

**Table 2 Implementing programmes to support at-risk youth in the Middle East and North Africa region: recommendations and lessons learned**

Theme	Recommendations/lessons learned
Adopt a holistic approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Engage youth, their peers and their families in a culturally appropriate way</li><li>• In addition to economic self-reliance, provide skills in leadership, teamwork, communication and social responsibility</li><li>• Add youth training, preparation and counselling to microfinance programmes (22)</li><li>• Coach, mentor and synergize with successful programmes led by the business community in West Bank (23) and Iraq (24)</li></ul>
Engage policy-makers and regulatory agents for a collaborative, interdisciplinary approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Successful and sustainable programming requires strong political support and an enabling regulatory environment in a country</li><li>• Collaboration is needed between nongovernmental organizations, ministries, local partners and population</li><li>• High level of youth engagement needs to be met with high efficacy to prevent frustration among youth</li><li>• Youth work initiatives highlight importance of engaged regulatory environment for policy (23) and partnering with policy-makers (26)</li></ul>
Emphasize interventions for female youth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Awareness of gender issues is critical for youth programming, both in design and evaluation</li><li>• Focus is needed on women, particularly in conflict situations</li><li>• Females should receive tailored materials and training so as not to be selected out of youth programmes (27)</li></ul>
Plan for transition to ensure sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Go beyond serving immediate needs and prepare youth for adult lives</li><li>• Foster cooperative relationships with larger, permanent institutions in the community (28)</li><li>• Include technical and vocational skills for youth in the transition period out of conflict</li><li>• Align educational programmes with job availabilities</li><li>• Brain drain can only be reversed by building opportunities for youth to participate productively in their communities</li></ul>