital, on new foundations that are aligned with the requirements of the current age. This includes enabling the youth – the key category of this society – to develop their knowledge, skills, thinking frameworks and values so as to transfer, localise, produce and employ knowledge effectively, for their own benefit and that of the Emirati society as a whole.

With knowledge representing one of the most important foundations of comprehensive and sustainable human development, the engagement of all categories and elements of a given society in the processes of knowledge transfer, localisation, employment and production is a must. In order to achieve this, it is imperative to face the challenges that might impede the building of the knowledge society, be it in education, scientific research or other sectors. Moreover, the effective management of knowledge is a mechanism through which the state can build new generations of citizens who are equipped with the skills required to handle current knowledge learning schemes based on creativity, innovation, critical thinking and scientific research. Knowledge workers are the foundation of progress and wealth in the current knowledge age, and the primary wealth-producing activities do not rely on the availability of raw materials or labour but rather on the added value that these workers provide through renovation, innovation and knowledge application in the workplace.

This report addresses the capabilities and mechanisms that enable the country and its youth to achieve the goal of building a knowledge society and, therefore, actively participate in creating a new civilisation not only in the UAE, but across the world. Moreover, the report explores how to deal with the necessity of integrating the Emirati youth, aged 19-29, into the process of knowledge transfer and localisation and the opportunities and challenges that hinder this. Drawing upon field investigations, the current situation of the country’s youth is carefully examined, particularly with respect to the possession of cognitive, cultural, economic and societal capabilities that are essential to actively contribute to building the knowledge society. In addition, the report aims to diagnose the status of the available enabling environments and their ability to expand youth opportunities and build their capacity to achieve this goal.

The issue of integrating the youth and stimulating their active participation in the transfer and localisation of knowledge holds a special importance for the UAE, it being one of the steadily rising countries aiming to achieve the highest possible rates of development, as well as advancing in the wider fields of knowledge. In this regard, the UAE has declared its determination to become one of the best countries in the world as expressed in the UAE 2021 Vision. Undoubtedly, there are many factors that support this ambition. The country’s significant financial capabilities and firm political and societal will coupled with its relatively small size, in terms of land area and population, will make these ambitions possible, and within reach in the near future.

This report builds on several facts and intellectual bases, the first of which being that the youth are the main means and the primary group relied upon to establish the knowledge society, or at least they should be; as they are the primary engine pushing in this direction. As a result, the youth must be provided with adequate attention and empowerment. The fact that a knowledge society is not self-built comes as the second intellectual basis;

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knowledge may exist in a certain country, but its availability does not necessarily entail the existence of a “knowledge society”. The third basis indicates that establishing the knowledge society through the youth, equipped with knowledge tools, must be observed as a practical programme with measures that ought to be implemented in the fields of education, scientific research, culture, communication, economics, media, technology and other fields, all at the same time and in harmony and integration.

The importance of the UAE report lies in addressing this subject at a time of major economic, social and political transformations that are affecting the Arab society’s core pillars and its major capital represented in young human resources that are able to build. The Emirati society, 43 years after the formation of the Union, has attained a level of community and economic maturity, evident in its major achievements in almost all fields. The emergence of the youth, both in terms of quality and quantity, as a key group in society represents perhaps one of the most important features of this phase, with the opportunities, challenges and hopes it entails, particularly with respect to broadening their opportunities and activating their participation in building and progressing in what benefits them and Emirati society as a whole. The previous Arab knowledge reports¹ have shown that the UAE, despite its substantial progress in many fields, still suffers from a knowledge gap in numerous scientific, literary and technical fields. This report aims to present a model of what the UAE has achieved so far, and what it strives to achieve in order to bridge this gap. It is no exaggeration to say that the youth are and will continue to be the fuel of Emirati society, because they are capable of advancing towards the knowledge society. Both the state and society in the UAE shall continue to rely on and support the youth to enable them to achieve tangible development in the fields of education, scientific research, technology, media and culture dedicated towards establishing the knowledge society. Taking into consideration that the youth are the driving force, policies and strategies should aim at transferring the society into a

development phase based on the new engine of “knowledge”. The effective integration of the youth into the transfer and localisation of knowledge in this ambitious society is the beginning of the journey in search of a knowledge society in the UAE.

Completing the Journey towards Establishing the Knowledge Society in the UAE

This report continues the steps of the two previous reports that targeted knowledge and the establishment of the knowledge society in the Arab world in general, and in the UAE in particular. The first Knowledge Report, 2009, entitled “Towards Productive Intercommunication for Knowledge”, defined the essential concepts for building the knowledge society in the Arab world. It tackled the conditions for transferring knowledge, localising it and diffusing its instruments as well as identifying the necessary enabling environment, while focusing on the necessity of creating an atmosphere that promotes and nurtures knowledge in all arenas, especially in education. The first report showed the quantitative progress in education; while noting that it was not accompanied by a qualitative one that allows for the accumulation of knowledge capital and the creation of an adequate enabling environment that permits the conversion of knowledge into an active factor in human development. The Arab states, including the UAE, have not yet been able to build the required critical mass of qualified youth capable of leading the process of establishing a knowledge society and economy. The report’s conclusions have also shown the central role of knowledge in development. Furthermore, they stressed the strategic value of education and training systems, particularly for the youth who are the main actors in building the knowledge-based society, economy and associated main values.

Accessing the knowledge society requires a series of imperative conditions, the first of which consists of forming the youth and improving their qualifications by providing them with new knowledge and life skills

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that transform them from mere knowledge consumers to actors capable of producing, circulating and investing in knowledge. This was confirmed by the UAE case study in the second AKR 2010/2011. The report explored the level of readiness of those under eighteen years of age to access the knowledge society. It concluded that the existing skills were, in general, inferior to the required level that qualifies them to access the knowledge society, though the existing values were found to be satisfactory. The case of the UAE in the report was marked by both the desire and the will to work towards establishing the foundations of a knowledge society, as well as the availability of the requirements for action, especially financial capabilities and infrastructure. However, the strategies for action and their embodiment in programmes and plans were not very evident and were not reflected, as required, in the achievements and the improvement of young people's knowledge and education levels.

Based on the results and conclusions of the two previous reports, this report, "Youth and Localisation of Knowledge in UAE", focuses on the role of the youth, the main lever in building the knowledge society. The UAE case study comes as an essential complement, in parallel and in accordance with the third Arab Knowledge Report (AKR) 2014,² published simultaneously, which is addressing the same issues but from a regional Arab perspective. This report diagnoses the knowledge and value realities of the youth, as well as their readiness level and skills required for enabling them to achieve the quantum leap in Emirati society, and to contribute to the transition from the "transfer and consumption" of knowledge to its "acquisition and localisation".

The Concepts of Localisation of Knowledge and Active Integration of the Youth

In line with the conceptual model adopted in the Third Arab Knowledge Report 2014, the overall conceptualisation of the process of enabling the youth to actively participate in the transfer and localisation of knowledge

is based on two essential elements. First, the concepts and approaches of the "transfer and localisation of knowledge", and second, "enabling and preparing" the youth to actively participate in the transfer and localisation processes. Similarly, the concept of "localisation of knowledge" encompasses three integrated key elements: first is the production of knowledge, second is the employment of knowledge for human development purposes in its cultural, scientific, social, political and environmental dimensions; and third is the dissemination of knowledge.

The term localisation does not only entail the act of transfer, because what makes it localised is the process of producing and re-producing the representations that accompany it, along with the necessary conditions for the transfer process, followed by the localisation and production processes. The goal is to provide enabling environments that include institutions and legislation, without which it would be hard to attain the thresholds of knowledge localisation. This also entails devising the means that enable localisation and providing the necessary elements for building the foundations of the knowledge society, the most prominent of which are ICT and the internet. These elements have become an imperative precursor to accessing a new world and a fresh unbounded culture, i.e. the spaces of development and knowledge society.

Undoubtedly, knowledge transfer is a necessary step to acquire the rudiments and tools of the knowledge society, especially ICT, as well as the essential technical, communication and more general life skills. Localisation of knowledge – which is the main focus of this report – is the transition from consumption of knowledge, and recycling it from its original form, to its acquisition, use and deployment. This localisation should happen within specific communities and within a social and cultural system that aims at progressing and providing the conditions for genuine development capable of actively contributing to building the human civilisation. The Emirati youth are to this act its lever, main end and purpose.

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In his works, Manuel Castells³ explained the major features of the network era and highlighted the role of information technology in achieving major social transformations. Castells has highlighted the role of the active “self” in the network society, where the workers strive, individually and collectively, within networks that produce and trade in what he calls “the power and experience”. This is done by moving in virtual worlds that transcend space and time barriers and defy simultaneously the various structures, classes and social segments.

The Conceptual Model for the Youth and the Localisation of Knowledge

The conceptual model adopted in this report for the UAE case is based on the interdependence between two basic pillars for the transfer and localisation of knowledge:⁴

- First: “Providing the Knowledge Capital”, consisting of youth capabilities that will ensure the transfer and localisation of knowledge;
- Second: “Providing the Enabling Environments”, including the required legislations, supporting institutions, and freedoms in their broader sense. Thus, securing the necessary tools needed for the transfer and localisation of knowledge, including institutional, legislative, cognitive and financial tools.

Both pillars, and the means they embody, complement each other in achieving the localisation of knowledge within an integrated system based on the mechanisms of transfer and localisation, including information technology, financial and non-financial stimuli, openness and communication, global and regional partnerships, translation, evaluation and follow-up. According to these concepts, the transfer of knowledge processes are viewed as part of a bigger picture which entails the ultimate goal, namely the localisation of knowledge.

As demonstrated in Figure 1.1, the concept of knowledge localisation involves three complementary key elements. The first is the transfer of knowledge; the second, the

production of knowledge; and the third, the employment and diffusion of knowledge for development purposes to benefit society. Within this context, the question that arises is the extent of availability and efficiency of the enabling environments required for the transfer and localisation of knowledge, including legislations, laws, infrastructure, supporting institutions, as well as economic, social, political, educational, scientific, cultural and media conditions.

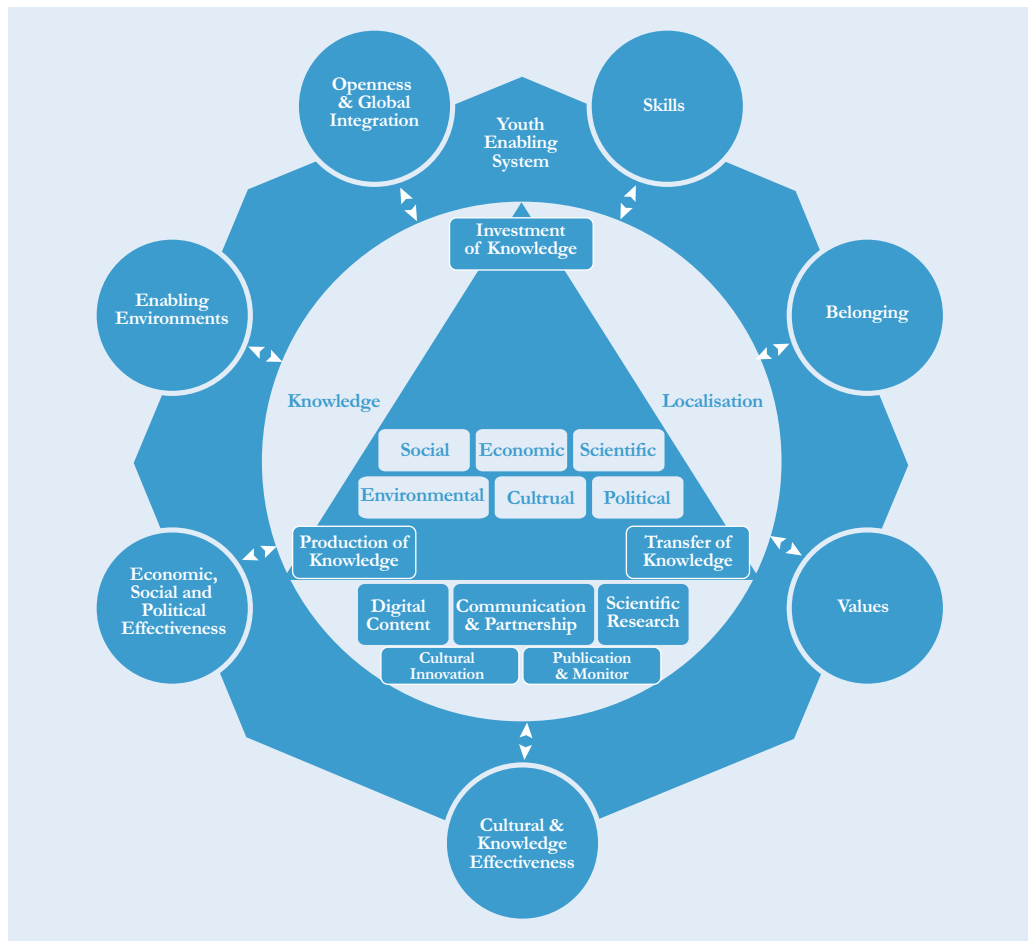
Within this conceptual model, enabling the youth is considered the second most vital element, as the transfer and localisation of knowledge cannot take place without the youth in particular and human resources in general. Empowering the youth is, then, one of the key tools in establishing the human knowledge capital needed in the UAE for the transfer and localisation of knowledge. Therefore, there is an interactive relationship between youth empowerment and knowledge localisation; the more the youth are enabled, the more enhanced the localisation of knowledge is. The concept of youth enablement and the enhancement of their contributions in building the knowledge society is based on the triad of knowledge, development and freedom adopted by the Arab Knowledge Report 2009. The current report considers that the issue of youth is not only inseparable from that of development, but rather lies at the heart of it. The youth are the bearers of knowledge and the achievers of development. At the same time, development provides opportunities to secure their freedoms and ensure their readiness to achieve sustainable development while enabling them to access the wider domains of the knowledge society.

Knowledge Localisation as a Gateway for Sustainable Development

In this context, there is a need to touch on the concept of human development, which is the ultimate goal of establishing a knowledge society. For a long time, progress was associated in economic and social literature with the concept of growth, represented in the achievement of minimal accumulation of quantitative indicators such as the GDP and

Figure 1.1

The Conceptual Model for the Localisation of Knowledge and the Youth Enabling System



its per capita share, as well as the availability of economic and social structures and the basic and necessary infrastructure. However, development policies and their priorities have led in many cases to less-than-desired or counterproductive results, as priority was often given to monetary indicators while largely neglecting dealing with the essence of effective development and its center, i.e. humans.

Credit primarily goes to the United Nations Development Programme, which replaced the concept of growth with the new concept of development, which then became human development. This approach represents a quantum leap from the strategies and policies of growth to that of human development, the general concept under which localisation falls and from which it stems.

This move is defined in a very significant statement used in the first UNDP Human

Development Report in 1990 to define the concept of human development: “People are the real wealth of a nation... the basic objective of development is to create an enabling environment for people to enjoy long, healthy and creative lives. This may appear to be a simple truth, but it is often forgotten in the immediate concern with the accumulation of commodities and financial wealth.”²⁵

This definition reveals the depth of the concept of development versus the reductive concept of growth. Growth does not show the real beneficiaries in the development process, as there are certain investments whose results are not immediately shown in the national product or growth figures. Such investments include better nutrition and health services, easy access to knowledge, more secure livelihoods, good work conditions, security against crime and physical violence and a sense of participation

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The concept of sustainable human development thus highlights two aspects: the first is manifested in forming human capacity in the fields of education and knowledge, while the other stresses the need to empower human beings through the investment of their capacity in production and the contribution to various fields

in the economic and cultural activities of the community one lives in. Of course, everyone seeks income growth; however, that is not the only demand that a person lives for or a government is focused on achieving.⁶ The quality of life is not associated with per capita income; it is significantly embodied in the total services provided to individuals in the community with the aim of achieving and securing what could be described as well-being and happiness. One of the main and direct results of using the concept of development in its aforementioned definition is associating it primarily with human well-being from a holistic perspective, and considering people's cognitive, cultural and social needs as important as their materialistic ones. There is no longer a standard form or unified recipe for development but rather different and multiple paths for various human communities and the multiplicity of their organisation and cultures.

Despite the substantial progress in terms of methods, scientific approaches and research, development will remain an abstract concept. While it suggests many mechanisms and interventions, it does not refer to an elixir for attaining a desired level of development. Every society has its own developmental needs that fit its capabilities. Hence, development seems like a complex process of change as results are not guaranteed, making it more perplexing since it does not simply happen by a politician or expert's decision but also requires several stimulating conditions and enabling environments necessary for its localisation and sustainability.

The Organic Relationship between Development and Knowledge

Debating development issues is rooted in their direct relationship with the knowledge society, as human development finds its procedural interpretation in the knowledge empowerment of the members of the society. The spread of modern technology, the prevalence of the existing “proximity to information”, and the ease of access to science and knowledge are practical and empirical evidences of developmental successes.

Development in general is a consistent and harmonious political, social, economic and valuable process targeting the constant improvement of life conditions. It involves a type of change that targets the human environment in terms of preparation and equipment, as well as knowledge, trends and practices.⁷ The concepts of human development and its practices also confirm the importance of investing in humans to build and establish a qualified human capital. This can only be achieved by granting the people wider opportunities to acquire knowledge, as there is no development without knowledge. The concept of sustainable human development thus highlights two aspects: the first is manifested in forming human capacity in the fields of education and knowledge, while the other stresses the need to empower human beings through the investment of their capacity in production and the contribution to various fields. Therefore, it can be said that sustainable human development is considered a comprehensive envisioning process aimed at empowering human beings, building cognitive abilities and expanding their options in various fields. This would render a qualified human being capable of investing his cognitive and intellectual energies in such a way that would enhance them, promote them and ensure their conservation.⁸

Box 1.1

Development and the Shift Towards the Knowledge Economy

The increased reliance of development plans on knowledge and its derivatives has resulted in a shift towards the knowledge economy; from an economy based on the physical component to one in which knowledge and skills are at the core of the production process. This is evidenced by the shift in economic thought, which, in its definition of the levels of development of countries, moved from relying on conventional indicators, such as the gross domestic product or gross national product, to indicators that are more accurate taking into account other criteria such as education, health and per capita income, similar to the Human Development Index used by the United Nations Development Programme.

Source: Abderrahim Al Maslouhi, background paper for the report.

In general, “knowledge society” is used to indicate the current phase in human society’s development, mainly based on the transfer, localisation and dissemination of knowledge, as well as its production and efficient employment in all areas of communal activity, all the way to wider fields and levels of human development.⁹ In this regard, the 2000 report of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) entitled “Knowledge Management in the Learning Society” confirmed that “knowledge is the key factor in the new mode of production, and that the learning process is the key to obtaining knowledge”.¹⁰

The main condition for knowledge to reserve its place as a vital element in the process of human development is to become a component of life in all fields, so the culture of searching for knowledge, acquiring it and utilising it becomes entrenched in peoples’ lives. Knowledge becomes useless if it is an individual product or an external product that has no return or benefit to society. Therefore, the term knowledge society concerns society as a whole, in addition to its culture, which seeks ways to acquire this knowledge, transfer, localise and benefit from it, build on and enrich it.

The Active Participation of the Youth as a Prerequisite for the Localisation of Knowledge

As demonstrated above, the concept of human development intersects and goes beyond the preceding policies and progress strategies. It has human beings at its centre, as well as the most active and productive group, the youth, at its heart. In this context, the youth are no longer a mere age group with special characteristics and requirements, nor a turbulent period of transition between childhood and adulthood; they have become a “human capital” upon which all development strategies and policies are built.

Contrary to popular belief, the youth constitute the biggest social group of consumers and producers of values,

cultures and knowledge, in addition to various economic, social and cultural pressures. During this stage, young people complete their basic formation and training and move towards the labour market, seeking to start their own families and gain social status through social participation and recognition.

Knowledge, at its various levels and mechanisms, is considered an important aspect of young people’s thoughts and concerns. This means it is an essential element in building their identity within the framework of a general process determined by their self-perception and roles as young people on one hand, and by the culture, identity and values arising from their interaction on the other. The analysis of cultural and cognitive effectiveness of young Emiratis, and young Arabs in general, involves a number of relevant issues that include values, culture, identity, integration, belonging and citizenship.

Emirati youth are not currently subject to just one type of pressure and influence, but rather to a complex and interactive compound of internal and external influencers due to globalisation¹¹ and the development of means of communication and interaction. Add to this the openness of their society to a large number of nationalities, languages and cultures. This renders the issue of establishing one’s identity, or hesitating about it, one of the most important and major challenges that determines one’s position and stance on knowledge; whether to accept or reject it, to participate in its transfer and localisation or resist the process with justifications that revolve mostly around the issue of building a unified and acceptable identity.¹²

Such issues are not to be tackled as independent or isolated limitations, but rather as highly interactive and interdependent systematic dynamics. The selective or exclusionary position of any of this system’s components is one of the most important barriers to the localisation of knowledge which requires the efficient integration of the youth in the process.

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As is the case for development as a central concept, it is necessary to redefine the parameters and limits of young people themselves, given their status as the “critical mass”, whether for the society as a whole or, in the context of the problematic and challenge of the transfer and localisation of knowledge.

Box 1.2

Youth: The Most Important Segment in the Dissemination and Production of Knowledge

Undoubtedly, young people represent the largest and most important segment which bears, more than any other segment, the responsibility of participating in the process of knowledge dissemination, production and employment. This is due to their high numbers and the role they should play in assimilating knowledge and the latest developments in building capacities, fixing errors and constantly developing themselves. Therefore, investigating what the socialisation systems produce in terms of youth groups who are supposed to respond to the requirements of participation in the processes of dissemination and production of knowledge, as well as the shift towards a knowledge-based economy, is a pressing topic of great importance that helps in understanding the organisational context of the scientific and educational formation the Arab youth are subject to.

Source: Kamal Naguib, background paper for the report.

Youth Between Two Aspects: Biological and Social

Who are the youth? What are their general characteristics? When does the period of youth begin and when does it end? Answers to these and similar queries do not require biological responses related to defining the age group or groups that frame this social bloc, but rather entail a debate on the reconstruction of the limits and relations between all other age groups. This selection will organically affect the rights and obligations of each age group. It will also impact its role and position within the community and the tasks entrusted to it, and, as much as this report is concerned, it will influence the transfer and localisation of knowledge.

According to Pierre Bourdieu, the youth represent a complex social and sociological

phenomenon.¹⁵ The divisions and borders between age groups are ultimately representations formed by society about these stages rather than selections and biological differences.

Youth-related issues in the UAE and the wider Arab region are particularly important given the large demographic size of this age group and its own problems of quality. This is especially true in a highly-variable local and international context, with continuous openness to the world as a result of the progress and spread of modern technologies, especially the internet, and the acceleration of the globalisation of behavioural patterns and cultural values. And apart from the general definitions of youth as a statistical category that separates childhood from adulthood, there is currently no unanimous scientific definition or characterisation. This is a major obstacle for the various stakeholders involved in youth-related plans and programmes, particularly in adapting programmes and policies, and in our case of the transfer and localisation of knowledge, with the real needs and aspirations of the target groups. In all cases, for methodological purposes and in line with what was adopted in the third Arab Knowledge Report 2014, published in conjunction with this report, the 19-29 age group was considered as representative of the youth in the UAE. This category includes young people at the stage of university education and post-primary school formation and training, and extends to the early stages of work, production and social structuring, including marriage and building a family, bearing in mind the importance of young people in subsequent categories.

The youth in the UAE are considered one of the most important categories concerned with the transfer and localisation of knowledge and its production, utilisation, dissemination and integration into the economic and social development processes and in the wider cultural context. The youth represent the social segment that is most capable of learning, training and working as well as producing and being innovative. They are a driving force for development within a society.

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The increase in the proportion of the youth in the country's demographic pyramid is the best indicator of the importance of their role and highlights the need to better enable them. Based on population estimates for 2013, young people in the 19-29 age group in the UAE constitute 22.2% of the total population.¹⁴

Other Arab countries have expressed serious concern over their demographics, due to the high proportions of young people and the subsequent need to provide jobs that limit youth unemployment and qualify them to engage in social life. However, this does not seem to be among the UAE's concerns, for the country has managed so far to have the lowest youth unemployment rate among Arab countries. Add to that the numerous funds that help support the youth, such as the Marriage Fund, as well as the availability of family and social solidarity systems. The society's tribal structure, customs and traditions also help support young people and their integration into life in smooth and safe ways.

Box 1.3

Youth and the Ability to Work

The concept of the youth is synonymous with the ability to work, produce and communicate. It is also equivalent to fertility and productivity, as well as being an intercommunication engine, given their feasibility. But at the same time, youths are keen on adventure and enjoy the ability to go forward with courage and enthusiasm. There is no doubt that the idea of giving young people a specific role in order to expand the horizons of the knowledge society in the Arab world, is a shift towards caressing the qualifications of youths backed by a spirit of initiative and courage, which will enable them to endeavour on the paths of the knowledge society in smoother ways, compared with the rest of the social components.

Source: Kamal Abdul Latif, background paper for the report.

General Methodology

The methodology of this report adopted a number of empirical and analytic approaches in order to draw a more accurate picture of the status of the youth and knowledge in the UAE. Research tools were

numerous and included field surveys with the participation of representative samples from young people in the final stages of their university studies, intensive workshops with young people and specialists and the latest information, data and studies available at national and international levels. Below is a description of the most important features of these methodologies.

Analytical Studies

To identify the availability of the enabling environments necessary for the transfer and localisation of knowledge, through the results of a desk study that involved critical analysis of available studies, research and reports, and based on the latest relevant information and data issued by international organisations, research and studies exclusive to Emirati society, in addition to background papers, statistics, and relevant data, with the analysis of legislations, laws and various relevant publications.

Field Study

By conducting field surveys on representative samples covering the target population of young people (males and females), at their last year of university, and who receive their university education in one of the country's three public institutions: the United Arab Emirates University in Al Ain, Zayed University in Dubai and Abu Dhabi, and the Higher Colleges of Technology in nine cities – Dubai, Abu Dhabi, Al Ain, Madinat Zayed, Khalifa City, Ruwais, Sharjah, Ras Al Khaimah and Fujairah. The sample involved 2,142 female and male students in humanities and science departments in these three universities.

Focus Groups with the Youth

These focus groups allowed for broader participation in understanding, debating and enriching the report. The team organised and managed focused workshops with groups of young people aged 22-34, in order to explore their views on their readiness for the transfer and localisation of knowledge and their suggestions for ways and strategies that go in

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this direction. Additionally, a brainstorming workshop was held with the involvement of a large group of experts and specialists who discussed various topics addressed in the report. Topics included the concepts of transfer and localisation of knowledge, the state and the challenges in this field, the elements of youth empowerment and supportive environments for this process, and the strategies of future action.

Structure of the Report

This chapter offers an introduction to the report, highlighting its importance, which is represented by the active integration of the Emirati youth in the processes of knowledge transfer and localisation. In this context, a number of conceptual frameworks were provided based on the philosophical and theoretical frameworks adopted in the third Arab Knowledge Report 2014, taking into account the specifics of the UAE case.

In the next chapter, the report examines the knowledge and developmental situation and the challenges of knowledge localisation in the UAE. Moreover, it provides a description of the knowledge and developmental situation according to international indices. It also showcases the position of the UAE relative to other countries in several international indices such as the Global Innovation Index, Economic Competitiveness, Human Development Indices and the Happiness Index. The chapter exposes the most important challenges facing the Emirati society at the cognitive and developmental levels, without losing sight of achievements and with a positive look to maximise the benefits. It also addresses a number of challenges, including those in the areas of education, youth motivation, human resources and economic restructuring.

Since the concept of youth empowerment in the UAE cannot be discussed without identifying the enabling environments that surround this process, the third chapter addresses the nature of relevant enabling environments and their status in the UAE. These refer to the supporting environments

provided to the youth by the community in various structures and forms to prepare, help them and facilitate their engagement in the knowledge society. Within this setting, the chapter provides an analytical description of the status of the educational environment, particularly higher education, and reviews the status of scientific research and development, which represents one of the most important pillars of the desired knowledge society. The chapter examines the status of economic environments and the general economic structure and their ability and readiness to support the operations of transfer, localisation and youth integration. It then moves on to discuss social, political, demographic, cultural and technological environments from the same perspective. The chapter also includes a presentation and an analysis of a series of decisions and legislations in support of the knowledge society that could potentially establish a basis from which to push young people to acquire the necessary skills for the transfer and localisation of knowledge. It also observes the status of a number of sectors and institutions and their contribution to finding and activating projects that support the youth and the localisation of knowledge.

The fourth chapter presents a detailed analysis of the state of the Emirati youth, their ambitions and the challenges they face to achieve active integration in the transfer and localisation of knowledge. This analysis is based on the results of field surveys conducted with young people, and the results of focused workshops and brainstorming sessions. The chapter provides an objective assessment of the status of the youths' skills and the values that guide their behaviour and actions. It also focuses on the issues of belonging, identity, openness and communication with the world culturally and scientifically, while examining the current levels of effectiveness among young people, whether economic; labour issues, social; interaction and community participation, or general; cognitive and cultural effectiveness.

In line with the positive and realistic outlook adopted in this report, and in continuation of

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the trend that the Arab Knowledge Reports have followed, the fifth and final chapter suggests a set of strategies and mechanisms to activate young people's participation in the process of knowledge transfer and localisation, the production of knowledge and its employment for the benefit of human development in the UAE. These proposals are consistent with the overall strategy for supporting and enhancing the general trend in the UAE to build and activate

comprehensive national efforts aimed at the transfer and localisation of knowledge and to support creativity and innovation towards the production, development and deployment of knowledge in various fields. Such processes would contribute to the consolidation of the knowledge society in the country and institutions, so that it becomes an integral part of UAE society as a whole.

The fifth and final chapter suggests a set of strategies and mechanisms to activate young people's participation in the process of knowledge transfer and localisation, the production of knowledge and its employment for the benefit of human development in the UAE

Endnotes

- ¹ See the Arab Knowledge Report 2009 and 2010/2011 -the UAE case study.
- ² See the third Arab knowledge Report for the year 2014, published in conjunction with this report, which deals with this subject from a regional perspective covering the Arab region as a whole.
- ³ See, for example: Castells 2000a, 2000b, 2004 & 2012.
- ⁴ This conceptual model was presented and discussed in a specialised workshop held in Dubai on 12 December 2013 with the participation of the UAE Minister of Education and a number of Emirati experts, academics, and stakeholders
- ⁵ UNDP 1990
- ⁶ UNDP 1990
- ⁷ AbdElrahim Al-Atri, background paper for the report.
- ⁸ UNDP 1990.
- ⁹ Murad Illah 2011.(Reference in Arabic)
- ¹⁰ OECD 2000.
- ¹¹ The AKR uses the term globalisation or globalism, while the intellectual Murad Wehbe finds that the term “globalism” is a more accurate translation.
- ¹² See Chapter 4 of this report, which shows the perceptions of young Emiratis with regards to the subject, based on field surveys and focused groups.
- ¹³ Bourdieu 1984. (Reference in French)
- ¹⁴ UAE National Bureau of Statistics 2013.