



## Arab Youth Arts & Music Initiative



*Empowered lives.  
Resilient nations.*

### INTRODUCTION

The present document provides an overview of the “Arab Youth Arts & Music Initiative” (AYAMI) which has been conceived by the UNDP regional programme for Arab States with the overall objective to raise awareness on the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) among children and youth, and to prepare them for being the custodians of sustainable development. The initiative places art and music at its core, as powerful tools to communicate messages and engage with people and communities. The Arabic language is also a key for the success of this initiative as it has the potential to take the SDGs message to every school and home, ensuring that no one is left behind.

### CONTEXT

The 2030 Agenda represents a historic milestone, a commitment among nations all across the world to walk together towards the achievement of 17 essential, urgent and measurable advancements for the world’s people. An enormous amount of work must be done to bring the 2030 Agenda into reality. Everyone can and should play a role in the implementation of this shared agenda for prosperity.

In particular, the 1.8 billion young men and women across the planet can be a driving force for development. They represent the opportunity to create a huge wave of change which will impact how our world looks and functions today, in the future and even beyond 2030. The Arab region is home to the youngest population in the world, with over 150 million young men and women under the age of 18. Furthermore, the current Arab youth generation is the largest the region has witnessed in 50 years, with more than 60% of the population under the age of 30.

This expanding population exerts great pressure on societies and may represent a heavy burden on state institutions and basic infrastructure. At the same time, these young people represent an unprecedented opportunity because, by virtue of the investment made by Arab countries over decades, they are more well educated, healthier and better connected to the world than previous generations.

Yet, while many of the development challenges are especially salient for children and youth, they are not fully aware of the vision, opportunity and space for action offered by the 2030 Agenda. This, coupled with other obstacles (e.g. cultural, institutional, etc.), makes the potential of Arab youth to drive positive change way underexpressed and underutilized. There is therefore a need to reinforce advocacy efforts targeting young men and women, to prepare and encourage them to be the present and future custodians of sustainable development.

## RATIONALE

The inspiration behind AYAMI is that the SDGs must be brought down to local realities if they are to succeed in changing the world by 2030. Children, youth, and communities must internalize how the issues represented by the SDGs affect their own daily lives and environments, whether that be on improving health and nutrition; the importance of early learning and quality education; fostering more peaceful communities where children live free from violence; or establishing more sustainable approaches to use and preservation of natural resources. When that understanding happens, people of all ages can be inspired to take action, resulting in sustained progress on these goals and shifts in social norms and behaviors in the long-term.

AYAMI places art and music at the center of its rationale, as they can offer children and youth unique perspectives and solutions towards today's most pressing global challenges. Art and music also remind us that our most valuable resource for achieving the SDGs by 2030 is our creativity, which must be put at the service of sustainable development. In addition, AYAMI intends to leverage the outreach potential of artists and musicians from the region to spread the word about the SDGs to wide and diverse audience.

Finally, "arabizing" the advocacy on the 2030 Agenda and tailoring it to the context of the Arab States brings the SDGs closer to the people and is key to instill a full ownership by children and youth of the region. It is also a solution to address the language barrier that is often associated with the predominant SDG English materials and communication, thereby constituting an important effort to leave no one behind.

## OBJECTIVES

The overarching objective of AYAMI is to raise awareness about the 2030 Agenda among children and youth in the Arab region and engage them to promote their role as actors and advocates of the SDGs. The initiative is structured around two specific objectives, which correspond to two sequential streams of work with different time horizons:

- 1) Creating a momentum for SDGs promotion and advocacy in the Arab Region through the production of a multimedia product. This objective, which is the main focus of this concept note, has an indicative timeframe of around 12 months.
- 2) As this stream of work yields results, a fully-fledged regional initiative will be designed to design and implement a region-wide advocacy and awareness campaign for achieving the 2030 agenda through engagement of children and youth in the schools.

## ACTIVITIES

### Track one – the quick win

The first and initiating phase of AYAMI will be centered around the production and promotion of an SDGs multimedia product, namely a song with video-clip. This choice is based on the fact that music can carry and transmit messages in a very powerful way and is a very appealing format for younger generations, including children and youth.

AYAMI intends to develop a high-quality product with very high outreach potential, which will be ensured through a combination of the following:

- Recruitment of a professional music composer and music production company. This will ensure that, with support from UNDP, the lyrics -combined with quality music and sound- carry a powerful message around SDGs and encourage youth action;
- Development of the video-clip through a professional producer and director, to complement the music with motivating images;
- Engagement of 1-2 music celebrities as lead singers, with the likes of artists such as Kathem Al-Saher, Tamer Hosny, Nancy Ajram etc. Celebrities can be powerful advocacy partners, for the credibility and notoriety they enjoy with broad segments of the public, and for the spotlight they can draw to key issues;
- Engagement of 7-10 young talented singers to form a choir to accompany the solos of lead singers with choral sections. These young voices will be identified through a possible collaboration with [The Voice Kids: Ahla Sawt](#) (meaning Best Voice)– a popular Arabic music talent show for younger singers. The inclusion of these young talents can constitute a sign of young people’s ownership of the 2030 Agenda and a source of inspiration for new generations.

Once the product is developed, a communications strategy will be implemented to promote and disseminate the song region-wide, through media and social media channels – including the possible screening during at The Voice Kids show. This will serve to create the momentum for SDGs promotion in the region, and take advocacy efforts to the next level.

### Track two – towards an art-based regional advocacy initiative

To do so, a fully-fledged regional advocacy initiative can be contemplated. The campaign will be targeting children and youth (up to the age of 18) by creating an enabling environment and providing the financial and technical means for them to engage in activities that are creative, innovative and entertaining. The campaign will be nationally based, involving concerned ministries (education, youth, culture), local authorities and schools. The initiative will also consider setting up SDGs art clubs in schools to ensure further project sustainability.

#### AN INITIATIVE IN CONCERT WITH ONGOING EFFORTS AND PARTNERS

AYAMI will not act in isolation, but it will be part of and aligned with the broader efforts by UNDP and partner agencies across the region:

- AYAMI is part of and aligned with the overall work on youth by the regional programme for Arab States. In particular, it will benefit from the experience and draw synergies with ongoing initiatives such the Youth Leadership Programme and Visualize 2030, which support young people to take the lead in developing and implementing innovative solutions and advocacy tools to address the main development challenges in their communities.
- AYAMI will draw upon a good deal of examples of advocacy work and awareness campaigns by UNDP country offices. These include for instance the engagement of Omar Samra as goodwill ambassador in Egypt to promote environmental protection and youth empowerment. Another example comes from UNDP Sudan, which worked with a music group called Aswat al Madina to help connect governmental partners with younger constituencies. In addition, UNDP in Tunisia engaged a group of local artists to produce a song to raise awareness on the importance of voting. And many others shining examples of effective advocacy and communications campaigns.
- Especially for its second phase, AYAMI will seek partnerships and collaboration with other UN agencies and actors engaged in the promotion of the SDGs among youth and children. These include for instance UNICEF and UNESCO, but also the global SDGs Action Campaign and the private sectors efforts of the Common Ground Initiative.

#### TIMEFRAME AND ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE FIRST PHASE

The first phase of AYAMI is expected to start its implementation in the first quarter of 2019, and to take approximately 12 months. This timeframe is also designed, but not bound by, the opportunity to promote the multi-media product during the Dubai Expo 2020. Depending on progress and results, the initiation of the second phase could also start before the first year of implementation.

AYAMI is an initiative led and managed by the UNDP regional programme for Arab States, in collaboration with other relevant RBAS, Hub and Country Office units. The implementation modality will benefit from the new and revised UNDP policies for programme and project management, such as the Engagement Facility, the Project Initiation Plan and/or Development Services as relevant.

## REQUIRED RESOURCES

The overall resources required for the implementation of the first phase of AYAMI amount to US\$ 250,000 - with the following breakdown of costs:

<b>Multi Media Production</b>	
<b>Song</b>	
Composition fees	\$ 20,000
Copywriting fees	\$ 2,500
Production fees*	\$ 17,500
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>\$ 40,000</b>
<b>Kids engagement</b>	
Kids fees	\$ 10,000
Kids travel and accommodation	\$ 20,000
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>\$ 30,000</b>
<b>Video Clip Production</b>	
Producer	<b>\$ 120,000</b>
Production Manager	
Director	
Director of Photography	
<b>Technical Coordinator</b>	
Fees per month	<b>\$ 10,000</b>
<b>Communication Strategy</b>	
Communication plan and implementation	<b>\$ 50,000</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 250,000</b>

Any resource requirement associated with the second phase will be discussed at a later stage and based of further consultation with relevant UNDP offices, partners and beneficiaries.