

Conclusion



The present report discussed existing inequalities and disparities in the Arab region, ranging from inequality in income, opportunities, wealth, gender and climate change. It highlights that heightened social and economic inequalities are potential seeds of discontent, and provide fertile ground for unrest and tension by leaving millions of young people with unrealized potential and ambitions. Most importantly, inequality hinders national efforts on leaving no one behind, and undermines the realization of the 2030 Agenda.

In a time of growing inequality and social exclusion, the accumulation of economic and social tensions, particularly exacerbated by the greatest cost-of-living crisis in the past 25 years, have the potential to significantly increase disaffection and alienation among Arab populations, who continue to face unemployment, poverty, exclusion and social deprivation.

Inequality is the result of policy choices. Reducing inequalities requires reasserting the role of the State as the guarantor of equal economic and social rights, and implementing policies to equitably redistribute resources. This is a political process first and foremost. At the national level, it necessitates structural reforms and changes in economies and institutions, as well as social and legal changes to promote equality and social inclusion. The present report is a step forward in that process. It is necessary to bring all sectors of society together across the region, by forging partnerships between Government, business, trade unions, international organizations, and civil society.

For this shift to occur, there is a need to utilize the enormous advantages in the Arab region: people with talent, energy and enthusiasm; strong networks of family and kinship relationships; abundant natural resources; a strategic location; and a common historical, cultural and spiritual heritage, bound by the Arabic language and linked through geographical proximity.

Implementing the actions outlined in the present report is fundamental to achieving the positive differences that policy can make to the lives of people in Arab countries. The practical solutions presented in the report are realistic yet ambitious, and set a course for real change in the areas that matter most to Arab citizens to guarantee a better quality of life for all.