The social and human sciences (SHS) enhance understanding of contemporary challenges and help the international community respond to them more effectively by delivering on the goals set by the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. UNESCO supports inclusive and sustainable development, fosters intercultural dialogue and helps Arab Member States to achieve Sustainable Development Goal 16, especially target 16.7 “Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels”, by providing technical advice, developing capacities and facilitating knowledge management.
**Syrian Youth as agents for social cohesion**

In response to the Syria crisis, UNESCO Beirut promotes youth leadership in social cohesion and intercultural dialogue in Syria and in host communities.

**Girls through sports:**
A total of 200 Syrian and Lebanese young girls and women were trained and participated in football matches with peers. Through these activities, participants acquired social skills, self-confidence and developed friendship with Lebanese youth.

**Debate as means for intercultural dialogue:**
A series of local and national debate competitions were organized in three cities (Damascus, Latakia and Aleppo) in partnership with the Syrian Trust, a leading youth NGO. The process provided an opportunity to advocate for youth role in social development, inter-cultural dialogue and peace building.

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**National youth policies**

Networks of Mediterranean Youth (NET-Med Youth), is a three-year project implemented by UNESCO and funded by the European Union which empowered young men and women through increased participation and policy making process in building communities, and in becoming agents of positive transformations in their region. The project benefits 8 countries along the eastern and western basins of the Mediterranean Sea. More on: http://www.netmedyouth.org/where/lebanon

The regional report “Youth policies implementation challenges: how to move from theory to effective public governance” analyses challenges and lessons learnt from youth policies in 5 Arab countries. For more information, visit the following link:

World Social Science reports (WSSR)

The World Social Science Report in partnership between UNESCO and International Social Sciences Council (ISSC) addresses important social science challenges, takes stock of social science contributions and capacities, and makes recommendations for future research, practice and policy. The three main WSSR are:

- World Social Science Report 2016: Challenging Inequalities – Pathways to a Just World
- World Social Science Report 2013: Changing global environments
- World Social Science Report 2010: Knowledge divides


MOST Programme

Management of Social Transformations (MOST) is UNESCO’s intergovernmental programme on social transformations. MOST works with governments, social and human science communities and civil societies to improve connections between knowledge and action, connections that are one key to positive social change. It is implemented at National and Regional levels. Within the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), MOST contributes to the eradication of poverty, the establishment of inclusive and sustainable responses to environmental change, and the promotion of inclusive, effective and accountable governance, as well as a participatory and representative decision-making at all levels.
How can we face the challenges of climate change unless we understand its history? How can we end identity-based conflicts without studying collective narratives? How can we understand the world without examining cultural forces at play? The World Humanities Conference (WHC), which ran from 6 to 12 August, ended with the adoption of a new vision for the humanities for the 21st century. Participants agreed that, the humanities’ capacity to engage substantive long term reflection was indispensable to our societies in steering the environmental, technological, and cultural dynamics that are transforming them.

A New Humanities Agenda for the 21st Century
New Global and Regional agendas for SHS

After the Arab uprisings and in this critical historical juncture, societies in the Arab States region are more in need than ever for a new imagination and fresh readings of the past, and visions for the future. During the Consultation meeting on “Recentering Humanities: Theories, approaches, knowledge production in the Arab region” organized by UNESCO Beirut in Byblos, in May 2017, Arab thinkers and researchers in humanities thoroughly reviewed and debated ways of rethinking humanities in the region.
The coalition of Arab cities against Racism, Discrimination, Xenophobia and Intolerance is established within the framework of the International coalition of inclusive and sustainable cities-ICCAR, launched by UNESCO in 2004 and under the lead of Casablanca.

In particular, in Lebanon, UNESCO Beirut promotes social inclusiveness in urban settings through joint initiatives such as:

**Inclusive and sustainable cities: Good practices initiative in Lebanon (April-June 2017).**
This project is a joint initiative among UNESCO, UN-Habitat and Beirut Arab University (BAU) and its main purpose is to collect experiences and lessons learnt in promoting social cohesion and urban governance initiated by Lebanese municipalities.

**Empowering Youth and Local Communities on Leadership and Advocacy for the Rights of Young Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) in Lebanon.** In partnership with the Lebanese Physical Handicapped Union (LPHU), the young participants took part in a series of training workshops as well as practical fieldwork activities for the mapping of the accessibility of public spaces to PWDs in three different areas in Lebanon (Saida, Akkar, Bekaa).
More information available on this link:

Social inclusion underlines national institutional and human capacities at all levels to generate, manage and apply knowledge for inclusive, equitable development that is based on ethical values and human rights. More info on:
MOST School
MOST school upgrades the public policy-making in Member States through scientific evidence, humanities-based knowledge, ethics, and human rights frameworks.


MOST school in Lebanon on “SDGs agenda as a framework for sustainable development”
The MOST school in Lebanon (Beirut, March 2017) is the first national MOST school established in the Arab States region. Hosted by the Observatory of Good governance at the Université Saint Joseph de Beyrouth (USJ), the school was attended by 40 researchers, young professionals and students from universities, key ministries and civil society organizations. It explored inter-university collaboration in the form of consortium and highlighted a number of national priority issues.

MOST paper series

In 2016-2017, UNESCO Beirut supported the Arab Council for Social Sciences (ACSS) in piloting a campaign in Lebanon, Morocco and Egypt among secondary and university students on the relevance of SHS in their career development. The paper “Towards a New Generation of Social Scientists in the Arab World” analyzes lessons learnt and recommendations for a regional approach in promoting social and human sciences.

Youth, Peace and Security

In December 2015, the Security Council adopted groundbreaking Resolution 2250 on Youth, Peace and Security (YPS). For the first time, the UN Security Council dedicated a full Resolution to the positive role young people can, and do play in conflict prevention, the prevention of violent extremism and peace building.

In this context, UNESCO Beirut co-organized the consultation and high-level dialogue in Amman in December 2016. Attended by 59 Arab youth peacemakers, this meeting provided a platform where participants discussed priority action to promote peace in the region.

Youth Empowerment and Participation

The interest and demand to place the youth at the heart of social development are increasing globally, and more specifically in the Arab states region. UNESCO supports policy research and dialogue that promotes inclusion, engagement, participation, and empowerment of young men and women in partnership with all interested stakeholders.
Since the 1970s, the field of bioethics has grown considerably. Bioethics today includes reflection on societal changes, ways to achieve a balance between scientific and technological advances, and the need to respect human rights.

Universal Declaration on Bioethics and Human Rights was adopted by the General Conference on 19 October 2005 can be found on: http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0014/001461/146180E.pdf

Advocacy through National Bioethics Committees (NBC):

A Bioethics committee is a committee, which addresses ethical dimensions of the health sciences, life sciences and innovative health policy.

UNESCO Beirut supported inter-regional cooperation among Arab National Bioethics committees (NBCs) through “the Arab States Regional Summit of National Ethics and Bioethics committees”, (Muscat, April 2017). Moreover, UNESCO Beirut provided tailored training courses to NBCs in Kuwait, Rabat and Muscat.

UNESCO Beirut sets standards and criteria to promote ethics teaching. A set of regional ethics training courses (ETTC) aimed to strengthen capacities of ethics teachers in Amman, Muscat, Beirut, Tunis, Khartoum and Riyadh. UNESCO’s Bioethics Core Curriculum introduces the bioethical principles of the Universal Declaration on Bioethics and Human Rights to university students.

Read Bioethics core curriculum section 1 on: http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0016/001636/163613e.pdf

Read Bioethics core curriculum section 2 on: http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0021/002109/210933e.pdf