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Yes Youth Can! - Central (YYC-C)

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS3

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY4

I. PROGRAM OVERVIEW7

II. PROGRAM PROGRESS.....7

A. CUMULATIVE PROGRESS OVERVIEW 7

B. PROGRAM INTERVENTIONS 9

III. CONSTRAINTS AND CHALLENGES.....15

IV. LESSONS LEARNED15

V. PLANNED ACTIVITIES FOR NEXT PERIOD OF THREE MONTHS, APRIL- JUNE, 2012.....16

LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ACK	Anglican Church of Kenya
AYT	Africa Youth Trust
AOTR	Agreement Officer Technical Representative
CBF	County Bunge Forum
CBO	Community Based Organization
CES	Civic Engagement specialist
DO	District Officer
DC	District Commissioner
COP	Chief of Party
DYO	District Youth Officer
GoK	Government of Kenya
ICC	International Criminal Court
ID	Identification document/card
INGOs	International Non-Governmental Organization
MCI	Making Cents International
MoGCSD	Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Development
MoYAS	Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NYC	National Youth Council
NYF	National Youth Forum
OCA	Organizational Capacity Assessment
PEV	Post-election Violence
PO	Program Officer
PM	Program Manager
TOT	Training of Trainers
TSU	Technical Support Unit
USAID	United States Aid for International development
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
VSL	Village Saving and Loans
YDCs	Youth Development Coordinators
YYC-C	Yes Youth Can - Central
YADEN	Youth Art Development & Entrepreneurship Network
VSL	Village Savings & Loans
YEETs	Youth Economic Empowerment Trainers
YVTs	Youth Village Savings & Loans Trainers

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The fourth quarter of the Yes Youth Can Central (YYC-C) implementation involved a more focused effort to ensure a youth led, youth owned and youth managed approach. The last three quarters had concentrated on laying the foundation by building youth structures (village Bunges and county boards) and partnerships for sustainable program development, but this reporting period focused on strengthening the structures for organizing and delivering youth activities. Therefore, as mobilization of youth to form village Bunges and increase Bunge membership continued, the responsibility to do this has shifted from us and has instead become a youth-led activity through the county board and Bunge leaders. The County Bunge Forum (CBF) boards, which have been elected to represent the village Bunges, played a crucial role in mobilizing fellow youths and taking initiative to strengthen the operations of the village Bunges.

In geographical coverage, the YYC-C fully expanded to cover all the 15 constituencies of Kiambu and Murang'a counties for objectives 0 and 1, while undertaking activities under objectives 2 and 3 in Juja constituency in Kiambu County and Gatanga constituency in Murang'a County, as per the original Cooperative Award stipulations. YYC-C targets 500,000 at-risk youth out of a total youth population of 759,216 youths, spread across an estimated 1,882 and 1,462 villages in Kiambu and Murang'a counties, respectively.

During this period, Mercy Corps continued to benefit from learning experiences during the implementation, often modifying the strategies to suit the local environment and banking on the local community structures while focusing to achieve the set objectives. Even though the mobilization of youth was slow, awareness about YYC and interest in joining village youth Bunges increased. The YYC structure had become clearer as the already formed village Bunges and the CBFs provided avenues for youth to seek clarification and try to identify with a program that had received with a lot of skepticism earlier.

In mobilization and sensitization of the youths, Mercy Corps worked in partnership with the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports (MoYAS) and the CBF boards. Mobilization meetings were held within administrative units so that more youth could be reached with YYC information. During such meetings, youth "Bright Spots" with leadership and coordination qualities emerged. They began mobilizing fellow youth for the program. During the quarter, Mercy Corps and partners directly reached a total of 17,816 youth through YYC-C activities, and a further 36,030 more 'at risk' youths were reached indirectly through *barazas*, outreach campaigns, radio shows, sports tournaments, and other youth activities, bringing the total number of youths reached this quarter to over 53,846. This number added to the total number of 33,797 who have joined 1,251 village Bunges.

In order for these formed village Bunges to legitimize their operations, registration with the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Development (MoGCSD) continued. However, due to the negative publicity given to the program at the beginning and the increased number of Bunges seeking registration, the registration process faced challenges as Bunges were not popular with the registration office. Mercy Corps continued to engage the relevant offices to support formed Bunges in easing the registration processes. The table below gives an illustration of village Bunge coverage in the two counties.

County	Constituency	Total youth population	Female in Bunges	Male in Bunges	Total Youths in Bunges	Total Bunges formed	Average per Bunge
Murang'a	Gatanga	47,799	1,816	,1013	2,829	123	23
	Kandara	41,347	785	2,141	2,926	77	38
	Kangema	20,380	702	928	1,630	55	29
	Kigumo	33,203	778	982	1,760	55	32
	Kiharu	49,174	1,139	2,147	3,286	106	31
	Maragwa	41,231	730	851	1,581	56	28
	Mathioya	22,826	521	657	1,178	44	27
Kiambu	Gatundu North	27,359	574	749	1,323	63	21
	Gatundu South	63,020	932	1,185	2,117	73	29
	Githunguri	44,574	877	963	1,840	80	28
	Juja	144,250	3,166	4,112	7,278	254	29
	Kabete	99,901	664	793	1,457	63	23
	Kiambaa	60,425	309	591	900	60	15
	Lari	20,592	786	1,218	2,004	74	27
	Limuru	43,135	757	931	1,688	68	25
	Totals	759,216	14,536	19,261	33,797	1,251	27

To enhance partnerships and networking, we held discussions with key stakeholders in the province that play important supporting roles in the program implementation. These stakeholders included the provincial administration, MoYAS and MoGCSD. This was aimed at building confidence among the youth and stakeholders while changing the thinking of others about the program.

Mercy Corps' mentorship program continued to involve Bunge members on civic issues that included development of advocacy plans, resource mapping and action plans. During the quarter, 503 Bunges developed action plans to influence their community and local government decision making. We conducted a training needs assessment on the county boards in various aspects of leadership, resource mobilization, good governance and media engagement, as well as civic education. Through advocacy campaigns, Bunges are able to influence the duty bearers on resource allocation to youth programs and accountability of public funds, among other issues. We are currently assisting USAID/EY to conduct a major campaign in all the counties for youth who do not have identity cards to register ahead of the general elections.

To increase youth employability, livelihoods and income, we rolled out entrepreneurship trainings in four districts in Juja and Gatanga constituencies. The Bunges had previously selected 16 youths as ToTs to determine the appropriateness of the draft curriculum content developed by MCI. Consequently youth Bunge trainings were rolled out in the four targeted districts within Juja and Gatanga constituencies: Thika-West, Thika-East, Ruiru and Gatanga. This quarter, 2,311 youth were trained, bringing the total trained to 2,628.

Initial results indicate that the Bunges trained have highly appreciated the depth and quality of material delivered by the trainers and the practical, action-oriented approach to its delivery. The trainings have enabled youth to write business plans for purposes of securing business grants under the YYC-C regional award and reinforced the skills of those already engaged in small business. These business plans are being reviewed for support. A Village Saving and Loaning (VSL) approach, which is a simple and inexpensive community microfinance methodology, was initiated in order to set the youth on the path of mobilizing, utilizing and accounting for their own resources. The approach is primarily market-driven and run by youth trainers with oversight from Mercy Corps staff. A VSL Training of Trainer's workshop saw an initial 13 youth "Bright Spots" recruited and given an intensive training. The ToTs are working in 13 constituencies directly supervised by Mercy Corps staff and supported with program resources to carry out their work in the first 12 months.

We carried out a gender assessment in Gatundu North, Kigumo, Juja and Maragwa constituencies in Kiambu and Murang'a counties to assess the challenges and opportunities that young women face in accessing economic and political spaces. Focus group discussions were conducted with youth in Bunges and those not in Bunges, as well as elder people. We also conducted a female mentorship forum with young women leaders from the Bunges. The forum targeted 40 young women who are members of the County Boards and the financial review committees. The young women who attended the forum formed a core group that will be critical in carrying out mentorship forums to link female mentors with young women in Bunges. During the International Women's Day (IWD) celebrated on 8th March, whose theme was "connecting girls, inspiring futures", Mercy Corps staff joined young mothers through the Pamoja Dada initiative in Ruiru to celebrate the day. We purchased sanitary pads and baby diapers for the young women and spent three hours sharing with them. The session focused on appreciating womanhood where Mercy Corps staff and the Pamoja Dada young women shared on what they celebrate about being women, or for the males, what they celebrate about women. A total of 20 young women were reached in this forum.

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 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.

To achieve the goal of supporting youth to be agents of positive change in their communities, Mercy Corps and our partners have developed a series of integrated activities that will work toward four objectives:

- 0) mobilization of youth and formation of youth representation structures at the village and county levels;
- 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
Goal: To strengthen the capabilities of youth & youth Bunges in the Central province 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 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;	500,000	53,846	242,255	48.5%
0.2a # of Village Bunges formed and registered	2,000	440	1,251	62.5%
0.2b # of County Forums formed and registered	2	0	2	100%
Objective 1: Support youth to exercise a greater voice in local and national affairs				
Objective 1 Indicator: # of youth Bunges who have action plans in place to influence their community and local government decision making	1,000	503	774	77%
Objective 1 Indicator: Number of youth who attend Bunge meetings	5,000	4,858	23,480	470%
1.2a USAID GJD 4.1: # of youth members of Bunges who have completed USG-assisted civic education training programs	5,000	252	489	9.7%
1.2b # of community service projects implemented by Bunges	500	5	7	1.4%
1.3a # of youth members of Bunges who attend County youth leadership conferences	96	65	156	162%
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.	28	0	0	0%
1.5 # of Bunges involved in youth-led advocacy campaigns targeted towards policy and public investment decisions.	300	38	52	17%
Objective 2: To increase youth productivity, employment opportunities and income				
Objective 2 Indicator: # of Bunge members achieving greater economic independence	625	0	0	0%
2.1a # of young people who participate in comprehensive value chain assessments	40	0	37	93%
2.2a USAID EG 6.3 # of young persons completing USG-funded workforce development programs	2,500	2,311	2,628	105%
2.3a # of youth entrepreneurial groups who develop business plans	80	48	48	60%

2.3b # of small grants issued for microenterprises	50	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	150	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	16	3%
Objective 3: Improve young women's access to political, social and economic opportunities.				
3.1 # of County forums held to disseminate gender assessment findings	4	0	0	0%
3.2a # of public outreach campaigns conducted on the civic engagement and livelihoods	24	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	16	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	10	0	0	0%

B. Program Interventions

Mercy Corps and its partner, YADEN, have worked in a structure where field officers in partnership with youth volunteers and the county boards mobilized and sensitized youths for action. The program approach of youth led, youth owned and youth managed has resulted in youths taking a lead role in forming as well as managing the village Bunges, sourcing for support from various stakeholders to initiate their own activities as well as engaging other players in youth initiatives. This is clearly evidenced by 38 advocacy events that have been initiated by the youth Bunges, with some find support from other stakeholders rather than Mercy Corps. Through the CBF boards and the Bunge leadership, youths have demonstrated some level of leadership which now demands respect from others.

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

Summary of Objective 0 Outcomes
0.1 500,000 youth aware of Yes Youth Can program
0.2 Youth representation structures formed in the Kiambu & Murang'a Counties

Outcome 0.1 500,000 youth aware of Yes Youth Can! – C Program:

During the quarter sensitization meetings were organized by the CBF boards in partnership with Mercy Corps, the provincial administration and the MoYAS. The focus was on areas that had the fewest youths participating under YYC activities through barazas, outreach campaigns, radio shows, sports tournaments, and other youth activities. During such meetings, youth bright spots with leadership and coordination qualities emerged. These youth continued to mobilize fellow youth for the program. During the quarter, Mercy Corps and its partner directly reached a total of 17,816 youth through YYC-C activities, and a further 35,030 more ‘at risk’ youths. This number added to the total number of 33,797 who have joined 1,251 village Bunges formed to date.

Outcome 0.2 Youth representation structures formed in Kiambu & Murang’a County:

The third quarter had seen the formation of the CBF boards after Mercy Corps had organized two County Bunge Forums, bringing together 994 youths from 15 constituencies (537 in Kiambu, 457 in Murang’a). The two boards are independent bodies with elected officials who will serve for one calendar year as stipulated in the CBF constitutions. Through the reporting period, Mercy Corps and partners have enhanced this structure, which has elected its executive office and started discharging duties to the interests of the village Bunges.

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

Summary of Objective 1 Outcomes
1.1 YADEN measurably strengthens organizational capacity
1.2 Youth Bunges actively engaged in civic issues
1.3 Central province youth networked to foster cooperation and understanding
1.5 Youth led advocacy efforts strengthened to influence policy and public investment decisions:

Outcome 1.1 YADEN measurably strengthens organizational capacity

Based on the organizational capacity assessment carried out, specific training needs had been identified for YADEN in strengthening their organizational, finance and sub-grant management. However, despite numerous training sessions and on-the-job mentoring, YADEN as an organization could not take up the challenge in ensuring a youth led, owned and managed program delivery. Hence, Mercy Corps decided to terminate the sub-agreement with the organization. Instead, the focus is on building the capacity of the County Boards as institutions that represent the Bunge structure, and preparing them to take up the roles in readiness for the close-out within an year.

Outcome 1.2 Youth Bunges actively engaged in civic issues

During the fourth quarter, the trained TOTs offered mentorship training to 21 Bunges at village level on asset/resource mapping and action plans, as well as organizing advocacy campaigns on individual Bunge-level issues. The use of TOTs as a strategy was meant to initiate activities that would serve as an entry point for demonstrating youth leadership capabilities as well as engaging with government officials and other stakeholders. This is reflected in the 503 Bunges that have developed action plans while another 38 have initiated advocacy campaigns.

Outcome 1.3 Central province youth networked to foster cooperation and understanding

With the formation of the 1,251 Bunges, youths in Central have been networked in county boards. This is a representative body for all the Bunges formed in each county with a mandate to spearhead Bunge formation and operations in their respective counties. The constitutions of the county boards were created in forums whereby all formed Bunges were represented by two officials. These forums were also able to discuss and adopt the constitutions governing the Bunges in their regions.

To legitimize their work, the Murang'a youth county board has already registered as a CBO at the MoGCSD, while the Kiambu board has registered as an association with the registrar of organizations. These networks have developed their plans and strategies for action at the constituency and county level.

Outcome 1.4 Local government responsiveness to issues important to youth increased

Mercy Corps held a meeting with the Provincial Commissioner and other provincial and district heads to share the gains realized in the province, discuss ways to promote youth participation, and address challenges in program implementation. This has increased the recognition and acceptance of the youth structures formed and addressing socio-political concerns that youths express. The youth Bunges have established their interaction with the government offices evidenced by participation of the officers in youth led meetings and advocacy campaigns.

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

In the fourth quarter, youth Bunges organized 38 advocacy events involving a total of roughly 4,340 youths. Youths' advocacy has attracted the attention of community members as well as the local media, since they have managed to involve a number of stakeholders such as the provincial administration, district youth officers, area councilors and, in case of health issues like Ihiga-ini youth Bunge's campaign, staff of the sub-district hospital in the area. Most of these advocacy events also serve as opportunities to increase the number of youth in the village Bunge as well as form new Bunges in adjacent villages.

Of great importance is how village Bunge's engagement in civic issues has assisted in changing of the negative perception most of the older generations have of the youth. A good case is where village Bunges in Mugoiri and Murarandia division of Kiharu constituency organized an advocacy event on "My ID My Life" campaign. The main objectives of the event included encouraging youth who are 18 years and over, but have not applied for IDs, to take the initiative. General awareness of the significance/importance of the youths to have an identity card was disseminated. A total of 199 youth from village Bunges of the above division participated in the forum and, in a period of a week, 599 IDs out of the 641 IDs were collected. Most of the youths without IDs requested the relevant authorities to facilitate, availing of the forms closer to the youth, at the chief's office.

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

Summary of Objective 2 Outcomes

2.1 Comprehensive labor market, youth skills 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 Market, youth skills and value chain assessments

A comprehensive youth-led labor market and youth skills assessment was carried out during June 2011, and a draft report became available in October 2011. The report was finalized and submitted to USAID in January 2012. We have disseminated the findings during two stakeholders forum held during the reporting period.

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

The 16 Youth Economic Empowerment Trainers (YEETs) recruited and trained by Mercy Corps using the Making Cents International-developed “Rise-up, Lift Yourself with Business & Life Skills” curriculum undertook trainings in the four targeted districts within Juja and Gatanga constituencies: Thika-West, Thika-East, Ruiru and Gatanga. A total of 1,800 youths were trained and equipped in various aspects of small business start-up and management. According to evaluation feedback that we normally receive at the end of each training, participants have highly appreciated the depth and quality of material delivered by the trainers. An evaluation of the impact the trainings have had among the youth will be carried out in the course of the new program year beginning April, 2012.

Summary of 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.

We also organized the first agribusiness forum in partnership with the Kenya Horticulture Competitiveness Program (KHCP), where the KHCP partners show-cased their activities to representatives of various youth Bunges. The aim of the partnership is to link youth Bunges already trained in entrepreneurship to opportunities in agriculture and business along the flower, dairy, passion fruit, and banana value chains.

Outcome 2.3 Youth income increased through micro and small enterprise development

In the course of rolling out business skills training, Mercy Corps program staff were able to incorporate business planning as a module. This helped the youth to write business plans for purposes of securing business grants under the YYC-C regional award. The training also had the effect of reinforcing the skills of those already engaged in small business.

Additionally, youth Bunges were able to identify possible businesses enterprises through resource-mapping activities. Most applications revolve around agri-business (services, horticulture and poultry). A total of 48 business plans were received and reviewed with 20 short-listed for further scrutiny and subsequent funding in the next quarter.

In this quarter, the program was able to liaise with the YYC National program to look at the possibility of carrying out two youth trade fairs in Kiambu and Murang'a Counties. Plans are already afoot with Kiambu being the first one. A youth planning team under the direction from YYC-N staff is already on the ground preparing for the mid-April 2012 event.

Towards the end of the quarter, an agri-business forum bringing together various actors in the FINTRAC-managed Kenya Horticulture Competitiveness Project (KHCP) was also planned for and carried out in Thika Town. The event brought together KHCP partners, Mercy Corps, the Murang'a and Kiambu County Board members, and other youth Bunge representatives. Mercy Corps was able to share the YYC profile as the KHCP partners shared more information on existing agricultural value-chains that the youth could participate in. It was also an opportunity for the youth to have Q&A sessions regarding the value chains on offer. The idea and planning for this activity was triggered by a real crucial need several USAID-funded programs had for youth participation that was not easy to come across. It is hoped that quite a number of youth Bunges will be linked with these and other organizations and individuals that can help them improve production, obtain and expand markets, develop skills, gain experience, and more.

In response to the need for enhanced youth participation, Mercy Corps initiated a Village Savings and Loans (VSL) sub-component in all the 15 constituencies falling under the two counties of Murang'a and Kiambu. This began with a Mercy Corps program staff training where 13 participants went through a VSL orientation. This was quickly followed by Youth VSL Training of Trainer's workshop that saw 13 youth bright-spots being given an intensive training. They will work in 13 constituencies and will be directly supervised by Mercy Corps staff and supported with program resources to carry out their work in the first 12 months. It is expected that VSL will become a major economic empowerment strategy to mobilize local resources, hold most of the youth Bunges together, and create a platform for future programming.

Outcome 2.4 Youth obtain employment in the public and private sectors

During the quarter, Mercy Corps made contacts with key stakeholder organizations with the intent of hosting a major employers' forum in the month of April or May 2012. Among them, the Thika and Ruiru Chambers of Commerce were contacted and offered support through their chairperson. The planned event will bring together the key actors in the formal education, vocational training, private sector, civil society and other related sectors for two purposes. First, Mercy Corps will disseminate the Labor Market and Youth Skills Assessment Report. Second,

the event will create a platform for soliciting support to provide qualified youth with opportunities in attachments, apprenticeships, internships, job placements and the like. We are strongly of the opinion that this activity combined, with the life skills knowledge shared by the 16 YEETs with youth Bunge members in the two constituencies of Juja and Gatanga, has increased their employable skills. We expect that placements will start in the month of April 2012 and expect to see an initial group of 60 youth linked to employers.

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

Summary of Objective 3 Outcomes
3.1 Gender assessment completed to identify challenges and opportunities for young women
3.2 Community understanding increased of importance of female education, literacy and civic engagement
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

Outcome 3.1 Gender assessment completed to identify challenges and opportunities for young women.

A gender assessment was carried out in January 2012. Four constituencies were sampled in Kiambu and Murang’a counties in order to cater for rural and urban/semi-urban populations within the predominantly rural area. The assessment was carried out in Gatundu North, Kigumo, Juja and Maragwa Constituencies. Focus group discussions were conducted with youth in Bunges and those not in Bunges, as well as elder people and community leaders, to assess the challenges and opportunities that young women face in accessing of economic and political spaces. The data analysis is currently in progress.

Outcome 3.2 Young women in village Bunges mentored by female role models on economic opportunities

During the last quarter, we engaged two female mentors and held a two-day mentorship forum with young women leaders from the Bunges. The forum targeted 40 young women who are members of the County Boards and the financial review committees. The young women interacted with two female mentors who are leaders in various fields. Some of the issues that were addressed included the challenges young women face in accessing leadership and entrepreneurship as well as the contribution of sexual and reproductive health of young women to this. The young women who were reached in the forum formed a core group that will be critical in carrying out mentorship forums to link female mentors with young women in Bunges. More forums will be held in the first and second quarters of the year. Young women will be linked with female mentors from their communities who will mentor them on economic engagement and leadership. The young women will identify role models from their communities who have made impacts in entrepreneurship, leadership and other public roles.

The International Women’s Day (IWD) is a global event celebrated on 8th March. The theme for this year's IWD was “connecting girls, inspiring futures”. In celebrating this day, Mercy Corps staff joined young mothers through the Pamoja Dada initiative in Ruiru. We purchased sanitary pads and baby diapers for the young women and spent three hours sharing with them. The

session focused on appreciating womanhood. Mercy Corps staff and the Pamoja Dada young women shared on what they celebrate about being women, or for the males, what they celebrate about women. A total of 20 young women were reached in this forum.

3.3 Community understanding increased of importance of female education, literacy and civic engagement

During the implementation of the YYC objectives, the importance of female education, literacy and civic engagement has been addressed. The linkage between literacy and civic engagement has been noted by the youth and community members. Education and exposure have been noted to contribute to the young women's confidence in accessing public spaces and hence engage in civic duties, including community leadership.

III. Constraints and Challenges

- The suspicion from the political class and local administration has been a challenge. Most politicians perceive YYC as inciting youths against them and other leaders. However the popularity of YYC among the youth has left politicians with no option but attempting to infiltrate through their networks.
- An underdeveloped information feedback mechanism was the main constraint in this quarter as most of the village Bunge activities taking place on the ground were not reported. Mercy Corps will address this by having community-based field officers and engaging the constituency representatives in a number of constituencies to facilitate linkage and sharing of information between the beneficiaries, stakeholders and implementing partners.
- Most Bunges are willing to register their Bunges but it actually takes time for youths to collect registration fees from the members.
- The Bunge concept has not been realized in some constituencies like Kiambaa, where youth still have a "wait and see" attitude, so thus far very few Bunges have been formed.
- Managing the partner (YADEN), who was adamant in using the YYC strategy in implementation, was not easy. This led to termination of the agreement at the end of March.
- The program description and budget for year two is still awaiting approval from USAID.

IV. Lessons Learned

- The handout culture is so widespread in the region, sometimes bringing YYC into conflict with youth expectations.
- There is a need to diversify activities of the youth Bunges so as to reduce the likelihood of group disintegration. We need to engage Bunges in advocacy activities, community service projects and investment projects, all at the same time. This will give a chance to all members of a village Bunge with diverse talents to participate in YYC.
- Mobilizing youth into Bunges in Central province was not as easy as it had been anticipated. This is because youth have been disillusioned in the past by people who wanted to organize them for their own gains. It thus requires a lot of confidence building among the youth while

making them appreciate the gains of coming together and exploring the opportunities that are open to them.

- Youth and youth networks from Nyeri and Kirinyaga counties have consistently requested for expansion into their counties. YYC-C is considering taking the program to one of the counties if funds are availed by the donor.

V. Planned activities for next period of three months, April- June, 2012.

Mobilization of youth to form Village Bunges and increase their membership will continue, targeting an additional 400 new Bunges. During this period, the CBFs will be strengthened to ensure mobilization of more youths and strengthening of the Bunge activities. Mercy Corps will concentrate on supporting advocacy campaigns, the community grants, and enterprise small grants, as well as increasing young women’s opportunities to benefit from YYC. We will work with the county board structure to ensure equitable mobilization across all constituencies.

The Bunges will continue with civic engagement, mentoring issues in their localities, and attending public forums and policy meetings. The advocacy and community projects identified through their resource mapping that are viable will be funded on a first-come-first-served basis, while the rest will be funded by YYC-N.

On increasing youth productivity, employment opportunities, and income, the rollout trainings for life skills and entrepreneurship will continue in the four focus districts. We will also upscale VSL trainings to Bunges. We aim at seeing increased productivity, market access, skill acquisition, and more. In addition we will also be giving Bunge enterprise grants from the business plan competition and placing the first group of Bunge members in internships/apprenticeships.

Gender assessment analysis will be completed and the dissemination of findings will be in the next quarter. Young women’s mentorship in civic engagement, leadership and enterprise development will continue in the next quarter, along with outreach campaigns on issues that hinder women’s participation in the Bunges.

Next Quarter Work plan				
Activities	Responsible	April	May	June
Project Administration, M&E and close-out				
Annual workplans	COP			
Financial reports	COP			
Quarterly Report	COP			
Annual Reports	COP			
Environmental compliance of community grants	M&E			
Objective 0: Form youth representation bodies at village and county levels				
Outcome 0.1: 500,000 youth aware of YYC program				
Host public fora	CES			
Outreach campaigns by CBF boards and village Bunges on YYC	PO, FO, CBF			
Develop stories and use of local media	CBF, COMM			

Outcome 0.2: Youth representation structures formed in Kiambu and Murang'a Counties				
Formation and Registration of youth Bunges and CBFs	CES, PO, CBF			
Resource mapping and action plans by village Bunges and CBF boards	CES, PO, FO			
Objective 1: Support youth to exercise a greater voice in local and national affairs				
Outcome 1.1: Local Partners' Capacity strengthened				
Joint County board meeting for action plan development	GTS, PM, CBF			
Training plan implemented with CBF boards and Bunges	CES, PM			
Outcome 1.2: Youth Bunges actively engaged in civic issues				
My ID my Life campaign and voter registration supported by youth Bunges and CBFs	CES, CBF			
Youth Bunges civic engagement training	CES, CBF			
Community service campaigns led by youth groups	CES, FO			
Grassroot Soccer training and works with CBF boards to implement the Healthy Behavior curriculum	CES, CBF			
Outcome 1.4: Local government responsiveness to issues important to youth increased				
Meeting with ministry of Youth and of Gender officials	PM, CES			
Public forums with government partners and CBFs/ young Bunges	PM, CES			
Public planning meetings organized to enhance youth participation	PM, CES			
Outcome 1.5: Youth-led advocacy efforts strengthened to influence policy and public investment decisions				
Youth led advocacy campaigns implemented by Bunges/CBFs	CES, PO, FO			
Outcome 1.6: Community investment fund/Micro grants program				
Community projects proposals reviewed	PO, FO, CES			
Environmental compliance clearance for grant proposals	COP			
Community grants disbursed and monitored	CES, PM			
Objective 2: Increase youth productivity, employment opportunities, and income				
Outcome 2.1: Youth engage in existing value chains and village savings and loans roll out				
YVTs recruiting and supporting Bunges to adopt VSL	STA, PO			
VSL being utilized as a strategy to enhance more Bunge-formation	STA, PO			
Outcome 2.2: Youth employability increased through life/job skills and entrepreneurship training				
Life-Skills training	STA, PO			
Entrepreneurship training	STA, PO			
Outcome 2.3: Youth income increased through micro and small enterprise development				
Business plans and grant applications	STA, PO			
Grant application evaluations	STA, PO			
Small grants issued to youth enterprises	STA, PO			
Outcome 2.4: Youth obtain employment in the public and private sectors				
Apprenticeship programs negotiated with employers	STA, PM, PO			
Stakeholders forums conducted with potential employers	STA, PM, PO			
Youth centers provide career counseling	STA, PM, PO			
Youth linked to USAID and other donor programs	STA, PM, PO			
Youth working with existing agricultural value-chains for economic gains	STA, PM, PO			
Outcome 3.1: Central gender assessment completed to identify challenges and opportunities for young women				
Youth reached in validation workshop for gender assessment	GTS, youth			
Findings of assessment shared with stakeholders	GTS, M&E			
Outcome 3.2: Community understanding increased of importance of civic engagement and enterprises				
Advocacy initiatives by young women in Bunges	CES, GTS, CBF			
Outcome 3.3: Young women champions engaged to work with young female Bunge members on economic empowerment				

Young women per constituency identified to plan for mentorship forums	GTS/PO/CBF			
Mentors identified in 3 constituencies	GTS, PO/CBF			
Mentors identified in 4 constituencies	GTS, CBF			
Mentorship forums in 3 constituencies	GTS, CBF			
Mentorship forums in 4 constituencies	GTS, CBF			
Outcome 3.4: Young women develop leadership and advocacy skills				
Identify stories for story telling activity	GTS, CBF			

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

Outcome 0.1: 500,000 youth aware of Yes Youth Can program

Mercy Corps will continue to raise the awareness amongst youth of the Yes Youth Can program in partnership with the formed CBF boards. The CBF boards and village Bunges will organize outreach campaigns based on their developed communication strategies. In addition, we will host quarterly stakeholder forums to explain the program to potential new participants. We will continue to encourage youth representatives to constantly explain the program to their youth networks and develop a cadre of youth ambassadors to add to those from year one, who will go to new youth Bunges to explain Yes Youth Can. We will support outreach campaigns using sports and theatre, organized by village Bunges to recruit more youth. The quarterly CBF board meetings will review their communication strategy for recruiting more youth and reach out to constituencies or regions with few youth in Bunges. Youth representatives will also use the local FM stations to recruit youth who are not in Bunges. Organized events like church services, weddings and funerals will serve as mobilization platforms.

Outcome 0.2: Youth representation structures formed in the 2 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 1,251 village Bunges.

These village Bunges and CBF boards have become important partners for Yes Youth Can. 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 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: Local partners' organizational capacity strengthened

The Kiambu and Murang'a CBF boards were constituted in December 2011 with an aim of coordinating Bunge activities in their respective regions. The board members, drawn from

grassroots village Bunges, have limited skills in areas like group development, civic engagement, resource mapping, resource mobilization and others. From the training needs assessment done, key gaps were identified including leadership and governance, resource mobilization, strategic planning and civic engagement. Therefore, during the next quarter, we will embark on specific trainings geared towards building the capacities of the CBFs to bridge these gaps. This will enable the CBFs to cope with the increasing needs of the village bunges for support and guidance.

Outcome 1.2: Youth Bunges actively engaged in civic issues

YYC-C 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, besides helping form a national Kenyan identity—all of which help to counter negative and violent influences. The TOTs who were trained in year one will be supported to roll out Bunge trainings to sensitize Bunges on other civic engagement trainings from a range of options, including healthy behaviors, peace building, negotiation and communication, volunteerism, democracy and governance, and advocacy, with support from Grassroots Soccer. As part of the training, village Bunges will conduct advocacy campaigns to put their new skills to use as well as raise their profile in their communities.

As the country gears towards the general elections, there are over six million youth without identity cards across the country. In collaboration with the national registration bureau, youth will use the village Bunges to rally their fellow youth without IDs to register, and those who have registered, to collect their IDs. They will have ready registration packs and distribute them to where the youth are as opposed to youth walking long distances to seek the registration materials. After registration they will roll out the voter registration campaign to ensure that youth will make their political choices heard through the ballot.

Outcome 1.3: Central youth networked to foster cooperation and understanding

With the two CBF boards in place, Mercy Corps will work with the youth structure to enhance networking and coordination of Bunge activities. One of the key activities for the CBF is to strengthen the youth network in the region. Mercy Corps will support the CBFs to hold constituency meetings to recruit and verify CBF membership. All formed bunges will be required to register and subscribe to the CBFs for better coordination and promotion of the youth agenda in Central province.

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 YYC-C program we will continue to engage the local government officials to address youth issues. Mercy Corps will conduct regular meetings with government officials informing them of Yes Youth Can activities and explaining the benefits of youth and government working together especially under the new constitution. During the next quarter, Mercy Corps will organize a stakeholder forum that will bring all the relevant

government line ministries together with CBF officials to discuss their support to youth activities and involvement in implementing youth projects in the region. We will also encourage youth to attend public planning meetings to influence the allocation of government resources, such as the Local Authority Transfer Fund, Youth Enterprise Development Fund, Women Enterprise Fund, and the Constituency Development Fund.

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 constituency and county representatives to utilize the advocacy skills developed under Outcome 1.3. Individual Bunges and CBF boards will identify and develop advocacy campaigns at grassroots and county levels, and will use these to access the advocacy kitty from Mercy Corps.

Outcome 1.6: Community Investment Fund/Micro-Grants Program

We will support the formed village Bunges to implement projects that support community initiatives that not only define the roles of the youths at the community level but also offer income opportunities for Bunge members. So far, seven community service projects have been approved for support by Mercy Corps and will be funded in the next quarter. All village Bunges implementing these grants have involved other stakeholders and the community for impact and sustainability of the projects. Additional requests have also been received and will be reviewed, with the viable projects supported during the next quarter.

Objective 2: Increase youth productivity, employment opportunities and income

Outcome 2.1: Youth engage in existing value chains and roll out of Village Savings and Loans in 15 constituencies

The labor market and youth skills gaps assessments were completed in year one with outcomes used to reshape the program. Starting in 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.

In Marcy 2012, Mercy Corps recruited and trained 15 youth ambassadors to support the roll-out of Village Savings and Loans (VSL) on a pilot basis within the 15 constituencies of Kiambu and Murang'a counties. Youth in Central province are generally entrepreneurial and at times held back by inadequate financial resources. VSL is intended to support resource mobilization among youths, both for personal consumptive and business use. It is planned that a total of 6,240 youth, translating to about 208 groups, will be reached through this innovation in the quarter.

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

The “Rise-up, Lift Yourself with Business & Life Skills” training is still ongoing among youth Bunges. Youth Economic Empowerment Trainers are scheduled to increase their outputs to reach between 600 and 800 youth trained per month. The objective is to reach a minimum of 2,500 youth with entrepreneurship skills, but it is clear that we will surpass that target.

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

So far we have received 48 applications from a call for applications for group/Bunge-based business start-up grants of approximately \$ 500-\$1,000. Plans will be processed and disbursed in the next quarter. The potential grantees 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. We will provide feedback to those Bunges that were unsuccessful and link them to other funding options, such as financial institutions with youth-friendly products, the Yes Youth National Tahidi Youth Fund, the USAID-funded FIRM project, and government funding including the Youth Enterprise Development Fund, the Women Enterprise Fund, and the Constituency Development Fund. After additional youths successfully complete the entrepreneurship training, a second call will be made in the first quarter of year 2.

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 April 2012, we will have our first stakeholder forum to bring together all interest groups in the formal education, vocational training, corporate business, agri-business, civil society and other sectors in Central province. A key highlight of the forum will be the dissemination of the Labor Market & Youth Skills Assessment Report.

As a result of the forum, it is expected that opportunities in apprenticeships, internships, and attachments will be generated for the youth. Discussions with key informants are already afoot. Additionally, and as outputs from the assessment report, we will identify industries and institutions looking to expand, especially in the industrial town of Thika and farms around Kiambu and Murang’a where added workforce is needed. We will negotiate placements for youth. The first group of apprentices will be placed in May 2012 after the stakeholder forum. At the same time, 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. It is expected that a total of 150 youth will be linked to agricultural value chains and for formal employments. A database for potential linkages is being finalized.

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

Outcome 3.1: Central gender assessment completed to identify challenges and opportunities for young women

In February 2012, Mercy Corps conducted a gender assessment to identify the impacts of the post-election violence on relations between women and men, and specific constraints facing young women in participating in economic and civic activities. The assessment included a literature review and field work in sampled constituencies including key informant interviews and focus group discussions with female and male youth, and adults to understand the specific issues in Central province that affect young women's involvement in civil society, local decision-making, and economic activities. The assessment was youth-led, with young women and young men collecting and keying in the data. In April 2012 we will commence the data analysis and generate a report in the month of May 2012. We will hold forums with the youth to validate the data in the month of April. After the report is completed, we will also hold forums with youth and other stakeholders to disseminate and receive community reflection in the months of May and June.

Outcome 3.2: Community understanding increased of importance of female education, literacy, and civic engagement

Linked to the Community Service Projects under Outcome 1.2, we will mentor young women to develop advocacy initiatives led by young women and men to highlight the importance of education, literacy, civic engagement, sexual and reproductive health, and employment of women. Additionally, to improve young women's ability to engage in civic activities, we will work to improve young women's literacy. Through their village Bunges, young women will be supported with advocacy grants to raise awareness on female education and other issues that would influence young women's participation in leadership and community projects.

Outcome 3.3: Young women champions engaged to work with young female Bunge members on economic empowerment

Mercy Corps, in collaboration with Bunge leaders and CBF boards, will identify approximately 6-8 women from each of the 15 constituencies to mentor Yes Youth Can young women in Bunges on economic empowerment. Young women will participate in identifying the mentors within their constituencies, planning for the forums, and mobilizing at least 50 young women from each constituency to participate in the forums. We will engage with the mentors on how to share their skills and reflect regularly with each other and Yes Youth Can project staff. The young women who participate in the forums will further share the insights with other young women in their bunges and organize for similar forums at their levels.

Outcome 3.4: Young women develop leadership and advocacy skills.

This activity is not planned for the next quarter. However, the mentorship forums will be used to start identifying possible stories for the story telling. Advocacy and leadership skills will be addressed in the mentorship forums