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

Second Quarterly Report
July 1 – September 30, 2011

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		Start Date	March 7, 2011
		End Date	March 6, 2013
		Report Date	July , 2011 to September 30, 2011
		Total Award	\$ 2,499,738

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

A-STEP	- Africa Sports and Talent Program
AOTR	- Agreement Officer Technical Representative
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
MC	- Mercy Corps
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
WYIPD	- Wareng Youth Initiative for Peace and Development
YDC	- Youth Development Coordinator
YSHG	- Youth Self Help Group
YYC-RV	- Yes Youth Can, Rift Valley

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This quarter started with the change of youth mobilization strategy from the initial sub-location, location, and constituency and county level structure to village Youth Bunges and County Bunge Forums. In this reporting period, the YYC-RV program has managed to reach a total of 39,097 ‘at-risk’ youths through USG-supported activities that include civic engagement, as well as social and economic empowerment initiatives. Out of the 39,097 young people, 23,402 males and 15,695 females were engaged through outreach campaigns, mobilization forums and meetings at the village level. Approaches we employed to reach out included involvement of the local administration such as chiefs through barazas, as well as church meetings, sporting and social events.

Together with our three local partners Rural Women Peace Link (RWPL), Africa Sports and Talent Program (A-STEP), and Wareng Initiative for Peace and Development (WYIPD), we re-mobilized to form and register village Youth Bunges in all seven counties starting with Uasin Gishu. Results have been forthcoming and in this quarter alone, we sensitized and formed 967 village Youth Bunges that have adopted the constitution and by-laws. A total of 89 Bunges are registered with the government as either a village Youth Bunge or a village Youth Self Help Group. In Uasin Gishu and Elgeiyo Marakwet county we have a total of 178 and 60 Bunges respectively, 350 Bunges in West Pokot, 129 in Trans Nzoia, 62 in Kericho, 96 in Nakuru and 93 in Nandi. Five community service projects were implemented: one by a Youth Bunge in West Pokot, three in Uasin Gishu and one in Nakuru county.

With approval from USAID, we conducted the baseline in both YYC 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 the seven 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 filled in questionnaires were returned from the treatment and control villages respectively. This represented both male and female youth respondents. Respondents’ education levels varied somewhat. In most villages, over half of respondents had completed at least secondary school, or 12 years. It was encouraging to note that responses demonstrated high levels of confidence in taking action to contribute to the development of Kenya.

In 14 of the villages, over 80% of the youth selected either “a great deal” or “some” to demonstrate how confident they are in taking action to contribute to the development of Kenya. On the question of youth participation in political violence, 81% of youth responded that they would never use force or violence for a political cause across all of the surveyed villages in Rift Valley. Virtually all respondents (98%) reported engagement with members of other ethnic groups in economic, social, civic or political activities in the past month. The survey also sought to find out the future economic situation of youth. Youth seem to be optimistic about the future: in most of the villages, 90% of more of the youth expect their economic conditions to be better in twelve months. On gender perspective, many youth (80%) agree that women should be involved

in economic livelihoods. A detailed baseline report is being concluded and will be shared with USAID separately.

During this quarter, we conducted training with the partners on resource and assets mapping, on how to develop action plans, documentation of success stories. 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.

Under the second objective of increasing youth productivity, employment opportunities, and income, we conducted a labor market and youth skills assessment to establish opportunities for youth and the existing employers willing to take on apprenticeship.

Further, and in respect to objective 3, Mercy Corps has taken the opportunity to discuss with the youth on the need to have gender balance in the village Youth Bunges formed and registered. We continuously emphasized that there must be well balanced Bunge gender representation in both leadership and membership.

However, the program has not lacked challenges. We have received limited support from the government especially on the registration of village Youth Bunges. Mercy Corps and USAID held meetings with government officials to inform them about the program and advocate for their support. Yet, the Provincial Commissioner (PC), the Provincial Director of Gender and Social Development (PDGSD), the District Gender and Social Development Officers (DGSDOs), the District Commissioners (DCs), and the District Youth Officers (DYO) expressed their suspicions about the program, hence their reluctance to have village Youth Bunges registered. Most of them have referred to the program as political. Nevertheless, Mercy Corps has come up with strategies to work with elders to gain confidence and support of the community about the program and to advocate with the government on the registration of the Bunges. Other challenges include insecurity in areas such as West Pokot and floods making the areas impassable. The just concluded confirmation of hearings at the International Criminal Court (ICC) has heightened political and tribal differences.

During next quarter we will continue to form Youth Bunges as well as form County Bunge Forums (CBFs). We will carry on with capacity building on the job of our local implementing partners. The next quarter will also see civic engagement Training of Trainers (TOT), subsequent Youth Bunge members' civic engagement training, county advocacy, networking, advocacy, and community projects grants through the Youth Bunges.

Life skills and entrepreneurship TOT training will come late October followed by Bunge members' roll out to empower Bunges for business idea generation and capital sourcing. We plan to conduct a rigorous gender assessment exercise throughout the seven counties and disseminate findings starting December, 2011.

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 the 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 2 million youth (15–30 years) are out-of-school, and the great majority of these have no regular work or income, makes them particularly vulnerable to recruitment for pay, into political campaigns and criminal gangs.

The youth development 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 in the Rift Valley to be agents of positive change in their communities. Mercy Corps is supporting this goal by pursuing three related objectives: 1) Form youth representation bodies at village and county levels; 2) Support youth to exercise a greater voice in local and national affairs; 3) Increase youth productivity, employment opportunities and income; and 4) Improve young women’s access to political, social and economic opportunities.

II. PROGRAM PROGRESS

A. Cumulative Progress Overview

Indicator	Overall targets by EOP	This quarter	Cumulative	% to date
GOAL: To strengthen the capabilities of youth and youth Bunges in the Rift Valley to be agents of positive change in their communities				
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%
Objective 0: Form youth representation bodies at Village and County levels				
0.1 USAID PS 6.1: # of people from ‘at-risk’ groups reached through USG-supported conflict mitigation activities;	900,000	39,129	44,817	5%
0.2a # of village Bunges formed & registered.	5,000	967	967	19%

0.2b # of County Forums formed and registered	7	0	0	0%
Objective 1: Support youth to exercise a greater voice in local and national affairs				
1.1a # of youth Bunges who have action plans in place to influence their community and local government decision making.	1,000	57	57	6%
1.1b # of youth who attend Bunge meetings	15,000	19,360	19,360	129%
1.2a USAID GJD 4.1: # of youth members of Bunges who have completed USG-assisted civic education training programs	15,000	1,323	1,323	9%
1.2b # of community service projects implemented by Bunges	150	5	5	3%
1.3a # of youth members of Bunges who attend county youth leadership conferences	160	0	0	0%
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	0	0	0%
1.5 # of Bunges involved in youth-led advocacy campaigns targeted towards policy and public investment decisions.	1000	0	0	0%
Objective 2: To increase youth productivity, employment opportunities and income				
# of Bunge members achieving greater economic independence	2000	0	0	0%
2.1a # of young people who participate in comprehensive value chain assessments	100	0	19	19%
2.2a USAID EG 6.3 # of young persons completing USG-funded workforce development programs	7500	24	24	0.3%
2.3a # of youth entrepreneurial groups who develop business plans	200	0	0	0%
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	0	0	0%
Objective 3: Improve young women's access to political, social and economic opportunities.				
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	0	0	0%
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

Mercy Corps has lived to the spirit of a youth owned, youth led and youth managed approach to all activities in the YYC-RV program. In collaboration with our three local partners: Rural Women Peace Link (RWPL), Wareng Youth Initiative for Peace and Development (WYIPD), and Africa Sports and Talents Empowerment Program (A-STEP), we have sensitized the youths on the YYC-RV program, especially on Bunge formation and understanding the purpose for which they are formed. We have encouraged and provided space for Bunges to discuss youth representation and leadership over and over in their routine meetings and come up with their own objectives and design of their action plans with well mapped out resources within their villages. We noted great progress in youth taking initiatives through their Bunge leaders to try and address their own village challenges by undertaking community service projects to make their community a better one.

Our efforts to engage the government and local leaders to gain program support have received mixed responses. Most are skeptical of the program. One milestone achieved here was meeting with the Kalenjin and Kikuyu communities' village elders who promised to support program

activities. To satisfy evidence based approach in implementation and program impact measurement, Mercy Corps, with the help of our headquarters technical team, revised the YYC-RV PMP and work plans to reflect changes proposed by USAID. We subsequently undertook a baseline survey in the households in 18 treatment Village Bunges and 4 control Village Bunges. In the 942 (781 treatment and 161 control groups) returned questionnaires, we sought to find baseline data to the following qualitative indicators:

- i) % change in youth who feel confident to contribute positively to the community
- ii) % change in youth who take action to contribute positively to the development of Kenya
- iii) % change in youth who report engaging in or approving of political violence
- iv) % change in youth who interact across ethnic lines
- v) % of Bunge members achieving greater economic independence
- vi) % of youth entrepreneurial groups raising additional investment capital
- vii) % change in people who understand the importance of female civic education and livelihoods
- viii) % change in people who understand the importance of female civic education and livelihoods
- ix) % change of young women who report a greater diversity of economic opportunities

GOAL: To strengthen the capabilities of youth organizations in the Rift Valley to be agents of positive change in their communities

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

Summary of Objective 0 Outcomes
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:

YYC-RV has managed to directly reach 39,097 young people, 23,402 male and 15,695 female through outreach campaigns, mobilization forums and meetings at the village level. The youths appreciate the YYC program and most of them have confirmed that they share the same information with their friends and colleagues in church, sporting events, and social sites. Involvement of local administration such as chiefs has pulled a tremendous support towards the mobilization of the youths which is realized through chief baraza’s where young people are encouraged to identify themselves with the opportunities presented by the YYC program.

The structure from sub-location, location, constituency and county as reported in the last quarter was perceived as not representing the majority of the youths at the village level. The newly adopted village-county structure has attracted the attention of local administration such as chiefs, village elders and other stakeholders who have welcomed the program with a high desire to participate. Partners employed different strategies to carry on with the mobilization and sensitization of the YYC program, like the use of provincial and local administration, mapping out of villages in their locations, and identification of Youth Ambassadors who often visit the Youth Bunges to monitor their progress.

The mobilization of the Youth Bunges has continued with a gender perspective lens. With continuous sensitization on the inclusion of both males and females into the membership of village Bunges, young women representation in the Bunges is growing. We have also ensured their entire active participation by ensuring gender balance in the Bunge leadership positions. This has led to young women comprising of almost half of those who are already on Bunge membership lists.

County	No. of Bunges formed	No. of Youth attending Bunge meetings
Uasin Gishu	177	3,817
Nandi	93	2,332
Elgeyo Marakwet	60	1,180
Transnzoia	129	2,848
West Pokot	350	5,600
Kericho	62	1,084
Nakuru	96	2,499
Totals	967	19,360

Outcome 0.2: Youth representation structures formed in the 7 counties

The village model reaches out to all youths at the village level and ensures that youths are empowered to participate in leadership and governance in their communities. Together with our three local partners Rural Women Peace Link (RWPL), Africa Sports and Talent Program (A-STEP), and Wareng Initiative for Peace and Development (WYIPD), we re-mobilized to form and register village Youth Bunges in all seven counties starting with Uasin Gishu. Results have been forthcoming and in this quarter alone, we sensitized and formed 967 village Youth Bunges that have adopted the constitution and by-laws. A total of 89 Bunges are registered with the government as either a village Youth Bunge or a village Youth Self Help Group. In Uasin Gishu and Elgeiyo Marakwet county we have a total of 177 and 60 Bunges respectively, 350 Bunges in West Pokot, 129 in Trans Nzoia, 62 in Kericho, 96 in Nakuru and 93 in Nandi. Five community service projects were implemented: one by a Youth Bunge in West Pokot, three in Uasin Gishu and one in Nakuru county as shown in the table above. Mobilization remains ongoing at the village level in preparation of County Bunge Forum formation in the next quarter. Village Bunges are striving hard to expand their membership, acquire legal standing, draft annual action plans as well as map out resources and opportunities within their villages. This has been an encouragement to neighboring villages that are emulating the Bunge formation steps and forming their own village Bunges. This clearly reveals the eagerness and commitment the young people have in pursuit to pull together their voices and energy through forming groups to collectively identify issues and find solutions.

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

This quarter Mercy Corps conducted a training for the partner organizations on resource mapping, how to develop action plans, documentation of success stories and monitoring and evaluation. These are skills that will enhance the documentation of the program and monitoring of it's impact. 23 youth development coordinators and three program managers attended the training.

Outcome 1.2: Youth Bunges actively engaged in civic issues

During this quarter, the youth mobilization and formation of structures has given a platform to youth to develop and exercise their skills. The youths in the Bunges are engaging the community in identification of issues affecting the community. In most Bunge meetings we have seen elders and chiefs participate in the Bunge discussions and advise the youths on ways of developing their villages. The civic engagement mentoring trainings were held in September in Nandi and Uasin Gishu counties. 63 mentors participated in skills acquirement in advocacy, action planning and resource mapping. The Youth Bunge representatives then shared the skills with the members of their respective Bunges. To date, we have a total of 57 action plans and resource mapping templates filled and received by Mercy Corps. Activities initiated by the Bunges are based on advocacy issues, business projects and community service projects they plan to undertake. Five community service projects were implemented by five different Youth Bunges. These included two road reconstruction and repair projects by Nangrotum village Bunge in West Pokot, and by Katuyo Village Bunge in Uasin Gishu county. Tree planting in Mau Forest was implemented by Temeiyotta Village Bunge in Nakuru county, while a village clean up exercise was undertaken by the Race Course village Bunge. Anti- jigger campaign by Corner Village Bunge in Uasin Gishu County was undertaken in the month of August. Moreover Bunges have been holding frequent meetings and the total number of those who have sat in the meetings so far is estimated to stand at 19,360 youth. Village Youth Bunges have confessed to be realizing rewards of what they have done so far and are therefore aiming at trying their hands at economic projects for employment and income.

Community projects undertaken per county

No.	County	Village Bunge	Project Undertaken
1	Uasin Gishu County	Race Course village Bunge	Village clean up exercise
2	Uasin Gishu County	Katuiyo village Bunge	Road repairs
3	Uasin Gishu County	Corner village Bunge	Anti-jigger campaign
4	West Pokot	Nangrotum village Bunge	Road repairs
5	Nakuru	Temeiyotta village Bunge	Tree planting

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

Two-day county level advocacy and networking training leading to this outcome were not scheduled for implementation and reporting this quarter.

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

Our continued engagements with the government officials especially on YYC program objectives greatly contributed to our success this quarter. As we talked to them, we took precautions to only emphasize the development aspects of the program rather than advocacy and leadership/voice to avoid raising suspicions. The municipal council of Eldoret provided a truck for garbage collection during a past Race Course Village Bunge clean-up and tree planting activity. This was a clear indication of local government support to this program and the youth. Recently and through a meeting, we also won support of Rift Valley elders who command critical respect in the region. Another approach to gaining support has been inclusion of YYC program information sharing sessions in other program activities like in the Local Empowerment for Peace Program (LEAP II). To advance these efforts, we are in the process of developing flyers and brochures with well packaged information about the program for public dissemination. The next step to this outcome is to start linking youth Bunges with government partners through issue based meetings.

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 quarter.

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

Summary of Objective 2 Outcomes
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

The Labor Market and Youth Skills Assessment was a primary activity under YYC’s Objective 2: *to increase youth productivity, employment opportunities and income*. The youth skills and labour markets assessment report is in its final stage. The findings identified high-potential sectors and local businesses for viable opportunities for youth employment and self-employment. This is expected to form the basis for subsequent assessments and ensure the validity of our data and acknowledge the dynamic nature of the labor market, the assessment process and subsequent economic activities that will be conducted in two additional phases. Findings include:

➤ **Continue Youth-led Market Research.**

Our surveyed Kenyan youth believe that they can and should take an active role in determining their futures. They are eager to be part of the process in improving their political, social, and

economic conditions. YYC youth who participated in the Training of Trainers (ToT) acknowledged that they were grateful to take the lead in designing the assessment tools. Through this process, the youth ensured that every question had purpose and was directly related to their economic situations. Additionally, youth noted that they benefitted from thinking through high-potential economic sectors. Youth gained confidence in interacting with employers and increased their professional networks through the assessment.

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 are able to experience firsthand 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.

We recommend that the youth-led assessment process continues for the subsequent two phases of the program. The youth who participated in the pilot ToT should train additional survey enumerators and FGD facilitators so that more youth across YYC program areas can engage in and build skills in the market research activities. Additionally, this process should be replicated throughout the other regions where YYC operates.

➤ **Promote and Develop Life Skills.**

Life skills have been identified as critical skills both by youth and potential employers. Life skills are transferable in any labor market and are impervious to any shocks to the economy. Specifically, 33 percent of local employers highlighted interpersonal skills as the most important requirement considered 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) will modify their Rise Up, Lift Yourself with Business and Life Skills™ curricula to ensure that these topics are appropriately covered. Life skills training should be specifically emphasized to enable youth to build internal competencies to anticipate and manage various situations and circumstances in life. A wide range of life skills such as those listed above need to be considered including financial literacy and conflict negotiation.

We understand life skills to be an integral component of improving the overall employability of Kenyan youth and will work to ensure that this skills development is a cornerstone of the YYC program.

➤ **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 did not express enthusiasm or high-interest in this sector and also mentioned complications with acquiring and accessing land. The agricultural

sector presents many opportunities for young people; however, at present, YYC youth remain largely disinterested in this work.

We recommend that subsequent phases of the assessment explore opportunities for youth to participate in agricultural activities (and enterprises) across value chains. More importantly, YYC staff will look to link youth with large agribusiness firms, local leaders in the sector, and existing value-chain projects, so that youth may understand that this is a profitable and well-respected form of income generation. Additionally, agriculture should be addressed in the community dialogues recommended above, so that young people work to close some of these negative perceptions on the sector as a whole. The value-chain curricula within MCI's modules may also work to increase youth's perceptions towards agriculture as a profitable and worthy business.

➤ **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 their community, including family members and the 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 don't view them as leaders. However, as evidenced by the employer survey, businesses believe that youth are hard-working, skilled, and reliable workers.

We recommend that the findings of this assessment be shared with the community at large, especially other Kenyan youth-focused programs. Young people should use the assessment as a tool for generating dialogue on the societal perceptions of young people. Fora with parents, potential employers, elders, and local government officials will help to bridge the gap in perceptions and will also enable the community at large to view youth as valued, productive members of society. These fora can also be tied into activities under Objective 0 and Objective 1 through Bunge and the civic engagement dialogues. Dialogues will also help youth to build their life skills, such as leadership and effective communication. YYC youth will share these findings with non-YYC youth so that young people can develop ideas on activities which may work to close the perception gap.

➤ **Enable Effective Entrepreneurship.**

Young people have many ideas for starting a business but feel that they face nearly insurmountable barriers in achieving these goals. Lack of capital and understanding how to best manage money were often mentioned as a major hindrance to following an entrepreneurial pathway. Young people also mentioned tough competition and weak moral support from parents and the elder community as barriers to starting a business.

During the FGDs, observation techniques were listed as the most common form of gaining information about high potential sectors and market opportunities. However, youth feel that they

need stronger, more reliable avenues for gathering accurate knowledge on viable opportunities for entrepreneurship.

We recommend that all youth participating in the Objective 2 activities participate in 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, YYC staff should look to more deeply explore the issues related to lack of capital and appropriate financial services in following subsequent assessment phases.

➤ **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, repeatedly was mentioned as a major issue. Across some 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.

We recommend that the life skills and entrepreneurship curricula addresses the specific challenges that young men and women encounter in the Kenyan workforce. Additionally, the YYC program will work to place all apprenticeships with appropriate employers understanding any sensitivities or issues that may arise under this gender lens. We will also explore these issues further during the next two phases of the assessment in order to design the most appropriate responses.

➤ **Acclimate Youth to the Realities of the Working World.**

According to the businesses surveyed, young people have misconceptions about the realities of the working world. Specifically, nearly 60 percent of employers believe that youth have high expectations about salaries. Young people acknowledge that their educational experiences have not provided them with practical knowledge about the professional world. Exacerbating this situation, young people do not feel that they have adequate professional experience for many employers. This vicious cycle prevents often youth from securing the jobs and economic activities they are most interested in.

We recommend that young people receive links to on-the-job trainings, through apprenticeships and short-term opportunities that have the possibility of evolving into long-term placements. More than 61 percent of surveyed Rift Valley employers are willing to take on apprentices. When possible, business mentoring and exposure to select business leaders will also enable youth to understand professionalism, respect for authority in the workplace, and strong work ethics. Additionally, we believe youth should be exposed to accurate information on standard salaries and wages. Our findings also noted that the majority of surveyed businesses seek employees through job adverts, so the YYC program will work to ensure that young people know how to search for job opportunities and respond accordingly.

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

In preparation for the implementation of the above-mentioned outcome, several activities were envisaged and rolled out as follows. First, life skills and entrepreneurship curricula were designed by Making Cents International (MCI) with input from the youth in Rift Valley to benefit at least 7,500 youths across the program target areas. The findings of the youth-led market research activities were used to inform this curriculum besides consultative activities conducted by MCI that consisted of one-on-one interviews, site visits, and Focus Group Discussions with Mercy Corps staff, YYC partner organizations, youth development coordinators (YDCs), youth district leaders, youth leaders (“Bright Spots”), and youth group members in Rift Valley. Focus Group Discussions in each region used a modified market research approach where 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.

Further, a two-day pre-TOT workshop was held in Eldoret in August, 2011. The main objective of the pre-TOT workshop was to test experiential learning methodologies and adult learning principles with potential facilitators, and to determine final criteria for selection of TOT participants, TOT design, and recommendations for training roll-out. 24 YDCs and “Bright Spots” from across the program areas were targeted and trained. The workshop examined techniques and methodologies from the facilitator’s and participant’s perspective with particular focus on “what makes a good trainer,” the applied learning approach, and group facilitation skills. This also led to conclusions and decision making on the identification of the 24 “Bright Spots” from the Bunges across the seven counties targeted under YYC within Rift Valley province.

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

This activity was not planned for reporting in this quarter. However changes have been made to the effect that grants would be transformed into loans. This would be rolled out in the next phase.

Even so, identification of potential economic development initiatives from Village Youth Bunges is on-going. Initiatives cut across agri-business (farming, poultry keeping) and village savings and loans that are currently in progress in some Village Bunges. Most of the youth Bunges formed have shown a lot of initiative by contributing amongst themselves and starting projects such as beans farming, and table banking/village saving schemes.

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

Apprenticeship programs negotiated with employers, youth centers to provide career counseling and youth linkage to USAID and other donor programs activities for this outcome were not scheduled for this quarter implementation and reporting. However, through the assessment we identified firms ready to take up apprentices/interns. Selection as well as linkage of the potential apprentices/interns is slated for the subsequent quarter.

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

Summary of Objective 3 Outcomes

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

As per our initial work plan, objective 3 activities were not planned for this reporting period.

III. Constraints and Challenges

- 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 and Social Services authorizing the registration of the Bunges.
- 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 which made the area impassable.
- High illiteracy levels in areas such as West Pokot has led YDCs to help the youth with writing minutes and documentation of Bunge activities.
- There have been incidents of insecurity in West Pokot and Trans Nzoia which has made it difficult to plan youth activities and Bunge formation meetings.
- The ICC process has made the region to be 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 December/January ICC deadlines and what it would mean to the region.
- It has been a challenge to have many young women participation in the Bunges due to culture and the timidity of the girls.

IV. Lessons Learned

- The youth have been waiting for the opportunity to be organized for a long time and thus have embraced the program very fast. Recognition and participation of some of the Village Bunge leaders in other youth centered programs by Mercy Corps like district leaders' forums under LEAP II program have improved community representation at higher levels.
- Organization and mobilization of youth at grass root levels through youth Bunges has led to many organizations getting attracted 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 Ministry of Youth Affaires in areas where it's difficult to for the Ministry to work with youth.
- Many youths have economic empowerment ideas but lack organization, synergy and collective action to make it a reality. Formation of Village Bunges has helped overcome this challenge.
- We have learnt that numerical presence of young females in Bunges does not imply their full participation hence 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.

V. Planned activities for next period of three months, October – December 2011

Mercy Corps will continue to create awareness about the program throughout the next quarter through public fora, outreach to at-risk youth and program objectives materials development and dissemination. We will organize consultation meetings with key stakeholders and youth leaders from Bunges to foster understanding between youth, elders and administrators. Formation and registration of Village Bunges will continue throughout the life of the program. Once we have met the threshold of 60% per target Bunges in every constituency, we will hold County Bunge Forum elections. Due to the challenge with registration, Mercy Corps will work with elders to advocate and lobby for registration and community acceptance. Using the organizational assessment results conducted, we will continue training and capacity building of all three local partners in areas where we want them to improve. We will also identify another group of civic engagement mentors for training. The trained mentors will then be used to roll out youth Bunge civic engagement trainings to run during the entire quarter. Plans to see community service campaigns start in the month of October are already underway. After formation of County Bunge Forums, we will conduct advocacy and networking trainings to its affiliate members starting the month of November. We envisage stakeholders meetings with the government officials in quest of increased program support. Next quarter will also see many of the objective 2 activities being implemented. We will conduct life skills and entrepreneurship TOT training, and later in November use the trained “Bright Spots” to reach out to other youth in Village Bunges. At the onset of this, we will issue business plans application forms for youth to apply for financial support for enterprises. This will be vetted and successful applicants issued with small loans to start off their businesses. Some other promising groups will be linked to USAID and other donor programs for support. For the youth who will not be willing to participate in entrepreneurship activities, we will link them with prospective employers for apprenticeships or centers that provide career counseling. Starting October, we shall initiate the process for gender assessments in the seven counties. Following completion of the assessment, dissemination of the findings shall begin through town hall meetings starting December, 2011.

Activity (Person responsible)	2011		
	October	November	December
Project Start-Up, Administration, and M&E			
Branding and Marking Plans finalized			
Annual work plans			
PMP submitted to USAID			
USAID Yes Youth Can Database input			
Financial reports			
Quarterly Report			
Baseline Survey conducted and completed			
Annual Reports			
External Mid Term Evaluation			
External Final Evaluation			

Objective 0: Form youth representation bodies at Village and County levels			
Outcome 0.1: 900,000 youth aware of YYC program (CES)			
Host public fora (CES,PM)			
Outreach to at-risk youth (PM, CES & FOs)			
Develop materials to explain the program (COP)			
Outcome 0.2: Youth representation Village Bunges formed in the 7 counties (CES)			
County forums Formed (CES)			
Objective 1: Support youth to exercise a greater voice in local and national affairs			
Organizational capacity assessment with Partners (COP)			
Training plan implementation for RWPL, A-STEP, WYIPD (PM)			
Village Bunge leaders identified (CES)			
Civic engagement training (TOT) (CES)			
Youth Bunge civic engagement training (CES)			
Community service campaigns led by youth Bunges (CES)			
Grass root soccer (CES)			
2 days county level Advocacy training (CES, PM, AYT)			
2 days county level networking training (CES, PM, AYT)			
Meetings with government officials (PM,CES)			
Public forums with government partners and youth (1 per quarter) (PM,CES)			
Youth participate in public planning meetings (PM,CES)			
Youth led advocacy campaigns (CES, PM)			
Objective 2: Increase youth productivity, employment opportunities, and income			
Labour market assessment (STA, PM,M&EO)			
Value chain assessment (STA, PM,M&EO)			
Market (Product) assessment (STA, PM,M&EO)			
Life skills/entrepreneurship TOT with 20 people completed (STA, PM)			
Life skills training (STA, PM)			
Entrepreneurship training (STA, PM)			
Business plans and grant applications (STA, PM)			
Loans application evaluations(STA, PM)			
Small loans issued to youth enterprises (STA, PM)			
Apprenticeship programs negotiated with employers (STA, PM)			
Youth centers provide career counseling (STA, PM)			
Youth linked to USAID and other donor programs (STA, PM)			
Objective 3: Improve young women's access to political, social, and economic opportunities			
Gender assessment in 7 project Counties (GTS, M&EO,PM)			
Town Hall meetings to share gender assessment results (GTS, M&EO,PM)			
Outreach campaigns on female literacy/civic education (GTS, PM)			
Bunges identified for female economic empowerment programs (GTS, PM)			
Training for champions on mentorship (GTS, PM)			
Village Bunges economic empowerment campaigns (GTS, CES, PM)			
Stories collected from Yes Youth Can beneficiaries (GTS, M&EO, PM)			
Results of story-telling initiatives widely disseminated (GTS, PM)			
Young women participate in Youth Leadership Forum (GTS, CES, PM)			

Objective 0: Form youth representation bodies at Village and County levels

Outcome 0.1: 900,000 youth aware of YYC program

Mercy Corps and the three local partners will conduct monthly out-reach campaigns to make more youth aware of the YYC program. Materials like brochures and flyers to share with the public on program objectives will also be developed and distributed throughout program areas. We will also encourage youth representatives and our local partners to explain the program to their youth networks and develop a cadre of Youth Ambassadors who will go to Village Bunges to explain the Yes Youth Can program.

Outcome 0.2: Youth representation structures formed in the 7 counties

We shall continue to form Youth Bunges in all program areas where it allows. We shall then form County Bunge Forums in all counties by end of December. The County Bunge Forum formation will not mark an end to mobilization; we will continue working towards the target of more than 700 village Bunges formed per county by the end of the program. The youth forums at both Village and County levels will be registered and will hold regular meetings to discuss issues affecting them in their communities. They will then identify community projects they can undertake and Mercy Corps will provide small grants using a first come first served strategy. To overcome the challenge of registration, we will continue to work jointly with community elders and government officers to win their support.

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 Training plan implementation for RWPL, A-STEP, WYIPD

Mercy Corps has found that through local partners' capacity building, positive results are guaranteed. We plan to continue with our rigorous capacity building plan developed through capacity assessment process of all our three local partners in the next quarter. Areas of concentration will include leadership, resource mobilization, staff performance, monitoring and evaluation and financial management.

Outcome 1.2: Youth Bunges, actively engaged in civic issues

Mercy Corps and its IPs will continue with Village Bunge formation and identification of their leaders through out next quarter. For the already formed Bunges, we will engage them through Bunge specific trainings on civic issues in November and December. These trainings will be conducted by our pool of civic engagement Mentors trained in October. Ready village Bunges will also be able to access Community Investment Fund from Mercy Corps to conduct community service projects and advocacy grants within their communities in next quarter. Grassroot Soccer will in November start the healthy curriculum development for training youth coaches using sports and theatre. We will also partner with our Yes Youth Can National who has community grants for Youth Bunges.

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

We shall conduct two-day county level advocacy and networking trainings in the months of November and December, 2011 after the County Bunge Forums are in place. This is geared to

build the capacity of the elected county level youths to truly represent their peers, advocate for change, and work together across ethnic lines and geographic boundaries. Through these trainings, youth representatives will identify county level and national issues for advocacy and networking with other counties in other provinces.

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

Mercy Corps will continue engaging government officials through meetings to discuss program objectives, progress and challenges. This will happen through out next quarter. Other activities leading to this outcome are: holding public forums with government partners and Youth Bunges and Youth Bunges participating in public planning meetings.

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

Activities leading to this outcome are not scheduled for next quarter implementation and reporting.

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

Outcome 2.1: Comprehensive labour market and value chain assessments completed

The first round of the Labor Market and Youth Skills Assessment was conducted in the first and second quarter. We will not have the second round in the next quarter rather we will have it conducted in the fourth quarter. However findings from the earlier assessment will be incorporated into the economic empowerment programs/activities.

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

In October, 2011, Making Cents International (MCI) will conduct a TOT on life skills and entrepreneurship with our partners and 24 youth “Bright Spots”. These youth will then be paired with field officers to conduct trainings to 7,500 youth in Village Bunges in need of such trainings, starting the month of November, 2011.

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

Bunge-based business plans and competition for business start-up grants will kick off in November but the funds will not be disbursed until January 2011. This is to allow time for development and design of the application process that permits a fast review while also ensuring that activities feed into the overall project strategy and have a strong chance of success. Potential recipients will be mentored in groups throughout the business development process to allow them to share ideas and collaborate, thus increasing business linkages and creating a supportive network. Under this outcome, we will partner with the Yes Youth Can-National program to provide support to viable business ideas.

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. We will begin to reach out to employers as established in the assessment to gauge their interest in having apprentices starting the months of November, 2011. We will also start working 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

Starting the month of October, Mercy Corps and RWPL will conduct a gender assessment to identify the impacts of the PEV on relations between women and men, and specific constraints facing young women in participating in economic and civic activities. The tools development will be developed in October while the data collection, analysis and presentation will be conducted in November. This will be done through Focus Group Discussions with girls, boys, youth, and adults to understand the specific issues in the Rift Valley province that affect young women's involvement in civil society, local decision-making and economic activities. As with the market assessments, these will be youth-led, with young women and men collecting and participating in analyzing the data. We will hold town hall meetings in December after the assessments to share the findings and receive community reflection. Purposive sampling techniques will be used to sample areas to be covered in the assessment. We will consider cultural issues, PEV hot spots, diversity in culture, and ethnic representation in rural and urban areas as we sample.

Outcome 3.2: Community understanding increased of importance of female civic engagement and livelihoods.

Outreach campaigns on female civic education and livelihoods through the Bunges that lead to this outcome are not scheduled for next quarterly implementation and reporting. However in all Bunge mobilization and formation, the participation and leadership of young women is a cross-cutting theme.

Outcome 3.3: Female youth in Bunges mentored by female role models on economic activities.

Activities for this outcome are not scheduled for next quarter reporting. We will identify young women in Bunges for economic empowerment programs; and conduct training of champions on mentorship and Bunges' economic empowerment campaigns to achieve this outcome.

Outcome 3.4: Young women develop leadership and advocacy skills through storytelling initiative.

Activities for this outcome are not scheduled for next quarter reporting.

VI. List of sub-grantees

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