

## SOCIETY: SURGE IN SAUDI BIRTHS WITH AN ESTIMATED 151,197 ADDITIONAL NEWBORNS BY 2030

**Addressing obesity enhances societal well-being and helps KSA reach its goals for Vision 2030**

### Enhanced fertility and family growth:

By reducing obesity rates, more individuals can overcome obesity-related infertility causes, allowing them to conceive and carry pregnancies to term successfully<sup>65</sup>. This leads to an increase in birth rates, contributing to the growth of Saudi population.

### Increased workforce participation and advancement:

Weight loss positively impacts the participation and advancement of women and youth in the workforce<sup>66</sup>.

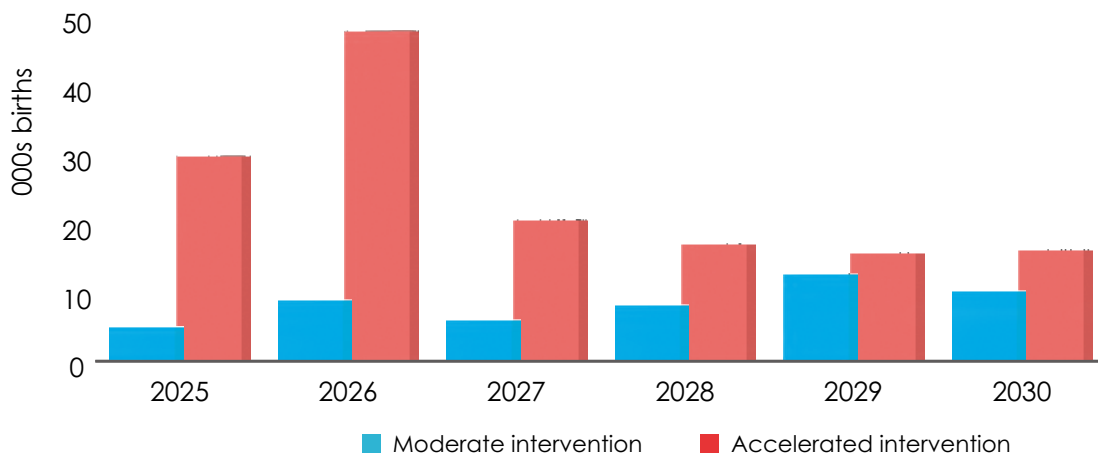
Healthier employees experience fewer chronic illnesses and maintain better mobility, enabling them to perform job duties more effectively and sustain consistent employment.

The KSA government has prioritized increasing the number of Saudi families and enhancing workforce participation. The 2030 Vision highlights this commitment, citing families as the “key building block” of a prosperous society<sup>67</sup>.

**Weight loss could increase the total number of births in the KSA and empower women and youth to become a part of the workforce**

### Figure 15: Additional births (2025-2030)

With weight loss, 151,197 additional births occur in the KSA in the high impact scenario, 51,074 in the low impact



**An estimated 151,197 additional births could take place in the accelerated scenario**

At the present pace, an increasing number of people are estimated to experience infertility every year, which is contributing to a loss of live birth rate.

**Obesity is linked to several conditions which may contribute to infertility, for both men and women, such as hormonal imbalance or a loss of periods<sup>68</sup>.** Additionally, obesity can have significant impact on mental health<sup>69</sup>, potentially reducing social interactions, and by extent, willingness to start a family.

However, weight loss at the population level could lead to a reversal of this trend, with people averting infertility and increasing birth rates. With weight loss, young adults transitioning out of obesity may see their perspective on

the future brighten. They may have more ease finding employment, feel more self-confident, more willing to meet a partner and marry, and ultimately more willing and able to start a family.

**“I was diagnosed with ovarian failure and no more periods, now I am getting my periods back” - Whiteshield Sentiment Analysis**

In the Kingdom specifically, this is reflected in a study with data from as early as 1988, already showing that individuals

living with obesity are overrepresented in fertility treatments.



Consider the case of Hamdan, the 33-year-old Saudi from Riyadh. He was suffering from obesity with a BMI of 35, and was unable to have children. With weight loss, his BMI has now reached a healthy 24. He no longer finds himself in joint pain and muscle aches, his overall health drastically improved. He was later able to conceive for the first time.

Cumulatively, in the period between 2025-2030, **an additional 151,197 births could take place in the accelerated intervention scenario.** Out of these additional births, 68% or 102,636 are projected to be Saudi nationals. This is equivalent to around 25,000 new Saudi families being created. In the

moderate intervention scenario, 51,074 additional births take place, out of which around 35,167 are Saudi births. This is a boost to the local population and supports Vision 2030's broader objectives of strengthening social cohesion and enhancing human capital in the region.

**Figure 16: Additional births – Saudi nationals and expatriates**

**+151,197** In the high impact scenario, more than 151,197 additional births are born by 2030

**Additional births - Saudis and expatriates**



**+102,636**  
Saudi births



**+48,561**  
non-Saudi births



### **92,500 new workers could become a part of the workforce**

The link between employment gains and weight loss are supported by academic studies, specifically observing that

adults living with obesity are more likely to be unemployed<sup>70</sup>. This link is further attested by first-hand accounts emerging from the sentiment analysis.

***“I have [gained] 30 kilos as I no longer can do many sports activities I used to do, causing me also to be depressed [...] [Weight loss] will improve my life considerably [...]. I can’t even find a job full-time as I cannot handle it”***

*- Whiteshield Sentiment Analysis*

With improved health and reduced bias towards adults living with obesity among employers, citizens will have a greater capacity to seek and secure employment. This could result in an estimated 92,500 additional workers in the accelerated intervention scenario. In the moderate intervention scenario, 29,581 additional Saudi workers are estimated to join the workforce by 2030.

### **64,197 Saudi women are estimated to join the workforce by 2030**

Unemployment rates as well as obesity rates are higher for women in the KSA than their male counterparts, yielding a stronger benefit of weight loss for women.

Reducing obesity will empower women to take up employment opportunities in the public and private sector. There is an estimated addition of more than 64,197 women in the workforce in the accelerated intervention scenario and 20,477 additional women in the moderate intervention scenario by 2030. Out of these additional women, 88% or 53,634 are Saudi nationals in the accelerated intervention scenario and 17,232 in the moderate intervention scenario. This is primarily because of the higher baseline obesity

prevalence among Saudi females (43.3%), which when reduced, allows more Saudi women to become active and join the workforce, contributing positively the nation's Vision 2030.

### **19,059 youth are estimated to join the workforce, 16,816 of them are Saudi**


Youth suffering from obesity face a double challenge, in completing higher education and securing employment. Obesity is linked with reduced educational outcomes and employment opportunities<sup>71</sup>. Helping these individuals overcome obesity would be an especially important contribution to KSA society.

**A well-employed youth population contributes to higher productivity, drives innovation, and supports the expansion of key economic sectors.** Additionally, engaging young individuals in the workforce reduces dependency ratios and fosters a dynamic economy capable of adapting to global market changes. Weight loss is estimated to add close to 19,059 youth to the workforce, 16,186 of which are Saudi youth. In the moderate intervention scenario, this increase in the workforce is around 6,203 youth, 5,265 of which are Saudi.



Remember Fatima who had to quit her job as a customs agent? Losing weight loss will enable her and 64,197 women to become a part of the workforce.

Table 5: Society indicators

Category	Indicator (by 2030)	Measure	Status Quo (2024)	Base Scenario (2030)	Moderate Intervention (2030)	Accelerated Intervention (2030)
 Society	Total births	#	572,172	502,083	512,599 (+10,516 births)	518,872 (+16,879 births)
	Additions to workforce	#	16.8 Mn	17.8 Mn	17.8 Mn (+29,581)	17.9 Mn (+92,500)
	Women in the workforce	#	6 Mn	6.4 Mn	6.4 Mn (+20,477)	6.4 Mn (+64,197)
	Youth in the workforce	#	2.7 Mn	2.9 Mn	2.9 Mn (+6,203)	2.9 Mn (+19,059)

### Analysis by Key Demographics

**Significant estimated societal gains for Saudis, 25,000+ new families could be created, 76,544 could enter the workforce:**

#### Nationality:

- 68% or 102,636 Saudi births are estimated to take place due to reducing obesity in the population, along with 48,561 expatriate births.
- Out of the 19,059 youth added to the workforce by 2030, around 85%, or 16,186 are Saudi youth, in the accelerated intervention scenario. Even though Saudi nationals form only 23% of the workforce, they suffer from a much higher prevalence of obesity (19.6%), compared to

expatriate youth (16.2%). Weight loss benefits are therefore especially visible in Saudi.

- The impact of additional jobs created is also disproportionate across different demographic cohorts. For Saudi nationals, who suffer from a high prevalence of obesity, reducing weight enables 76,544 individuals to join the workforce in the accelerated intervention scenario, especially for women, for Saudi women, making up the majority of those joining the workforce (53,634). The impact of weight loss on expatriates is much smaller, as most of them are already absorbed in the workforce. Still, losing weight allows an additional 15,956 expatriates to enter the workforce by 2030.

