



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



## Yes Youth Can! - Rift Valley (YYC-RV)

First Annual Report  
March 7, 2011 – March 6, 2012

Submitted to:  
AOR, Pamela Wesonga  
Agreement Officers Camille Garcia and Milly Warobi  
USAID/East Africa

Country Contact	HQ contact	Project Summary	
Liesbeth Zonneveld Country Director Mercy Corps  ABC Place, Waiyaki Way, 1 <sup>st</sup> floor P.O. Box 11868-00100 Nairobi, Kenya  +254.735.139.533 cell +254-20.444.1126/43, office LZONNEVELD@ke.mercycorps.org	Becky Steenbergen Senior Program Officer, East and Southern Africa 202.463.7384 x 105 bsteenbergen@dc.mercycorps.org	Award No.  Start Date  End Date  Report Date  Total Award	AID-623-A-11-00019  March 7, 2011  March 6, 2013  March 7, 2011 to March 6, 2012  \$ 2,499,738

## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

---

<b>LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>I. PROGRAM OVERVIEW .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>II. PROGRAM PROGRESS.....</b>	<b>8</b>
A. CUMULATIVE PROGRESS OVERVIEW .....	8
B. PROGRAM INTERVENTIONS.....	10
<b>III. CONSTRAINTS AND CHALLENGES .....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>IV. LESSONS LEARNED .....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>V. PLANNED ACTIVITIES FOR NEXT PERIOD.....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>VI. LIST OF SUB-GRANTEES .....</b>	<b>29</b>

## LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

---

A-STEP	Africa Sports and Talent Program
AOTR	Agreement Officer Technical Representative
AYT	Africa Youth Trust
CBF	County Bunge Forum
CBO	Community Based Organization
CES	Civic Engagement Specialist
COP	Chief of Party
DC	District Commissioner
DGSDO	District Gender and Social Development Officer
DYO	District Youth Officer
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
ICC	International Criminal Court
ID	Identity Card
IEBC	Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission
IP	Implementing Partner
KTI	Kenya Transition Initiative
LMA	Labor Market Assessment
MC	Mercy Corps
MoGCSD	Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Development
MoYAS	Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports
NCCK	National Council of Churches of Kenya
OCA	Organizational Capacity Assessment
OSP	Organizational Strengthening Plan
PDGSD	Provincial Director of Gender and Social Development
PEV	Post-election Violence
PM	Program Manager
PMP	Performance Monitoring Plan
RWPL	Rural Women Peace Link
RV	Rift Valley
STA	Senior Technical Advisor
TOT	Training Of Trainers
TI-ALAC	Transparency International's Advocacy and Legal Advice Centre
VSL	Village Savings and Loans
WYIPD	Wareng Youth Initiative for Peace and Development
YDC	Youth Development Coordinator
YSHG	Youth Self Help Group
YYC-N	Yes Youth Can – National
YYC-RV	Yes Youth Can – Rift Valley

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

---

Yes Youth Can! (YYC) is funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). Its main objective is to strengthen the capabilities of youth organizations in Kenya's Rift Valley Province to be agents of positive change in their communities. The program empowers young people and grassroots youth organizations to achieve a greater voice in national policy making and create new livelihood opportunities. YYC takes an integrated approach that includes community mobilization, civic engagement, and economic development.

To achieve this goal, Mercy Corps and our partners in Rift Valley Province have developed a series of integrated activities that work towards four objectives:

- 0) Mobilize youth into village Bunges;
- 1) Support youth to exercise a greater voice in local and national affairs;
- 2) Increase youth productivity, employment opportunities, and income; and
- 3) Increase young women's access to social, political, and economic opportunities.

In Rift Valley, Mercy Corps is implementing the program in seven counties: West Pokot, Nakuru, Nandi, Uasin Gishu, Kericho, Elgeiyo Marakwet and Transoia. The YYC program was launched on 20 April 2011 by the former US Ambassador Michael Renneberger at Londiani County Council grounds in Kericho. The glamorous event was attended by 196 youth, mostly drawn from four counties (Uasin Gishu, Kericho, Nakuru and Nandi) of the seven counties where the program is being implemented. The two-year, \$2.4 million USAID-funded program is being implemented in local partnership with Wareng Youth Initiative for Peace & Development (WYIPD), Rural Women Peace Link (RWPL), and Africa Sports, Talent Empowerment Program (A-STEP). Technical support is provided by Making Cents International (MCI) & Grassroots Soccer.

### **Program progress**

To establish a constituency for the program, objective 0 zero was introduced to mobilize and establish village structures for youth empowerment. Under this objective, YYC Rift Valley (YYC-RV) has been mobilized and formed 3,583 Bunges in all 7 counties. This includes 350 in Transoia, 750 in West Pokot, 570 Uasin Gishu, 400 in Nandi, 741 Nakuru, 372 Elgeiyo Marakwet, and 400 in Kericho.

In the last year, Mercy Corps has directly reached 367,810 "at-risk" youth. The main approaches of mobilization included 51 outreach campaigns that were done using theater, sports, and chief's *barazas*, which were mostly supported by the local administration.

After formation of the Bunges, Mercy Corps engaged their members in mentorship programs on civic issues that include development of advocacy plans, resource mapping and action plans. In this year 3,227 youth Bunges were mentored. During the constituency forums in October, we

collaborated with Transparency International's Advocacy and Legal Advice Centre (TI-ALAC) to train the youth on county devolved governments and how the county board can engage it.

Mercy Corps organized seven County Bunge Forums (CBFs) between December and February. The forums brought together 301 Village Bunges in Uasin Gishu County, 306 Bunges in Trans-Nzoia, 400 Bunges in Nandi, 400 Bunges in Kericho, 700 Bunges in Nakuru, 372 Bunges in Elgeiyo Marakwet, and 750 Bunges in West Pokot. During the CBFs, the delegates elected the county board officials who were representatives of the Village Bunges. The CBFs considered gender balance, ethnic balance, people with disability and regional representation. In March 2012, the counties elected the executive board leaders and nominated the Finance Review Committees that will work closely with the YYC National (YYC-N) program.

Throughout the year Village Bunge members have been involved in many activities. Under objective 1, 17 village Bunges have been involved in community service projects without funds from YYC. Further, the youth have been involved in 26 advocacy campaigns. Mercy Corps has started building the capacity of the county boards in different aspects. The Nandi County Board was trained on negotiation skills, conflict cycle and peace building skills; along with elders, they responded to the clashes along the Kipsigis, Nandi and Luo border. All the boards have been trained on strategic planning, leadership skills and their roles.

Under objective 2, Mercy Corps completed the labor market and youth skills assessment for Rift Valley Province. Focus group discussions used a modified market research approach: a total of 56 youth participants engaged in targeted discussions in four separate consultative sessions around youth challenges, relevant curriculum content, training methodologies, and training implementation. The findings have informed our programming in ensuring the right activities to meet the needs of the youth in livelihood development. Furthermore, Making Cents International trained 24 "Bright Spots" to train Bunge members in each county on entrepreneurship and life skills. The bright spots have so far conducted over 500 trainings on entrepreneurship for Village Bunges, reaching 7,537 youths in the seven counties. Negotiations for apprenticeships for the youth started this year in March 2012 and are ongoing.

Objective 3 activities started with a gender assessment exercise in January. It was conducted with the support of 16 enumerators (8 female and 8 male) who were trained as data collectors. They worked in pairs within 8 constituencies. Data collection was done in February and reached 240 youths. The assessment was mainly done to establish the impediments for young women participating in civic engagement and livelihoods. The assessment report is still being drafted.

Under the same objective, four outreach campaigns were carried out in Nakuru, Eldoret North, Eldoret South and Belgut constituencies to increase the participation on young women in bunge activities and the community at large. Through the outreach campaigns we were able to reach 1,344 young women. We also commemorated Women's Day on 8 March 2012 in partnership with National Council of Churches of Kenya (NCCCK) and RWPL, when we brought together 300 young women from Village Bunges and women role models from the community to talk about women leadership.

To achieve the above, Mercy Corps needed the support of government officials and other stakeholders. To build close working relationships, we organized seven stakeholders meetings and seven elders meetings. After we shared the program and the strategies with the stakeholders, most of them were impressed and are cooperating with us. There is still need to strengthen these relationships though.

With approval from USAID, we conducted the baseline in both Rift Valley and Central on a combined budget of about \$1,200. The baseline survey used a cluster design with two-stages (village and interviewee) and was designed in alignment with the revised indicators that we use to assess impacts, as stipulated in the revised Performance Monitoring Plan. The baseline evaluation collected survey data from 18 program villages in all seven program counties in Rift Valley and four comparison villages from neighboring Baringo and Narok counties. Youth enumerators conducted approximately 40 interviews with youth in each of the villages. A total of 781 and 161 questionnaires were returned from the treatment and control villages, respectively. It was encouraging to note that responses demonstrated high levels of confidence in taking action to contribute to the development of Kenya.

Organizational Capacity Assessment for the implementing partner (IP) organizations was also conducted in June using a tool designed by Mercy Corps. In October, we conducted training with the partners on resource and asset mapping, development of action plans, and documentation of success stories. Other trainings for the IPs during the year included financial management, USAID rules and regulations, and M&E. During the training we were also able to receive feedback from the Youth Development Coordinators (YDCs) on progress made and challenges encountered in the field.

### **Planned activities for the upcoming year**

In the next reporting year, Mercy Corps will partner with the County Bunge board members and its local partners to continue with mobilization of youth to form Village Bunges and increase their membership. We will concentrate on issuing the advocacy grants, the community grants, and the youth enterprises small grants, as well as increasing young women's opportunities to benefit from YYC. We will launch the campaign on "My ID My Life" in all the counties, encouraging youth who do not have ID cards to register ahead of the general elections. We will continue to conduct capacity building of the county boards in various aspects like leadership, resource mobilization, good governance and media engagement as well as civic education. At the end of the year the CBFs will hold their second annual general meetings in all counties after ensuring village Bunge elections have taken place.

Finally, in the last quarter Mercy Corps and its IPs will work with the county boards and stakeholders to close out or transition the program in a smooth and professional manner, while also documenting successes.

## **I. PROGRAM OVERVIEW**

---

Youth were at the center of the 2007/2008 post-election violence (PEV), both as direct perpetrators and as victims. Although analysis of PEV has identified politicians as the force and organizers behind the large-scale terror, killing, arson, rape, and destruction, youth were the agents. The fact that almost two million youth (15-30 years) are out-of-school, and that the great majority of them have no regular work or income, makes them particularly vulnerable to recruitment for pay into political campaigns and criminal gangs.

The youth empowerment program Yes Youth Can! provides an opportunity for the youth between 18-35 years to find their voices, elect leaders from the village and hold them accountable in service to their communities, and engage in livelihood activities. The goal of YYC-RV is to strengthen the capabilities of youth and youth Bunges to be agents of positive change in their communities. Mercy Corps is supporting this goal by pursuing four related objectives: 0) Mobilize youth and form youth representation structures at the sub location level; 1) Support youth to exercise a greater voice in local and national affairs; 2) Increase youth productivity, employment opportunities, and income; and 3) Increase young women's access to social, political, and economic opportunities. Our flexible and responsive approach to implementation is based on the principles of putting youth squarely in the driver's seat to determine their own future, identifying young leaders or "bright spots" to champion the potential of their peers, and ongoing market analysis to identify sustainable economic opportunities.

## II. PROGRAM PROGRESS

### A. Cumulative Progress Overview

Indicator	Overall targets by EOP	This quarter	Cumulative	% to date
<b>GOAL: To strengthen the capabilities of youth and youth Bunges in the Rift Valley to be agents of positive change in their communities</b>				
Goal: % change in the level of youth who feel confident to contribute positively to the community.	BV+50%	0	0	0%
Goal: % change in number of youth who take action to contribute positively to the development of Kenya	BV+50%	0	0	0%
Goal: % change in youth who report engaging in or approve of political violence	BV-25%	0	0	0%
<b>Objective 0: Form youth representation bodies at Village and County levels</b>				
0.1 USAID PS 6.1: # of people from ‘at-risk’ groups reached through USG-supported conflict mitigation activities;	900,000	285,907	367,810	41%
0.2a # of Village Bunges formed & registered.	5,000	1,122	3,585	72%
0.2b # of County Forums formed and registered	7	5	7	100%
<b>Objective 1: Support youth to exercise a greater voice in local and national affairs</b>				
1.1a # of youth Bunges who have action plans in place to influence their community and local government decision-making.	1,000	2,631	3,227	323%
1.1b # of youth who attend Bunge meetings	15,000	18,199	71,660	478%
1.2a USAID GJD 4.1: # of youth members of Bunges who have completed USG-assisted civic education training programs	15,000	14,812	16,135	108%
1.2b # of community service projects implemented by Bunges	150	6	17	11%
1.3a # of youth members of Bunges who attend county youth leadership conferences	160	70	70	44%
1.3b % change in youth who interact across ethnic lines	BV+40%	0	0	0%
1.4a USAID GJD 2.3: # of local mechanisms supported with USG assistance for citizens to engage with their sub-national government.	49	4	7	14%

1.5 # of Bungen involved in youth-led advocacy campaigns targeted towards policy and public investment decisions.	1000	0	0	0%
<b>Objective 2: To increase youth productivity, employment opportunities and income</b>				
% of Bunge members achieving greater economic independence	BV+50%	0	0	0%
2.1a # of young people who participate in comprehensive value chain assessments	100	21	40	40%
2.2a USAID EG 6.3 # of young persons completing USG-funded workforce development programs	7,500	4,622	7,537	100%
2.3a # of youth entrepreneurial groups who develop business plans	200	508	508	254%
2.3b # of small grants issued for microenterprises	100	0	0	0%
2.3c % of youth entrepreneurial groups raising additional investment capital.	25%	0	0	0%
2.4a # of youth that gain on-the-job experience through private sector apprenticeships	300	0	0	0%
2.4b USAID EG 6.3 # of people gaining employment or better employment as a result of participation in USG-funded workforce development programs	500	41	65	13%
<b>Objective 3: Improve young women's access to political, social and economic opportunities.</b>				
3.1 # of county forums held to disseminate gender assessment findings	7	0	0	0%
3.2a # of public outreach campaigns conducted on the civic engagement and livelihoods.	60	4	4	7%
3.2b % change in people who understand the importance of female civic education and livelihoods.	BV+25%	0	0	0%
3.3a # of mentors paired with young women	40	0	0	0%
3.3b % change of young women who report a greater diversity of economic opportunities.	BV+50%	0	0	0%
3.4a # of stories performed and disseminated on the radio and through multimedia	25	0	0	0%

## **B. Program Interventions**

In order to complement the Local Empowerment for Peace (LEAP) II program that Mercy Corps is implementing in the Rift Valley region, the YYC-RV team partnered with WYIPD, RWPL and A-STEP in the implementation of its program. The YDCs that were hired by these partners are working closely with volunteers recruited from the villages to mobilize the youths to form Village Bunges.

The principle of youth-owned, youth-led and youth-managed has put youth in the lead for their own development. Through the Village Bunges, youth identify problems in their villages. Through resource mapping they find solutions, develop their action plans, and conduct advocacy campaigns. They also identify service projects that they can do with their community. Capacity building for the youth through civic education and entrepreneurship trainings equips them with the skills they need to make informed decisions in businesses. Some youth have initiated economic empowerment activities and advocacy campaigns in their villages on different issues affecting them.

Due to the cultural dynamics of Rift Valley, where elders are the decision makers in the community, there was a need to engage elders at county-level meetings to explain to them the objectives of the program and in quest for their support. All the elders are supportive but caution the youth and local implementers to ensure the meetings do not turn into political functions. Stakeholders meetings are also crucial in building support and rapport with government and other NGOs. The stakeholders meetings give the government representatives an avenue to open up and interact with the youth actors and beneficiaries of the program. The recent National Bunge Association (NBA) and County Bunge Forums were the climax of youth efforts from the villages and the excitement and celebrations accompanying them from the youth were clear evidence that youth are finding their space at last. Finally, we worked closely with the local media to disseminate information about the YYC program, which was helpful in reaching more youths and earning their much needed confidence.

### **Objective 0: Form youth representation bodies at village and county levels**

<b>Summary of Objective 0 Outcomes</b>
0.1: 900,000 youth aware of Yes Youth Can program
0.2: Youth representation structures formed in the 7 counties

#### *Outcome 0.1 900,000 youth aware of Yes Youth Can – RV! Program:*

Mercy Corps and the local partners used outreach campaigns and mobilization forums throughout the year to reach out to the youth. The strategy – which included sports, theatre, meetings and dialogues between youth – resonated with them very well. YYC-RV managed to directly reach 367,810 youths. The partners held 51 outreach campaigns to disseminate information about the program where young people interacted, and encouraged them to join village Bunge formation. Our local partners identified youth ambassadors in the villages, and they have been making frequent visits to the Bunges to monitor the Bunge progress. Our supporters – who include local administration, village elders, community elders, religious leaders and other stakeholders – have also been disseminating information about the YYC program

through church meetings, chief *Barazas* and other meetings when invited to speak. The local media (FM stations) has also played a significant role in sensitizing the youth about the program. We have received coverage in mainstream and local media stations that has assisted in reaching more youths in the region.

There has been continuous sensitization on the need to include both males and females into the membership of Village Bunges. We see young women’s representation in the Bunges grow steadily. We have encouraged having female Bunge presidents who are influencing the others positively. To support this further, we have put emphasis on having a gender balance in Bunge leadership positions purposely to boost and encourage young women’s participation in already formed 3,583 Bunge activities.

*Outcome 0.2: Youth representation structures formed in the 7 counties*

Mobilization forums and outreach campaigns enabled us to meet our targets for this year. Through the joint efforts between Mercy Corps and the three local partners, we have managed to mobilize and form 3,583 Village Youth Bunges who have adopted the constitution and bylaws, and proceeded to carry out elections. This includes 350 bunges in Transzoia, 750 in West Pokot, 570 in Uasin Gishu, 400 in Nandi, 741 in Nakuru, 372 in Elgeiyo Marakwet, and 400 in Kericho.

Out of these, 296 are registered. Registration of Bunges has been a huge challenge in Rift Valley as the Provincial administration was not in favor of the program and the use of the word “bunge”. Continuous lobbying finally unlocked the stalemate in December. Though not all DGSDOs are excited to register the youth, it is moving and youth are now pushing it.

**Number of Bunges formed in each county is as illustrates in the table below:**

No.	County	Total Bunges	Registered
1	Uasin Gishu	570	88
2	Elgeiyo Marakwet	372	64
3	Trans Nzoia	350	20
4	West Pokot	750	15
5	Nakuru	741	26
6	Nandi	400	53
7	Kericho	400	30
	<b>Total</b>	<b>3,583</b>	<b>296</b>

In December, January and February, seven County Bunge Forums (CBFs) were launched. The CBFs brought together 301 Village Bunges in Uasin Gishu, 306 Village Bunges in Trans-Nzoia County, 400 Village Bunges in Nandi County, 400 Village Bunges in Kericho, 700 Village Bunges in Nakuru County, 372 Village Bunges in Elgeiyo Marakwet, and 750 Village Bunges in West Pokot.

The forums provided the young people with opportunities to network, adopt their own constitutions, and elect county board members. The Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC) led the elections and guided the youths (most of whom have not participated in national elections) through the voting procedures that were strictly observed in all

the counties. The stakeholders present during the forums included government representatives, elders, religious leaders, the IEBC, media, APHIA *plus*, and OTI/Chemonics. They all encouraged the voters to keep up the spirit and maintain peace.

Since the launch, the boards have elected their executive officers and the West Pokot Board is registered as a community based organization. Board members have been involved in numerous activities in their localities. For instance, the Uasin Gishu and Trans Nzoia boards have been involved in mobilization and formation of more village Bunges; the Nandi County Board has been involved in peace building activities across the Muhoroni-Aldai border, where a recent cattle rustling incident occurred.

**Objective 1: Support youth to exercise a greater voice in local and national affairs**

Summary of Objective 1 Outcomes
1.1 WYIPD, RWPL, and A-STEP measurably strengthen organizational capacity
1.2 Youth Bunges actively engaged in civic issues
1.3 Rift Valley youth networked to foster cooperation and understanding
1.4 Local government responsiveness to issues important to youth increased
1.5 Youth-led advocacy efforts strengthened to influence policy and public investment decisions

*Outcome 1.1: WYIPD, RWPL, and A-STEP measurably strengthen organizational capacity*

Mercy Corps believes in strengthening the capacity of our youth-led local partners for results and impact. Organizational Capacity Assessments for the IP organizations were conducted in June using a tool designed by Mercy Corps. In October, we conducted training with the partners on resources and assets mapping, development of action plans, and documentation of success stories. During the training we also received feedback from the YDCs on progress made and challenges encountered in the field.

We have continued to support our partners in areas they feel challenged, especially leadership, M&E and project financial management. This has resulted in exponentially increased performance on program activities monitoring and reporting by all partners.

*Outcome 1.2: Youth Bunges actively engaged in civic issues*

The civic engagement mentorship trainings continued throughout the year. The youth were trained on resource mapping, action plans, advocacy, the Kenyan Constitution and proposal writing. The sessions were held at the constituency level, reaching youths from different Village Bunges. The Bunges exhibited progress since formation in the kind of the activities they have been engaged in. To date, we have a total of 3,227 Village Bunges who were trained in resource mapping and action plans.

17 Village Bunges have been involved in community service projects. These included six road reconstruction and repair projects by Nangrotum Village Bunge in West Pokot, Cornor Village Bunge in Uasin Gishu County, Misemwa Village Youth Bunge, Katuiyo Village Bunge in Uasin Gishu County, Water Supply Bunge in Trans-Nzoia Bunge, and Leketet Village Bunge in Elgeiyo Marakwet County. Tree planting in Mau Forest was implemented by Temeiyotta Village Bunge in Nakuru County, Longonot Village Bunge in Nakuru County, and Kobil Village Bunge

in Elgeiyo Marakwet County. Finally, village clean up exercises were undertaken by the Race Course Village Bunge and Longonot Village Bunge in Nakuru Village Bunge.

Furthermore, the youth have been involved in five advocacy campaigns. For example: Misemwa Village Youth Group conducted literacy campaigns in their village and school mentorship projects; Corner Village Bunge and Pioneer Gateway Village Bunge in Uasin Gishu County conducted anti-jigger campaigns; Cheptiret Village Bunge and Race Course Village Bunge conducted HIV/AIDS campaigns; and Water Supply Village Bunge conducted an ID campaign.

The County boards have been involved in different trainings to build their capacities. The Nandi Boards were trained on negotiation skills, conflict cycle and peace building skills. All the boards have been trained on strategic planning, leadership skills and the history of conflict in Rift Valley.

*Outcome 1.3: Rift Valley youth networked to foster cooperation and understanding*

Through the CBFs, the youth of Rift Valley got an opportunity to network, know each other and share experiences. Youth from different constituencies met at the county level for the first time to forge a common vision for their county. This has improved relationships between the youth, with the greatest success achieved in West Pokot where some constituencies had never sat in the same gathering.

In March, we held a two day Rift Valley regional board meeting which brought together all the seven county boards in Eldoret. Creating a non-ethnic youth agenda for Rift Valley was the main agenda for the meeting. Youth discussed openly the barriers by their elders to cooperate with other communities. They also shared their learning opportunities, which Mercy Corps will be supporting in the second year.

*Outcome 1.4: Local government responsiveness to issues important to youth increased*

We held seven stakeholders meetings in the seven counties with government representatives, NGOs, media and elders to disseminate the YYC program and solicit their support. The meeting brought together youth presidents from Village Bunges, the District Commissioners (DC), Regional Commissioner, District Youth Officers (DYO), District Gender and Social Development Officers (DSGDO), NGOs working with youth, District Peace Committee representatives, women leaders, elders and relevant ministries. Most of the government representatives confessed that they did not know about the program and hence acted out of ignorance and political influence in rejecting registration of the Bunges.

Continuous collaboration with the government has been crucial and necessary especially when the youth are implementing community service projects. The municipal council of Eldoret provided a truck for garbage collection during a clean-up community project implemented by the Race Course and Conner Village Bunges.

Flyers and brochures with YYC information were printed and distributed during mobilization meetings, constituency and county forums. Youth in Uasin Gishu also participated in a trade-fair and exhibition, and six Bunge presidents and six Bunge members participated in the Youth

Enterprise Development Fund training on November 3, 2011 organized by the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports (MoYAS).

In December 2011, YYC National organized the first national forum in which youth mobilized from all the six YYC program provinces participated. Seventy youths attended from the Rift Valley. Youth exchanged ideas on YYC implementation and several speakers, among them government officials, held speeches on youth empowerment as a government policy and procedures for applying for identity cards.

*Outcome 1.5: Youth-led advocacy efforts strengthened to influence policy and public investment decisions*

Youth-led advocacy campaigns leading to this outcome were not scheduled for implementation and reporting this year.

## **Objective 2: To increase youth productivity, employment opportunities and income**

<b>Summary of Objective 2 Outcomes</b>
2.1 Comprehensive labor market and value chain assessments completed
2.2 Youth employability increased through life/job skills and entrepreneurship training
2.3 Youth income increased through micro and small enterprise development
2.4 Youth obtain employment in the public and private sectors

*Outcome 2.1 Comprehensive labor markets and value chain assessment*

Mercy Corps completed the labor market and youth skills assessment for Central Province in July 2011. The methodology used focus group discussions (FGDs) and key informant interviews. Focus group discussions in each region used a modified market research approach: a total of fifty-six youth participants engaged in targeted discussions in four separate consultative sessions around youth challenges, relevant curriculum content, training methodologies, and training implementation. This is expected to form the basis for subsequent assessments, ensuring the validity of our data and acknowledging the dynamic nature of the labor market.

The findings identified high-potential sectors and local businesses with viable opportunities for youth employment and self-employment. It was evident that for youth to start businesses, they required start-up capital, which was difficult to raise as individuals. To meet this need, Mercy Corps has started a pilot VSL scheme to help Bunges raise internal resources, which members can borrow and then pay back as their businesses thrive. The report has been published and shared with stakeholders.

Other findings include:

- Continue Youth-led Market Research: As evidenced through the surveys, 23 percent of surveyed employers do not believe that youth have realistic expectations of the world of work. By empowering young people to identify and meet with local businesses, youth gain first-hand experience with various types of working environments and conditions. This exposure enables them to understand the realities of the local market, as well as the

workforce they are about to enter. To implement the findings, we are holding meetings between employers and youth to sharpen their skills in work discipline and etiquette.

- Promote and Develop Life Skills: Both youth and potential employers identified life skills as critical, given that they are transferable to any labor market and resilient against economic shocks. Specifically, 33 percent of local employers highlighted interpersonal skills as the most important criteria they consider when hiring. These skills are often not developed within the formal education system. During the youth skills assessment dialogues, youth identified networking and communication skills, presentation skills, customer care, public relations, discipline and professional ethics as important skills for both employment and self-employment.

Based on these findings, Making Cents International (MCI) modified the “Rise Up, Lift Yourself with Business and Life Skills”™ curriculum to ensure that these topics are appropriately covered. All the 7,532 youth trained in entrepreneurship have received life skills training.

- Explore Opportunities in Agriculture: The agricultural sector, largely subsistence-based, employs 75 percent of Rift Valley’s total labor force. However, during the FGDs, young people did not frequently list agriculture as a form of self-employment. Across all FGDs, youth expressed little enthusiasm or interest in this sector. They also mentioned complications with acquiring and accessing land. The agricultural sector presents many opportunities for young people, but YYC youth remain largely disinterested in this work. To bridge this gap, the training toolkit used value chain modules to present youth with the different levels they can engage in other than production. We are also holding discussions with Sygenta, which is willing to give seeds, train the youth in horticulture, and later buy the products. More and more youth are getting interested.
- Bridge the Perceptions Gap: One of the most startling findings of the assessment was the vast gap in perceptions between young people, employers, and the larger community. While youth largely believe themselves to be intelligent and positive leaders, they believe that the community, their family members, and private and public sectors perceive them as negative influences on society. Youth feel mistrusted by the community. They believe that their employment and entrepreneurial efforts are often not supported, as they feel others in the community do not view them as leaders. However, as evidenced by the employer survey, businesses believe that youth are hard-working, skilled, and reliable workers.

We are encouraging young people to use the assessment findings as a tool for generating dialogue on the societal perceptions of young people. Public forums with parents, potential employers, elders, and local government officials will help to bridge the gap in perceptions and enable the community at large to view youth as valued, productive members of society. We will support such dialogues under objectives zero and one, above.

- Enable Effective Entrepreneurship: Young people have many ideas for starting businesses but feel that they face nearly insurmountable barriers in achieving these goals. They often mentioned lack of capital and understanding of money management as hindrances to

following an entrepreneurial pathway. Young people also mentioned tough competition and weak moral support from parents and the elder community as barriers.

The program is ensuring that all youth participating in Objective 2 activities receive entrepreneurship training, in addition to basic life skills development. Additionally, youth should continue to use the tips and tools gained in the YYC assessment process and share this knowledge with their peers. Finally, in addition to financial literacy training, we have started pilot VSLs to fundraise resources from the youth and later link them to other financial providers and the Tahidi Fund.

- Acknowledge and Address the Gender Divide: Although surveyed employers noted no significant preference in hiring males versus females, youth feel that there are gross differences for men and women in the Kenyan workforce. Sexual harassment, especially for young women, was repeatedly mentioned as a major issue. In several FGDs, young females mentioned that prostitution was a common means for young women to pay for college and university. While young women feel that they are often taken advantage of in the workforce (in the form of sexual harassment, lower pay, and harsher working environments), some young men also noted that it is easier for females to obtain employment. During the gender assessment, we included a question on the same to explore these issues further and design appropriate responses.

#### *Outcome 2.2 Youth employability increased through life/job skills and entrepreneurship training*

In October 2011, Making Cents International conducted a Training of Trainers course with 24 YYC “Bright Spots” from 24 constituencies on the “Rise Up, Lift Yourself with Business and Life Skills”™ curriculum. The bright spots were contracted for a one-year period on a three-month rolling basis contract. Starting in November, these 24 “Bright Spots” rolled out trainings in their respective constituencies under the supervision and support of our local partners’ YDCs. They have conducted trainings on entrepreneurship for 866 Village Bunges reaching over 7,537 youths (3,938 male and 3,599 female) in the seven counties, as of the end of March 2012.

The text box below shows a summary of the curriculum that was used.

The trainings have inspired numerous business activities by the youth. These include youth involvement in horticulture (onions, cabbages), apiculture, cereals production (maize), beans, brick making, and

#### **Life skills and entrepreneurship curriculum**

*Session I: Financial Literacy.* Exposes participants to the importance of managing money for both personal and business purposes. It explores the importance of savings and how to make better decisions around money.

*Session II: Exploring Entrepreneurship.* Demystifies what entrepreneurs and business people do by understanding that successful business people are problem solvers.

*Session III: Seizing Opportunities in the Value Chain.* Provides participants a broader understanding of the value chain, how to assess the market, value addition, reading market signals, and costing.

*Session IV: Business Skills.* Focuses on developing business skills by giving participants the opportunity to learn good planning, financial management, pricing, negotiation, and risk management.

livestock trade. Many youth Bunges have reported involvement in table banking (merry-go-rounds). This suggests a thirst for capital accumulation, although it uses locally mobilized resources. The newly introduced Village Savings and Loans (VSL) training will go a long way in formalizing such informal groupings.

Due to the overwhelming demand for funding development enterprises, partly triggered by the trainings, the group VSL program was rolled out. This is a crucial tool and strategy for keeping youth together, in addition to helping mobilize local resources and inculcating a culture of saving and borrowing to invest amongst the youth. It is expected to help in keeping the youth engaged and in enhancing networks among the youth at the village level. The first team of VSL facilitators and supervisors were trained early March this year. They include 9 YDCs and 9 other pre-selected “bright spots”. The roll out of VSL activities began in 3 counties: Uasin Gishu, Nandi, and Trans-Nzoia.

Other noteworthy gains noted with related to the roll out of these trainings include:

- In collaboration with Equity Bank, through their financial literacy program, the Economic Empowerment Trainers (EETs) have benefited from training materials given out by Equity (flipchart paper and Marker pens).
- Due to the visible work that the EETs are doing, some have benefited from the use of GOK resources. One of them has a GOK motorbike that he uses to move around, courtesy of the MoYAS.
- Through the EET trainings youth have gained skills and developed proposals for funding, which have been given to Mercy Corps and others potential funders like the NYF and NACC.

#### *Outcome 2.3: Youth income increased through micro and small enterprise development*

Mercy Corps sent out a call for economic empowerment proposals. Youth Bunges have started sending business plans from all the geographical areas where youth have participated in the life skills and entrepreneurship training. Over 500 proposals were received by the deadline of the call. The proposals are currently being vetted and Bunges with the best ideas will be funded under YYC-RV. A partnership arrangement has been worked out to ensure most if not all of those promising project proposals are funded through our sister YYC-N’s funding. Other potential partners include banks and INGOs working in our target areas.

#### *Outcome 2.4: Youth obtain employment in the public and private sectors*

Youth, especially the educated youth, are hopeful to gain formal employment, as established during the Labor Market and Youth Skills Assessment. However, many youth lack the skills to network, spot opportunities and present themselves to prospective employers. We have started to create linkages with employers who might be willing to have youths as their employees, as we aim to place 300 of them in apprenticeship and see another 500 gain meaningful employment through participation in the program.

So far, apart from the 21 partner YDCs that have benefited as employees of the program, we graduated 24 “Bright Spots” as life skills and entrepreneurship facilitators, and 9 VSL facilitators. All of those youth are now engaged in training Village Bunges, at the moment with a

fee from YYC. Later on, the Village Bunges should pay the fees to the Bright Spots. Each Bright Spot has one “Rise Up, Lift Yourself with Business and Life Skills”™ training kit to assist him/her to conduct the training with the Village Bunges.

Negotiations for apprenticeships for the youth started early this year. Towards this end, we have worked with the Ministry of Labor Employment officers and the Chamber of Commerce and Industry to reach out to its members, which have potential to employ youth. We held a series of meetings in February 2012 with individual potential employers and follow up for placement is ongoing.

**Objective 3: Improve young women’s access to political, social and economic opportunities.**

<b>Summary of Objective 3 Outcomes</b>	
3.1	Rift Valley wide gender assessment completed to identify challenges and opportunities for young women
3.2	Community understanding increased of importance of female civic engagement and Livelihoods
3.3	Young women in village Bunges mentored by female role models on economic opportunities
3.4	Young women develop leadership and advocacy skills through storytelling initiative

A gender assessment was conducted with the support of sixteen enumerators (8 female and 8 male) who were trained as data collectors. They worked in pairs within eight constituencies reaching out to 240 youths. The assessment was mainly done to establish facts on lack of participation in civic engagement and enterprise development by young women. The assessment report is still being drafted.

We conducted four outreach campaigns in Nakuru Constituency, Eldoret North, Eldoret South and Belgut constituencies to increase the participation of young women in the community. Through the outreach campaigns we were able to reach 1,344 ladies.

In partnership with NCKK and our local implementer RWPL, we commemorated the International Women’s day on March 8. The event brought together 300 young women from Bunges and women role models from the community to talk about women leadership. The ladies were encouraged by the role models and their confidence boosted.

### **III. Constraints and Challenges**

---

Several constraints and challenges arose during the first year of program implementation:

- Registration of the Bunges has proven to be a challenge, with the PSGO and DSGO's requesting that we give them a letter from the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Development (MoGCSD) authorizing the registration of the Bunges. We have since seen a turnaround and we hope the process will be easier this year.
- Suspicions and scrutiny from the government, especially on the program objectives and Bunge materials, has led to the partners and some program staff being interrogated by the government's National Security Intelligence Service. This has instilled fear in the partners' staff.
- The river beds in West Pokot flooded when it rained, making the area impassable and halting program activities.
- High illiteracy levels in areas such as West Pokot have led YDCs to help the youth with writing minutes and documenting of Bunge activities. Meanwhile we are encouraging them to join adult literacy classes.
- There have been incidents of insecurity in West Pokot and Trans Nzoia which occasionally hindered youth activities and Bunge formation meetings.
- The ICC process has made the region very sensitive due to the uncertainties caused by the process. We were advised by the PC to move slowly on implementation and to be sensitive of the December/January ICC deadlines and what they would mean for the region. So far no major challenges have arisen.
- Young women participation in the Bunges has been low due to culture and the timidity of the girls.

### **IV. Lessons Learned**

---

Several lessons have been learned in the program so far. The most important were:

- The youth have been waiting for the opportunity to be organized for a long time and thus have embraced the program very quickly. Recognition and participation of some of the Village Bunge leaders in other youth-centered programs by Mercy Corps (like district leaders' forums under the LEAP II program) have improved community representation at higher levels.
- Organization and mobilization of youth at grassroots levels has attracted many organizations to work with the youths. ProMara, APHIAPlus, OTI/Chemonics, and SNV have met with the youth in Village Bunges and are discussing ways of working with them. The government has also shown interest through the MoYAS in areas where it is difficult for the Ministry to work with youth.
- Many youths have economic empowerment ideas but lack organization, synergy and collective action to make them a reality. Formation of Village Bunges and mentorship has helped overcome this challenge.
- We have learned that numerical presence of young females in Bunges does not imply their full participation. Therefore we are pursuing actions to improve their skills in

communication and build their confidence so they can participate on an equal basis with their male counterparts.

- CBFs offer a platform for interaction among the young people. It gives them a chance to share their experiences and learn from each other. The forums also motivate youth to form more Village Bunges, and to increase the Bunge youth membership.
- CBF Boards expressed they would like to participate in capacity building in leadership and good governance; resource mobilization; gaining more insight in devolution; as well as CBF board leadership and their roles as mentors of youth in the counties.
- The elections, especially those at county level, have given the youths an opportunity to be in the driver seat during all election processes. The youth were able to elect worthy youthful leaders in a peaceful manner, which bolstered their confidence in the upcoming national elections, as many youth are expected to vote as well as stand for office.
- The collaboration with Transparency International and the IEBC enabled Mercy Corps and implementing partners to increase the youths' understanding of the Constitution, especially with regard to devolution. Youth took notice of the need to create participation mechanisms that enable them to express their views on the development priorities of Village Bunges and CBFs and to monitor the performance of the boards and their projects (i.e. accountability to their members).

## **V. Planned activities for next period**

---

March 7, 2012 to March 6, 2013

Our next year's plan will build on the successes of the previous year. It includes outreach campaigns to "at risk" youth through Village Bunges and CBF boards. We will develop materials explaining the program and use local media for dissemination to make more youth aware of the program. Formation and registration of Village Bunges and CBF boards will continue; for those already formed, they will be guided on development of action plans to influence policy and decision making within their communities.

Organizational capacity building of our partner organizations will also continue in year two. To help youth become more actively engaged in civic issues, we will support civic engagement training, community service projects/campaigns, and capacity building sessions for the boards on advocacy and networking. One campaign that we are looking forward to is the "My ID My Life" campaign. Furthermore, Grassroots Soccer and partners will implement a Healthy Behavior curriculum. The Rift Valley Annual Bunge Conference, together with a Central Province exchange visit, will help youth to network. We will increase our efforts to involve the local government through meetings and public forums as a way of bridging the gap between the government and the youth. Plans are at advanced stages to have many community projects reviewed and funded since Mercy Corps has already secured environmental review waivers.

Recruitment and training of the first cohort of Youth Volunteer Trainers (YVTs) is already completed. We expect to have the graduates utilize existing value chains for their own economic gains, in addition to supporting the Village Bunges to adopt VSL. Youth will receive life skills training, which includes entrepreneurship and financial literacy training. Youth who develop good business ideas will earn small grants from Mercy Corps to make their businesses

operational. For those that are not business minded, we will engage them through apprenticeships and career guidance for formal employment.

We expect to complete the gender assessment and finalize the report within the first quarter of year two. After this is done, we will hold town hall meetings to share the results. Utilizing the report findings, outreach campaigns on female civic education and livelihoods and mentorship will be conducted through the Bunges, considering cultural and social issues affecting young women. We will endeavor to document stories collected from YYC beneficiaries and widely disseminate them in order to increase young women’s participation in village Bunge activities.

<b>Yes Youth Can Rift Valley Work Plan</b>														
<b>12 Months</b>	Person responsible	<b>Year 2</b>												
<b>Activities</b>		<b>M</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>J</b>	<b>J</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>O</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>J</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>M</b>
<b>Project Administration, M&amp;E and close-out</b>														
Annual work plans	COP													
USAID Yes Youth Can Database input	M&E													
Financial reports	COP													
Quarterly Report	COP													
Annual Reports	COP													
External Mid-Term Evaluation	M&E													
Environmental compliance of community and enterprise grants	M&E													
Program close-out														
Non federal audit	COP													
External Final Evaluation	M&E													
Administrative and programmatic close-out deliverables discussed with staff and stakeholders	COP, CBF													
Formal partnerships (sub grantees) close-out scheduled	COP, PM													
Program team determination for transition	COP, HR													
Lessons learned documented	M&E,Com													
Final program and financial report submitted to the donor	COP, CD													
Final transition and celebration meetings with stakeholders	CBF													
A complete program file submitted to the Country Director	COP													
<b>Objective 0: Form youth representation bodies at the village and county levels</b>														
<b>Outcome 0.1: 900,000 youth aware of YYC program</b>														
Host outreach campaigns by village Bunges and CBF boards	CES													
Develop materials to explain program and youth use local media	COP													
<b>Outcome 0.2: Youth representation structures formed in the 7 counties</b>														
Form and register village Bunges & CBF boards	CES													
<b>Objective 1: Support youth to exercise a greater voice in local and national affairs</b>														
<b>Outcome 1.1: WYIPD, RWPL, and A-STEP measurably strengthen organizational capacity</b>														

Organizational capacity assessment with partners	COP																		
Training plan implementation for RWPL, A-STEP, WYIPD	CES & PM																		
<i>Milestone: second series of trainings completed</i>	<i>CES &amp; PM</i>																		
<b>Outcome 1.2: Youth Self Help Groups actively engaged in civic issues</b>																			
Youth Bunge civic engagement training	CES																		
Community service campaigns led by youth Bunges	CES																		
Grassroots soccer works with partners to implement Healthy Behavior curriculum	CES																		
My ID my Life campaigns and voter registration by youth	CES																		
<i>Milestone: Youth bunges participate in civic campaigns</i>	<i>CES</i>																		
<b>Outcome 1.3: Rift Valley youth networked to foster cooperation and understanding</b>																			
Hold 7 CBF board annual meetings	CES, CBF																		
Capacity building of the CBF boards	CES, CBF																		
Hold Rift Valley Bunge conference	CES, CBF																		
Exchange visit to Central province	CES,CBF																		
<b>Outcome 1.4: Local government responsiveness to issues important to youth increased</b>																			
Meetings with government officials and community elders	PM,CES																		
Public forums with government partners and youth Bunges	PM,CBF																		
Youth participate in public planning meetings	PM,CBF																		
<i>Milestone: 5 Government projects implemented with youth input</i>	<i>PM, CES</i>																		
<b>Outcome 1.5: Youth-led advocacy efforts strengthened to influence policy and public investment decisions</b>																			
Youth-led advocacy campaigns implemented	CES, CBF																		
<b>Outcome 1.6: Community investment fund/micro grant</b>																			
Community grants proposals review and support	CES,PM																		
Environmental compliance approval	COP,PM																		
Community grants funded and monitored	CES,PO																		
<b>Objective 2: Increase youth productivity, employment opportunities, and income</b>																			
<b>Outcome 2.1: Youth engage in existing value chains and roll out of VSL</b>																			
Youth utilizing existing value chains for economic gains	STA, PM																		
Recruitment and training of youth ambassadors from village Bunges	STA, PM																		
Youth ambassadors recruited and supporting Bunges to adopt VSL	STA, PM																		
<i>Milestone: VSL used as a strategy for resource mobilization</i>	<i>STA, PM</i>																		
<b>Outcome 2.2: Youth employability increased through life/job skills and entrepreneurship training</b>																			
Life skills training and mentorship for 5,000 youth	STA, PM																		
Entrepreneurship training and mentorship for 4,000 youth	STA, PM																		
Financial literacy training through Western Union and Equity Bank																			
<i>Milestone: 7,500 youth trained in life skills and entrepreneurship</i>	<i>STA, PM</i>																		

<b>Outcome 2.3: Youth income increased through micro and small enterprise development</b>													
Business plans and grant applications	STA, PM												
Grant application evaluations	STA, PM												
Small grants issued to youth enterprises	STA, PM												
<b>Milestone: 80 small business grants awarded</b>	<b>STA, PM</b>												
<b>Outcome 2.4: Youth obtain employment in the public and private sectors</b>													
Apprenticeship programs negotiated with employers	STA, PM												
<b>Milestone: Apprenticeship program begins</b>	<b>STA, PM</b>												
Apprenticeships negotiated with employers	STA, PM												
Youth centers provide career counseling	STA, PM												
Youth linked to USAID and other donor programs	STA, PM												
<b>Objective 3: Improve young women's access to political, social, and economic opportunities</b>													
<b>Outcome 3.1: Rift Valley wide gender assessment completed to identify challenges and opportunities for young women</b>													
Gender assessment in 7 project counties	GTS, M&E												
Town Hall meetings to share gender assessment results	GTS, PM												
<b>Outcome 3.2: community understanding increased of importance of female civic engagement and livelihood</b>													
Outreach campaigns on female civic education and enterprises	GTS, CBF												
Advocacy campaigns on cultural and social issues affecting young women	GTS, CBF												
<b>Outcome 3.3: female youth in bungen mentored by female role models on economic opportunities</b>													
Mentorship forums for all women Bunge leaders in the 7 counties	GTS, CBF												
Mentors identified and trained from all YYC constituencies	PM, GTS, CBF												
Constituency mentorship forums in leadership and economic empowerment	PM, STA												
<b>Outcome 3.4: Young women develop leadership and Advocacy skills</b>													
Stories collected from Yes Youth Can female beneficiaries	GTS, CBF												
Results of story-telling initiatives widely disseminated	GTS, CBF												
Young women participate in the second annual meetings in their counties	GTS, PO												

**Objective 0: Form youth representation bodies at Village and county levels**

*Outcome 0.1: 900,000 youth aware of Yes Youth Can program*

Mercy Corps will continue to raise awareness among youth of the Yes Youth Can program in partnership with the formed CBF boards. The CBF boards and village Bungen will organize outreach campaigns based on their developed communication strategies. In addition, we will host quarterly stakeholders' forums to explain the program to potential new participants. In collaboration with the YYC National program, we will develop materials, including brochures and radio ads to raise awareness of the program. We also will continue to encourage youth

representatives to constantly explain the program to their networks, adding to the cadre of youth ambassadors from year one who go to new youth Bunges to explain Yes Youth Can.

*Outcome 0.2: Youth representation structures formed in the 7 counties*

To ensure that the Yes Youth Can program meets the needs and involves youth throughout program implementation, we will continue to form structures at the village level with elections of interim officials who will guide the youth in adopting a constitution and by-laws and later to register as youth self-help groups. So far, we have formed more than 3,000 village Bunges; we hope to bring this figure to 5,000 by end of the program. We organized county forums and CBF board elections in two counties. These village Bunges and CBF boards have become important partners for Yes Youth Can.

In the second year, the youth will register the CBF boards as community based organizations and will hold their 2<sup>nd</sup> annual meeting, plus elect new board members for the next term. The Bunges will engage in asset/resource mapping and develop action plans that stipulate what advocacy issues the Bunge can take up in the locality, such as a community service project or a business enterprise. Mercy Corps, RWPL, A-STEP and WYIPD will regularly consult with the village Bunge leaders and CBF board on important issues facing youth from the county level to the village, identify successes and challenges in program implementation, and monitor the pulse of young people with regards to the program, the political environment, and the general election campaigns.

**Objective 1: Support youth to exercise a greater voice in local and national affairs**

*Outcome 1.1: WYIPD, RWPL, and A-STEP measurably strengthen organizational capacity*

Mercy Corps' partners, WYIPD, RWPL and A-STEP have extensive experience in mobilizing and empowering youth. In the second year we will consolidate our first year capacity building outcomes by working closely with our partners to help them leverage their incredible assets more fully. We will continue to provide them capacity building opportunities in five key areas: 1) leadership, 2) resource mobilization, 3) staff performance, 4) monitoring, evaluation and reporting, and 5) financial management. We also will help them increase their technical skills in civic engagement and entrepreneurship. The second year capacity assessment will take place in May 2012, with capacity building efforts through training, mentoring and on-the-job coaching continuing throughout the program. The second set of trainings will be completed by December 2012.

*Outcome 1.2: Youth Bunges actively engaged in civic issues*

Yes Youth Can Rift Valley will continue to provide opportunities for young people to build and demonstrate their leadership abilities, advocate for change, influence government officials, and develop relationships that cross ethnic and geographic boundaries, in addition to helping form a national Kenyan identity. All of these counter negative and violent influences.

We have a pool of over 200 trainers who will continue to train and support the Bunges to ensure that they have constitutions and action plans in place. In the second year, we will train the Bunges on devolution law, electoral law, good governance and leadership. These trainings will reach the villages through the CBFs. The second round of trainings will start in April 2012.

Bunges will also be able to choose two other civic engagement trainings from a range of options, including healthy behaviors, peacebuilding, negotiation and communication, volunteerism, democracy and governance, and advocacy. As part of the training, village Bunges will conduct community service campaigns to put their new skills to use as well as raise their profile in their communities. In addition, Grassroots Soccer will provide mentorship to a cohort of youth from the boards on using sports to teach healthy behaviors. The four themes of the life skills are conflict resolution, health, civic education and communication.

Finally, youth Bunges will mobilize youth for ID registration and collection, in collaboration with the national registration bureau. This addresses the major problem of youth lacking access to certain opportunities because they lack national identity cards. This effort will also coincide with the voter registration exercise, so youth can participate in the upcoming national elections.

*Outcome 1.3: Rift Valley youth networked to foster cooperation and understanding*

Mercy Corps and its local implementing partners will build the capacity of the elected youth at the county level to truly represent their peers, advocate for change, and work together across ethnic lines and geographic boundaries. The learning gaps that have been identified already by the county boards include strategic planning, communication, good governance, resource mobilization, and citizenship. Mercy Corps specialists will conduct the training in collaboration with local consultants from the localities.

To increase networking among counties and across ethnic lines, we will hold a Rift Valley Province forum to bring all the CBF boards from the seven counties together. This will take place in March and November 2012. The boards will agree on priorities for advocacy and networking, especially in the run up to the elections. The CBF boards will organize and host the second annual general meetings for two representatives per village Bunge per county during the period December 2012 thru February 2013. In collaboration with YYC-N, all the CBF boards will meet to form the National Bunge Association, giving them a platform as youth from Kenya to engage. They will decide on national priorities to be implemented across the counties in addition to the regional and county work plans.

*Outcome 1.4: Local government responsiveness to issues important to youth increased*

Mercy Corps recognizes that to focus on building youth civic engagement skills (supply), but not to work on government's openness to youth input (demand), we will only increase youth frustrations. Therefore, throughout the program we will continue to engage local government officials to address youth issues. This has been achieved in the first year with buy-in from the provincial administration, the MoYAS, as well as with the MoGCSD, which registers all the Bunges.

We also realized that community elders play a crucial role and are held in high esteem in decision making in the Rift Valley. We are working with all the councils of elders in the seven counties. We will continue to conduct regular meetings with government officials, elders and other stakeholders to inform them about YYC activities, explain the achievements and challenges, create synergies, and leverage each other's resources.

Once a quarter, we will host public forums for youth Bunges and government to explain their concerns to each other. We are also encouraging youth to attend public planning meetings to influence the allocation of government resources, such as the Local Authority Transfer Fund and the Constituency Development Fund. The Yes Youth Can program has given an opportunity to youth to meet with their members of parliament and key stakeholders who have shown interest in allocating some resources to youth.

*Outcome 1.5: Youth-led advocacy efforts strengthened to influence policy and public investment decisions*

To help young people have more influence in policy and public decision making that affects their lives, we will work with the CBF representatives to utilize the advocacy skills developed under Outcome 1.3. Starting in April 2012, each county forum will identify and develop one county-level advocacy campaign. County boards and village Bunges will be able to access the advocacy campaigns kitty for support to fund activities.

*Outcome 1.6: Community Investment Fund/Micro-Grants Program*

We will support the village Bunges to implement projects supporting community initiatives that not only define the roles of the youths at the community level, but also offer income opportunities for Bunge members. Those youth Bunges unable to benefit from the kitty will be seconded to the YYC-N program's grants and investments for support.

**Objective 2: Increase youth productivity, employment opportunities and income**

*Outcome 2.1 Youth engage in existing value chains and roll out of VSL*

The labor market and youth skills gaps assessments were completed in year one with outcomes used to reshape the program. Starting March 2012, the economic empowerment team is working with the Kenya National Chamber of Commerce and Industry and other implementing partners in the counties to find opportunities for youth in the value chain processes. They have identified value addition in different areas like agricultural business, service industry, and micro franchising which can ensure more youth are actively engaged in livelihood projects.

To support local resource mobilization and sustainability of the village Bunges, YYC-RV is piloting the first phase of Village Savings and Loans (VSL) schemes with 500 village Bunges, starting in March 2012. In order for youth Bunges to borrow money for investments, they must mobilize their own resources to match the funds for greater impact. This will ensure that the Bunges remain solid structures long after the program. We are already engaging with the Ministry of Co-operative Development to train the Bunges on Youth Cooperatives. These are more regularized than self-help groups, giving them more opportunities for accessing and utilizing resources.

We have a cohort of youth "bright spots" trained in data collection, entrepreneurship and VSL methodologies. They will work with village Bunges as resource persons to support any rapid assessment needed before projects are launched by the youth. No more comprehensive assessments will be conducted under the objective.

*Outcome 2.2: Youth employability increased through life/job skills and entrepreneurship training*

Since November 2011, 24 youth have been trained by Making Cents International and paired with the YDCs to train youth village Bunges on business enterprises and simulation. The life skills components in the toolkit include communication skills, decision making skills, and bargaining for better prices.

In the first phase, we met the target for the program by training over 7,500 youth. The training will continue in the second year on a demand basis. Eventually the youth Bunges will pay for the services. This will create opportunities for youth to work, and also to understand the challenges others are facing in accessing resources and how they can overcome them.

Finally, Grassroots Soccer will start their healthy life skills curriculum in April 2012 to enhance youths' life skills in civic education, negotiation, health and sanitation through sports. It is envisaged that over 15,000 youth will undergo the life skills training by the end of the program.

*Outcome 2.3: Youth income increased through micro and small enterprise development*

After youth successfully complete the entrepreneurship training, they will be invited to develop simple group-based business plans and compete for business start-up grants of approximately \$500-\$1,000. The first call for application went out in late February 2012; trained Bunges will submit their proposals by mid-March 2012 for screening by the team. The funding will be done in three cycles.

The application process is easy, allowing for fast review while also ensuring that activities feed into the overall project strategy and have a strong chance of success. Successful plans will assess market demand, potential income, likely expenses, cash flows, financing required, and any hiring potential.

Throughout the business development process, potential grantees will be mentored in groups to allow them to share ideas and collaborate, thus increasing business linkages and creating a supportive network. We will provide feedback to those village Bunges that are unsuccessful and link them to other funding options, such as banks with youth-friendly products, the Yes Youth Can National Tahidi Youth Fund, the USAID-funded FIRM project, and government funding including the Youth Enterprise Development Fund, the Women Development Fund, and the Constituency Development Fund.

*Outcome 2.4: Youth obtain employment in the public and private sectors*

For youth better suited for employment in the public and private sectors rather than entrepreneurship, we will connect them to various employment options. In the assessments under Outcome 2.1, we have identified employers who have shown interest in having youth apprentices who have diverse skills. We have already held two meetings in Nakuru and Kitale with potential employers who were positive about the initiative. We will follow up on youth placement in April 2012.

The Kenya National Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the government employment and labor officers in the counties have also been very helpful in putting together potential employers. Starting in May 2012, we will work with youth centers to increase information about employment options and link youth graduates with other USAID and donor youth employment programs, such as the World Bank Youth Employment Program.

**Objective 3: Improve young women's access to political, social and economic opportunities.**

*Outcome 3.1: Rift Valley wide gender assessment completed to identify challenges and opportunities for young women*

In February 2012, Mercy Corps and RWPL conducted a gender assessment to identify the impacts of the PEV, cultural barriers and illiteracy on relations between women and men, and specific constraints facing young women in participating in economic and civic activities. The assessment included observations and interactions with young women and men, and field work in sampled constituencies involved focus groups with girls, boys, youth, and adults. The research sought to understand the specific issues in Rift Valley Province that affect young women's involvement in civil society, local decision making, and economic activities.

As with the market assessments, the gender assessment was youth-led, with young women and men collecting and keying in the data. The data will be analyzed and a report compiled in March 2012. We will hold town hall meetings in April 2012 in all counties to share the findings and receive community reflection.

*Outcome 3.2: Community understanding increased of importance of female civic engagement and Livelihoods*

Linked to the Community Service Projects under Outcome 1.2, youth Bunges will develop projects led by young women and men to highlight the importance of civic engagement and employment of women. Additionally, to improve their ability to engage in civic activities, we will work to improve young women's participation in village Bunges.

*Outcome 3.3: Young women in village bunges mentored by female role models on economic opportunities*

Starting March 2012, Mercy Corps, RWPL, and the female youth in Bunges will identify approximately 40 young women from their communities to mentor female youth on economic empowerment. This mentoring will occur through regular visits to discuss potential income generating opportunities, reaffirm life skills (outcome 2.2), and start business/entrepreneurship initiatives. We will train mentors on how to share their skills and reflect regularly with one another and YYC project staff.

*Outcome 3.4: Young women develop leadership and advocacy skills.*

During the last three quarters of the second program year, YYC will develop a young women's storytelling initiative where project beneficiaries will team with women's leaders in the political, civic, and private sectors to create a series of 25 success stories on women's empowerment. Stories will be disseminated through print media and community radio, as well as participatory video shared through the Rift Valley Media Resource Center, Internews' Reporting for Peace

program, television public service announcements, and social media websites popular with youth. We will work with like-minded women leaders in the province to maximize the profile of this campaign throughout Rift Valley province.

Toward the end of the project, we will hold a competition among project beneficiaries to identify the top five stories from the village Bunges. At the second annual meetings of the CBF boards, under outcome 1.3, winners will present their stories along with women's leaders, and we will work with local radio to broadcast the event live.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

In March 2012, we will cooperate with USAID to conduct an external mid-term evaluation. In April 2012, we will submit the first year annual report with subsequent quarterly reports. We will work together with USAID on the end-of-program external evaluation in February 2013.

Additionally, Mercy Corps' M&E Specialist will conduct quarterly visits to each of the program sites to monitor progress towards targets. All of this data will be submitted in quarterly reports and annual reports, as per our agreement with USAID, and indicator data will be entered into the YYC database. We also will conduct environmental compliance assessments on all grants.

Starting in December 2012, we will embark on the program closeout activities to ensure proper transition with at least a 90-day transition period. During this period, all program activities will be completed, all documentation organized, contracts and sub-contracts closed out, and plans for final progress and financial reporting made. The programmatic transitioning will occur throughout year two: through the structures of village Bunges and county boards, the youth will increasingly become involved in implementation. We will hand over documentation to the county boards and other stakeholders, and provide any training required for the transition. Together with the youth and stakeholders, we will celebrate our accomplishments for the two years and, if there will be a second phase, plan the continuation together.

### **VI. List of sub-grantees**

---

1. Wareng Youth Initiative for Peace and Development (WYIPD)
2. African Sports and Talents Empowerment Program (ASTEPE)
3. Rural Women Peace Link (RWPL)