



Economic prosperity cannot be achieved without entrepreneurial spirit

Conference paper by Zeidan Ali Zeidan

The Arab Spring is still linked with great hopes of real democracy in the Middle East and North Africa. With one of the world's highest percentage of young adult citizens between the age of 19 and 30, youth unemployment is still alarmingly high. The high number of young adult citizens in the region indicates a vast untapped human potential. This hasn't been utilized so far to help mitigate and overcome social and economic difficulties the countries still face after 2011.

Giving the citizens a voice, many of the social and economic difficulties and political 'misinterpretations' have been addressed by the different Civil Society Organizations throughout the region. They advanced 'new' topics like democracy, respect for human rights and women empowerment.

Parallel to this development the landscape of young entrepreneurs has grown in the region. Many young entrepreneurs came up with their ideas and turned them into viable businesses. Even though at first sight both groups might have conflicting goals, a closer look reveals that both can complement each other to contribute to a stable and socially just society.

Still, after the Arab Spring many countries lack good governance. This will require strong partnerships between the state, Civil Society Organizations and entrepreneurs. Together they can address social issues and find a cure for youth unemployment through collaborative creation and widespread adoption of new solutions. This helps communities to become prosperous, stable and pushes political institutions to be agile and responsive to the people they serve.

True vibrant democracy cannot be achieved without civil society, and economic prosperity cannot be achieved without entrepreneurial spirit.

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