

**YES YOUTH CAN! NORTH EASTERN REGION
(YYC! NER) PROJECT, KENYA**

QUALITATIVE STUDY REPORT

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Acronyms

AGM	Annual General Meeting
CBF	County Board Forum
CBO	Community based organization
CVE	Countering violent extremism
EDC	Education Development Center
ExCom	Executive Committee
FGD	Focus group discussion
G-Youth	Garissa Youth (project)
ID	Identification
IGA	Income generating activities
KS	Kenyan Schillings
NGO	Non-government organization
M&E	Monitoring & Evaluation
NEP TTI	North East Provincial Technical Training Institute
NYBA	National Youth Bunge Association
SACCO	Savings and Credit Cooperative
ToT	Training of trainers
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
YYC!	Yes Youth Can! (Program)
YYC! NER	Yes Youth Can! North Eastern Region (Project)

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Yes Youth Can! North Eastern Region (YYC! NER) project was implemented by Education Development Center (EDC) in the three Kenyan counties of Garissa, Wajir and Mandera from March 2013 to January 2016. The project's goal was to promote peace and prosperity by empowering youth and; to aid youth to play an active, peaceful and positive role in their communities by creating economic and social opportunities. YYC! NER was part of the USAID funded national Yes Youth Can! (YYC!) program (2011 – 2015) that empowered Kenyan youth to expand their economic opportunities, contribute to their communities and become responsible members of society. YYC! NER also served as the third phase of the USAID funded Garissa Youth (G-Youth) project (2008 - 2013), which was implemented in Garissa municipality.¹ The G-Youth project engaged youth in career development, livelihood, civic participation activities and empowered youth to design and lead initiatives to improve their economic opportunities.

The YYC! NER project mobilized youth to form bungenes (Kiswahili for parliament). These youth bungenes democratically elected leaders, who in turn formed a County Board Forum (CBF) in each of the three counties. Each CBF in turn developed work plans to implement activities (sports tournaments, helping youth get IDs, managing scholarships, providing trainings on small businesses and peace issues, relaying social and health information etc.) for local youth and also carried out some community projects.

YYC! NER thus built the organizational and management capacity of CBFs to oversee youth activities and community projects; empowered youth with income generating activities (IGA), leadership, peace building, health etc. trainings; enabled youth to conduct various IGA and small businesses; provided scholarships; developed Somali-language radio programs (on issues such as peacebuilding, religion, health etc.) and; began Savings and Credit Cooperatives (SACCOs) in each of the three project counties where youth could make savings and apply to get matching loans.

YYC! NER Performance indicators

YYC! NER had the following three objectives encompassing various performance indicators, which were all met or exceeded with two exceptions.

Mobilize and empower youth to organize themselves to address their priorities and needs:

- Approximately 24,500 youth bunge members (surpassing the target of 23,000) attended events that were geared towards strengthening understanding and mitigation conflict between groups

¹ The YYC! NER served as the third phase of the G-Youth project when USAID asked EDC to join the national YYC! program and to change the third phases' name (from G-Youth to YYC! NER). The first two phases of the G-Youth project, however, were not connected to the national YYC! program & also did not cover Wajir and Mandera.

- Approximately 17,000 youth bunge members and some community members (surpassing the target of 11,000) attended events, training, or activities designed to build mass support for peace and reconciliation
- Approximately 695,000 youth and other inhabitants were reached through public information campaigns (radio programs) to support peaceful resolutions
- CBFs were formed in Garissa, Wajir and Mandera and they all received assistance to carry out activities for youth
- The target of 3 elections for the CBF over the duration of the project was surpassed as five elections were held (2 each in Garissa and Wajir and 1 in Mandera)
- As a result of these 5 elections the target of 90 youth holding leadership positions in the CBF was surpassed as 150 youth held leadership positions in the three CBFs (60 each in both Garissa and Wajir and 30 in Mandera)
- The target of 3 county level work plans developed was surpassed as 5 work plans were developed (2 each in both Garissa and Wajir and 1 in Mandera)

Support youth to implement work plans that reflect their expressed priorities:

- 485 youth (instead of the targeted 500) in bunges got scholarships
- 169 youth in bunges (surpassing the target of 150) got specific short term agricultural sector productivity or food security training
- Approximately 3,800 youth in bunges (surpassing the target of 200) started small businesses or recollected that they had better employment at the end of the project as compared to when the project commenced
- 3 SACCOs were formed in Garissa, Wajir and Mandera
- Approximately 1000 SACCO members (surpassing a target of 350) from the 3 SACCOs got trained on financial issues and some of these members got loans

Strengthen youth's voice on priority issues to combat extremism through youth radio:

- 144 radio programs were produced
- 24 youth (instead of the targeted 30) were trained to produce these programs

Mobilization of Youth to Form Bunges

The main issue facing youth in the North Eastern region of Kenya pertains to unemployment. As educated and uneducated youth are not able to find jobs they develop a lack of direction, focus and confidence in their future. This state of mind is further compounded by issues of poverty and, in some cases, drug and alcohol abuse. In this scenario youth are also susceptible to radicalization as terrorist groups in neighboring Somalia are very active. In this type of scenario the YYC! NER project was therefore greatly welcomed by youth and the community in the three counties.

The data obtained for this study clearly demonstrates that the YYC! NER was successful in reaching vulnerable youth in the three counties of Garissa, Wajir and Mandera and in mobilizing them to organize themselves into bunges; leading to the elections of active and functional CBFs in all three counties. However, security issues in the North Eastern region, the Presidential elections of 2013 and delays in registration of the bunges by the county government in Garissa did delay the mobilization process, in all three counties, beyond the project's planned timeframe.

Over the three year period of the project 1229 bunges were registered but the activeness of all these bunges, however, is difficult to ascertain. This scenario, however, was not unexpected as the YYC! NER project did not carry out any direct activities with the bunges themselves; as all activities were done through the CBFs. Therefore the project staff were reliant on the CBFs to get updated information on the bunges; while also relying on the volition of each bunge's leadership for providing accurate and updated data on their activities (via a bunge tracker form that they had to provide to the project staff and update quarterly). Nonetheless, the bunges that remained active during the project timeframe *mainly* comprised the following,

- Bunges that had a pro-active leadership
- CBF members bunges
- Bunges that were involved in small business activities
- Bunges that were involved in community activities
- Bunges that had received structured IGA and peace trainings
- Bunges whose members were pooling ideas to plan to start a small business
- Bunges that had regular meetings for members
- Bunges that did not lose members

Benefits of YYC! NER Project Activities

The data gathered for this study clearly demonstrates that the project activities reflected youth priorities and benefitted them. The establishment of the CBFs and the organizational capacity building of the CBF members enabled these nodal bodies to oversee the bunge system in their counties, conduct activities for youth, demonstrate leadership and establish a platform to address youth issues within the community. The YYC! NER also provided management, financial, leadership, peacebuilding, IGA etc. trainings to CBF members, who then in a structured manner acted as master trainers to provide IGA and peace trainings to youth in bunges. Trainings in other topics were also provided to youth in bunges, but they were not as structured; though many youth benefitted from them in getting informed about health and social issues etc.

The result of the IGA trainings as well as the ability of the youth to connect with other youth in their bunges to discuss business ideas led to some small businesses being conceived and implemented by the youth themselves. As a result some youth did small businesses in the areas of livestock rearing, farming, poultry, bakeries, setting up kiosks and shops etc. thereby being able to generate incomes. Further the end line survey implemented by EDC also demonstrated

that thousands of youth recollected that the state of their employment was better at the end of the project as compared to when the project commenced.

One of the most popular activity of the YYC! NER project was the scholarships and hundreds of youth were able to continue studying, to obtain diplomas and to attend vocational institutions as a result of these scholarships. Select youth were trained in media, journalism and radio production; and these youth then produced 144 radio programs (broadcast over a private radio channel and a community radio channel in the North East region) that addressed topics pertaining to youth, while also advocating for issues of peace. Further, hundreds of SACCO members from the three SACCOs were provided financial training; and the three SACCO were also successful in giving out 14 standard loans and 60 Coca-Cola loans (to sell Coca-Cola products) by the end of the project.

Male and female youth participants benefitted equally from the project. Female youth leadership was also ensured as certain number of leadership positions in the bunges and CBFs had to female. However, in general, there were more male than female members in bunges. The role of the community and the local government also varied based on the region and the activity. The community leaders and local government were both involved in the shareholders forums which kick started the youth mobilization process. Subsequently, however, the community leaders and members were more involved with the bunges and CBFs; and community and religious leaders also took part in trainings of youth and mentored them.

Impact of the YYC! NER Project

The YYC! NER project also had a significant impact as

- Youth were empowered as they realized they could do things on their own to address their needs & hope was created that youth problems could be tackled by youth groups
- The status quo was changed as youth created a space and platform through which they could advocate for their needs
- Being part of bunges led to enhanced social interaction among youth.
- Youth avoided idleness, got knowledge and awareness and harnessed their skills for their own benefit
- Youth leadership emerged and there was recognition of this leadership by the community and local government
- Relations between youth and their communities improved
- A harmonious and peaceful unity was created among the youth from different clans, tribes and regions
- Youth learnt about and practiced democratic methods and ideals
- Participation in bunges and in various youth activities & interacting with the community and religious leaders' dissuaded youth from becoming radicalized

- A structure was established through the bunge system which the community, religious leaders and the county government could make use of to reach youth to further promote peace and security
- The project empowered youth and the community to talk more openly about violent extremism and radicalization

Differences between Garissa and Wajir in the YYC! NER Project

This study assessed the performance of the YYC! NER project in Garissa and Wajir as field visits did not take place in Mandera. When assessing the performance of the project in these two counties the study data demonstrates that the benefits from the project activities and the project impact was similar in both counties. However there were key differences including,

- A certain youth structure already existed in Garissa municipality due to the G-Youth project that the YYC! NER project incorporated and benefitted from. Further, due to the history of the success of the G-Youth project many youth in Garissa County were eager to join the YYC! NER project.
- As the mobilization of youth to form bungenes began in Garissa and then spread to Wajir (and Mandera), the project had a longer timeframe of operation in Garissa as compared to Wajir (and Mandera). Hence the CBF in Garissa had more time to become operational.
- Community leaders and members knew about and had participated in the G-Youth project in Garissa municipality so it was easier to bring them on board for the YYC! NER project.

Revisiting the G-Youth Project

The YYC! NER project was significantly different from the G-Youth project as it followed many features of the national YYC! program. Some of the main differences included,

- The YYC! NER project was more logistically challenging as it covered three counties and required a lot of time to put a structures in place to hold meetings for youth, to reach remote youth etc. This project due to its geographical range also faced more security issues and uncertainties, which did not exist in the same scale in the G-Youth project.
- The YYC! NER project reached youth in towns and villages but the G-Youth project only covered Garissa municipality and thus hardly targeted rural illiterate youth.
- EDC directly implemented activities in the G-Youth project. In the YYC! NER project, however, EDC did not have any partners and all youth activities were conducted through the CBFs and the bunge system, who served as partners and beneficiaries.
- The G-Youth project had career support activities which the YYC! NER project did not.
- The role of the role of the community was more defined in the G-Youth project. The YYC! NER project worked with the community during the mobilization process, however, after this phase it was up to the CBFs and the bungenes to work with and build relationships with the community.

Other data obtained by the study demonstrated the long term impact of the G-Youth project nearly four years after it ended. This included,

- Youth who built their leadership skills and benefitted from the G-Youth activities got into politics and ran for county assembly elections. Some current members in the county assembly in Garissa are products of the G-Youth project.
- Some youth still run business in Garissa after benefitting from the skills, information and entrepreneurship trainings they received
- The skills and information youth got from their leadership and ICT trainings are still useful
- Those youth who received scholarships were able to complete their education and get diplomas and those that did vocational trainings were able to get jobs.
- Youth started thinking about their future, stopped being idle and became less susceptible to certain vices (such as alcohol and drugs)
- Youth were empowered and continue to feel empowered

YYC! NER Project Challenges

The YYC! NER project had some challenges and these included,

- The security situation in North Eastern Kenya delayed the project's activities and hindered reaching out to youth in certain areas. Further, distances between remote villages was a logistical challenge during the initial mobilization of youth
- The project targeted urban/rural and educated/uneducated youth across the three counties. Thus the CBFs in some cases had illiterate members, members who lived in very remote areas and members who could not speak the same language. This diverse composition of the CBF membership led to delays in the development of the CBFs work plans
- The CBFs do not have any source of definitive future funding after the project ends.
- Some youth assumed that they would be financially compensated from joining bungenes
- The SACCOs faced distrust of youth who thought they were not sharia compliant; members had low savings; there were difficulties in getting guarantors for loans and; there is a lack of future plans
- The transfer of pertinent officials addressing the youth portfolio in the local county governments hindered the building of long term relations

YYC! NER Project Recommendations

The data obtained for the study includes some pertinent recommendations such as,

- While religious and community leaders did engage with youth on issues of violent extremism and radicalization during meetings and trainings; the presence of religious leaders (sheikhs) to be constantly and consistently involved with any project that addresses these issues is also required

- The youth in the North Eastern region are diverse thus there is a need to demarcate youth based on their specific needs and backgrounds. The project was cognizant of this issue, but it would have benefitted from having a more customized plan for each different category of youth that it wanted to target.
- Youth who got scholarships should have been required to join their SACCO as this would have not only helped in the SACCOs mobilization efforts to get more members, but these new members could have increased the savings in the SACCOs
- All the three CBFs need to build better connections with USAID and other donors so they can explore getting funding for future activities.
- The three CBFs need to be better prepared to inform the bungees in the wards as to what they plan to do for the future once the project ends & the steps they are taking to get funding for future activities.
- There needs to be improved alignment of the CBFs with pertinent government departments and officials & CBFs also need to be better informed about government funding for youth projects.
- The radio programs need to be hosted for free on the Internet so that youth can continue to access them

YYC! NER Project Sustainability

The YYC! NER project brought benefits to youth and also had a significant impact in empowering youth, building better connections between youth and their communities and addressing issues of peace and security. Yet the specific context of the North Eastern region of Kenya (including high unemployment, poverty, radicalization etc.) along with some of the challenges the project faced can seriously impact the future sustainability of the project's achievements. This includes,

- At an individual level youth have been empowered, have built unity, have hope that youth can work together to solve their issues and have learnt about democratic ideals. This empowerment will not vanish.
- The capacity that has been built of the CBF members in finance, management, leadership, IGA, peace issues etc will not disappear and these youth will continue to manifest what they have learnt
- The youth in bungees who got IGA and peace trainings will benefit from them for the rest of their lives
- The youth who were able to start a small business have learnt about and practiced being an entrepreneur
- The positive relations that have been built between youth and their communities have led to a lot of good will for the future, but these ties need to continue to be nurtured
- Youth have got recognition from the community and the local government, but if they are not able to maintain the bunge structure there is a danger of a loss of this recognition
- The project has enabled youth and their communities to talk about radicalization and has contributed to peace and security in the region. However, if projects and activities that

target youth do not appear in the future; then there is a danger that high unemployment, idleness of youth and feelings of alienation will make youth again more susceptible to radicalization

- If the CBFs are not able to get other sources of funding for their activities their existence and thus the whole bunge system itself will be under threat
- If the SACCOs are not able to get members to make more savings and to be able to resolve the issue of guarantors they will not be able to exist in the future

The goal of the YYC! NER project was to empower youth to promote peace and prosperity; and to aid youth to play a positive role in their communities by creating economic and social opportunities. Summing up, this study has clearly demonstrated that this goal and the project's three objectives were addressed; and the project had an impact on youth and brought them diverse benefits. Yet the issues the YYC! NER project addressed are also profound and thus require more time, resources and efforts to be resolved.

2 PROJECT OVERVIEW

The Yes Youth Can! North Eastern Region (YYC! NER) project was implemented by Education Development Center (EDC) in the three Kenyan counties of Garissa, Wajir and Mandera from March 2013 to January 2016. The project aimed to promote peace and prosperity by empowering youth and; aided youth to play an active, peaceful and positive role in their communities by creating economic and social opportunities. YYC! NER was part of the USAID funded national Yes Youth Can! (YYC!) program (2011 – 2015) that empowered Kenyan youth to expand their economic opportunities, contribute to their communities and become responsible members of society.² YYC! NER also served as the third phase of the USAID funded Garissa Youth (G-Youth) project (2008 - 2013).³

2.1 Background of the YYC! NER Project

The YYC! NER project emanated from and built on two interventions.

The G-Youth Project⁴

The G-Youth project was a USAID funded intervention implemented by EDC in Garissa city (municipality) from October 2008 to January 2013. The project had two phases.

Phase 1 (October 2008 – October 2010) began in Garissa municipality, the headquarters of the North Eastern province in Kenya. Garissa has high employment and illiteracy; youth considered as an at-risk population and; there is a history of Al Shabaab recruitment of youth in the area. To address these challenges EDC conducted needs and assets assessments of youth, and based on these activities an initial 20-month project design was developed.

G-Youth's goal in phase 1 was to engage Garissa's youth in career development, livelihood and civic participation activities. The project initially targeted 1,600 in and out-of-school youth between the ages of 16-30 years in all 36 villages of Garissa municipality. The project included activities that: helped youth to build leadership skills; facilitated appropriate career choices; provided support in seeking employment and/or income generating information; bridged technical and university education opportunities and; provided a fun and safe space for youth to socialize. Phase 1 had four components: the establishment of a Career Resource Center; the

² When the YYC! was initiated in 2011 Kenya had 8 provinces. The YYC! began in 7 provinces and expanded to the North Eastern province in 2013. Since the Kenyan constitution of 2013 was implemented, the country's provinces have been replaced by a system of counties. Hence the YYC! NER covers the three counties of Garissa, Wajir and Mandera that previously constituted the North Eastern province.

³ Two phases of the G-Youth project were implemented by EDC in Garissa municipality. The YYC! NER then served as the third phase of G-Youth project when USAID asked EDC to become part of the YYC! Program. The first two phases of the G-Youth project were, however, not connected to the national YYC! program.

⁴ For more details on the G-Youth project refer to EDC's final report on the YYC! NER project.

strengthening of the North East Provincial Technical Training Institute (NEP TTI); the development and implementation of a Workforce Readiness Program and; organizing a Youth Action Summit.

In G-Youth's second phase (November 2010 – January 2013), EDC empowered youth to design and lead initiatives to improve economic opportunities for themselves and their communities. This phase aimed to achieve youth empowerment through four program components. Under Youth Action, youth were supported to design and lead the development of their own community initiatives through capacity building and a small grants funding. Under Youth Work, the project sought to increase the numbers of Garissan youth with greater access to livelihood opportunities. Under Youth Education, the project aimed to increase youth retention and transition to secondary schools and higher education. Finally, under Youth Civics, the project promoted principles and practices of tolerance and peaceful coexistence through educational radio programs; and built youth's skills in developing and producing these radio programs.

The National Yes Youth Can! (YYC!) Program⁵

YYC! was a USAID funded national program, which partnered with the Kenyan government and included various implementing partners across the country. The goals of the YYC! which targeted youths between the ages of 18 and 35 were to:

- Empower youth to expand their economic opportunities and contribute to their communities
- Encourage youth leadership and youth voices in local and national policy dialogue
- Increase youth participation in local development and peace initiatives

The YYC! arose directly from the need to address the root causes of social and economic marginalization among young people. The program also aimed to prevent a recurrence of the widespread violence that followed the 2007 presidential election in Kenya; with particular attention to contributing to peaceful presidential elections in 2013.

YYC's approach was to work with youth to help them organize themselves into groups called *bunges* (Kiswahili for parliament). Each bunge was formed by the participating youths on the basis of their own needs and interests. Once established, bunges could solicit funding from YYC! to pursue income-generating activities (related to agriculture, small businesses, informal savings clubs etc.) as well do community service projects.⁶ A key focus of YYC! was on training bunges in organizational management and democratic organizational practices. Bunges across the country selected representatives to participate in their county level bunges, called County Board

⁵ See: <https://www.usaid.gov/kenya/fact-sheets/yes-youth-canmwamko-wa-vijana>; NORC: Yes Youth Can! Impact Evaluation Final Report. June 2014. USAID (<http://www.norc.org/Research/Projects/Pages/impact-evaluation-of-usaid-yes-youth-can-kenya-project.aspx>).

⁶ The YYC! NER joined the national YYC! Program after this grants mechanism was completed and so the YYC! NER had its own grants that were given to the CBFs and SACCOs, but not directly to any bunges.

Forums (CBFs), and leaders of the CBFs comprised the National Youth Bunge Association (NYBA).

YYC! also aided bunges to initiate and reinforce messages and activities to promote peaceful resolution of conflict. The Tuko Rada peace movement, which included a large peace festival event and a training of trainers (ToT) on how to prevent post-election violence were the results of this effort.

Bunges that met some organizational criteria (registering themselves with the government, opening a bank account etc.) were eligible to apply for grants. These grants were administered through a national facility set up by YYC! called the Tahidi Youth Fund. This fund, however, was discontinued and as a result the funding to bunges was devolved to the county level. Another main component of the YYC was to work with bunge members to form Savings and Credit Cooperatives (SACCOs) which provided loans to members.

The bunges provided a structure for youth to take actions to improve their lives, develop leadership skills, promote collective decision-making and emerge as positive forces for change in their communities. Critically, all YYC! activities were led and managed by the youth.

2.2 Summary of YYC! NER Project

At the conclusion of the second phase of the G-Youth project, USAID extended EDC's award to implement the YYC! program in the North Eastern Region. The YYC! NER project thus adopted the national YYC framework, built on the success of the G-Youth project and continued in Garissa (now covering the whole county) while also expanding to Wajir and Mandera counties. The goal of YYC! NER was to promote peace and prosperity by empowering youth; and to aid youth to play an active, peaceful and positive role in their communities by creating economic and social opportunities. The project also aimed to make the youth of North Eastern region productive and responsible citizens who could lead the progress of their societies in the future.

At the start of the project, EDC administered a baseline survey to measure youth's perceptions and activities related to civic engagement and governance. The findings of the survey suggested that youth placed value in civic participation, however, most youth cited a lack of information on how to become involved in community development.

Following the national YYC! structure, the project mobilized youth to form bunges. The youth bunges democratically elected leaders, who in turn formed a County Board Forum (CBF) in each of the three counties. Each CBF in turn developed work plans to implement activities for local youth and to also carry out some community projects. The local bunges were also aligned with the NYBA through the CBFs.

YYC! NER built the organizational and management capacity of CBFs to oversee youth activities and community projects; empowered youth with income generating activities (IGA), entrepreneurial, leadership, peace building, health etc. trainings; enabled youth to conduct various IGA and small businesses; provided academic and vocational scholarships; developed Somali-language radio programs (on issues such as peacebuilding, religion, health etc.) and; began SACCOs (in each of the three project counties) where youth could make savings and apply to get matching loans.

YYC! NER had the following three objectives encompassing various performance indicators.

- Objective 1: Mobilize and empower youth to organize themselves to address their priorities and needs
- Objective 2: Support youth to implement work plans that reflect their expressed priorities through a Window of Opportunities Fund
- Objective 3: Strengthen youth's voice on priority issues to combat extremism through youth radio

This qualitative study was conducted to assess the performance of the YYC! NER project and is structured in the following manner. Chapter 3 provides a brief overview of the methodology employed in the study. Chapter 4 addresses the first objective of the project including the mobilization of youth to form bungenes, the CBF work plans and the activeness of the bungenes. Chapter 5 addresses the second and third objectives of the project and includes a discussion on the project activities and the benefits they provided to youth. Chapter 6 includes a discussion of the holistic impact of the YYC! NER project. Chapter 7 includes a discussion of the differences between the G-Youth and the YYC! NER projects and the long term impact of the G-Youth project in Garissa municipality. Chapter 8, the concluding chapter, summarizes the study's results and includes a discussion on challenges, recommendations and the sustainability of the impact of the YYC! NER project.

3 METHODOLOGY⁷

The purpose of this qualitative study was to assess the YYC! NER project's performance to empower youth to promote their own development and to become responsible citizens for peace and prosperity. As per its terms of reference, this study addressed the following key themes.

- Success of the project in reaching vulnerable youth in the North Eastern region and mobilizing them to organize themselves into active youth groups (bunges)
- Success of the bunges in retaining/expanding membership, formulating objectives and work plans and achieving them
- Benefit to youth from participating in bunges & other project activities
- Project impact as demonstrated by best practices and lessons learned
- The project's relevancy, efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability
- Challenges and recommendations
- The long-term impact of phases of the G-Youth project (in Garissa)

Key study questions were developed based on the study themes along with the objectives, performance indicators and activities of the YYC! NER project. The study began on December 9, 2015 and lasted for a period of 40 working days; and fieldwork took place in North Eastern Kenya, in Garissa and Wajir, from December 14-31, 2015.

It is *important* to note that the findings in the study specifically pertain to Garissa and Wajir as no field visits took place in Mandera (the third county covered by the project) due to the security situation there. The methodology for this qualitative study included the following.

Document Review

All pertinent documentation related to the project was examined and analyzed. Further, all quantitative data⁸ collected to address the performance indicators of the project was also aligned with the qualitative data gathered as part of this study.

Key Information Interviews

28 key information interviews were conducted with the following in Garissa and Wajir,

- CBF Leadership/ExCom members (who also served as trainers for youth in bunges)
- SACCO leadership/management committee members
- Youth in bunges
- Community leaders

⁷ See Appendix A for a detailed methodology with breakdown of interviews, FGDs etc.

⁸ The final round of quantitative data collection, in Kenya, was conducted by EDC in January 2016 and made available to the consultant.

- County government officials
- Youth scholarship recipients
- Youth trainers
- North Eastern Province Technical Training Institute (NEP TTI) Assistant Principal
- Official in the Ministry of Industrialization and Enterprises
- YYC! NER project staff



Focus groups discussions (FGDs)

14 FGDs were held with the following in Garissa and Wajir,

- Youth in bungees
 - CBF members
 - SACCO members
 - Community members
 - Youth trained to produce radio programs
- Youth who participated in the G-Youth project

Limitations

The data gathering exercise for this qualitative study was a successful exercise, however, certain limitations did emerge. Due to the security situation in Garissa and Wajir counties the movement during the field visits was limited to Garissa city and Wajir city. In Wajir, however, a visit to one village to meet with the village bunge members was possible; but in Garissa no such visits were possible. Further,

- The targets for total number of youth to participate in FGDs (with youths in bungees) were not met in either Garissa or Wajir
- 1 or the 3 FGDs with youth in bungees did not take place in Garissa as the invited youth did not appear
- Only 3 SACCO members appeared for their FGD in Garissa
- Only 3 trained youth producing radio programs appeared for their FGD in Garissa
- Only 5 youth who had participated in the G-Youth project appeared for their FGD in Garissa
- Male and female youths were invited for the FGDs in Wajir and Garissa, however, in all cases more males than females appeared for each FGD that took place.
- The issue of violent extremism was a very sensitive topic and had to be addressed delicately. While some participants in the interviews and FGDs did bring up this issue themselves; other participants did not address this topic at all and thus this line of inquiry was also not pursued with them.

- Some interviews and FGDs participants did not want their photos taken and their wishes were respected, however, this hindered obtaining visual documentation for some of the field visit activities.

4 MOBILIZATION OF YOUTH

This chapter addresses the first objective of the YYC! NER project: “*Mobilize and empower youth to organize themselves to address their priorities and needs.*” It includes a discussion of the mobilization of youth to form bunges, the development of the CBFs work plans and the activeness of the bunges. Table 1 below also enumerates the performance indicators for this objective and the final M&E data pertaining to them.

Table 1: Objective 1 Performance Indicators

	Indicator	Project Targets	Targets Achieved	Comments
1.1	Number of people attending USG-assisted facilitated events that are geared towards strengthening understanding and mitigation conflict between groups	23,000	24,501 (13,161 M 11,340 F)	Includes youth bunges members
1.2	Number of host national inhabitants reached through USG assisted public information campaigns to support peaceful resolutions	695,102	695,102 (496,658 M 198, 450 F)	The audience and listenership of the radio programs in the North Eastern region
1.3	Number of people participating in USG supported events, training, or activities designed to build mass support for peace and reconciliation	11,000	17,005 (9124 M 7881 F)	Includes youth bunges members in all three counties and some community members
1.4	Number of civil society organizations (CSOs) receiving USG assistance engaged in advocacy interventions	3	3	1 CBF in each of the three counties
1.5	Number of youth elected to positions of leadership on county boards, executive boards, or village committees	90	150	30 CBF members in each of the 3 counties
1.6	Number of county elections held	3	5	Elections for CBF members in 3 counties
1.7	Number of county boards formed	3	3	One CBF in each county
1.8	Number of county-level work plans developed	3	5	One in each county

4.1 Mobilization of Youth in Bunges & CBF’s Work Plans

The main issues affecting youth in the North Eastern region of Kenya are unemployment, poverty, lack of direction, drug and alcohol abuse and threats of radicalization. In this challenging context EDC employed a phased approach and initiated the YYC! NER project in Garissa in April 2013, Wajir in August 2013 and Mandera in March 2014.

The start of the YYC! NER project in each county commenced with a stakeholders' forum where the project was introduced; and support was sought from the county government, ward representatives,⁹ local and religious leaders, youth and women representatives, local community based organizations (CBOs) and non-government organizations (NGOs) etc. After the stakeholders' forum, the project staff and youth volunteers began the youth mobilization process.

Government data was obtained on where large youth populations resided in the three counties and the project staff and volunteers traveled to these areas to hold meetings with youth. In these meetings (in villages and towns) the project and the bunge system was explained to the youth, local chiefs and other community leaders. Further, during these mobilization events additional youth volunteers were also recruited, who then helped in mobilizing additional youth in far flung villages. In some cases community leaders also spoke to the youth during these meetings.

The structure of the bunges in the YYC! NER was as follows:

- A bunge had to have a minimum of 15 members
- Each bunge elected four leadership positions: President, Vice-President, Treasurer and Secretary (1 of these 4 leadership positions had to be female)
- Two delegates from the four leadership positions were picked to represent the bunge at the sub-county level (1 of these 2 delegates had to be a female)
- From all the bunges delegates sent to the sub-county level, 5 delegates were elected to represent each ward at the county level (2 of these 5 had to be female)
- A total of 30 delegates were elected to represent each county and these 30 delegates formed the County Board Forum (CBF)
- 6 of the 30 CBF members were elected to form the Executive Committee (Ex-Com) consisting of the President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, Assistant Secretary and Assistant Treasurer (2 of these 6 had to be female)
- The President and senior most female of the Ex-Com (of each CBF) attended the NYBA quarterly meetings in Nairobi

“The youth in Wajir are facing no jobs, poverty, drug and alcohol abuse...and there is also danger of radicalization...so we need youth programs to reduce these issues.”

Chief of Wajir City

“Everything worked well and we had no problems in electing our bunge President and other leaders. We also have full freedom to bring up any issue we want with the bunge President.”

Bunge Member, Male 20, Garissa

⁹ Garissa has 7 wards, while both Wajir and Mandera have 6 wards. However, at the time of the mobilization Garissa also only had 6 wards.

During the timeframe of the YYC! NER project **1,229 bunges** were thus registered in the North Eastern region with 411 in Garissa, 290 in Wajir and 528 in Mandera.

During the mobilization process a bunge tracker form (which recorded data on the bunge members and activities) was provided, which each bunge leadership had to complete and return to the project team. The youth did not have to pay a fee to join a bunge, however all bunges had to be registered either as a self-help group or a CBO with the Department of Social Services (as required by Kenyan law).¹⁰ The registration of a CBO cost 5000 Kenyan Schillings (KS),¹¹ while the registration of a self-help group cost 1000 KS; and the funds to register a bunge were paid by the youth themselves.¹² The CBFs, however, had to be registered as a CBO. The project then also aided the bunges to register with the Department of Social Services in each county.

The Ex-Com of each CBF was the leadership team that oversaw and managed the bunge system. Quarterly board meetings for all CBF members were held, during which work priorities were discussed; work plans for activities were developed and all other matters concerning the bunges and other youth issues were covered. Special Ex-Com meetings were also held as needed. In addition Annual General Meetings (AGMs) were held in each county to gather representatives from all the bunges.¹³ Each bunge in good standing with the CBF sent two delegates (a female and a male) to the meeting. The AGMs were mostly held at the ward level due to security issues and the banning of large gathering in the county capitals. During the AGM bunges dues were paid, the leadership of the CBF presented a report on the achievements made in the prior year and new CBF representatives were elected. After the AGMs the newly elected CBF members come together to elect an Ex-Com.

The Garissa CBF's first work plan activities included: hosting a football tournament to conduct civic education on topics such as the benefits of the new constitution for the youth, the rights of the youth to acquire identification (ID) cards (my ID my life) and peaceful coexistence; radio trainings; scholarships for vocational and tertiary education; and establishing a SACCO. The Garissa CBF's second year work plan activities included post-

“The project was successful to mobilize youth and the CBF, in a short amount of time, has been able to develop work plans to carry out activities for youth. This is the first time something like this has been done for youth in Wajir.”

CBF President, Wajir, Male, 27

“We had some security issues in the mobilization process and we had to travel large distances to reach some villages, but overall it was successful and hundreds of bunges were formed and registered.”

Youth Mobilization Volunteer and CBF Secretary, Garissa, Male, 22

¹⁰ Most bunges registered as self-help groups.

¹¹ 100 KS is approximately 1 US dollar.

¹² Each bunge also had to pay a small subscription fund to the CBF.

¹³ Garissa held its AGMs in May and June 2015; Wajir held its AGMs in August 2015 and; Mandera's first AGM will take place after the end of the YYC! NER project.

secondary scholarships, IGA trainings for bunges, peace events and trainings for bunges, civic education programs through radio and exchange visits with successful CBFs in other counties.

The Wajir CBF's initial work plan activities included a football tournament to address health and substance issues; radio programs to address peaceful coexistence; educating youth about their rights to acquire national IDs; scholarships; trainings on leadership, financial management and income generation; and establishment of a SACCO. The Wajir CBF's second work plans activities included IGA trainings for bunges, peace events and trainings for bunges; establishing an office for the CBF and; sending representatives to the NYBA meetings.

The Mandera CBFs initial work plan activities included youth participation in peace building through sports; creating public awareness on devolution;¹⁴ creating awareness on the effects of drugs and early marriage; scholarships; CBF capacity building; SACCO development; IGA trainings for bunges and; peace events and trainings for bunges.

Once the work plans and budgets were approved by USAID, activity costs were either run through a fixed obligation grant or paid for directly out of the EDC Windows of Opportunity Fund budget.¹⁵ Thus most of the CBFs work plan activities were run through sub grants, with EDC coordinating specific activities such as capacity building of CBF members and initial SACCO development. See table 2 below for a summary of key milestones in the three counties.

Table 2: Key Milestones

County	Activity	Date Accomplished
Garissa	1 st stakeholder forum to introduce YYC! NER	April 2013
	1 st wave of mobilization	April to July 2013
	1 st delegates meeting	December 2013
	1 st Ex-Com election and work planning session	January 2014
	Sharia compliant SACCO development and capacity building	August 2014 - September 2015
	SACCO registered	August 2014
	1 st Annual General Meeting	June 2015
Wajir	2 nd Ex-Com election and work planning session	June 2015
	1 st stakeholder forum to introduce YYC! NER	August 2013
	1 st wave of mobilization	September-December 2013
	1 st delegates meeting	April 2014
	1 st Ex-Com election and work planning session	May 2014
	Sharia compliant SACCO development and capacity building	August 2014 - September 2015
	SACCO registration	July 2015

¹⁴ Devolution refers to the 2010 constitution making county governments the centers of political power instead of the provinces.

¹⁵ For events, for example, EDC paid costs such as conference packages and the youth paid for local transportation costs. This allowed EDC to bear some of the larger costs and preserve vendor relationships, while allowing the youth to build internal accountability measures as they tracked their spending.

	1 st Annual General Meeting	August 2015
	2 nd Ex-Com election and work planning session	August 2015
Mandera	1 st stakeholder forum to introduce YYC! NER	March 2014
	1 st wave of mobilization	April 2014 to June 2014
	1 st delegates meetings*	October 2014 - January 2015
	SACCO registration	March 2015
	Sharia compliant SACCO development and capacity building	January 2015 - September 2015
	1 st Ex-Com election and work planning session	February 2015

* Elections were not successfully held at the first delegates meeting due to clan tensions. A sub-county level strategy was used instead to ensure inclusion.

The targets for the performance indicators for the first objective of the YYC! NER project were also met and, in some cases, surpassed. This included,

- 24,501 (13,161 M/11,340 F) youth bunge members attended United States government (USG) assisted and facilitated events that were geared towards strengthening understanding and mitigation conflict between groups
- 17,005 (9,124 M/7,881 F) youth bunge members and some community members participated in USG supported events, trainings or activities designed to build mass support for peace and reconciliation.
- 695,102 (496,658 M/198, 450 F) youth and other inhabitants were reached through public information campaigns (radio programs) to support peaceful resolutions.
- 3 CBFs were formed and became operational; and these 3 registered CSOs received USG assistance to engage in advocacy interventions for youth¹⁶
- The target of 3 county elections for CBFs were surpassed as in both Garissa and Wajir two elections took place to elect 2 different groups of CBF members. Thus by the end of the project 5 county elections took place (2 in Garissa, 2 in Wajir and 1 in Mandera)¹⁷
- The target of 90 youth (30 in each of the three counties) elected to positions of leadership on CBFs was surpassed as 2 different CBFs were elected in both Garissa and Wajir. Thus, by the end of the project 60 youth in Garissa, 60 youth in Wajir and 30 youth in Mandera (for a total of 150 youth) had been elected to positions of leadership on the CBFs in the three counties
- The target for 3 county-level work plans developed was surpassed as by the end of the project 5 works plans were developed (2 in Garissa, 2 in Wajir and 1 in Mandera)

4.2 Success of Mobilization and Activeness of Bunges

¹⁶ This addresses both performance indicators 1.4 and 1.7.

¹⁷ The 2nd delegates meeting was referred to as the first Annual General Meeting. Basically, two delegates meetings were held in both Garissa and Wajir leading to the elections of two CBFs (in each county).

The data gathered for this study clearly demonstrates that the youth mobilization drive was a successful exercise. During the first year of the project the main emphasis was on the mobilization effort; and this drive was also not a one off activity as the project staff continued supporting the mobilization and registration of youth bungenes in all three counties, through the CBF, during the project timeframe. The initial mobilization, however, first took place in Garissa and then expanded to Wajir and Mandera; and this phased method followed the approach proposed in the project proposal.

In Garissa County (outside of Garissa municipality) many youth in villages already knew about the G-Youth project hence they were very receptive to the YYC! NER project's mobilization efforts. Further, also due to G-Youth, a structure in Garissa municipality was already in place that the project took advantage of to mobilize youth. In Wajir and Mandera, this was the first time a project was being implemented that specifically targeted youth. Hence, this emphasis of the project on youth greatly aided in the mobilization efforts across the two counties. Community leaders and members and parents of youth, in all three counties, were also supportive of the project; and wanted the youth to join bungenes to avail of the opportunities the YYC! NER project provided.

There were, however, delays in the launch of the mobilization process in Garissa due to the 2013 Presidential elections in Kenya and the local security situation. Compounding these issues, the unresponsiveness of the county government to initially approve youth bunge registrations delayed this process in Garissa. The delays in Garissa, therefore, slightly shifted back the project's timeframe for the mobilization in Wajir and Mandera. Further, in all three counties, security escorts were sometimes needed to accompany the project staff to travel to certain wards and; certain villages were avoided because travel to those areas was considered too risky. In addition, the large distances between some villages also made the mobilization at the village level a logistically challenging process.

By the end of the project 1229 bungenes were registered in the three counties. The activeness of all of these bungenes, however, is difficult to ascertain. Generally the bungenes that remained active during the project timeframe *mainly* comprised the following,

- Bungenes that had a pro-active leadership
- CBF members bungenes
- Bungenes that were involved in small business activities
- Bungenes that were involved in community activities
- Bungenes that had received structured IGA and peace trainings
- Bungenes whose members were pooling ideas to plan to start a small business
- Bungenes that had regular meetings for members
- Bungenes that did not lose members

There were, however, a variety of factors which inhibited the project team from getting accurate data on the numbers of active bungenes. The main issue was that it was the responsibility of the

CBFs to maintain contact with the bunges and to then inform the project staff about the bunge activities. So while the CBFs would provide information on some active bunges, in other instances, they might not relay information about other active bunges. In ward meetings bunges would discuss what they were doing, however, the issue that arose again was that if the CBFs did not provide this information, it was very difficult for the project staff to ascertain which bunges were active and which were not. Compounding this scenario was the fact that even though some bunges in far flung villages or in the towns were active, many of them had limited contact with the CBF.

Another issue was that each bunge had to provide a bunge tracker sheet to the project staff and also provide quarterly updates. This form, however, was only partially completed by many bunges and, further, many bunges also did not provide updates on their activities.¹⁸ Therefore tracking the activeness of the bunges, through the tracker form, also had limitations.

The youth who participated in this study, though unanimous in stating that their bunges were active, did provide some reasons as to why some youth would leave a bunge. These reasons included,

- Youth who passed the age of 35 had to leave the bunge due to the bunge laws
- Some youth felt that they would get financial benefits by joining the bunge, however, when they felt these benefits were not forthcoming they left the bunge
- Some bunge members went to other towns and cities to study so they left their bunges, however, in many cases when these youth came back to their homes for holidays they recommenced their participation in the bunges

“Some youth have left our bunge because they felt that the project would give them funding to start a business. When they found out that this was not how the project worked they lost interest and left the bunge.”

Bunge Member, Male 23, Garissa

4.3 Key Findings

The main issue facing youth in the North Eastern region of Kenya pertains to unemployment. As educated and uneducated youth are not able to find jobs they develop a lack of direction, focus and confidence in their future. This state of mind is further compounded by issues of poverty and, in some cases, drug and alcohol abuse. In this scenario youth are also susceptible to radicalization. The youth in the North Eastern region thus face a vicious circle as lack of jobs and poverty breeds frustration and idleness; which further creates an opportunity for recruitment for violent extremism. In this type of scenario there was a very critical need for youth programs

¹⁸ To address this issue the project staff made use of opportunities such as trainings, AGMs, CBF meetings, personal contacts with bunge presidents etc. to get updated data for the bunge tracking forms.

that could positively engage the youth and the YYC! NER project was therefore greatly welcomed by the youth and the communities in all the three counties.

The data obtained for this study clearly demonstrates that the YYC! NER was successful in reaching vulnerable youth in the three counties of Garissa, Wajir and Mandera and in mobilizing them to organize themselves into bungenes. Over the three year period of the project 1229 bungenes were registered in the three counties; a bunge system with youth delegates elected to the sub-county and county levels to form CBFs was established and; the three established CBFs developed work plans to conduct activities and trainings for youth. However, security issues in the North Eastern region, the Presidential elections of 2013 and delays in registration of the bungenes by the county government in Garissa did delay the mobilization process, in all three counties, beyond the project's planned timeframe.

The number of bungenes that were registered in the three counties is a remarkable effort, however, it was not possible for the project staff to definitively ascertain which of the hundreds of registered bungenes were active and which were not. This was due to a lack of consistent information being provided by the CBFs on the bungenes in their counties along with the lack of updated data in the bunge tracking forms. This scenario, however, was not unexpected as the YYC! NER project did not carry out any direct activities with the bungenes themselves; as all activities were done through the CBFs. Therefore the project staff were reliant on the CBFs to get updated information on the bungenes; while also relying on the volition of each bunge's leadership for providing accurate and updated data on their activities (via the bunge tracker form).

Lastly, it should also be pointed out that all the performance indicators pertaining to first objective of the YYC! NER project met, or exceeded, their targets. Approximately 24,500 youth bunge members attended events that were geared towards strengthening understanding and mitigation conflict between groups and; approximately 17,000 youth bunge members and some community members attended events, training, or activities designed to build mass support for peace and reconciliation. Three CBFs were formed in Garissa, Wajir and Mandera and they all received assistance to carry out activities for youth. The target of 3 elections for the CBF over the duration of the project was surpassed as five elections were held (2 each in Garissa and Wajir and 1 in Mandera); and as a result of these 5 elections the target of 90 youth holding leadership positions in the three CBFs was surpassed as 150 youth held leadership positions in the three CBFs (60 each in both Garissa and Wajir and 30 in Mandera). The target of 3 county level work plans developed was also surpassed as 5 work plans were developed (2 each in both Garissa and Wajir and 1 in Mandera).

5 BENEFITS OF YYC! NER PROJECT ACTIVITIES

This chapter addresses the second and third objectives of the YYC! NER project: “*Support youth to implement work plans that reflect their expressed priorities.*” & “*Strengthen youth’s voice on priority issues through multimedia approaches.*” It includes a discussion of the activities carried out by the project and the benefits derived from them for the youth. Table 3 below also enumerates the performance indicators for these two objectives and the final M&E data pertaining to them.

Table 3: Objectives 2 & 3 Performance Indicators

	Indicator	Project Targets	Targets Achieved	Comments
Objective 2: Support youth to implement work plans that reflect their expressed priorities				
2.1	Number of individuals from underserved and/or disadvantaged groups accessing tertiary education programs	500	485 (417 M 68 F)	Youth in bungenes who got scholarships
2.2	Number of individuals who have received USG supported short term agricultural sector productivity or food security training	150	169 (63 M 106 F)	Youth in bungenes who got these trainings
2.3	Total number of clients (households and /or micro enterprises) benefiting from financial services provided through USG-assisted financial intermediaries, including non-financial institutions or actors	350	1001 (579 M 422 F)	SACCO members (individuals and groups) benefitting from financial services ¹⁹
2.4	Number of financial Intermediaries support by USG assistance	3	3	3 SACCOS in the 3 counties
2.5	Number of persons receiving new or better employment (including better self-employment) as a result of participation in USG-funded workforce development project	200	3798 (2559 M 1239 F)	Youth in bungenes doing small businesses or jobs after being part of the project
Objective 3: Strengthen youth’s voice on priority issues through multimedia approaches				
3.1	Number of youth led and produced civic education radio programs produced and aired with USG assistance	144	144	Radio programs broadcast
3.2	Number of youth trained on radio production, journalism and broadcast with USG assistance	30	24	Youth in bungenes who got these trainings

5.1 Project Activities

The main YYC! NER project activities can be broadly divided into the following interconnected areas: mobilization of youth to form bungenes, CBF capacity building & organizational

¹⁹ This includes individual as well as group members.

development, trainings for youth bunge members, income generating activities, scholarship grants, radio programs and formation of SACCOs.

After the mobilization process and the formation of bunges, a youth bunges system was established in the three counties; with the three CBFs serving as the nodal organizations in this system. To build the capacity of the CBFs, project staff and external consultants conducted leadership, teamwork and financial and organizational management trainings (on organizational policies and procedures, procurement, book keeping, payment documentation, internal controls, financial reporting etc.) for the CBF members.

In addition the CBF members were also provided trainings on IGA, entrepreneurship, peace building, health issues (HIV/AIDS) etc. The CBF members then went to their wards, with appropriate resource materials, and relayed the content of these trainings to the bunge presidents and other leadership. In some cases external consultants were also involved in providing these trainings. It was then the responsibility of the bunges presidents and the other leadership to hold meetings to cover the content of these trainings in their own bunges. Specifically, structured IGA and peace trainings were provided to youth in bunges (some community members also attended these meetings); and the IGA trainings were very appreciated by the youth. Further, a certain number of youth in bunges also got specific short term agricultural sector productivity or food security trainings.

In this manner youth in bunges got information and skills on IGAs (and in some cases on agricultural productivity and food security); and on how to conduct small business activities. As a result some youth after these trainings (or just by pooling their ideas and resources with other bunge members) started small businesses. Other structured trainings were also provided to youth to inform them about issues of peace. Further, less structured trainings were also provided on other health and social issues to youth in bunges.

The YYC! NER project also provided academic and vocational scholarships and EDC developed a guide which outlined the process for awarding scholarships.²⁰ Scholarship recipients were selected by a scholarship committee managed by the CBFs and; some community members and the project staff also took part in the selection process. These scholarships were in fixed amounts covering tuition and related costs such as books, however, they did not cover all the fees required for a student to obtain a diploma.²¹ Once awarded, scholarship payments were made directly to the institutions where the youth were studying or getting their vocational training.

“The project had provided us education through scholarships and developed a sense of community based business that youth can do together.”

*Bunge Member, Female, 22,
Garissa*

²⁰ Similar scholarships were provided during the G-Youth project; but they were not a feature of the national YYC program and were only used in the YYC! NER project.

²¹ Academic scholarships amounted to 24,000 KS in Garissa; 30,000 KS in Wajir and; 35,000 KS in Mandera. Vocational scholarships amounted to 10,000 KS in all three counties.

Building on the success of the G-Youth project, the YYC! NER project continued to train youth in journalism and radio production. These trained youth then developed radio programs that were geared to address youth needs and priorities and to support peaceful coexistence for communities in the North Eastern region. Topics covered in the radio programs included youth mobilization and bunge formation; and civic matters such as youth radicalization, peace building, effects of early marriage, leadership, health issues such as HIV, drug and alcohol abuse etc. The programs were both pre-recorded and live (with a call in component) and were aired weekly (one program a week) on both Star FM across North Eastern Kenya, and on its sister station in Wajir (Warsan FM).²²

All YYC projects (across the country) developed SACCOs to facilitate lending for income generating activities; and youth got matching loans on their savings if their loan application was successful. As EDC prepared for formation of the SACCOs in the North Eastern region, the project staff consulted with other YYC projects across the country and built on their experiences. The project thus established SACCOs in Garissa, Wajir and Mandera; which were regulated by the Kenyan government as SACCOs are considered public institutions and thus have to comply with the Co-operative Act of 2010.²³ EDC also supported the registration of the three SACCOs with the Registrar of Co-operatives in each county.

SACCO members, in the three counties, were provided trainings facilitated by the national Ministry of Industrialization and Enterprise Development. These trainings were done at three levels: the first level introduced the youth to the co-operative business model; the second level concentrated on management and; the third level covered governance, corporate governance, oversight, loan policies, HR policies, procurement policies, team building etc. to run the SACCO.

The concept of a SACCO, however, was new in the North Eastern region of Kenya and it also faced a challenge due to the existence of a strong perception among the local population that SACCOs were not compliant with *Sharia* law. In order to address this concern and ensure that the SACCOs would be successful, EDC conducted extensive research on formation of sharia-compliant SACCOs and also met with certain sharia compliant SACCOs. EDC further engaged a consultant to train youth on developing sharia compliant SACCOs.

Nearly all the targets for the performance indicators for the second and third objectives of the YYC! NER project were also met or surpassed. These included,

- 169 (63 M/106 F) youth bunge members received short term agricultural sector productivity or food security training

²² 11 other radio programs were also specifically developed to be broadcast exclusively in Wajir.

²³ SACCOs also have to provide for indemnity according to Kenyan law, which means that they have to have security or protection against a loss on a loan.

- 3 SACCOs to serve as financial intermediaries were formed (1 in each of the 3 counties)
- 1001 (579 M/422 F) SACCO members from the 3 SACCOs (including individual and group members) benefitted from learning about financial service issues or got loans by being part of SACCOs
- 3,798 (2559 M/1239 F) youth in bungenes started small businesses or got employment as a result of the project's work force development initiatives²⁴
- 144 youth led civic radio programs were produced and broadcast

However two indicators did not reach their targets as,

- 485 (417 M/68 F) scholarships were awarded to youth bungenes members
- 24 youth in bungenes were trained on radio production, journalism and broadcasting

It should also be noted that as a result of the project activities, events and trainings (as was noted in the previous chapter) approximately 24,500 youth bunge members were geared towards strengthening understanding and mitigation conflict between groups; and approximately 17,000 youth bunge members and some community members learnt about issues pertaining to peace and reconciliation.²⁵

5.2 Benefits from Project Activities

The data gathered for this study clearly demonstrates that the YYC! NER project activities greatly benefitted the youth in the North Eastern region of Kenya, albeit, with some exceptions.

CBFs

The benefits from the CBFs were derived at two levels. After having their organizational and management capacity built the CBFs kept the bungenes system functioning and conducted various activities for youth (sports tournaments, helping youth get IDs, managing scholarships, providing trainings on IGAs and peace, relaying social and health information etc.); while also engaging with the community and doing some community projects (picking up garbage, helping orphaned children etc.). The CBFs thus managed a youth structure and led a platform where issues affecting youth could be addressed, while also getting recognition in their communities.

At an individual level the CBF members got first-hand experience on how to manage an organization that promoted youth issues. All the CBF members (including the Ex-Com members) who participated in this study were unanimous in their feedback that not only had the CBFs enabled activities for youth; but they personally were able to demonstrate leadership

²⁴ This employment was based on youth recollections of the state of their employment being better at the end of the project; as reported in the end line survey conducted by EDC.

²⁵ These two indicators were covered under objective 1 of the project, but they are discussed as part of the project activities under objectives 2 & 3 in this chapter.

through the work of the CBFs. They were also of the view that being part of the CBFs provided them with a status to interact with community and government leaders in a manner they could never have done before. On the other hand all the community leaders and members who participated in the study were also complimentary towards the CBFs role in conducting youth activities and in building bonds with the community.

Nonetheless, the CBFs also faced certain issues and there were delays in developing work plans and in achieving milestone targets; though all three CBFs did manage to achieve their milestone targets by working very hard towards the end of the project. One of the main reasons for these delays was due to the composition of the CBF itself. The youth who were elected to the CBFs performed their functions on a volunteer basis and were not full time employees. Thus the CBFs had to work around the schedule of the members who in some cases were not all available at the same time. Further, there were logistical issues to bring the CBF members together in one place (as members lived across the county with some residing in remote areas) when decisions needed to be made or when paper work had to be filled out. In addition, CBF members came from different regions and spoke different dialects, hence, there were also language issues and communication was not seamless among the members themselves.

CBF Member



The 21 year old Garissa CBF Vice-Secretary is from the village Bula Oscar Youth bunge in Lagdera sub-county. He first joined the YYC! NER project as volunteer in the mobilization process, then became his bunge's president and was then subsequently elected to the CBF. As the bunges in his ward have both literate and illiterate youth members he was very careful to ensure that everyone understood the IGA trainings he conducted. He also beamed with pride while relating that some of his bunge members had also started a milk business after the IGA trainings he carried out.

When discussing his role, he was quick to point out that he related the work of his CBF to the bunges in his ward therefore he was an important connection in the bunge system. When asked what benefits the YYC! NER project has provided him, he said the ability to learn and to exercise leadership; and for the youth a chance to be heard at the county level and to be engaged with political issues. He also stated the importance of the bunges in peace building as his own village bunge acted as a peace keeping group when clan clashes erupted in the area.

With the project coming to an end in the region he remarked, "In my village people talk about what I have achieved and about my leadership as I represented my village bunge and many other bunges in the ward. After the project ends my mentality for leadership for youth will not go away."

Trainings

Various trainings were conducted as part of the YYC! NER project including leadership, financial and management trainings to build capacity of CBF members; IGA, entrepreneurship, peace building, health issues etc. trainings for CBF members who then served as master trainers for youth in bungenes and; trainings for SACCO members.

All the CBF members who participated in this study were again unanimous in stating that the trainings they received helped them in managing the CBF, provided them with skills to personally grow as leaders and to get information and knowledge on various other topics. For the youth in bungenes, however, the most structured trainings they received pertained to IGAs, developing small businesses, entrepreneurship and on peace issues. It is *important* to note, however, that these structured peace trainings were conducted at the end of the project after the field visits took place for this study. Hence the youth who participated in this study were not able to provide any information on these structured peace trainings.

The vast majority of youth in the FGDs stated that they had they received IGA trainings and had also benefitted from them. As a result of these IGA trainings these youth were able to get information and skills on how to do a business and, most importantly, to think about doing some small business by themselves or jointly with other youth in their bunge. On the other hand very few youth in the FGDs talked in any great detail about the other trainings they had received. Though some youth did state that they had benefitted from getting some health and peace building information in some of their trainings; with a few of the youth specifically mentioning the information they received on HIV/AIDS.

Youth Trainer



“Before being part of the YYC! NER project I also participated in the G-Youth project. I was a member of a youth group during G-Youth and our group was doing a small milk preparation business in our village. When the YYC! NER project started our group became a bunge. I was then elected to be the bunge President and in the sub-county elections I became a member of the CBF. As a CBF member I got trainings in the following areas: finance, management, leadership, IGA and peacebuilding.

I served as a trainer for bungenes in my ward. So far I have trained 45 youth in three groups of 15 over a period of a 3 days on IGA. IGA is the main area where I have provided trainings and this is a topic that youth are the most interested to learn about. I found that the IGA trainings were very helpful to the youth; and some bunge members have even set up their own small businesses like running small kiosks and selling livestock and poultry. For the other topics when I go back to my village I talk to my bunge members about what I have learnt. For example, after my peace building training I went to my village and talked to all the youth about peace building issues. These trainings, however, were not as structured as the IGAs ones that I carried out.

The YYC! NER project has given me a lot of benefits as I also got a scholarship to study and being a member of the CBF gave me leadership skills and qualities. The trainings I provided have helped other youth to get information on entrepreneurship and some bunge members have joined together to start small businesses. Mainly, the project has got the youth to connect with each other and the CBF has

helped build a youth network.”

Bulla Gadud B Youth Bunge President, CBF Member & Trainer, 23

Small Businesses and Jobs

Many of the youth who participated in this study were able to recount how they themselves or someone in their own bunge (or in another bunge) had started some sort of small business after becoming part of the YYC! NER project. Some youth either pooled their ideas and resources together to do a small business after they got information and skills from their IGA trainings; or in other cases just by becoming the member of a bunge gave them an opportunity to meet and brainstorm with other bunge members on how they could create some small business. Hence, the bunge system by itself or the IGA trainings, specifically, provided the impetus for youth to start thinking and discussing what they can do to generate income; leading to some small businesses being formed. The resulting small businesses that the youth did included livestock, poultry, farming (rice, vegetables and fruit), butchery, salons, kiosks, bakeries, selling groceries etc.

More specifically, the youth who participated in this study and who had actually started a small business (either alone or with other youth bunge members) were equivocal in stating that being part of a bunge gave them courage to start thinking about doing a business. They further claimed that they would never have thought of doing a small business if they had not had the opportunity to meet other youth and to discuss business issues with them. Being part of a bunge thus helped them to be confident to pool their ideas together and to collectively think through what small business they could implement to generate income.

“The IGA trainings enlightened our knowledge of business as we had never done any kind of business before.”

Bunge Member, Male 25, Waiir

Nonetheless, this study cannot make a broad claim that the small businesses that the youth started during the YYC! NER project led to great increases in their or their households’ wealth. The youth recognized the potential of increasing their incomes by doing small businesses; however no youth claimed that either they or anyone they knew had made big financial gains from the small business that were started. In terms of economic empowerment, however, this study can claim that youth in bunges did start to recognize the potential of business opportunities that existed for them; which is something many of them did not realize before their participation in the project.

The YYC! NER project also contributed to helping some youth get employment as participants in the study said that they knew of youth who jobs in shops, as drivers etc. during the project timeframe. The end line survey conducted by EDC (as part of the final M&E data collection for the project) also demonstrated that thousands of youth recollected that they had better employment at the end of the project as compared to when the project commenced.

Youth Bunge's Poultry Business



When the 15 youth (10 males/5 females) in Wajir city formed their bunge they started thinking about what business they could do together. During one of their brainstorming sessions, after they had completed their IGA trainings, they came up with the idea of starting a poultry farm. After doing some research they were convinced that hens and eggs would sell in the city and this led them to pool 100,000 KS together. One of the bunge members also offered a piece of land adjacent to his house to host the hens. The money they had pooled was then used to buy materials to build a metal and wire shed and to buy hens.

Once everything was in place they were successful in selling hens and eggs in the city and were able to make some profit, which was shared among all the members. Seeing the success of their first hen farm, the bunge members decided to build another shed in another location. With the help of another bunge member, whose family had some open land, they have just constructed another metal and wire shed and are now waiting to buy more hens. To further expand their business activities they have also started growing papayas near the new shed, which they will also sell in the city.

The youth are enthusiastic about their business venture, but at the same time they are realizing that doing this type of business is not as simple as it appears. The food for the hens is not cheap and they also need to get water pumps to have a steady supply of water for growing the papayas. Thus, they would like to get some funding so that they can buy these water pumps and a generator to run them. Down the line they would also like to get some more training on how they can further scale up their business ventures in Wajir county.



Scholarships

Over the course of the field visits, the one YYC! NER project activity which was the most well-known and which diverse participants felt had immensely benefitted the youth was the scholarships.²⁶ The scholarships thus were in very high demand in all three counties and many youth applied for them. Further, even though the scholarships were limited (in the amount of

²⁶ It is interesting to note, however, that EDC's final M&E data shows that the target of 500 scholarships was not met as only 485 scholarships were given. The reasons for this might be due to delays in submission of paperwork by youth, having to align the scholarship with the academic calendar (taking into account the project's timeframe in the 3 counties as most project activities only began after the first year of the project when the initial mobilization process ended).

funding they provided as they did not cover the full costs of getting a diploma) all the youth who had obtained them stated that they would not have been able to continue or complete their studies without this financial aid. Some of the community members who participated in the study even had children who had obtained scholarships; and they were very thankful as they felt this activity really aided poor families.

None of the youth participants, on the other hand, reported any problems with the scholarship process or favoritism in the handing out of scholarships, however, a nearly unanimous complaint was that the number of the scholarships should have been increased. Further, another issue was raised by some youth pertaining to a rule for the allocation of the scholarships. The scholarships were only provided to youth who resided in the three counties and who attended a college or institution that was located in the three counties. Hence, some youth felt that even though they were residents of the three counties, they could not get a scholarship as the college or institution they were attending was located outside of the three counties.

Scholarship Recipients



“After I joined my bunge in 2013 our bunge President told us about the scholarships. Five youth from my bunge applied for scholarships and all of us got it. My scholarship was used to pay for my studies at the Teacher Training Institute in Wajir. The course is for four years and without the aid of the scholarship it would have been very difficult for me to continue studying. When Al Shabaab started attacking the region the national teachers union asked all non-Muslim teachers to leave so there has been a shortage of teachers in the county. I want to get my diploma so I can teach children from all over Wajir county who don’t have a chance to get a good education because of the lack of teachers.”

Scholarship Recipient, 21, Wajir West Bunge Member

“Four members of my bunge applied for a scholarship and we all got it. I’m using the scholarship at the Kenya Institute of Criminal Justice (Wajir Branch) to study business. The scholarship has given me encouragement as my family has financial problems and without it I don’t know if I would have been able to continue. After I get my diploma I want to work in Human Resources.”



Scholarship Recipient, 22, Bulla Cabadulla Bunge Member, Wajir

Radio Programs

Building on the success of the radio programs in the G-Youth project, the YYC! NER continued to train youth in journalism and radio production to produce 144 new radio programs. A total of

24 youth were trained over a period of six months; and after their trainings with the expert guidance of a project staff member (Radio & Communications Manager) they produced these programs. The radio programs were broadcast once a week²⁷ over a private radio channel (Star FM); and the costs of the broadcasts were borne by EDC. Listenership data also showed that the radio programs were reaching approximately 695,000 audience members in the North Eastern region of Kenya.²⁸

During the course of the field visits, however, only anecdotal examples of the benefits of the radio programs were found; as in the interviews and FGDs most of the youth knew about the radio programs, but only a few had actually listened to any of them. The few youth that had listened to some radio programs were of the opinion that they were informative and addressed topics that were relevant to youth. The three youth who were trained to produce radio programs, however, were adamant that thousands of youth listened to the programs and hundreds of youth provided feedback by calling and texting opinion during the live discussion portions of the programs themselves. Nonetheless, what is clear is that the radio programs addressed various issues that were of importance to youth and disseminated information on social and health topics; and also, very tactfully, addressed issues of radicalization, while also incorporating issues of peace and religious guidance. Thus those youth, and other community members, who listened to the programs definitely got some useful information and benefits from them.

Youth Producing Radio Programs

Three of the youth from bungenes in Garissa (aged 22, 20 and 20) who were trained and produced radio programs saw the advertisement for radio trainings on the YYC! NER Facebook page. After being selected they went through a six months training; which covered media, ethics, journalism and radio program production. All three of them then got internships with a radio station in Garissa for three months. Two of the trained youth served as producers of the radio programs and also trained other youth who came into the program after them; while the third served as a field reporter getting opinions of youth and the community for the radio programs.

Themes for the programs were chosen by the production team keeping in mind the pressing issues for youth and inputs that youth who contacted the program provided. The radio programs had multiple announcers and during the broadcast of each episode, two telephone numbers were provided for youth to call and provide their comments. On an average 50 youth called during the live portion broadcast of each program and a further 70-80 text messages were also received. These three youth didn't hesitate in stating that thousands of youth were regular listeners and they also had numerous stories of how when they were traveling around the counties, many youth would tell them that they listen to the radio programs.



²⁷ The last 20 programs were broadcast once a day as they were produced towards the end of the project.

²⁸ This audience/listenership addresses indicator 1.2 under objective 1 of the project i.e. the number of host national inhabitants reached through USG assisted public information campaigns to support peaceful resolutions.

When asked what benefits the radio programs have brought to the youth all three were in agreement that that the radio programs: have raised awareness of youth on peace and social issues; experts could answer youth's questions about religion, health, drugs etc.; and youth got entertainment as the issues being discussed were in the youth's interests plus songs were also played.

As the project ends in North Eastern Kenya the radio programs will cease however these three youth are convinced that during their duration the radio programs helped in changing youth behavior for the better as youth got informed about governing and peace and also got religious guidance. As for themselves two of the youth are going to study journalism at the university, while the third wants to work for a few years before thinking about going back to media work. However, all three have a desire to work on TV programs in the future.

SACCOs

The SACCOs were established in Garissa in August 2014, in Wajir in July 2015 and in Mandera in March 2015. The differences in dates for the establishments of the SACCOs reflects the overall implementation of the project in three counties after the mobilization process that took place in the first year of the project. Once the project activities began in each county the SACCOs were formed and EDC also facilitated the mobilization for the SACCOs through the CBFs; as five youth from each ward were selected to become part of a group of 30 original members for each SACCO. 12 of these 30 members were further trained to mobilize other youth to join the SACCO. These members then selected the SACCO leadership; which has continued the membership mobilization process.

Youth could register to be a member in the SACCO as an individual or as a group, however if they registered as a group they could only apply for a loan as a group. To be eligible for a loan each member had to make a minimum savings of 200 KS every month for at least six months.²⁹ After these minimum qualifications were met a member was eligible to apply for a standard loan for double the amount of their savings; provided they could get a guarantor (another SACCO member) who could guarantee half the amount of the loan. If there requirements were met then a standard loan application had to be filled and if this application was approved by the SACCO leadership, EDC would provide a matching loan on the amount requested by the youth.

“The SACCO has a lot of potential as it can help youth launch a business and get employed. I have informed a lot of youth about the SACCO, but the problem we have right now is that only about half of our members are active in making savings and there are many difficulties in giving loans. But I have the motivation to work hard after the project ends to make the SACCO work, as I'm convinced it can help youth.”

SACCO Chairman, Male 27, Garissa

²⁹ Members could only withdraw their savings if they formally quit the SACCO.

In this regard, EDC also budgeted 1.4 million KS to be given out for loans to each of the three SACCOs. However, if by the end of the project if there were no approved loans EDC did not plan to give this money to each SACCO, as it was only applicable for loans during the project timeframe.

The SACCOs also provided Coca-Cola loans. USAID/Kenya and Coca-Cola 5by20 entered into a partnership through which both parties would support the promotion of livelihoods of women in Kenya. YYC! NER joined the partnership so that its youth SACCO members could benefit from increased income generation opportunities by obtaining a SACCO loan to purchase the equipment required to become a Coca Cola vendor. A SACCO member then had to follow the same eligibility procedures to get a Coca-Cola loan as he/she would to get a standard loan.

By the end of the project the three SACCOs in Garissa, Wajir and Mandera had approximately a 1000 members (including individuals and groups) and the following loans were provided:

- Garissa SACCO gave out 12 Coca-Cola loans and 4 standard loans
- Wajir SACCO gave out 20 Coca-Cola loans and 10 standard loans
- Mandera SACCO gave out 28 Coca-Cola loans

Thus by the end of the project the three SACCOs had given out 14 standard loans and 60 Coca-Cola loans.

The SACCO members that participated in this study were all in agreement that being part of the SACCO had been helpful as they had learnt about savings, enterprise development and how co-operatives works. Many of the youth also felt that being part of the SACCO had brought them together with other youth to think about doing some business together for their future. Nonetheless it was clear during the interviews with SACCOs' leadership and in the FGDs with the SACCO members that there was a high level of confusion about: the rules to get loans, why loans were not being processed quickly, the Kenyan government's regulations that the SACCOs have to follow and how the SACCOs would proceed in the future after the project ended.

Some real challenges, however, did exist with the SACCOs. One issue that emerged was that even after pertinent trainings and dissemination of information that the SACCOs were sharia compliant; many youth were still not convinced that this was the case. Hence, the mobilization process of getting youth to join the SACCOs suffered in this regard; and this issue was also compounded by the fact that the SACCO, itself, is a novel concept in the North Eastern region. The youth who were SACCO members also had similar profiles in the sense that the majority of them were unemployed or did not have regular employment. Therefore, it was not easy for them to make regular savings in the SACCO, leading to all the three SACCOs having a lack of savings.

Another major issue pertained to the Kenyan government regulation that a SACCO member needed a guarantor to get a loan. The problem that emerged in relation to this regulation was that

all the SACCO members wanted to get loans but no one was willing to be a guarantor; as if you become a guarantor you could not apply for a loan yourself until the member (for whom you are a guarantor) has paid back his/her loan. This regulation thus severely impeded members to get loans as they are not able to find a guarantor within their SACCO.

Ultimately, the long term future of the SACCOs is precarious as EDC will not provide any matching funds to the SACCOs to give loans after the end of the project. Further, the SACCO leadership and members are also not clear how they will continue in the future or who will replace EDC to provide matching loans in the future.³⁰ Though it has to be noted that the vast majority of the SACCO leadership and members were adamant that they were willing to work hard and to do what it takes to find a solution to make their SACCO a success in the future.

SACCO Member



“I joined the SACCO to save money to get a loan, but so far the SACCO leadership has told us that the loans are in the process of being given and that the loan money is being arranged. I’m not sure why there is a delay and why this is happening. However, even without getting a loan I have gotten some benefits from joining the SACCO as I got trainings on financial management and on how to save and budget money. The trainings we got about sharia compliance was also very good as this is a very important religious issue for us.”

SACCO Member, 26, Wajir

5.3 Key Findings

The data gathered for this study clearly demonstrates that the project activities reflected youth priorities and benefitted them.

The establishment of the CBFs and the organizational capacity building of the CBF members enabled these nodal bodies to oversee the bunge system in their counties, conduct activities for youth and to establish a platform to address youth issues within the community. The CBF members themselves benefitted from the diverse trainings they received and also developed and practiced their leadership skills. However, the CBFs did face some challenges as there were delays in the development of work plans and in the achievement of milestones. Nonetheless, it has to be recognized that the CBFs existence and their work was a great achievement. The CBFs were created by the project; their capacities were built and; the project staff aided them as much as they could. However these were nascent organizations staffed by volunteer youth who had never led or managed such an entity before. They needed time to be able to be fully self-

³⁰ After the project ends the SACCOs will not be required to have an organization that will provide matching loans, but this was one concern that the SACCO leadership and members relayed in their interviews and FGDs.

sufficient and to master the context of their counties to lead a youth agenda; while also being able find alternate sources of funding for their long term future.

The YYC! NER provided management, financial, leadership, peacebuilding, IGA etc. trainings to CBF members, who then in a structured manner acted as master trainers to provide IGA and peace trainings to youth in bunges; with the IGA trainings being much appreciated. Trainings in other topics were also provided to youth in bunges, but they were not as structured; though many youth benefitted from getting informed about health issues etc. The result of the IGA trainings as well as the ability of the youth to connect with other youth in their bunges to discuss business ideas led to some small businesses being conceived and implemented by the youth themselves. As a result many youth did small businesses in the areas of livestock rearing, farming, poultry, bakeries, setting up kiosks and shops etc. thereby being able to generate incomes. However, issues of getting funding for certain other businesses and lack of jobs for youth were still dominant in all three counties.

One of the most popular activity of the YYC! NER project was the scholarships and there was unanimous feedback from the youth and the community members about their benefits. Hundreds of youth were able to continue studying, to obtain diplomas and to attend vocational institutions as a result of these scholarships. Without their presence many youth would have had to stop studying and to give up on their educational dreams. Further, 144 radio programs were also broadcast in the North Eastern region that addressed topics pertaining to youth, while also advocating for issues of peace. Thousands of youth listened to these programs and were able to get more information and knowledge about pertinent issues as a direct result of the broadcast of these programs.

The SACCOs provided financial training to hundreds of members and succeed in giving out 14 standard loans and 60 Coca-Cola loans by the end of the project. Nonetheless, the concept of SACCO was new in the North Eastern region and this novelty along with the perception that SACCOs were not sharia compliant hindered their acceptance among youth. Further, the youth who were members of SACCOs were mostly unemployed so it was difficult for them to be active members who made savings. In addition the government regulation calling for a member to get another youth (in the SACCO) to be his/her guarantor for a loan also impeded youth from applying and getting loans. Overall there was confusion among the SACCO members and leadership regarding the SACCO rules and regulations; and with the project coming to an end they were not clear how their SACCOs would function or survive in the future.

“The scholarship gave me time to continue my studies otherwise I would have dropped out and would not know what to do. Now after I get my diploma in Supply Chain Management I can look for a job anywhere in Kenya”

Male Scholarship Recipient, 26, Furaha Bunge, Wajir

“I used my scholarship to get a Community Development diploma and I now work with the County Government at the County Service Public Board. In the future I want to do social work with children and old people.”

Female Scholarship Recipient, 26, Gun Bunge, Garissa

Ultimately, however, the SACCOs required much more time than the project timeframe to get acceptance in the communities in North Eastern Kenya; and also need a committed leadership that is willing to work for years to permanently establish the SACCOs. Further, in the short project timeframe, it was also not possible to demonstrate the positive impact of the SACCO loans; as the 19 standard and 58 Coca-Cola loans were made towards the end of the project and therefore there was hardly any time for other youth to see the benefits of these loans.

Lastly, the performance indicators for the second and third objectives of the project were also met or exceeded (with two exceptions) as 485 youth in bungenes got scholarships and 169 youth in bungenes got specific short term agricultural sector productivity or food security training. Approximately 3,800 youth in bungenes also started small businesses or recollected (in the end line survey conducted by EDC) that the state of their employment was better at the end of the project. 144 radio programs were produced and 24 youth were trained to produce these programs. Further, three SACCOs were formed in the three counties and they had approximately 1000 members.

6 IMPACT OF THE YYC! NER PROJECT

This chapter includes a discussion of the holistic impact of the YYC! NER project along with the gender issues addressed by the project and the role of the community and local government.

6.1 Project Impact

There are critical issues facing youth in the North Eastern region including unemployment, poverty, idleness, lack of motivation, drug and alcohol abuse and radicalization. The data gathered for this study clearly demonstrates that in this difficult context the YYC! NER project not only brought diverse benefits to youth through its activities, but also made a broader significant impact. This impact is demonstrated in many profound ways including the following.

Youth Empowerment

- Youth were empowered and enlightened as they realized they could do things on their own to address their needs, and started to do them. Hope was created that youth problems could be tackled by youth groups.
- The status quo was changed as youth created a space and platform in the North Eastern region that had not existed before; and through which they could advocate for their needs.
- Youth unity was developed. Being part of bungenes led to enhanced social interaction among youth. Youth were able to network with each other, learnt teamwork and discussed ideas to implement activities to address their needs, to do a small businesses together and to generally bond with each other.
- Youth got an opportunity to discover themselves, avoided idleness, obtained knowledge and awareness and harnessed their skills for their own benefit.
- Being part of the bungenes had an impact on youth self-development, self-reliance, self-confidence and self-esteem. Leading to a more positive focus in their own lives.
- Youth self-image was improved, which translated into improved interactions with others, particularly those holding positions of leadership within the community

“As a result of the project youth can make statements for themselves, run their own affairs and can speak with the government and community leaders”

Bunge Member, Female, 21, Wajir

“No other project is tackling the problem of youth in Garissa and assisting them, training them, helping them study and giving them skills. If not for this project some youth could have joined Al Shabaab. The project has kept the youth busy. We know what the project gave our children...it supported our youth”

Male Community Member in FGD, Garissa

- Youth got opportunities to organize and govern themselves, thus leadership skills were installed among them.
- Youth leadership (for both males and females) emerged and there was recognition of this leadership by the community and local government
- Youth political involvement increased as they became more engaged with political issues and the political process.
- Youth were discouraged from engaging in substance abuse & community and youth leaders became active in speaking about substance abuse
- Youth's minds were prepared to think about and engage in entrepreneurship

Community & Local Government

- The project improved relations between youth and their communities. Youth worked with their communities in an organized manner on community projects and also informed and involved community members in their activities
- Youth got the ability to speak in formal forums with government officials and community leaders and got recognition from the community and the government
- Passive youth became involved in their communities interacting positively with community leaders and members
- There was an increase in trust and respect for youth in the community and youth received support from elders, chiefs, and religious leaders in organizing youth and community events

Peace and Security

- A harmonious unity was created among the youth. Keeping in mind the security issues in the North Eastern region and the history of clan warfare; youth from different clans, tribes and regions mixed with each other and came together for unity and peace.
- By participating in bunge elections and elections at the sub-county levels youth learnt about and practiced democratic methods and ideals.
- Participation of youth in bungenes and in various activities & interacting with community and religious leaders dissuaded them from becoming radicalized.

“Joining the bunge made me more focused in my life. I met other youth that I would not have met if I wasn’t part of a bunge. I also got more knowledge and awareness. Being in a bunge also helped me not be idle.”

Bunge Member, Male, 23, Garissa

“The YYC! NER came at a very right time as it gave the youth something to do. Otherwise some of these youth would have been brain washed.”

Female Community Member, Wajir

“Through the bunge we have learnt teamwork and networking...we know the rights of youth...there is now unity of youth”

Bunge Member, Female 22, Wajir

- A structure was established through the bunge system which the community, religious organizations and the county government can make use of to reach youth to further promote peace and security.
- Discussing violent extremism is a very sensitive topic but the project empowered youth and the community to talk more openly about it.
- Issues and information about peace and tolerance was disseminated more broadly among youth and their communities.

6.2 Gender Issues

The impact of the YYC! NER project on gender issues was also significant. Gender equality was built in the design of the project as each bunge had to have female members and there were a certain number of female members that had to be in leadership positions in the bunge, CBF and in the CBF Ex-Com; and a senior female Ex-Com member also had to represent the CBF (along with the CBF president) at the NYBA quarterly meetings. These requirements gave women a voice in the bungenes from the village to the CBF levels and thus women’s leadership was ensured in the bunge system.

The female youth bunge members who participated in the study were unanimous in their views that the project had provided avenues for female leadership and some females were also taking part in income generating activities through small businesses. More importantly these participants felt that women’s voices could be heard and their views and opinions aired; and in the bungenes and the CBFs male youth members listened to them. The participation of women in the bunge system, receiving trainings and doing activities also gave them confidence. The male youth bunge members in the study were also unanimous in stating that having a certain number of women representatives in the bunge leadership and in the CBF was positive as women’s voices were heard and their leadership was important; and they were also of the view that the project treated women and males equally. Though both male and female youth did point out that there were more males than females in their bungenes and in the whole bunge system in general.

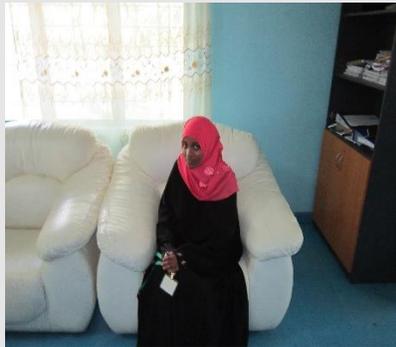
“Women were treated equal to men in my bunge and we got the same opportunities to do activities as the men...I never felt any discrimination.”

*Bunge Member, Female, 23,
Garissa*

The community leaders and members and the government officials in their interviews and FGDs were also all supportive of the role of women in the project. Many of them pointed out that attitudes in the North Eastern region were changing towards women; and families now wanted their daughters to get the same educational and business opportunities as their sons. Some community members who had daughters were also very vocal in stating that the project’s activities had benefitted their girls and provided an opportunity for female leadership.

The data gathered for the study clearly demonstrates that the overall benefits and impact of the project were broadly similar for both male and female youth. However, there were more examples of male youth bunge members doing small businesses; and overall there were more male than female youth bunge members in the three counties. It should also be noted that the project staff also included female managers who were from the North Eastern region. These officials provided regular technical assistance and outreach with the youth; and also served as role models for female youth members in the bunges as well as in the CBFs.

Female Bunge Members



“My brother was a member of a bunge and he told me about the YYC! NER project and so when I turned 18 I also joined a bunge. The biggest benefit I have gotten from the project, in the brief time that I have been involved, has been from the trainings on IGA. I have learnt that to be a good entrepreneur you have to have knowledge, be aware of the challenges and know how to approach a business idea. My desire now is to start a business with my family and we are thinking about opening a poultry farm. I will go to university to start my BA, but I will start this business before I go and continue to work on it when I come home for the holidays. The project has made the youth in my area come out to build their

future and to speak about their thoughts and their future. It has also helped us share ideas and to discuss challenges about what we want to do”

Member of Garissa Province Youth Bunge, 18

“I was elected to be the president of my bunge and then was elected to be a CBF member. As a member of the CBF I got leadership, IGA and peacebuilding trainings. I have trained more than 50 youth from different bunges on IGA in my ward. I have seen that some of the bunge members I trained have gone on to start small businesses such as small retail stores and some women have opened a hair salon. Women have benefitted from the trainings as they have got information about IGA to open their small business, their capacities have been built and they have been able to connect with other women to generate business ideas to work together.”



Garissa Town Youth Bunge President, CBF Member & Trainer, 18

6.3 Community and County Government

The general consensus among the participants in the study was that the community was more involved with the project, but the role of the local government was limited. The majority of youth in bungenes were of the view that they were connected with their communities; as they informed the community leaders and members about their activities and the community leaders were also supportive of the bungenes and of the project activities. The vast majority of these youth also stated that they had no connection with the county government as part of their bungenes. The CBF members expressed their views that the community leaders were supportive of their activities and the CBF Ex-Coms could easily talk to these leaders; and the community members were generally informed about the project activities and supportive of the project. The CBF members also stated that their interactions with the county government were not as detailed or developed as with the community leaders and members.

The community leaders and members, in the study, demonstrated a general understanding of the project activities, without knowing specifics; and also were supportive of the CBF. The community leaders also stated that they had regular interactions with CBF Ex-Com members. It should also be pointed out that community and religious leaders also spoke to youth bunge members during large events and in some trainings about issues of peace, religious tolerance and drug and alcohol abuse. Thus they connected with youth throughout the project and also provided advice and guidance to them. Further, when asked about the role of the local government in the project none of the community leaders or members provided any specific examples of the government's involvement.

The local government officials that participated in this study were supportive of the project and felt that it had brought benefits to the youth. One of the officials had trained the youth on leadership and management issues. Another government official, stated that his government department was very interested to maintain ties with the youth.

Ultimately the involvement of the community and the local government depended on the region and on the specific activities that were carried out by the project and the CBFs. The communities were involved in stakeholders meetings that launched the project and in the mobilization efforts; and some community and religious leaders also spoke to youth on issues of peace and religion, and even took part in trainings for youth. Further, community and religious

“Community leaders were involved and served as a shoulder for the youth to cry on and to talk about peace, patience and radicalization. This was the first time youth had such a structured support from the project as well as the community. Youth issues were also raised by the youth leaders to engage with community leaders.”

Community Religious Leader, Garissa

“When the CBF took its activities to the grass roots level they involved the community and religious leaders so the community felt a sense of ownership. Community and religious leaders have been involved with the project as they have been in meetings to mobilize and build capacity of youth and told them their role in society and about following their religion peacefully.”

Community Leader, Garissa

leaders and community members were appraised of CBF activities for youth and were also present in some of these activities.

Some government officials were also part of the initial stakeholders meetings to launch the mobilization of youth and a small number of officials also took part in some trainings. However, the involvement of the county government, in general, was not as extensive as the community. Nonetheless the local government was appreciative and supportive of the project as it realized that it was beneficial to the youth.

One challenge that the project faced with the local government pertained to transfer of officials. During the project timeframe in Garissa the youth portfolio was moved to different government departments and the officials who addressed this portfolio were regularly changing. Hence, there was no consistency as the project staff would talk to certain officials about what the project was doing, but a few months later they would have to start this conversation again with another official in another department. In Wajir and Mandera this was not the case as the youth portfolio remained with the same department, but the head officials in the department also moved so the project staff had to rebuild relations with the new officials that came in.

The project staff also worked with government officials during the establishment of the SACCO and after they were registered, however, in all three counties the SACCO leadership were not able to sustain regular interactions with the pertinent government officials. The local governments in the three counties are also supposed to reserve 30% of their procurement in government contracts for youth, women and the disabled. However, this is not being practiced and youth are not able to get their share of this procurement. Further the CBFs were also not able to get government contracts or government funding for any of their activities.

In addition the involvement of the local government with the CBFs and the bungenes was also complicated by the fact that a National Youth Council (NYC) exists in Kenya and local governments are close to this entity and its structure. The youth in the NYC are selected by the government so naturally there are closer ties between the local government and the NYC.

Director, Department of Youth and Sports, Garissa

The 30 year old Director of the Department of Youth and Sports in the Garissa County government was a member of the G-Youth project and he stated that the project helped him learn about leadership and entrepreneurship. In fact, he added, many other youth who were part of the G-Youth project now have leadership positions after being elected to the Garissa County Assembly; and he had no doubt in stating that these youth County Assembly members decided to pursue a path in politics because of the exposure they got from the G-Youth project.

The Director claimed to be engaged with the YYC! NER project as he had been invited to the project activities; and he was interpersonally connected to the project as some of the youth from the G-Youth project who he knew were now part of the YYC! NER project. When asked about what role the county government and his Department can play when YYC! NER project ends, he says that his Department is reaching out to the same youth as the project and that the government can make use of the structure that

has been created by the project from the villages to the wards to the county level.

He then detailed some other options he wants to pursue to help youth in the County in the future including:

- Working with the Directorate of Intergovernmental Affairs (that links NGOs and government departments) and the Sub-County Administration Officers as these organizations and officials have been involved with the youth in bungenes
- Getting all data about youth from EDC so they can use it to work with and reach out to youth
- Linking the CBF to other leaders in the government hierarchy and to other stakeholders and businesses in the County
- Informing youth about future government funding for youth
- Involving youth in recycling, solar power, planting of trees etc. projects

In conclusion the Director said, “If the youth are not connected to another project or to other activities or don’t get further trainings they will go back to being idle and depressed, into drugs and then vulnerable to radicalization. So we have to do continue to do something for them.”

7 REVISITING THE G-YOUTH PROJECT

After the end of the second phase of the G-Youth project there was a gap of 3 months before the YYC! NER project began in Garissa. The YYC! NER project, however, was significantly different from the G-Youth project as it followed many features of the national YYC! program. Hence, there was a change in emphasis and some of the main differences included,

- The YYC! NER project reached youth in towns and villages but the G-Youth project only covered Garissa municipality and thus hardly targeted rural illiterate youth.
- As the G-Youth project was only operational in Garissa municipality, the project activities could be carried out in a short notice. The YYC! NER project was more logistically challenging as it covered three counties and required a lot of time to put a structures in place to hold meetings for youth, to reach remote youth etc. The YYC! NER due to its geographical range also faced more security issues and uncertainties, which did not exist in the same scale in the G-Youth project.
- In the G-Youth project there was a direct implementation of the project activities by EDC; and EDC also partnered with various youth groups, CBOs and NGOs to conduct project activities. In the YYC! NER project, however, EDC did not have any partners and all youth activities were conducted through the CBFs and the bunge system, who served as partners and beneficiaries. Further the whole bunge system had to be created as it did not exist before.
- The YYC! NER was more prospective as it mobilized youth and organized them into bunges, but it could not give funds or grants directly to the bunges. Hence the youth were not in direct touch with EDC but had to be connected via the CBFs for their activities. In the G-Youth project, however, EDC was in direct contact with the youth beneficiaries.
- The G-Youth project had a work readiness component, set up a career resource center and trained career counsellors to provide advice to youth; while also setting up a computer center and a career library with information on colleges and degrees. Youth were also taken on trips to visit colleges in Garissa. Such type of career support did not exist in the YYC! NER project.
- The amount of financial aid provided by the educational and vocational scholarships in the G-Youth project was much more than what was provided for scholarships in the YYC! NER project.
- The role of the role of the community was more defined in the G-Youth project as an advisory committee of community members existed which aided the project, but no such structured community presence was there in the YYC! NER project. The YYC! NER project worked with the community during the mobilization process, however, after this phase it was up to the CBFs and the bunges to work with and build relationships with the community.

The data gathered in the study from some of the project staff (who were also part of the G-Youth project) also highlighted their view that the G-Youth project could do more for a smaller number

of youth within Garissa municipality, while the YYC! NER project was more diffused. Nonetheless, it has to be acknowledged that the mobilization process in Garissa for the YYC! NER project was greatly aided by the existence of the G-Youth project as a certain structure existed to reach youth in Garissa municipality and many youth had also heard about the G-Youth project in other parts of the county; and therefore they were eager to be part of the YYC! NER project.

The data from the FGD with youth who took part in the G-Youth project and also the feedback from certain youth in other FGDs (who had previously been part of the G-Youth project) demonstrated the long term impact of the G-Youth project nearly four years after it ended. This included,

- Youth who built their leadership skills and benefitted from the G-Youth activities got into politics and ran for county assembly elections. Some current members in the county assembly in Garissa are products of the G-Youth project.
- Some youth still run business in Garissa after benefitting from the skills, information and entrepreneurship trainings they received from the G-Youth project
- The skills and information youth got from their leadership and ICT trainings are still useful to them
- Those youth who received scholarships were able to complete their education and get diplomas and those that did vocational trainings were able to get jobs. The vocational scholarships were also very helpful for those youth who were not educated.
- Youth who participated in the G-Youth project started thinking about their future, stopped being idle and became less susceptible to certain vices (such as alcohol and drugs)
- Youth were empowered by the G-Youth project

North Eastern Province Technical Training Institute (NEP TTI), Garissa



The G-Youth project offered scholarships for youth to study at NEP TTI; computer trainings were provided to youth at the Cisco Training Academy located in the Institute and; youth were brought to visit the NEP TTI campus to show them the institute and to promote the institute as a future place of study. As part of their participation in the G-Youth project the cost of computer training at the Cisco Training Academy for youth were also subsidized. The Institute has continued to subsidize youth for computer training courses at the Cisco Academy, thereby continuing one legacy of the G-Youth project. Since 2008 therefore around a 1000 youth have benefitted from this scheme.

However, scholarships for youth to study at the institute, which continued under the YYC! NER project, will terminate with the end of the project.

The Assistant principal of the Institute was full of praise of for the subsidized computer trainings, but he was also cautious about the future as the terrorist attacks in 2015 at the Garissa Teacher Training

College have also had a detrimental impact on full time enrollment in the Institute.

Kenya National Library, Career Resource Center (CRC), Garissa

The CRC that operated in the G-Youth project in the government library in Garissa has now become a youth center where book clubs are hosted; and meetings and workshops for youth are held. The computers in the CRC (which were donated by the G-Youth project) are hosted in the same room, but the space is now called the IT center. The IT center has become a commercial space where a small fee is charged for the general public to use the computers thereby making the IT center self-financing and sustainable. Even though the G-Youth project ended in 2013, the long term benefits of the CRC still exist as there is a functioning computer lab where all the G-Youth project computers are in working order. Further, the CRC space is a youth center that still caters to youth albeit not for career development purposes. In another legacy the IT assistant who oversaw the computers in the CRC in the G-Youth project was hired by the new IT center in the library.



8 CONCLUDING REMARKS

This concluding chapter summarizes the benefits and impact of the YYC! NER project; and also includes a discussion on challenges, recommendations and the sustainability of YYC! NER project.

8.1 YYC! NER Project Benefits and Impact

The context of the North Eastern Region of Kenya within which the project was implemented was very challenging for youth due to high unemployment, poverty, drug and alcohol abuse and radicalization efforts led by Al Shabaab. In addition, the project itself was impacted by security issues and logistical challenges which affected travel, communication and meetings with youth in remote villages.³¹ In this scenario the goal of the YYC! NER project was to promote peace and prosperity by empowering youth; and to aid youth to play an active, peaceful and positive role in their communities by creating economic and social opportunities.

The data gathered in this study demonstrates that the YYC! NER project was successful in achieving its goal and in addressing its three objectives to: Mobilize and empower youth to organize themselves to address their priorities and needs; Support youth to implement work plans that reflect their expressed priorities and; Strengthen youth's voice on priority issues to combat extremism through youth radio.

The interconnected project activities including mobilization of youth to form bungenes, capacity building and establishment of CBFs, trainings of youth, scholarships, radio programs and SACCOs all brought diverse benefits to the youth including,

- 1229 bungenes were formed and registered in the three counties and many of the bungenes were active during the project timeframe.
- The CBFs kept the bungenes system functioning and conducted various activities for youth (sports tournaments, helping youth get IDs, managing scholarships, providing trainings on IGAs and peace, relaying social and health information etc.); while engaging with the community and also doing some community projects.
- CBF members got experience to manage an organization and were able to learn about and demonstrate leadership.
- Youth in bungenes received structured trainings on IGA and peace issues. Some youth also pooled their ideas and resources together to do a small business.
- The scholarships gave youth opportunities to get an education or some vocational training.

³¹ The project also faced certain other challenges as for example in Mandera there was immense political pressure as it was felt that the youth bungenes would be a threat to the existing council of elders. These concerns were subsequently allayed but they did create difficulties.

- The radio programs disseminated information on social and health topics; addressed issues of radicalization and; incorporated issues of peace and religious guidance.
- 3 SACCOs were established and approximately 1000 SACCO members benefitted from getting trainings on financial issues. 14 standard loans and 60 Coca-Cola loans were also provided by the 3 SACCOs.

Further, male and female youth participants benefitted equally from the project. Female youth leadership was ensured as certain number of leadership positions in the bunges and CBFs had to female. However, in general, there were more male than female members in bunges. The role of the community and the local government also varied based on the region and the activity. The community leaders and local government were both involved in the shareholders forums which kick started the youth mobilization process; and community and religious leaders also took part in trainings of youth and mentored them. Subsequently, however, the community leaders and members were more involved with the bunges and CBFs while the role of the county government was not as active.

The YYC! NER project also had a significant impact as

- Youth were empowered as they realized they could do things on their own to address their needs & hope was created that youth problems could be tackled by youth groups.
- The status quo was changed as youth created a space and platform through which they could advocate for their needs.
- Being part of bunges led to enhanced social interaction among youth.
- Youth avoided idleness, got knowledge and awareness and harnessed their skills for their own benefit.
- Youth leadership emerged and there was recognition of this leadership by the community and local government.
- Relations between youth and their communities improved and there was an increase in trust and respect for youth in the community; and youth received support from elders, chiefs, and religious leaders.
- A harmonious and peaceful unity was created among the youth from different clans, tribes and regions.
- Youth learnt about and practiced democratic methods and ideals.
- Participation in bunges and in various youth activities & interacting with the community and religious leaders' dissuaded youth from becoming radicalized.
- A structure was established through the bunge system which the community, religious leaders and the county government could make use of to reach youth to further promote peace and security.
- The project empowered youth and the community to talk more openly about violent extremism and radicalization.

These achievements are even more remarkable as the YYC! NER project was only operational for three years while the other YYC! programs across the county were of longer duration.

Further, the YYC! NER project was also able to incorporate scholarships and countering violent extremism (CVE) information and activities; which were not present in the national YYC! program. One of the focus of the YYC! program was oriented towards mobilizing youth against post-election violence; whereas the YYC! NER project very innovatively used the YYC! framework to tackle violent extremism and radicalization by inculcating CVE issues and information in the project activities.

Further, it also has to be stated that the benefits and the impact of the project would not have been realized without the dedication and the hard work of the EDC project team; the majority of who were from the North Eastern region of Kenya.

Youth Bunge's Farming Business



The 30 members of a bunge in Wagalla village (Wajir county) started thinking about what income generating activities they could do. Led by their President who was also a youth volunteer during the project's mobilization process, the youth decided on doing some small scale farming. With the help of their CBF, and facilitation of the project staff, they were connected to the county government and were able to get some trainings in hay production and livestock from the Ministry of Livestock; and in preserving vegetables from the Ministry of Agriculture. While going through these trainings the youth

also found a piece of land in their village owned by two families who agreed to let the youth cultivate it.

The youth then pooled money to buy seeds, built a water tank by hand on the site and later also bought two water pumps. They have planted papayas which they sell in Wajir city and have also grown hay to sell during the draught season. They also share some of their papaya and hay harvest with the two families who own the land.

Overall they have been able to make some profits but there are challenges. The weather can be very severe in the region which ruined some of their papayas; and they also tried to grow tomatoes, but their first yield got infected. Their water pumps broke and now they need to raise funds to get them repaired. For now, the youth are eager to continue with their work and plan to meet with the Wajir CBF leadership so they can be introduced to some appropriate officials in the county government who can provide them information on getting government loans.



YYC! NER Performance indicators

The three objectives of the project had various performance indicators whose targets were also met or exceeded (with two exceptions) as,

- Approximately 24,500 youth bunge members attended events that were geared towards strengthening understanding and mitigation conflict between groups
- Approximately 17,000 youth bunge members and some community members attended events, training, or activities designed to build mass support for peace and reconciliation
- CBFs were formed in Garissa, Wajir and Mandera and they all received assistance to carry out activities for youth
- The target of 3 elections for the CBF over the duration of the project was surpassed as five elections were held (2 each in Garissa and Wajir and 1 in Mandera)
- As a result of these 5 elections the target of 90 youth holding leadership positions in the CBF was surpassed as 150 youth held leadership positions in the three CBFs (60 each in both Garissa and Wajir and 30 in Mandera)
- The target of 3 county level work plans developed was also surpassed as 5 work plans were developed (2 each in both Garissa and Wajir and 1 in Mandera)
- 485 youth in bungenes got scholarships
- 169 youth in bungenes got specific short term agricultural sector productivity or food security training
- Approximately 3,800 youth in bungenes started small businesses or recollected that they had better employment at the end of the project as compared to when the project commenced
- Approximately 695,000 youth and other inhabitants were reached through public information campaigns (radio programs) to support peaceful resolutions
- 144 radio programs were produced
- 24 youth were trained to produce these programs.
- 3 SACCOs were formed in Garissa, Wajir and Mandera
- Approximately 1000 SACCO members (from the 3 counties) got trained on financial issues and some obtained loans

Differences between Garissa and Wajir

This study assessed the performance of the YYC! NER project in Garissa and Wajir as field visits did not take place in Mandera. When assessing the performance of the project in these two counties the study data demonstrates that the benefits from the project activities and the project impact was similar in both counties. However there were key differences including,

- A certain youth structure already existed in Garissa municipality due to the G-Youth project that the YYC! NER project incorporated and benefitted from. Further, some

youth who became members of bungenes in the YYC! NER project had also participated in the G-Youth project.

- Due to the history of the success of the G-Youth project many youth in Garissa County were eager to join the YYC! NER project.
- As the mobilization of youth to form bungenes began in Garissa and then spread to Wajir (and Mandera), the project had a longer timeframe of operation in Garissa as compared to Wajir (and Mandera). Hence the CBF in Garissa had more time to become operational.
- Community leaders and members knew about and had participated in the G-Youth project in Garissa municipality so it was easier to bring them on board for the YYC! NER project.
- Some members of the Garissa County Assembly were youth who had been involved in the G-Youth project, hence youth across the county could already see a demonstration of youth leadership as a result of the election of these Assembly members.
- Many youth in Garissa municipality already knew each from the G-Youth project so a certain connection was already established between them, which the YYC! NER further consolidated.

“Initially the G-Youth project was an eye opener and had a lot of success so when the YYC! NER project came to Garissa, it already had a structure that it could use. The G-Youth created the base and foundation allowing the YYC! NER to grow. The YYC! NER had a network from the village to the CBF level so it had a bigger network than the G-Youth project, but the G-Youth project’s success in Garissa enabled the YYC! NER project to do its work better. In Wajir, as we didn’t have the G-Youth project we didn’t have any foundation like Garissa had.”

*County Chief Officer, Water Services,
Wajir County Government (previously
served in the Garissa County Government
during the G-youth project)*

On the other hand the youth in Garissa expected the YYC! NER to be exactly like the G-Youth project. When this was not the case, there was some disappointment as youth expected to get grants to do their own activities rather than having the CBF manage the activities. Further, there was also some feedback that the YYC! NER project should have focused more on employability and business, and less on leadership/civics; as was done under the G-Youth project.

8.2 Challenges

The YYC! NER project had some challenges and these included,

- The security situation in North Eastern Kenya delayed the project’s activities and hindered reaching out to youth in certain areas. Further, distances between remote villages was a logistical challenge during the initial mobilization of youth.

- The project targeted urban/rural and educated/uneducated youth across the three counties. Thus the CBFs in some cases had illiterate members, members who lived in very remote areas and members who could not speak the same language. This diverse composition of the CBF membership led to delays in the development of the CBFs work plans and in the realization of key milestones.
- The CBFs had some issues with getting bungees to pay this subscription fees and in maintaining regular communication with bungees in remote villages.
- The CBFs do not have any source of definitive future funding after the project ends.
- The maintenance of the bunge database was challenging as the project could not get many bungees to provide completed and updated bunge tracker forms.
- Bunge leaders sometimes faced difficulties in motivating members to remain active and some youth assumed that they would be financially compensated for participating in the project.
- The SACCOs faced challenges including distrust of youth thinking they are not sharia compliant, low savings of members, difficulties in getting guarantors for loans and lack of future plans.
- The transfer of the pertinent officials addressing the youth portfolio in the local county governments hindered the building of long term relations.
- Certain trained youth who served as master trainers for IGA and peace trainings had to cover a lot of villages and bungees (depending on where they did their trainings)
- Youth needed follow up trainings as one round of trainings were not adequate in many cases

8.3 Recommendations

The data obtained for the study includes some pertinent recommendations such as,

- CVE requires addressing core issues such as engaging with youth in terms of ideology. While religious and community leaders did engage with youth on these issues in AGMs, trainings and delegates meetings; the presence of religious leaders (sheikhs) to be constantly and consistently involved with any project that addresses violent extremism and radicalization is also required.
- The youth in the North Eastern region are diverse thus there is a need to demarcate youth based on their specific needs and backgrounds. The project was cognizant of this issue, but it would have benefitted from having a more customized plan for each different category of youth that it wanted to target. For example, youth who were uneducated and lived in urban areas etc.
- Youth who got scholarships should have been required to join their SACCO as this would have not only helped in the SACCOs mobilization efforts to get more members, but these new members could have increased the savings in the SACCOs.
- EDC made efforts to introduce the CBF leaders to officials from another international development organization (RTI) that will start implementing a youth employment project

(also to be funded by USAID) in Garissa County. However, all the three CBFs need to build better connections with USAID and other donors so they can explore getting funding for future activities.

- Future projects that target youth in these three counties need to make use of the structures created by the bunge system
- There is a need for follow up trainings not only for IGA and peace issues, but also for the SACCO members.
- SACCO members also need support in ICT trainings as advanced software pertaining to finances, enterprises, loans etc. exist; which these members should be aware of and using.
- If youth are planning to start a small business with their families, the pertinent family members should be included in the IGA trainings.
- The three CBFs need to be better prepared to inform the bungenes in the wards as to what they plan to do for the future once the project ends & the steps they are taking to get funding for future activities.
- There needs to be improved alignment of the CBFs with pertinent government departments and officials & CBFs also need to be better informed about government funding for youth projects.
- The radio programs need to be hosted for free on the Internet so that youth can continue to access them

Youth Bunge Member



I was involved with a CBO that did community development and social work and during the mobilization process for the YYC! NER project I became a volunteer. After our bunge was formed I now serve as its secretary. Our bunge has 20 members and they have all benefitted from the IGA trainings we have received. Some of the youth in my bunge have also benefitted from scholarships and have become motivated to do things for themselves. I myself got really motivated after the IGA trainings and now want to open a poultry farm in 2016. The only complaint I have about the project is that our bunge does not get enough information from the CBF...I think the CBF should do a better job of telling us what activities they plan to do in the future.”

23, Garissa Town Bunge Member

8.4 Sustainability Issues

The YYC! NER project has brought benefits to youth and also had a significant impact in empowering youth, building better connections between youth and their communities and addressing issues of peace and security. Yet the specific context of the North Eastern region of Kenya (including high unemployment, poverty, radicalization etc.) along with some of the

challenges the project faced can seriously impact the future sustainability of the project's achievements. The data obtained for this study demonstrates that many of the achievements of the project are sustainable, while others face more daunting challenges. This includes,

- At an individual level youth have been empowered, have built unity, have hope that youth can work together to solve their issues and have learnt about democratic ideals. This empowerment will not vanish.
- The capacity that has been built of the CBF members in finance, management, leadership, IGA, peace issues etc will not disappear and these youth will continue to manifest what they have learnt
- The youth in bunge who got IGA and peace trainings will benefit from them for the rest of their lives
- The youth who were able to start a small business have learnt about and practiced being an entrepreneur
- Women have gained leadership positions, obtained skills and connected with other women to start small businesses
- The positive relations that have been built between youth and their communities have led to a lot of good will for the future, but these ties need to continue to be nurtured
- Youth have got recognition from the community and the local government, but if they are not able to maintain the bunge structure there is a danger of a loss of this recognition
- The project has enabled youth and their communities to talk about radicalization and has contributed to peace and security in the region. However, if projects and activities that target youth do not appear in the future; then there is a danger that high unemployment, idleness of youth and feelings of alienation will make youth again more susceptible to radicalization
- If the CBFs are not able to get other sources of funding for their activities their existence and thus the whole bunge system itself will be under threat
- The CBFs also need to find other organizations that can continue to mentor them and to build their capacities as EDC did during the project timeframe
- If the SACCOs are not able to get members to make more savings and to be able to resolve the issue of guarantors they will not be able to exist in the future

“The youth in Garissa who went through the project have had their capacity built, but many new youth from rural areas are coming to the town...so who will build their capacity in the future?”

Male 25, Bunge Member, Garissa

“The youth have learnt many skills from the project so this will help them in the future even after the project ends.”

Male 22, Bunge Member, Wajir

“Youth leadership will not collapse after the project...but the new CBF leadership has to be very active to make sure the CBF survives.”

CBF President, 27, Wajir

Ultimately there will be a vacuum after the end of the YYC! NER project and if future projects, activities and funds do not appear for the youth in the region then there is a big threat that the achievements of the project will gradually diminish. Further, if the achievements of the project are weakened, youth in these areas who did not take part in the YYC! NER project will also not have a frame of reference for youth empowerment, building better relations with their communities and achieving peace and security in the region. Nonetheless, what is remarkable about the YYC! NER project is that it has empowered youth and given them hope in such a manner that the vast majority of youth who participated in this study (when asked about the sustainability of the project's achievements) stated that the youth will not disperse, they will continue to use the skills they have gained and will persist in advocating for youth issues.

The goal of the YYC! NER project was to empower youth to promote peace and prosperity; and to aid youth to play a positive role in their communities by creating economic and social opportunities. Summing up, this study has clearly demonstrated that this goal and the project's three objectives were addressed; and the project had an impact on youth and brought them diverse benefits. Yet the issues the YYC! NER project addressed are also profound and thus require more time, resources and efforts to be resolved.

Appendix A: Detailed Methodology

The purpose of this qualitative study was to assess the YYC! NER project's performance to empower youth to promote their own development and to become responsible citizens for peace and prosperity. As per its terms of reference, this study addressed the following key themes.

- Success of the project in reaching vulnerable youth in the North Eastern region and mobilizing them to organize themselves into active youth groups (bunges)
- Success of the bunges in retaining/expanding membership, formulating objectives and work plans and achieving them
- Benefit to youth from participating in bunges & other project activities
- Project impact as demonstrated by best practices and lessons learned
- The project's relevancy, efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability
- Challenges and recommendations
- The long-term impact of phases of the G-Youth project (in Garissa)

Key study questions were developed by the consultant based on these themes along with the objectives, performance indicators and activities of the YYC! NER project.³² The study began on December 9, 2015 and lasted for a period of 40 working days; and fieldwork took place in North Eastern Kenya, in Garissa and Wajir, from December 14-31, 2015.

It is *important* to note that the findings in the study specifically pertain to Garissa and Wajir as no field visits took place in Mandera (the third county covered by the project) due to the security situation there. Hence, this study does not assess the project's performance in Mandera, however, some insights and data pertaining to Mandera are included in this report; which were derived from the project documentation and from the interviews with the project staff. Further, the consultant's movements in Garissa and Wajir were also limited due to the security situation. Hence, with a few exceptions, all interview and FGDs took place in EDC's office in Garissa city and in the hotel where the consultant was based in Wajir city.

Methodological Breakdown

The methodology for this qualitative study included the following.

Document Review

All pertinent documentation related to the project was examined and analyzed. Further, all quantitative data³³ collected to address the performance indicators of the project was also aligned with the qualitative data gathered as part of this study. The document and information review for the qualitative study included the following resources.

- G-Youth Phase I Needs Assessment
- G-Youth Phase I PMP

³² See Appendix B for a matrix that enumerates the main questions this study addressed.

³³ The final round of quantitative data collection, in Kenya, was conducted by EDC in January 2016 and made available to the consultant.

- G-Youth Phase II Technical Proposal
- G-Youth Phase II PMP
- G-Youth Phase I & II Indicators Sheets
- YYC! NER Technical Proposal
- YYC! NER Summary and Overview
- YYC! NER Annual Reports
- YYC! NER PMP
- YYC! NER Performance Indicators
- County Board Forum (CBF) Work Plans and Milestones
- SACCO Milestone Tables
- YYC! NER Scholarship Guide
- YYC! NER Close-out Plan
- YYC! NER Indicators Sheet

Key Information Interviews³⁴

Key information interviews were conducted with the following in Wajir and Garissa.

Wajir

- 2 (1 male/1 female) CBF Leadership/ExCom members (who also served as trainers for youth in bunges)
- 2 (males) SACCO leadership/management committee members
- 2 (1 male/1 female) youth in bunges
- 2 (males) community leaders
- 2 (males) county government officials
- 3 (2 males/1 female) youth scholarship recipients

Garissa

- 3 (males) CBF Leadership/ExCom members (who also served as trainers for youth in bunges)
- 3 (males) SACCO leadership/management committee members
- 2 (1 male/1 female) youth in bunges
- 2 (males) community leaders
- 2 (males) county government officials
- 2 (1 male/1 female) trainers (who also serve as their bunges presidents)
- 1 official (male) from the North Eastern Province Technical Training Institute (NEP TTI)

A total of 13 interviews (10 males/3 females) were conducted out in Wajir and 15 interviews (13 males/2 females) were conducted in Garissa.

One interview was also conducted in Nairobi with an official in the Ministry of Industrialization and Enterprises, who conducted trainings for the SACCOs members in Garissa, Wajir and Mandera.

³⁴ See Appendix C for a full list of interviews.

Interviews were also carried out with the following YYC! NER project staff,

- Chief of Party
- Youth Engagement Associate Manager
- Radio & Communications Manager
- Grants Officer
- M&E Coordinator

*Focus groups discussions (FGDs)*³⁵

FGDs were held with the following in Garissa and Wajir counties:

Wajir

- 21 (16 males/5 females) youth in bungenes (3 FGDs)
- 11 (5 males/6 females) CBF members (2 FGDs)
- 6 (males) SACCO members (1 FGD)
- 7 (4 males/3 females) community members (1 FGD)

Garissa

- 14 (9 males/5 females) youth in bungenes (2 FGDs)
- 7 (4 males/3 females) CBF members (1 FGD)
- 3 (males) SACCO members (1 FGD)
- 6 (4 males/2 females) community members (1 FGD)
- 3 (males) youth trained to produce radio programs (1 FGD)
- 5 (males) youth who participated in the G-Youth project (1 FGD)

A total of 7 FGDs with 45 participants (31 males/14 females) were conducted in Wajir and 7 FGDs with 38 participants (28 males/10 females) were conducted in Garissa.

All interview and FGD tools were verified to ensure consistency with Institutional Review Board procedures prior to the field work being carried out in Kenya. Further, in the interviews/FGDs the consultant with the aid of the translators³⁶ (who were members of the YYC! NER project team) explained that the purpose of the interview/FGD. The participants were then told that their names will not be noted (nor will they be referred to by name in this study) and that the interview/FGD would last 45-60 minutes. As the translators has been involved with the project and knew many of the project stakeholders, they were seen as having legitimacy with the participants.

Please note however that translators were needed for *only* 5 of the 13 interviews and 2 of the 7 FGDs in Wajir and for 1 FGD in Garissa. The consultant conducted all the remaining interviews and FGD himself, as the participants spoke English.

³⁵ See Appendix C for a full list of FGDs participants.

³⁶ Two different project staff served as translators, as required, in Wajir and Garissa respectively.

In Wajir all interviews and FGDs took place at the hotel (in Wajir city) where the consultant was residing with the exception of two interviews and two FGDs. The two interviews took place at the offices of the government officials; one FGD took place in another hotel in Wajir city and; the second FGD took place in a village outside of Wajir city. In Garissa, all the interviews and FGDs took place in EDC's project office in Garissa city. All the participants' transportation costs were covered by EDC.

The consultant took hand written notes in English in all the interviews and FGDs and later typed in his notes (as required) for this report.

Data Obtained

Data was successfully obtained during the field visits to assess the YYC! NER project's performance to address: the goal and three objectives of the project; the key themes of the qualitative study and; the study questions for various target audiences. Further, the study also aligned the qualitative data gathered from the field visits with the end line quantitative monitoring data obtained via the M&E of the project activities (i.e. data on the performance indicators of the project). Thereby ensuring that a triangulation of data analysis was conducted while, simultaneously, also providing more descriptive insights to support the project's performance indicators.

Limitations

The data gathering exercise for this qualitative study was a successful exercise, however, certain limitations did emerge. Due to the security situation in Garissa and Wajir counties movement was limited to Garissa city and Wajir city. Further, with a few exceptions, participants had to come to EDC's office in Garissa city and a hotel in Wajir city for their interviews and FGDs. In Wajir, however, a visit to one village approximately 12 km from the city to meet with the village bunge members was possible; but in Garissa no visits to villages were possible. This lack of movement hindered the ability of the study to meet with village bungenes members and to get a first-hand account of their activities. The project staff did invite village youth bungenes members to come to EDC's office in Garissa city for FGDs. However due various reasons (the youth being occupied, vast distances for the youth to travel etc.) no village youth bungenes members were able to come to Garissa city to participate in any FGDs.

The number of youth that participated in FGDs was also an issue. Prior to the field visits the study expected to conduct FGDs with the following in both Garissa and Wajir,

- 30-40 Youth in bungenes
- 6-8 CBF members
- 6-8 SACCO members
- 6-8 Community members involved with project
- 4-6 Trained youth producing radio programs (Garissa only)³⁷
- 8-10 Youth who participated in the G-Youth project (Garissa only)

However,

³⁷ Youth were trained for the radio programs only in Garissa.

- The targets for total number of youth to participate in FGDs (with youths in bungenes) were not met in either Garissa or Wajir
- 1 of the 3 FGDs with youth in bungenes did not take place in Garissa as the invited youth did not appear
- Only 3 SACCO members appeared for their FGD in Garissa
- Only 3 trained youth producing radio programs appeared for their FGD in Garissa
- Only 5 youth who had participated in the G-Youth project appeared for their FGD in Garissa

The project staff tried to contact the missing youth to appear for the FGDs and even attempted to set up additional FGDs on alternate dates and times (for the youth who did not appear), however, these attempts were not successful. It should also be noted that some of the field work took place in the last week of December coinciding with the end of the year holidays, which was another reason for why some of the youth did not appear for their FGDs.

Some other issues that emerged during the course of the field visits included the following,

- Male and female youths were invited for the FGDs in Wajir and Garissa, however, in all cases more males than females appeared for each FGD that took place.
- The issue of violent extremism was a very sensitive topic and had to be addressed delicately. While some participants in the interviews and FGDs did bring up this issue themselves; other participants did not address this topic at all and thus this line of inquiry was also not pursued with them.
- Some interviews and FGDs participants did not want their photos taken and their wishes were respected, however, this hindered obtaining visual documentation for some of the field visit activities.
- As stated earlier the field visits did not cover Mandera County so the study could not assess the performance of the project there.

Appendix B: Matrix of Key Study Questions

The table matrix below includes the key themes that the study will address; and enumerates the main study questions that were posed in the under each theme. Pertinent questions from this matrix were customized for each interview and focus group discussion tool, depending on the category of the respondent(s) and their involvement with the project.

Success of the project in reaching vulnerable youth in North Eastern Kenya and mobilizing them to organize themselves into active youth groups (bunges)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How successful has the project been in reaching out to vulnerable youth? • How successful has the project been in getting vulnerable youth to organize themselves into bunges? • How are the bunges functioning? Have the bunges been active since they were formed? • How is the CBF functioning? Has the CBF been active since it was formed? • How successful is the bunges relationship with the CBF? • How successful is the bunges/CBF's relationship with the NYBA? • How successful has the project been in building capacity of the youth and bunges/CBF? In providing them trainings?
Success of the bunges in retaining/expanding membership, formulating objectives and work plans and achieving them
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How successful have the bunges/CBF been in retaining/expanding membership? • How successful have the bunges/CBF been in formulating and developing their objectives and work plans? • What types of activities are bunges/CBF implementing through their work plans? • How successful have bunges/CBF work plan activities been? • How successful have the bunges/CBF been in creating awareness of youth opportunities? • How successful have the bunges/CBF been in working with the SACCO?
Benefit to youth from participating in bunges/CBF & other project activities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How have youth benefitted from participating in the bunges/CBF? • What leadership positions have youth achieved in their communities as a result of their participation in the project? • What benefits have the income generating activities facilitated by the project provided to the youth? • What benefits have the grants/funds provided by the project given to the youth? • What benefits have the scholarships provided by the project given to the youth? • What benefits have livelihoods in the agriculture sector/ financial services facilitated by the project given to the youth? • How has the SACCO benefitted the youth? • How has the project helped youth to gain employment? • How have youth benefitted from the radio programs?
Project impact as demonstrated by best practices and lessons learned
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has the project empowered youth to promote their own life and career development? • Has the project enabled youth to promote peace and security? • Has the project enabled youth to make positive contributions to their community?

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What impact has the community had on the youth during the project?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What impact has the county government had on the youth during the project?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What impact has the project had on gender issues that exist in the region?
The project's relevancy, efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did the project achieve its goal to empower youth to promote their own development?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did the project achieve its goal to empower youth to become responsible citizens for peace and prosperity?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did the project achieve its three objectives?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How relevant, efficient and effective is the project compared to the earlier two phases of the G-Youth project?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What conditions still exist that contribute to the marginalization of local youth in North Eastern Kenya?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are the activities initiated/benefits promoted by the project sustainable?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What factors will influence the sustainability of the project activities/benefits?
Challenges and recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What main challenges did the project face?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the main recommendations for the project?
Long Term Benefits and Impact of the G-Youth Project (Garissa only)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the long term benefits and impact of the G-Youth project on youth?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How are the benefited provided by the G-Youth project different from what the YYC! NER project has done for youth?

Appendix C: List of Interviews & FGDs

WAJIR

Interviewees

- County Chief Officer (CO), Water Services, County Government of Wajir, Male
- County Executive Committee (CEC) Officer, Water Services, County Government of Wajir, Male
- President, CBF, Male 27
- Member, CBF, Female 21
- Chief of Wajir City, Community Leader, Male
- Sheikh (Religious Scholar), Male
- SACCO Secretary, Male 22
- SACCO Chairman of Credit Committee, Male 22
- Scholarship Recipient, Female, 21
- Scholarship Recipient, Male, 22
- Scholarship Recipient, Male, 26

FGD

- Community Members, 7 (4m/3f)
- Bunge Members, Wagalla Village, 7 males
- CBF Members, 6 (1F/5M): 23/22, 25, 34, 23, 31,
- SACCO Members, 6M: 19, 20, 24, 25, 30, 31,
- Bunge Members, 9M: 26, 25, 27, 25, 23, 25, 24, 24, 21 (from 3 different bunges)
- Bunge Members, 5 (3M/2F): 35, 28, 26/21, 18 (from 2 different bunges)
- CBF Members, 5F: 32, 24, 30, 21, 19

GARISSA

Interviews

- Community Leader, Islamic Organization, Male
- CBF Secretary, Male, 22
- CBF Vice Secretary, Male 21
- CBF Treasurer, Male 25
- SACCO Chairman, Male 27
- SACCO Vice Chairman, Male 24
- SACCO Member, Male 26
- Youth Bunge Member, Female 18
- Youth Bunge Member, Male, 23
- Community member, Chairman, Garissa Civil Society Organization Network, Male
- Assistant Principal, North Eastern Province Technical Training Institute (NEP TTI)
- Director, Department of Youth and Sports, Male

- Trainer, Bunge President and CBF Member, Male 23
- Trainer, Bunge President and CBF Member, Female 22
- Scholarship Recipient, Female, 26, Gun Bunge
- Scholarship Recipient, Male, 27, Nyuki Youth Bunge
- Scholarship Recipient, Female, 22, Bula alihmatal bunge, Ijara sub county

FGDs

- Bunge Members, 8 M: 20, 23, 19, 19, 21, 22, 20, 22 Garissa #1 (from 2 different bunges in Garissa)
- Bunge Members, 6 (5F/1M): 23, 23, 22, 18, 22, 23 Garissa #2 (from 2 different bunges in Garissa)
- Community Members, 6 (4M/2F)
- SACCO Members, 3 M: 27, 35, 31
- CBF Members 7 (3F/4M): 25, 24, 24, 25, 20, 22,
- Garissa Youth Members, 5 M: 29, 28, 20, 27, 27
- Youth trained for Radio Program, 3M: 20, 20, 22

NAIROBI

- Interview with Official in the Department of Co-operatives Ministry of Industrialization and Enterprise who carried out SACCO trainings