The Second Arab Women Development Report Arab Adolescent Girls:

Reality and Prospects Executive Summary

■ CAWTAR

The Center of Arab Women for Training and Research (CAWTAR) sees this report on *Arab Adolescent Girls: Realities and Prospects* as a preliminary, exploratory study that will lead to further studies in a field that is still not sufficiently investigated in the Arab region. The main aim of this report, particularly the field study included in it, is to look into the future of Arab women and draw the attention of decision-makers and those working to extend women's participation in the development process, to the possibility of positively affecting this future, particularly the possibility of raising the level of women's participation in decision making. This is to be achieved by identifying handicapping factors and dealing with them through effective policies and interventions in the early stages of their formation.

Accordingly, and in cooperation with the work team, the Center of Arab Women for Training and Research planned the project and the report so as to realistically meet the research and practical needs of the field of adolescence in Arab societies. Qualitative dimensions therefore acquired much importance in the study of the situation of female and male adolescents because they allowed for their voices to be heard as clearly as possible, without ever excluding other dimensions expressed by quantifiable indicators.

The first part of the report includes a general introduction; the second part includes a field study involving seven Arab countries, namely: Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Lebanon, Morocco, Tunisia and Yemen. The qualitative study is based on interviews with female and male adolescents, in which different aspects of their lives were presented and analyzed. The interviews were analyzed according to the following six themes:

Identity and self-representation
Puberty, reproductive health and love
Family relations
School and work
Adolescent culture and behavior
Attitudes and values

Part three contains conclusions and recommendations. The last part of the report includes an analysis of statistics and human development indicators in Arab countries, with an attempt to extract from these indicators whatever is relevant to the subject of adolescence, in addition to statistical tables.

A special publication entitled *Rainbow: Testimonials of Arab Adolescents* has also been prepared. It contains a

presentation of selected biographies from the seven countries as well as a summary of all the interviews conducted in the context of the national field studies.

The following are the major findings of the report beginning with the results of the analysis of the final part.

Arab Adolescent Girls: Quantitative Indicators

1. Human Development Indicators in Arab Countries

This part includes a follow-up on the human development indicators and the economic and social indicators in Arab countries. In line with the method of presentation adopted in the First Arab Women Development Report entitled *Globalization and Gender: Economic Participation of Arab Women*, issued by CAWTAR in 2001, indicators specific to each Arab country were presented separately, then in averages for the four sub-regions, namely: the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries, the Mashreq countries, the Maghreb countries and the less developed countries (LDCs), in addition to a general average for all Arab countries including some comparisons with other world regions.

From these indicators, it became clear that the Arab region still occupies the same positions on the world development scale: that is, in a better position than sub-Saharan African countries and the LDCs, but in a position lower than that of the Latin American region, East Asia, and the transition-economy countries. Arab countries were divided into: the high development level (the GCC countries), the middle development level (the Mashreq and Maghreb countries, except Iraq), and the low development level (the LDCs and Iraq). Indicators also showed important economic, social and human disparities between the sub-regions, and sometimes between the countries, which require a greater effort particularly in the study of the features that characterize each group of countries and lead to different development priorities.

Furthermore, this part includes recent attempts to devise human development indicators. This includes an examination of the First *Arab Human Development Report*, and also looks at the joint work of the Economic and Social Committee for Western Asia (ESCWA) and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP)[1] in this area. Both these attempts at producing Arab human development indicators take into consideration the economic, social and human dimensions, and support the idea of grouping Arab countries into sub-regions, at comparable levels of development, and on the basis of these various elements.

2. Female and Male Adolescents: Basic data

In their search for statistical data on female and male adolescents, work teams encountered major difficulties. What was available was drawn from statistical data generally published on the basis of a five year age-division, or by level of education. In the statistical part of the report, the 15-19 age group and the secondary education level were chosen as the two divisions that are closest to the age group involved in the field study in the seven countries (i.e. the 15-18 group). Below is a presentation of some of the data on female and male adolescents, which can be examined in detail in the statistical appendices.

The number of female and male adolescents in the 15-19 age group in Arab countries rose from 23 million in 1990 to

Adolescent Population by Region, 2003 and 2050
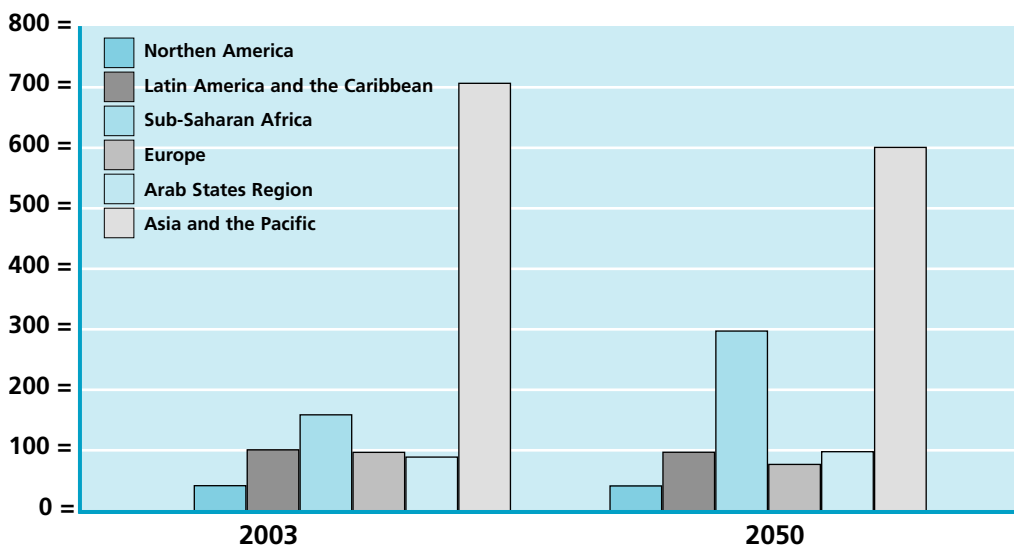
Source: UN Population Division in UNFPA Report State of World Population 2003 Investing in Adolescents Health and Rights

This part also covers the various human development indicators used internationally (e.g. the Human Development Index, the Human Poverty Index, and the Gender-Related Human Development Index) in addition to indicators related to population, education, health, the economy, living conditions, environmental issues, basic rights and communication.

31 million in 2000. This number is expected to approximate 35 million in 2010, and 41 million in 2020. Concerning the proportion of female and male adolescents in the total population of Arab countries, it has increased from 10.3% in 1990 to 11% in 2000. However, this percentage is expected to decrease to 9.9% in 2010 and to 9.7% in 2020. Female and male adolescents are unequally distributed among Arab countries, depending on the size of the population in each of these countries. Egyptian adolescents represent one fourth of the total Arab adolescent population, while both Algeria and Sudan count 11% of all Arab adolescents respectively, Morocco counts 10% and Iraq 8%. That is to say that, approximately two thirds of the female and male adolescents live in five Arab countries, all of which suffer from difficult economic conditions, and three of which suffer from wars or internal conflicts.

The data included in this part present some of the general characteristics of female and male adolescents in Arab countries in accordance with available statistical indicators. Doubtless, this is a partial image that points to a clear shortage of consistent, complete information. One of the main recommendations of this report is to provide this type of information. [2]

The major recommendations of this chapter are as follows:
- Build a database and set up a list of indicators specific to female and male adolescents in Arab countries through:

> - **Why is it that I am responsible for household chores? Must I be a servant because I am a girl?**
>
> - **Why is it I cannot be friends with young boys? It seems like friendship is not allowed and I don't understand why.**
>
> - **The supervisor is always waiting for us by the door if we are late and asks us to cut our nails if they grow long.**
>
> - **Why is it that I must wear a hijab? And that it is forbidden to enjoy youth?**
>
> - **And that girls cannot go out unaccompanied? I must say I do not like this situation.**
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> Sara, 16 years, Bahrain
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> - **I was agitated and caused trouble. My father's words hurt my feelings and my mother slapped me in the face without even giving me a chance to explain myself. I felt terrible and like I didn't belong in the house.**
>
> - **I have never had any sexual relations with a girl, and this will not happen outside of a legal marriage be it a regular long-term marriage or a temporary *muta'a* marriage.**
>
> Mahmoud, 18 years, Bahrain

- Regular evaluation and monitoring of the use of data on female and male adolescents.
- Endeavor to unify available data on female and male adolescents through the development and distribution of statistical guidebooks on definitions, indicators and criteria, and the organization of training programs and exchange of experience so as to generalize the unified use of these guides.
- Encourage the production and development of data on female and male adolescents by researchers outside of the area of specialized statistics, and provide them with the technical, statistical support necessary.
- Develop more relevant indicators and apply better-suited methodologies in describing the reality of female and male adolescents in the Arab region.

Part I: The General Framework

This report deals with adolescence as a modern social phenomenon and as a condition generated by the interactions between adolescents and the physiological, cognitive and psychological transformations they go through when they reach puberty on the one hand, as well as the surrounding social, economic, and political factors, and their institutions, ideologies and value systems, on the other. Adolescence, with its characteristics and problematics, is thus a dynamic condition, in the sense that any change in the factors affecting either one of the two parties involved in the equation (the individual and the society), results in a different description of the problematics and characteristics that define adolescence in any given society and time.

1. The Emergence of Adolescence
The theoretical framework of this study includes a historical presentation of the emergence of adolescence and its association with modernity and the advent of individualism in European societies. It also includes a presentation of the different approaches used in the study of adolescence, more particularly the physiological, psychological, educational, anthropological and sociological approaches. Indeed, understanding adolescence and its various dimensions and levels requires the use of a multidimensional approach that, on the one hand, corresponds to the complex nature of adolescents' lives and behaviors that shape their personalities as individuals and as members of a community. On the other hand, this approach must also address the idea that adolescence is a social phenomenon that constitutes an area of common interest to psychology, education and sociology. Based on this, the report adopted a combined approach using a methodological and scientific synthesis of the necessary elements that guarantee a coverage of all the dimensions and levels of the phenomenon.

This introduction also includes an analysis of the problematics associated with the transformation of Arab societies from traditional societies to modern ones. Moreover, it tackles the structural transformations that made these societies sway between tradition and modernity, in the sense that they are neither traditional in the traditional sense of the word, nor modern in the modernist sense. The introduction also clearly distinguishes between modernity and globalization, considering the latter as a factor of social division that compounds vertical binaries in societies, and strongly affecting both female and male adolescents.

One of the basic themes of analysis in this report is the emergence of the individual with an individualized identity, given that it is one of the core features in the definition of adolescence. The question was raised concerning the extent to which it is possible to address this issue in Arab societies, and whether anything has come up in the field study conducted in the context of this report that confirms or denies its applicability. In this respect, every effort was made to avoid projecting preconceived notions onto the matter and to steer away from unfounded generalizations in this report.

2. The Emergence of Individualism
The emergence of individualism is also one of the most

- **I would not follow the example of any particular person. I would choose to act because of an idea, not because of a person.**

- **I think marriage traps people. I like living in a disorganized way, well maybe not disorganized – but not fixed.**

Achraf, 18 years, Lebanon

- **A girl can only turn down a suitor before becoming engaged. After the engagement, it's not appropriate to leave a fiancé.**

- **I became a problem for my family. You feel like a stranger if you get married then come back to live with your family.**

- **My sister says: Even if the Pope told me to drop out of school, I wouldn't. I tell her: Don't leave school and don't get married.**

- **I used to even write poetry to my husband and read to him because he doesn't read very well. Now, I am disgusted, I don't write any more.**

Zeineb, 18 years, Lebanon

important outcomes of modernity. Adolescence is also crucial as a recent phenomenon associated with the very social and cultural transformations that led to the shaping of the modern individual. However, excessive use of the concept of individual has, in turn, led to other excesses, making it a mythical concept more than an expression of a real state. This applies to the modern European societies themselves, which often criticize this concept as mythical. This must be taken into consideration while studying the period of adolescence and its relation to the emergence of individualism in Arab societies where transition to modernity has been a complex and incomplete process.

Monotoring ICPD Goals-Selected Indicators

	Reproductive Health Indicators		
	Births per 1,000 women aged 15-19	Contraceptive Prevalence	
		Any Method	Modern Methods
North Africa	36	47	42
Algeria	16	64	50
Egypt	47	56	54
Libyan Arab Jamahirya	7	40	26
Morocco	25	50	42
Sudan	55	8	7
Tunisia	7	63	51
Western Asia	47	47	28
Iraq	38	14	10
Jordan	27	53	38
Kuwait	31	50	41
Lebanon	25	61	37
Palestine	94	-	-
Oman	66	24	18
Saudi Arabia	38	32	29
Syrian Arab Republic	34	36	28
United Arab Emirates	51	28	24
Yemen	111	21	10

- **I became sexually active two years ago... but having sexual relationships requires experience, and I try to avoid it to stay clean.**
- **...Someone wrote my name on the board, and I became some kind of a criminal at school.**
- **To the researcher: What type of sex do you want me to tell you about, legitimate or illegitimate?**
- **I love taking risks and being adventurous, especially when it has to do with saving or helping other people.**
- **Sometimes I think about emigrating clandestinely... I dream about visiting Germany and hope I will become a famous football player.**

Jihad, 18 years, Tunisia

Indeed, in Arab societies female (and male) adolescents are considered to be influenced by the concept of "individual as consumer" produced by globalization, more than by the "individual as citizen" produced by modernity. Distinction is seldom made between these two concepts, and reactions are consequently divided into two diametrically opposed sides. Some identify with the consumer type of globalization, and others with an absolute rejection of the values of both globalization and modernity, due to the inability to distinguish between them, often resorting to seclusion within a strict concept of cultural specificity.[3]

Belief in the existence of a simple linear transition from "a society without individuals" to a society in which the individual holds a central position is misguided. Some kind of hybridization in values and concepts has, indeed, taken place. Therefore, it is difficult to associate the individual with modernity and to describe the other values as being traditional. We can say, however, that the mixture of elements from individual culture with elements from the culture of the community is a modern combination, to the extent that individual values contribute to the transformation of community values. The community elements in this combination cannot be described as traditional because they too belong to modernity and have been reformulated and transformed so that they now constitute a part of a suigeneris structure. And, instead of assuming that individualism is achieved at the expense of the relation between the individual and the institution and in complete severance from it, we should say that

individualism requires a redefinition of the meaning of this relationship.[4]

Consequently, approaching the issue of adolescence in Arab societies from the perspective of the emergence of the individual, in the truncated sense of the word, that is, without taking into consideration the social and historical dimensions of this concept, can lead to partial understanding and to projections that would deprive the study and its conclusions of objectivity and consistency with reality.

The theoretical framework included in Part I seeks to avoid exactly this pitfall by providing extended presentations, analyses and comparisons. This part has managed to clarify the social and historical characteristics that are specific to adolescence in Arab societies on the one hand, and the degree of interaction with, and influence of, the global context in the two stages of transition to modernity and globalization, on the other. It also reinstates the place of adolescence within contemporary world history, as is the case in Western Europe.

Part II: The Field Study and Analysis of the Contents of the Interviews

This part includes an analysis of the contents of the interviews conducted in seven Arab countries on the basis of six themes that form the chapters of this part. The main results are as follows:

Chapter One:
Identity and Self-Representation
This chapter examines the methods and means used by female (or male) adolescents to build their self-identity and self-perception. Female and male adolescents repeatedly use the term "normal" in describing themselves. They did not give much importance to the components of outward appearance and beauty, focusing more on the moral, behavioral and relational aspects. They also often credited themselves with positive attributes without seeming to critically look at themselves, and resorted to comparisons with siblings, relatives and friends in defining their self-identity. There was also an overlap between their self-perception and the others' perceptions.

Another dimension that was made clear in this chapter is adolescents' inability to express themselves consistently regarding the self and temporal continuity. The present was the only existing time for these adolescents whereas the past was mostly an unpleasant memory.

Construction of individual projects, however, is often associated with the availability of the cultural, social and economic resources for female (or male) adolescents and

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Rights Denied by Child or Early Marriage

Early marriage of girls undermines a number of rights guaranteed by the convention on the rights of the child:

- the right to education (Article 28).
- the right to be protected from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, including sexual abuse (Article 19) and from all forms of sexual exploitation (Article 34).
- The right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health (Article 24).
- The right to educational and vocational information and guidance (Article 28).
- The right to seek, receive and impart information and ideas (Article 13).
- The right to rest and leisure, and to participate freely in cultural life (Article 13).
- The right to not be separated from their parents against their will (Article 9).
- The right to protection against all forms of exploitation affecting any aspect of the child's welfare (Article 36).

Source: UNFPA - The State of World Population 2003

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their families. This raises the issue of independence in contemporary societies. Contemporary societies are in fact characterized by delayed social autonomy because adolescents have already been granted the means to enable them to achieve better development and growth. This is paradoxical. Children mature physically, emotionally and intellectually earlier than in the past. But they are more dependent on their parents, and become independent at a much later age than in the past.[5]

The field study shows that the process often followed by female and male adolescents in forming their identity and crystallizing their self-image differs depending on the objective social and economic conditions, on the life experiences that affected them, as well as on the means they possess to direct their choices and deal with the problems and difficulties they encounter.

The paths that female and male adolescents follow in building their identity can be classified into three types: first, a path that is considered "obedient" and prepares the adolescent to be a full member of the traditional family group; he/she internalizes their standards and values, adopts their visions and judgments, and believes in the necessity of agreeing with them so as to achieve tranquility and avoid all causes of tension and aggravation. Close integration in the family group leads to the marginalization of the peer group's influence in the building of the personality of the adolescent who, in this case, becomes more like adults in terms of his/her behavior and values.

The second path consists of leaving the beaten tracks and "rebelling" against adults by rejecting their ideas and views and by criticizing their attitudes, thereby making sure to fashion a distinctive personality. This rebellion may not necessarily and spontaneously lead to the building of an independent personality or to contributing to social change, except if other favorable circumstances become available. Sometimes female and male adolescents seek "uniqueness and distinction by exaggerating their conformity to, and integration with, an imposed youth culture. They resist being described as different. To them, the highest achievement is for one of them to embody a given group value,"[6] even if this value is different from those of adults. However, full integration in the buddy group hinders the crystallization of individual projects, because the latter means distinction from the group to which the adolescent belongs.[7]

The third course is reconciliatory. It takes into consideration both internal and external changes. Here, the female (or male) adolescent resorts to respecting the standards of the family and society, while personally contributing to the shaping of a distinctive identity and

avoiding clashes.

Each of these courses is characterized by the fact that reflexive thinking about the self holds a different position for the female or male adolescent. In the first path, where the individual almost fully identifies with the family group, self reflexive thinking is limited. This thinking increases in the third path where the female or male adolescent seeks to reconcile the ego and the other, and culminates in the second, associated with avoiding that the individual personality melt into the group. However, in all cases, social comparison plays a central role. The ego image is constructed based on the "significant" other or the "generalized" other as reference, through imitation and obedience, or through relatively distancing oneself from the judgments of others, or completely severing from them and attempting to build one's identity and crystallizing one's personality away from stereotyped attitudes and prejudices.

The Major Recommendations of this Chapter are:

■ To consider the forming of a unique and innovative personality capable of free and independent thinking as a primary educational goal in society's relations with female and male adolescents. This would be compounded with the development of specific patterns of relations within the structures of families and schools that complement each other in achieving the goal stated above for the creation of a balance between the individual, society and the intermediary entities, based on cooperation and interaction.

■ To reconsider the strict age and gender hierarchy in society, its institutions and culture including the achievement of an institutional, legislative and cultural reform that takes into consideration contemporary developments including children's early intellectual and cognitive maturity, so as to prepare them for roles and for greater participation than what they usually get.

Chapter Two:
Puberty, Reproductive Health and Love
This chapter covers several different subjects. It first addresses the process and memories of puberty, and the female and male ways of dealing with its early manifestations. It then addresses adolescents' views concerning sex, love and friendship, as well as marriage and the choice of partner and his/her characteristics. The chapter focuses particularly on the different ways in which female and male adolescents experience and react to the period of puberty, communication between parents and children, and parents' roles in preparing the latter for the physical and psychological transformations they are about to face.

The chapter does not deal with the process of puberty as a unique and independent factor in the definition of ado-

lescence, but as one of the interconnected and inter-twined factors that form adolescence. Indeed, the roles and behaviors accompanying adolescence cannot be attributed to one single factor.

They naturally result from complex multi-leveled elements. Puberty and adolescence constitute a type of "bio-social chemistry" that generates qualitative situations that cannot be considered as the result of individual factors; rather, adolescence itself exists only thanks to, and as a product of, this "chemistry."

In Arab societies, it is necessary to put the process of puberty and its interactions in the context of the general social transformations as well as the changes in values that have occurred in the last few decades, particularly those related to marriage and relations between both sexes. The most important of these transformations, which are directly related to the subject of this chapter, is perhaps the increasing delay in marriage age, which has become a major phenomenon in most Arab countries. For the young generations, average age at marriage varies between 25 and 30 for females and males in most of these countries. This raises the average time span between puberty and marriage to over a whole decade, sometimes two decades, a period during which prevailing values and customs and the laws in force do not allow the establishment of open and stable sexual relations among the two sexes.

This issue did not really exist for previous generations, when only a few years separated the age of puberty from marriage (in addition to social life being less complex than it now is). This new situation exerts pressure on the situation of female and male adolescents, on their conceptions of relations between the sexes, on what types of relations are acceptable or prohibited, and on their conceptions of marriage.

In the female and male adolescents' testimonies, disagreement emerged concerning their respective view of the process of puberty, and on sexual matters in general. While discussion over puberty among male adolescents led naturally to the discussion of sex, it was, except in a few cases, different with female adolescents. In general, we can say that responses in both groups were brief, which showed adolescents' unease and embarrassment when they talk about these topics.

Responses point to a mixture of difficulty and ignorance of sexual matters and reproductive health. Discussions also reveal the narrow space reserved by families for discussing sexual matters and reproductive health, due to the parents' lack of readiness to assume their roles as transmitters of knowledge and to prepare their children

to access a new phase in their lives. This particularly applies to fathers, as mothers seemed to be more able to assume this role – particularly with girls – informing them, at a particular age, about the start of menstruation and how to deal with it. Judging from some of the testimonies concerning teachers' reactions, it is likely that there is also an important shortage of information among teachers on these questions. This is one more reason that encourages female and male adolescents to seek the help of friends, older siblings, media, books and magazines (the good and the bad), and films to obtain information on sex and reproductive health, which may not always be scientific.

Some of the testimonies indicate that the traditional system that prevailed in previous decades may have contained traditional means of communication which were more effective in their socio-historical context. They also stress that embarrassment, shyness and avoiding to talk about sexual matters within the family, represent a somewhat modern phenomenon, whereas puberty was traditionally the object of celebration.

The field study reveals the existence of a clear disagreement between female and male adolescents over everything concerning sexual behavior and reproductive health. It also emphasizes the fact that discrimination on the basis of gender acquires new and more important dimensions with puberty, which supports the conclusion that, for women and men, social roles become more clearly defined with the formation of sexual identity. The study further showed that constraints on female adolescents sharply increase, particularly in conservative families, to the point of withdrawal from school and the imposition of early marriage. In general, female adolescents expressed a greater interest in emotional, moral and behavioral aspects in the person they love or desire to marry, while male adolescents showed greater interest in sex and beauty in their life-partner. The majority of female and male adolescents consider that the choice of partners must be their own, with parental consultation but with respect for the personal choice of the person directly concerned, even though it doesn't seem to be always guaranteed, especially for female adolescents.

The Major Recommendations for this Chapter are:
- Integration of health awareness, protection from accidents, reproductive and mental health, and sex education in educational programs, and ensuring that schools are a safe channel for the provision of scientific and sound information in these matters.
- Organizing training sessions in these subjects for teachers, counselors in educational institutions and associations which deal with adolescence.
- Devoting innovative programs targeting social milieus

where early marriage is still widespread, for the purpose of curbing and eradicating this phenomenon, and setting up partnerships with active bodies and with government and judiciary authorities for the purpose of imposing a minimum age for marriage.

■ Conducting advanced research on the phenomenon of delayed marriage age, as a forced choice resulting from economic and social conditions, and from certain social habits and their consequences on the female and male's bodily and mental health, and on social situations and behavior.

Chapter Three:
Family Relations
The interviews indicate that both female and male adolescents give great importance to family. Female adolescents are generally more strongly attached to their families than male adolescents. For boys, other areas of interaction are available outside the family, whereas for girls, family is the only available institution, particularly in milieus that limit girls' access to the public realm. The adolescent's relation with family and parents can be described as relatively conflictual but limited by an "understanding" attitude towards parents on the part of the adolescent, with a few cases of absolute obedience or open conflict.

The chapter examines the female and male adolescents' relations with both parents, with fathers and mothers individually, and with male and female siblings and relatives. It also examines the impact of family break-up on children, control over female and male adolescents' behavior, areas of disagreement with the parents, and discrimination between girls and boys within the family. The chapter concluded with "a typology" of different families and a definition of some of their common characteristics, and the extent to which they contribute to the building of female and male adolescents' personalities.

The analysis of female and male adolescents' testimonies, shows that not all families contribute equally to the process of identity building, and that female and male adolescents succeed in building their specific individual personality, and their independence only when a set of conditions and resources are available. It seems that two types of resources, namely economic and cultural resources, play a major role in forming the profile of Arab families.

In general, it seemed that the majority of female and male adolescents live in families that have a greater tendency to follow a traditional family type in which roles are clearly distributed on the basis of age and gender. But other types of families exist, ranging from the more traditional type (which gives a greater role to the extended

family and tribal structure, particularly in Yemen), to a type that is more influenced by modernity and modern living patterns. There are also behaviors that are more influenced by "consumer" globalization, particularly among the younger generations.

Families seem to be more affected by the historical and social conditions of the country than by the other issues addressed in the report. While it is possible to draw prototypical profiles of the Arab family, identify the transformations they experience and the exchanges likely to occur between them, these families seem, according to adolescents' testimonies and to the other sources of the study, to tend towards three poles that are highly dependent on the characteristics of individual countries. First, the development of the Arab family seems to be attracted to the pole of the traditional patriarchal family which is more frequent in Yemen where the tribal structure is strong and the extended family still has an important role and a strong presence in the nuclear family, a situation which deeply affects female and male adolescents. The second pole is that of the modern family which agrees more with the characteristics of the Lebanese and Tunisian societies. Mention should be made here of the difference between these two countries. Lebanon is characterized by cultural idiosyncrasies and social relations that put it ahead on the level of social and cultural practices more than on the level of legislations and laws. As for Tunisia, the legislative, legal framework is considered to be more advanced than it is in Lebanon and more advanced than what prevails in the Tunisian social culture itself.

The third pole is represented by the influence of the pattern of consumption oriented globalization. This family conforms more with models that are widespread in Bahrain where this pattern deeply marks the behavior and relation of family members, a situation which could lead to a weakening of family ties and bring them to the edge of disintegration.

Based on the above, we can distinguish four "ideal" family models from within the three above-mentioned poles. In the traditional pole we can distinguish between traditional wealthy families and traditional poor families. Relations between these two types of family are based on traditional allegiance. It may be a work relation (i.e. the latter working for the former, particularly in the rural areas). It is generally a vertical one-directional relation. There is also the model of the globalized consumerist family which generally enjoys wealth and adopts consumerist behavior thereby imitating the globalized model and its values. Between this family and the traditional wealthy ones relations are likely based on the exchange of power and wealth interests. We also note the exis-

tence of relations of exchange between a third family model. These are middle class families which tend to be modernist. The basis of exchange here lies in the overlap that exists in the areas of professional activity, in the advanced cultural level, and in wealth particularly for the upper middle classes. Exchange is also defined on the basis of individual choices, as the values of both modernity and globalization overlap in their positive evaluation of the individual's role and personal choices. Finally, we mention the relations of exchange between middle class families which are modern and the poor families, particularly in the lower middle classes and the upper poor classes. The mechanism and channels of this exchange are achieved through education, culture and participation in political or social activities, achievements which bridge the gap between poor families and middle class ones.

These family models and common exchanges allow us to draw a general framework which defines relations of social exchange between families, and structures female and male adolescents relations, friendships, exchanges and behaviors within, and in agreement with it. Female and male adolescents are faced with the same influences (globalization, tradition and modernity) but to degrees and levels that differ from those faced by adults in general, and by their families in particular. They also have different reactions, which constitutes one of the most important foundations of what may be called the conflict of generations. The interviews clearly show that female and male adolescents are, in general, more attracted to the extreme cases than their families and parents, and this attitude is the most widespread and common one among adolescents. Indeed, from a behavioral point of view, female and male adolescents were more influenced by the "globalized" consumerist pattern.

In terms of values, however, female and male adolescents seem to be more influenced by a special form of affiliation with an inherited identity (which is more tinged with fundamentalism than with traditionalism, from the religious point of view). The influence of modernity and its values, on the other hand, seem to be limited and primarily confined to the combination of the elements of socioeconomic affiliation to the middle class, and to urban belonging, cultural openness, educational level, and political or social activity. The combination of these conditions is not always easily available. Finally, the majority of female and male adolescents tend to find a middle position that enables them to find middle solutions and to coexist with their families and society.

All of these models exist. They coexist and interact within the same countries. As explained above, they are approximate and ideal models, and real families are at varying distances from them.

As for the main problems associated with female and male adolescents' relations with their family, they essentially consist of a lack of space for dialogue within the family, and a quasi-general, although variable, discrimination between boys and girls. There are also two levels of what may be considered "a conflict of generations". The first is primary and consists in the disagreements occurring between parents and children over certain areas that are subject to severe control, particularly going out, choice of friends, and dressing – especially for girls. The second level of this "conflict of generations" takes a more crystallized form and is observable among female and male adolescents who enjoy reasonable cultural resources and feel the difference between their own perceptions and those of their parents. We should not lose sight of other cases such as the one mentioned by Sana (age 15, Egypt) when she said: "I have no time for conflicts of generations. My father, my brother and myself are busy fighting poverty".

The Major Recommendations Concerning the Family are:
- To develop relations within the family that would make it a more appropriate space for accompanying the female and male adolescent in building his/her unique personality and effectively integrating into society, by concentrating on addressing essential gaps in the family through:
  - increasing the spaces of dialogue between parents and children,
  - eliminating discrimination between girls and boys within the family,
  - developing interactive and complementary relations between family, school and female and male adolescents' friends.
- To develop programs targeted for parents, using communication media or through direct contact with them, and programs that target children and contribute to bringing forth multiple models for family construction and family relations based on dialogue and participation.
- To conduct an analytical field study of the phenomenon of family breakdown.

Chapter Four:
School and Work
This chapter examines female and male adolescents' relation with school and their perceptions of their professional future. It also examines the experiences of those who enter the job market.

1. School
The chapter presents four essential functions for school, namely: the cognitive function, preparation for the job market and economic activity, preparation for social and

citizenship roles, and another function resulting from the presence of pupils in large numbers in the school institution which allows for the development of horizontal relations between them and the expansion of their scope of references. This chapter also addresses pupils' relations with their teachers, discipline systems, curricula, teaching methods, co-education, discrimination against girls in educational opportunities, pupils' behavior in school, the characteristics of popular kids, with emphasis on the great need for reforming schools and their organization, and for the modernization of teaching methods.

In addition, this chapter addresses school's major historical and social functions, as a channel and a mechanism of social modernization used to break with prevailing traditional concepts, as well as an essential contributor to the emergence of adolescence as a social category in Arab societies. Adolescence is, in fact, considered in some senses as a product of schooling. However, the study also notes that the school is facing reverse influences and that it has become more and more affected by the transformations experienced by local and world communities as a whole. This raises the issue of "the crisis of schools" as a global crisis involving the role of schools in society, as well as their cognitive and economic functions, the internal relations between the administrative and academic bodies and pupils, and schools' relations with the parents.

Schools often find themselves caught between two types of relations: in the first, traditional types of relations, priority is given to law, order and discipline. When a pupil disagrees, he/she is punished. The second type of relation gives priority to exchange and is more receptive to dialogue and negotiation. At present, the school system cannot be accepted arbitrarily and without discussion, but must be open to negotiation and be able to convince on the part of pupils. But the level of heterogeneity between schools within the same country and between Arab countries is so high that Arab societies are faced with two different sets of problems associated with school and education. There are, on the one hand, the traditional schools in the full sense of the word that separate boys and girls and result in the spread of illiteracy, particularly among girls, use bodily punishment, dictation and backward curriculums, in addition to the problems of inadequate equipments, absence of health conditions and security... On the other hand, there are problems associated with the need to move to a modern school model in terms of teaching methods, curriculums and relations. What should be mentioned here is that the effects of globalization and economic reform in Arab countries push towards a deeper gap and dualism in the educational system.

Female and male adolescents consider the school as a compulsory passageway to maturity, work and indepen-

dence. Most of them do not consider school as an attractive or enjoyable institution. They also severely criticize the top-down system of relations within school and the excessive reliance on discipline and on the use of authority in the administration's and teachers' relation with the pupils, so much so that some of them compared the male or female principal to a jailer. The interviews clearly show the decline in the symbolic importance of teachers. The latter have, according to the female and male adolescents, lost their scientific competence and their abilities to establish interactive relations with pupils. Their pedagogical methods have also regressed. Indeed, many adolescents say they did not find an ideal teacher among their male and female teachers. The interviews have also shown manifestations of violence and uncivilized behavior in schools, which brought about complaints particularly from girls.

Most female and male adolescents prefer mixed schools which, for them, represent spaces that stimulate competition and contribute to the shaping of personality. There were also some reservations regarding religious customs and values, particularly among male adolescents, and reservations expressed by female adolescents who felt embarrassed and annoyed by boys' behavior.

An issue that is common to all the countries involved in the study is the disparity that exists between public schools and private schools. In private schools, similar behavior among male adolescents was noted in all the countries, particularly as regards the widespread phenomenon of consuming tobacco, alcohol, sometimes drug use, and certain inappropriate behaviors associated with relations between the sexes. In this respect, it was clear that social factors are more influential than national affiliations. As for female and male adolescents in public schools, they are more influenced by national specificities, and consequently their behavior differed from one country to another.

In what concerns the internal reform of school systems, sufficient attention has yet to be accorded to relations between pupils, teachers and the administration. Those concerned with this reform are not sufficiently interested in developing a work system that includes "safety valves" for solving conflicts through dialogue, or in creating effective participation mechanisms for pupils to deal with their school affairs and with their personal issues at school, even though these are priorities when it comes to adolescents.

The major recommendations in this field are:
- To renew school as an institution and reshape roles and relations within it, and to grant sufficient significance to the relational aspects that are usually neglected in educational reform programs. This is to be achieved through:
  - Reinforcing the pupil's sense of affiliation to his/her educational institution and rehabilitating school as an

educational institution founded on participation rather than as a mere instructional institution where relations are limited to administrative dimensions and vertical hierarchy.

- Producing a qualitative change in teaching methods through a greater reliance on active methods, and preparing a rehabilitation program for teachers to carry out this change.
- Creating appropriate forms of creative association between teaching inside the school and the many sources of knowledge existing outside the school.
- Encouraging pupils to organize committees and clubs and to elect their representatives in order to participate in the running of the school life. School is qualified to be the first space in which pupils are trained to participate in the management of public affairs on the local or national level. This must be included in the texts regulating school life and commitment to these regulations must be guaranteed in practice.
- According sufficient importance to sports, arts and practical activities and avoiding classifying disciplines and periods into fundamental and secondary.
- Developing school's internal regulations to allow for the establishment of early warning mechanisms to detect and solve conflicts before they worsen and become conflicts between pupils, parents, administration and teachers.

2. Professional Work and the Future

To both female and male adolescents, work represents a fundamental choice in the perception of their personal future. However, their testimonies did not indicate that they give priority to work as an instrument of self-achievement; for them, work is more associated with earning a livelihood (which is the most important consideration), the achievement of social recognition, or is considered as something taken for granted, a natural path that takes man from home to school and on to work. For female adolescents, in particular, it seems that joining work is not a necessity, not only because of social considerations that prevent it, but rather because it is a matter of personal choice and depends on whether their husbands are able to earn a good enough living. Here the image of work is associated with effort and exhaustion, and often with doing work that does not agree with personal aspirations and desires.

On the other hand, pure economic logic and the logic of success based on individual aspirations are still not widespread; and this shows the influence of social, cultural and economic dimensions in the evaluation of work and the definition of choices. The major conclusions regarding professional choices are characterized by:

- The overlap of female and male adolescents' choices, especially in terms of professions associated with technology, languages, and with diplomacy. However, choices are still very influenced by a traditional division of labor between women and men, such as the preference for social professions like medicine and education for female adolescents, and the preference for engineering, enterprise and commerce for male adolescents.
- A state of confusion and indecision regarding choices exists among a part of the female and male adolescents, which is natural owing to age and to the desire and ability to pursue education, as well as to other factors.
- Some of the choices are expressions of wishes and reflect the high value given to certain professions, as well as to the social importance a title associated with higher education can give, whatever the specialization.
- The female and male adolescents' choices seemed to be realistic in certain cases or countries, and associated with school tracks or with the emergence of current jobs. In other cases, the choices reflected an orientation towards professions with high financial yield and associated with the market and modern technology (e.g. computers and commerce).
- In general, female and male adolescents do not explicitly express preference for a given profession on material grounds. In some cases, it seems that adolescents could be satisfied with a job that guarantees stability and success in the social milieu where they live, a contentment limited to founding a family, owning a house and a car, and having a good reputation and acceptable social relations.
- Despite the existence of professional choices that reflect the specificities of each society, there were common cross-national choices, particularly for specializations in computer science, commerce and marketing, and a clear continued presence of fields that allow work abroad or in diplomacy (e.g. languages, political science, and law). These conclusions call for further research and reflection on the programs and policies that aim at encouraging youth employment. These programs do not come as ready-made conceptions at a time when opportunities for their success are not sufficiently available because they are not realistic or with the choices and preferences of those most concerned.

The Major Recommendations are as Follows:

- Improve and revamp government and non-government professional orientation programs, and create new lively formats of interaction between schools and fields of economic activity.
- Develop labor legislation relative to adolescent employment, particularly through commitment to the minimum legal age of entry into the job market, the conditions of work and trainee regulations, so as to grant adolescents more rights.
- Guarantee female and male adolescents' rights to

unionize and to benefit from social and health insurance, and from other work-related benefits and rights.
- Plan intervention programs targeting youth such as income-generating projects, loans and professional training. These programs must take into consideration: first, female and male adolescents' expectations and the priority they give to the social value of work; second, the prevailing conviction among them that there is a social division of labor on the basis of gender; and third, the adolescents' preference for a stable and permanent job that provides guarantees for the establishment of special projects the results of which are not guaranteed.

Chapter Five:
Adolescent Culture and Behavior

In the past, the family played a critical socialization role by providing the child and the adolescent models of interaction and different patterns of expression concerning behavior, opinions and values. Family used to be the primary reference for the models of conduct encountered by adolescents. This family role, important though it is, is gradually shrinking to the benefit of other institutions such as the school, the religious institution, and the different social and political institutions, as well as to the benefit of the peer group and friends who, in turn, form one of the essential sources for the shaping of female and male adolescents' behavior and attitudes.

Mass media plays an increasingly important role in shaping female and male adolescents' behaviors, particularly those of female adolescents. Indeed, these media have the ability to communicate messages and common contents to millions of adolescents. They are also characterized by intensity and continuity, which reinforces their cumulative impact and increases the likelihood of the messages and contents they spread being transformed into behavior. Media has acquired great power, and as such, it has the ability to provide evidence, as a reference and a reliable source of news, knowledge and behavior.

The appeal of the media which leads to a change in the patterns of behavior and customs and in what may be called the culture of adolescence, is one of the main dimensions identified by this study. It clearly showed the influence of the mixture of local environment effects with those resulting from increased exposure to the media of mass communication, as well as to the typical images that are generated by these media and are either internalized or rejected.

The contents of this chapter are divided into three themes, namely:
- Views of body and looks
- Self-isolation and friendship
- Interests and hobbies

Investigation of the first theme clearly shows that female and male adolescents generally accept their looks. The majority of them, especially the males, expressed reservations about attributing to themselves the "quality of beauty", as if that was something undesirable. However, the majority of adolescents of both sexes say they are attentive to their looks. Slenderness was a general demand, particularly among female adolescents, regardless of the country or the social class to which they belong. As to male adolescents, they tend to keep away from obesity and expressed the desire to be taller and athletic. In order to achieve that, some female and male adolescents follow a diet, practice sports and use make-up. Some even go as for as wanting to undergo plastic surgery.

As far as nutrition habits are concerned, they are variable. And despite the emergence of a category of female and male urban adolescents who increasingly consume fast food, traditional food still enjoys wide popularity and is sometimes the unique choice, as adolescents keep away from fast food to avoid obesity. In some cases, the nutrition system is unbalanced, showing in particular an insufficient consumption of vegetables, fruits and meat in the poor milieus.

As regards dressing, female adolescents are more strictly controlled. In this respect, we note a wide variety of tastes and practices. Female and male adolescents from the middle and wealthy classes influenced by consumer behavior share a preference for modern, "globalized" clothes and international brands. Others wear usual or traditional clothes, while a minority of adolescents consider the matter unimportant. In general, male adolescents prefer informal comfortable clothes, and female adolescents prefer clothes that go along with "reasonable and reserved" fashion, thereby keeping away from "conflicts".

The second theme emphasizes the search for friendships as an essential theme in female and male adolescents' lives. For female adolescents in particular, friendships include relationships with sisters (sisters being friends at the same time) and with relatives (female cousins on both the father's side and the mother's side). Friendship between opposite sexes is limited in the poor, rural and conservative milieus. For male adolescents, the friendship circle is wider, encompassing school, the neighborhood, and relatives as well. Friends constitute the favorite group with whom several activities are undertaken, especially outside the home. However, there seemed to be a problem with sharing secrets with friends, as female (and male) adolescents tended to be reserved, except with the special friend of whose discretion they were already sure.

The third theme shows the restrictions imposed on

female adolescents who are likely to carry on activities within the home and with the family, compared to a greater freedom for male adolescents in practicing activities with friends outside the home. As for hobbies, watching TV and using the computer were particularly emphasized compared to reading and going to the movies.

Practicing sports seemed to be a male activity for those who have financial resources, while music seemed to be a more widespread activity in all ages, countries and social classes, and particularly among female and male adolescents. Musical tastes varied between inclination to listen to classical and light songs, and interest in the most recent music fads. In this respect, tastes represented an indicator of the influence of globalized waves in music and arts and of the behavior associated with them.

Finally, the female and male adolescents' most important demand in this field was the need to establish a network of institutions and infrastructures designed for adolescents in neighborhoods and villages and near residential areas which can be used at affordable costs.

The Recommendations in this Area are as Follows:

- To provide appropriate infrastructures including clubs, associations, youth hostels, sport, leisure and cultural equipment, and make them available in places close to homes, especially in rural areas and in poor urban neighborhoods, which puts them within reach of larger groups, and enable female adolescents in particular to attend them.
- To develop consciousness-raising intervention plans and programs to encourage youth to read and use or obtain information technology. This can be achieved through reduction of book prices on the one hand, and setting up information technology networks in schools and in infrastructure reserved for female and male adolescents, thereby making it possible to extend the use of modern technology by girls and low-income categories, on the other. And to develop interest in the cinema and theater among both female and male adolescents.
- To increase the effectiveness of artistic education and spread general culture, legal education, tolerance values, respect for human rights and protection of female and male adolescents, using available means and channels (schools, media, club and association networks).

Chapter Six:
Attitudes and Values

This chapter examines the concepts and representations developed by female and male adolescents in their interactions with the wider society and the world, their attitudes towards public affairs and some of the important current developments in the world. The material is orga-

nized into four basic themes:

- Attitudes towards women and the social roles of women and men. This theme includes the following sub-titles: opinions regarding the current position of women, attitudes towards gender discrimination and equality, attitudes toward Western-type free relations and attitudes towards the veil.
- Attitudes towards religion and its importance in the adolescent's life and in society.
- Attitudes towards political life and public affairs. This theme includes female and male adolescents' definition of, and attitudes towards, authority, political action, involvement in social work, attitude towards wars and the events of September 11th, 2001.
- Miscellaneous attitudes concerning female and male adolescents' definitions of success and happiness, the value of money, and their attitudes towards traveling.

1. Attitude Towards Women and the Social Roles of Women and Men

The majority of female and male adolescents expressed dissatisfaction with the situation of women in Arab societies, recognizing the existence of deprivation and injustice towards them. However, this does not spontaneously lead to an attempt to change this situation (particularly on the part of male adolescents), or to an acceptance of the idea of equality of rights between men and women (an opinion that is equally widespread among female and male adolescents).

Attitudes towards the situation of women were categorized as follows:
- Clear opposition and dissatisfaction with the current

- My mother and father love my brother and I exactly as much as they love my sister.
- Friendship with girls is difficult. They spend most of the time in the house, and we are always in the streets.
- I don't want to rush into marriage. I want to save money and travel all over the world.

Amrou, 16 years, Egypt

- Divorce is something scary but sometimes it's necessary. I don't know what's best.
- Young girls didn't used to wear hijab. Only older women working in the fields used to wear the black hijab.
- He who can't lie won't be able to do anything, not go out or go to any place.
- It's like any given man is better than any given woman. Where do they come up with this kind of talk? It can't be religion. They make it all up.

Nahla, 15 years, Egypt

role and situation of women in society, leading to a call for equality of rights and a rejection of all forms of discrimination.

- Dissatisfaction with the current situation of women and recognition that women are generally wronged in society, without necessarily expressing the need to explicitly adopt egalitarian principles.
- Focus on the comparison of women's past and present situations, or between one society and another, to conclude that there is some kind of improvement or limits it would be better not to cross.
- Considering that women's situation is normal or natural given our customs and traditions, but without the expression of strong and firm attitudes against improvement of the situation and linking the likelihood of improvement with agreement with the prevailing social environment.
- Considering that women's situation is what it should be, often because of considerations associated with religious notions, as confining women's role to family duties towards their husbands and children is considered to be the ideal situation, anything contrary to that is considered as a departure from the right path, in addition to opposition to any attempt to change this situation.
- Adopting an indifferent or unconcerned attitude towards the issue.

There are several factors affecting these kinds of attitudes. Some of these factors are associated with the historical and social characteristics of the country concerned, which may give precedence to conservative or egalitarian attitudes. Yemen is generally a prime example of a country where responses are mainly focused on the conservative pole, and where the egalitarian pole is weaker. The opposite case is that of Lebanon, a country where the egalitarian attitudes appear to be stronger than in other countries. The second factor is gender. Indeed, female adolescents' attitudes seem to express dissatisfaction combined with a call for equality, and ultimately, dissatisfaction associated with discrete endeavors for change appropriate to customs and traditions. There are, at the same time, among male adolescents some attitudes that are stricter and more opposed to change.

The third factor is socio-cultural. Here the tendency (particularly with the combination of urban membership, social affiliation to the middle classes, and family cultural openness) is consistently to call for change and equality, accompanied by the emergence of a theoretical awareness of this necessity.

The fourth factor is religious and has a double influence: one is based on the fact that religious affiliation is a factor that helps interaction with, or rejection of, modern culture or conservative interpretations of traditions and heritage, particularly those concerning family relations and attitude towards women. The effect of this influence can be seen in the religiously mixed countries (e.g. Lebanon). The second influence is associated with female and male adolescents who are influenced by the religious political movements or with people affiliated to these movements. These adolescents hold religious-ideological convictions regarding women, more than simply religious convictions in the traditional sense of the word, even if these convictions are presented as coherent or expressing local traditions. We note, however, that the purely "typical models" in this or that sense do not exist, except for a few very exceptional cases.

The chapter also dealt with the phenomenon of veiling in its various forms, and shows the transformation that this phenomenon has gone through and its significance in the current conditions. Indeed, while wearing the veil was formerly a social custom common to rural and poor classes regardless of religion, it has for the current generation of female and male adolescents become an expression of political and cultural identity. Indeed, the interviews clearly showed that female adolescents who wear the veil are influenced by mass media, religious movements and friends of both sexes, more than by their own parents who seemed to be more lenient in this respect. In general, wearing the veil was considered a personal matter, but female adolescents influenced by religions and political movements manifest a strict attitude ultimately calling for imposition of the veil on all girls.

2. Attitude Towards Religion

The second theme deals with attitudes towards religion and its influence on the female and male adolescent's life. The interviews show that religion is present, and strongly so, and that it plays an essential role in determining attitudes and behaviors. This description applies to all respondents, except for a few cases who considered religion as being of little importance or gave a critical view of the prevailing understanding of religion. Their attitudes range from considering religion as a special relation between man and his Creator and avoiding pretension, to considering religion as a general organizer of society and the world in all the details of life. The chapter also notes the transformation from moderate, middle-of-the-road religion to religious movements of a political character which are more widespread among the children's generation, as compared with the parents' generation. In general, it also became clear that religious culture, in the wider sense of the term, is weak, and that female and male adolescents often do not differentiate between religious provisions and social customs and traditions on the one hand, and certain political and ideological discourses on the other. Nor do they know anything about religions other than the

one to which they are affiliated.

In light of the above, the major recommendations in this field are:

- Extending access to the religious heritage of the Arab region so as to include a wider knowledge of the religion to which the female (male) adolescent is affiliated, and knowledge of other religions, to enable these adolescents to build a religious culture based on tolerance and the discovery of common aspects, a culture that helps reject intolerance.

- Developing awareness of the distinction between religion and social habits and traditions, and between political and ideological choices, in order to make sure they are not confused in the prevailing consciousness, especially among female and male adolescents.

3. Attitude Towards Political Life and Public Affairs

As regards this theme the interviews show that there is great interest in major political issues, particularly those of Palestine, Iraq, Afghanistan and the events of September 11th, 2001, all of which were current issues at the time of the interviews. On the contrary, there is little interest in organized political action and a negative view of political parties and movements, as well as of the traditional concept of domestic policy. Regardless of their different affiliations and intellectual, religious and political backgrounds, female and male adolescents are unanimous in their negative evaluation of American politics and its pro-Israel bias. Adolescents are also unanimous in showing sympathy towards the Palestinian *intifada* and the Iraqi people. Besides, they all condemn war as morally unacceptable. However, beyond this general emotional reaction, there were no indicators concerning the availability of sufficient resources to build a practical and cohesive attitude that goes beyond what is spread by the media. The interviews also point out the great influence exerted by TV, particularly on the forming of this emotional political awareness. Many of the female and male adolescents expressed frustration at their inability to do anything to face up to the images and events broadcast on the silver screen.

Concerning authority, the female and male adolescents' views are close in defining it within a special circle generally represented by the parents and particularly the father, and within another circle generally represented by the organs of political authority. Certain adolescents hold the view that society and traditions also constitute an authority, explaining that attitudes adopted toward this authority are lenient when the parents' authority is involved, and more demanding in terms of justice and the idea of right when authority in the public domain is involved.

In general, the interviews show no radical attitudes in facing up to any private or public authority; rather, the like-ly tendency was to express dissatisfaction, a need for dialogue and more freedom, with clear dispositions to negotiate and compromise, and indeed to adapt to the requirements of that authority.

4. Other Attitudes: Success, Happiness, Money and Immigration

On this theme, the most obvious element is the adolescents' denial of any moral value to money. Clearly manifest is also the adolescents' talk about happiness and success in the future tense, as though achieving them here and now were something totally unthinkable. Desire for traveling and emigration was strong, choice of the country of destination varied, and reasons for that were numerous, ranging from seeking a better life and curiosity to finding out about new civilizations.

The contents of the four themes discussed in this chapter show disparities in the attitudes, behavior and concepts expressed by the female and male adolescents. The first disparity refers, in one of its dimensions, to the dualism of words and deeds which manifests itself through the difference between expressed attitudes and actual behavior. This is a dualism that generally prevails in society between what is stated and should be coherent with prevailing values, and what is practiced and tolerated even when it is in disagreement with what prevails, as long as it is not elevated to the level of the value it proclaims.

- **The boys especially feel like they are men, that they can do whatever they want, they can smoke cigarettes and spend time with friends.**

  Khadija, 18 years, Morocco

- **It's when I started dreaming and day-dreaming that I knew I had become a man. I started looking at women with lust.**
- **Girls want to have sexual relations more than boys do nowadays. They are becoming more and more Westernized.**
- **America is behind all the wars that are being waged around the world today.**

  Hassan, 18 years, Morocco

- **They look through my pockets and ask me where I was and with whom, and what I ate and what I drank.**
- **As for violence, we are used to it.**

  Fakhri, 18 years, Yemen

- **It doesn't make sense for a women to be president here because women are weak by nature. Women should work in sectors that are appropriate and that are suitable to our Islamic traditions.**

  Shadha, 18 years, Yemen

The second disparity between attitudes and/or behavior on the one hand, and concepts on the other, results from the fact that the change from the first level (attitudes and behavior) to the second level, is a complex process which requires a degree of abstraction and a higher degree of harmony between the different dimensions of female and male adolescents' personalities in various fields. This process is complex by nature and its conditions become available as the female or male adolescent grows older, and as her/his experiences and activities become more diverse.

General Conclusion

The points presented in this summary include some of the conclusions of the report and the contents of its chapters. The report itself captures some of the abundant and rich material that was available for its preparation. It is material that can be exploited in additional general and specialized analyses, and CAWTAR intends to undertake this work as part of its programs during its up-coming phase.

Doubtless, female and male adolescents' reality is richer than what is reflected in the report as well as more complex and more diverse. In this respect, and based on the contents of the interviews, the report identified the following points:

- There are general dynamics that work towards bringing female and male adolescents' attitudes and behavior closer together. The report identified four essential dynamics, namely: consumption-oriented globalization, the move to religious fundamentalism and radicalism, modernity, and the reproduction of traditional society.
- There are dynamics that work towards division and increased specificity, the most important of which being the lack of an overall culture, consumption-oriented trends, individualism and intolerance. Social, economic and cultural disparities between countries, and within the same country increase the effects of family and individual experiences on the building of the individual's personality, and of the personality of the group in a manner that differs from the more typical, general model.
- The typical models mentioned above remain closer to the ideal theoretical models. In fact, we seldom find female and male adolescents who consistently follow a model that combines specific convictions, intellectual values, attitudes, opinions, behavior and practice. As mentioned earlier, the most widespread characteristic for the majority of adolescents is the fragmentation of frames of reference.

All of this leads to an important diversity and multiplicity, as well as to atypical thinking and behavioral models. These models vary according to the different areas and dimensions that characterize the reality of adolescence.

These models vary in number also according to the number of national, family and individual experiences and characteristics, which means that typical models must be considered as theoretical frameworks that can be, but aren't necessarily, similar to potential outcomes in reality.[8]

In short, the study indicates that there are as many disparities between Arab countries regarding the subject of adolescence as there are similarities that transcend national borders and, to a lesser extent, as those that transcend the borders of the Arab region to reach the rest of the world. Adolescence is similar to the variety of worlds you find in a single country, and which, nonethe-

END NOTES

* Reprinted with permission from the Center of Arab Women for Training and Research (CAWTAR).
1. Mohamed Houssein Bakir, *Measuring Human Development,* the Economic and Social Committee for Western Asia and the United Nations Development Program, 1997.
2. The details and relative proportions by country, and the averages by sub-region can be found in the statistical tables in the appendix located at the end of the full report.
3. According to Castoriadis Cornelius, there is the model of the individual in a democratic society where society defines the set of living rules which permit first the emergence of the individual, and second the enjoyment of a set of rights and new spaces for freedom. This model has been replaced by another. It is the model of the privatized individual, that is to say the individual who closes himself up in his narrow private environment and who refocuses himself on consumption, taking a negative, pessimistic attitude towards politics in its Greek meaning, that is to say, as a res publica.
Robert Bidart, "Autorité parentale et citoyenneté: La question des compétences parentales", *Nouvelles problématiques adolescentes, pratiques institutionnelles en recherche*, sous la direction de Maryse Vaillant et Jean-Paul LeBlanc, L'Harmattan, 2001.
4. Vincenzo Cicchelli, "Recomposer le sens du lien de filiation. De l'individualisme éthique au processus d'individualisation", in: *Etre soi d'un age a l'autre: Famille et individualisation*. Tome 2, sous la direction de François de Singly, L'Harmattan, 2001.
5. Boris Cyrulnik, "Résilience et capacité d'évolution", in: *Nouvelles problématiques adolescentes, Pratiques institutionnelles ens recherche*, sous la direction de Maryse Vaillant et Jean-Paul Le Blanc, L'Harmattan, 2001.
6. Alain Clemence, François Rochat, Caroline Cortolezzis, Patricia Dumont, Michèle Egloff, Claude Kaiser, *Scolarité et adolescence: Les motifs de l'insecurite*, Haupt, Bern, 2001.
7. Robert Bidart, "Autorité parentale et citoyenneté: La question des compétences parentales", *Nouvelles problématiques adolescentes, pratiques institutionnelles en recherche*, sous la direction de Maryse Vaillant et Jean-Paul LeBlanc, L'Harmattan, 2001.
8. See Appendix 1 of the full report which descriptively and extensively presents the different formats of the models of personality building, behavior and attitudes, based on the field study.