



ASSESSING YOUTH AND GENDER PROGRAMMING IN YEMEN

FINAL REPORT



Photo courtesy of RGP – An event held by the Youth Council

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International Business & Technical Consultants, Inc.

8618 Westwood Center Drive

Suite 220

Vienna, VA 22182

USA

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Authors: Dr. Judy A. Benjamin; Nina Etyemezian



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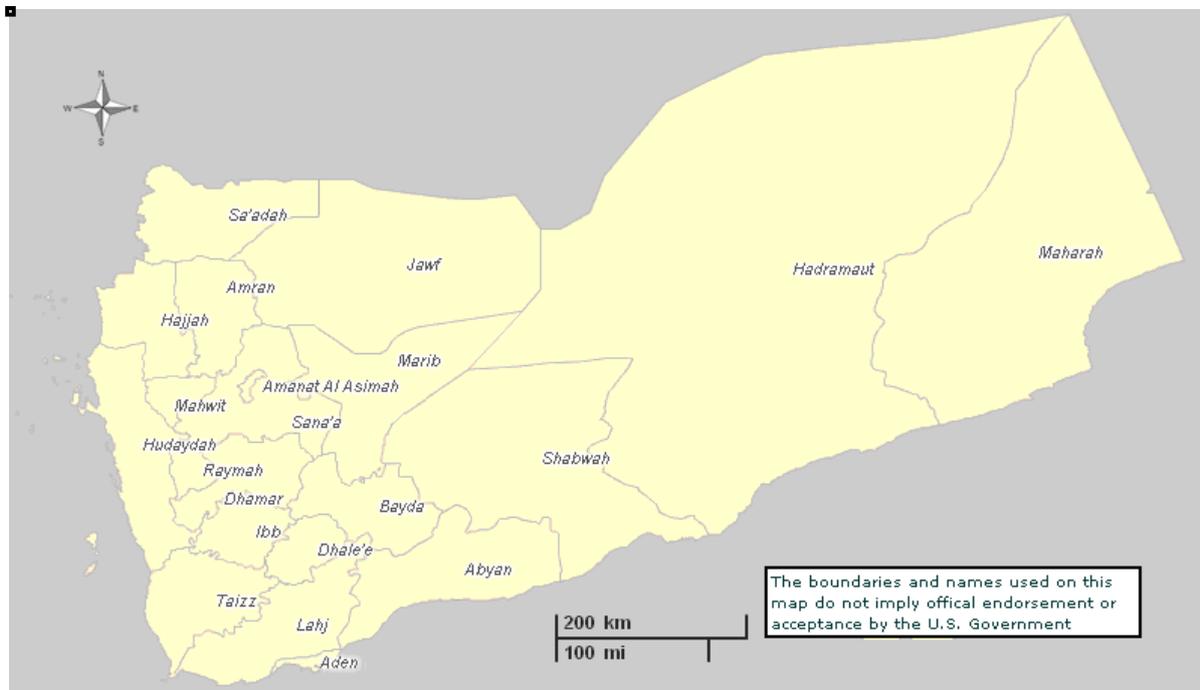
Abbreviations and Acronyms

BEST	Basic Education Support and Training (project)
CAII	Creative Associates International Incorporated
CAS	Country Assistance Strategy (World Bank)
CEDAW	Convention on Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CPI	Counterpart International
CLP	Community Livelihoods Project (USAID funded)
CBO	Community Based Organization
CSO	Civil Society Organizations
DAP	Development Assets Profile
DPPR	Development Plan for Poverty Reduction (ROYG)
DQA	Data Quality Assessment
ED	Education
EG	Economic Growth
EYSY	Engaging Youth for Stable Yemen (USAID funded)
FC	Fathers' Council
FGC	Female Genital Cutting
FGD	Focus Group Discussions
GBV	Gender Based Violence
GIZ	German Agency for Technical Cooperation
IP	Implementing Partner (USAID funded)
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
KAP	Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices
KII	Key Informant Interviews
LCP	Livelihood Competencies Profile
MC	Mothers' Council
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MENA	Middle East and North Africa (Region)
MEPI	Middle East Partnership Initiative
MFI	Microfinance Institution
MMT	Mobile Medical Teams
MOAI	Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation
MOE	Ministry of Education
MOHR	Ministry of Human Rights
MOLA	Ministry of Local Administration
MOPHP	Ministry of Public Health and Populations
MOPIC	Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation
MOSAL	Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor
MTVET	Ministry of Technical Education and Vocational Training
NDI	National Democratic Institute (USAID funded)
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
OTI	Office of Transition Initiatives
PMP	Performance Management Plan
RGP	Responsive Governance Project (USAID funded)
RH	Reproductive Health
ROYG	Republic of Yemen Government
SC	Students' Council



SFD	Social Fund for Development
SME	Small and Medium Enterprise
SWEMNA	The Status of Women in the Middle East and North Africa (report)
TBI	The Bilqees Initiative
TOT	Training of Trainers
TVET	Technical Vocational Education and Training
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USG	United States Government
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
VAW	Violence Against Women
WDD	Women's Development Departments
WNC	Women's National Committee
YEP	Yemen Empowerment Project (USAID funded)
YLDI	Youth Livelihood Development Index
YMEP	Yemen Monitoring and Evaluation Project (USAID funded)
YMN	Yemen Microfinance Network
YSI	Yemen Stabilization Initiative (USAID/OTI)

Map of the Republic of Yemen





Executive Summary

The purpose of this Youth and Gender Assessment is to assess Yemen's youth programming and make appropriate recommendations for future USAID projects. The assessment, which was commissioned under the Yemen Monitoring and Evaluation Project (YMEP), examined the assumptions that support relevant USAID projects, and identified linkages to the objectives of USAID/Yemen's strategic planning.

The YMEP Assessment Team collected survey data and conducted interviews with all Implementing Partners (IPs) and relevant UN agencies, international and local nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), other donors, and key stakeholders. Prior to conducting the field portion of the assessment, the Assessment Team conducted an extensive literature review. Documents reviewed¹ included reports, studies, and strategies from IP projects and international and national NGOs, UN agencies, the World Bank, Republic of Yemen Government, the U.S. Government, and other donors.

In addition to the literature review, the YMEP Assessment Team conducted field research and interviews from April 17 through June 3, 2011. Two U.S.-based consultants, a Team Leader and Co-Researcher, traveled to Yemen to conduct key informant interviews and to work with and coordinate the work of Grassroots Up, a Yemen NGO contracted to carry out the data collection. While political violence that flared up across Sana'a at the end of May, resulted in the US consultants' evacuation, Grassroots Up was still able to conduct their data collection. The YMEP Assessment Team's research methods included using gender-segregated focus group discussions (FGD) and key informant interviews (KII). The USAID/Yemen Mission, which funded this assessment, at the time of the Assessment was working in 10² key governorates,³ from which five were selected for data collection. Selection criteria for the governorates included: ongoing implementation of USAID-supported projects, geographic diversity, a balance of both heavily tribal and less-tribally influenced communities, and sufficient security to permit access for study. The YMEP Assessment Teams collected data in Abyan, Aden, Amran, Marib, and Sana'a.

Grassroots Up recruited experienced data collectors from the survey's target sites within the five selected governorates. A total of five field data-collection teams collected the survey data; each six-person team consisted of three men and three women. The teams attended an intensive four-day training in Sana'a on the assignment's objectives and in the use of the survey instruments. The teams pre- and pilot-tested the survey instruments in Sana'a following the training, making appropriate revisions based on the test results.

Violence in Sana'a and around the country intensified just as the teams deployed to the various governorates. The logistical difficulties and the danger caused by widespread conflict caused delays and forced some substitution of research sites, but the teams managed to conduct 69 of 78 planned key informant interviews, as well as 36 of the 40 planned FGDs; in total, the assessment surveyed 333 respondents. The sampling for the interviews and FGDs separated youth into two categories: "educated youth," which consisted of those who had

¹ Annex H lists references and Annex C provides an annotated bibliography for key referenced documents.

² While USAID was targeting 10 key governorates at the start of this Assessment period, the geographical priorities of USAID Yemen activities is adapting to emerging realities, as a result of the protests, uprisings and recent economic decline, and will likely not remain confined to these 10 governorates in the coming months.

³ Abyan, Aden, Hajjah, Al Dhale'e, Al Jawf, Amran, Lahj, Marib, Sana'a and Shabwah.



completed their secondary level education; and “uneducated youth,” which were composed of those who had not completed their 9th year (the level required by the Ministry of Education), as well as those who had not attended school at all or only for short periods.

The YMEP Assessment Team reviewed existing projects in USAID/Yemen’s portfolio by examining project reports and interviewing staff based in Sana’a. At the time of the assessment, security conditions did not permit the team to visit project sites. Moreover, concerns for the security of project staff working on the Yemen Stabilization Initiative and the Community Livelihoods Project activities precluded the field data collectors from interviewing key staff at project implementation sites. Despite these limitations, the YMEP Assessment Team analyzed the following USAID-funded projects which include youth and gender focused programming throughout their activities (please refer to Appendix D, which describes these programs in more detail):

- Community Livelihoods Project (CLP) implemented by Creative Associates;
- Responsive Governance Project (RGP) implemented by Counterpart International;
- Yemen Stabilization Initiative (YSI) funded by the Office of Transition Initiatives (OTI) and implemented in partnership with the International Organization for Migration (IOM).
- Engaging Youth for Stable Yemen (EYSY) implemented by Mercy Corps;
- Youth Community-based Conflict Mitigation (Y-CCM) implemented by Partners for Democratic Change-Yemen (PDC);
- Promoting Youth for Civic Engagement (PYCE) implemented by AMIDEAST;
- Basic Education Support and Training (BEST) implemented by Academy for Educational Development (AED);
- Strengthening the Role of Youth in Conflict Mitigation implemented by National Democratic Institute (NDI);

Youth Exclusion, Unemployment, and Stabilization

Yemen’s current economic status, most notably its high unemployment and labor force that far exceeds the abilities of either the public or private sectors to support it, is heavily rooted in the period following the first Gulf War in the early 1990s. Following that conflict, more than a million workers were forcibly repatriated from Saudi Arabia and neighboring countries. The loss of remittances, combined with the arrival back home of a huge labor pool that could not be absorbed into the job market, fundamentally altered job possibilities for younger, less experienced people.

Separately, Yemen’s youth population has swelled to the point where 75 percent of Yemen’s population is age 24 or under⁴. Factors contributing to this “youth bulge” have included

⁴ Ragui, A. et al. (2009) *Youth Exclusion in Yemen: Tackling the Twin Deficits of Human Development and Natural Resources*. Wolfensohn Center for Development.

Yemen's birthrate (at 6.2⁵ children per woman, the highest in the region), conditions fueled by extreme widespread poverty, inadequate access to child spacing information, and ongoing cultural norms that tend toward larger families, among others. Ironically, even positive developments, such as progress in eradicating certain diseases through aggressive immunization and public health education campaigns, which brought a reduction in infant and child mortality, have inadvertently contributed to the emergence of Yemen's youth bulge.

Remarks expressed in this assessment's FGDs demonstrated the consequences of the aforementioned economic and population-based factors. Young men, for example, often have difficulty moving through the normal transition path from school to employment to marriage and family. Instead, they postpone their adulthood, many spending their time in idleness, socializing with their peers, chewing *qat*. Most young women, even after attaining a secondary education, cannot find steady⁶ employment.

Young people interviewed for this assessment expressed disgust at the level of corruption in the government and the bribes required for most services, especially when applying for highly-coveted government jobs. The assessment found that 91 percent of youth preferred a job with the government over the private sector because of the former's perceived security (e.g., in youth FGDs, the notion that the government would take care of them if they became ill – or look after their families if they died – was



expressed frequently). The preference for government jobs was prevalent in all governorates except in Sana'a, where 38 percent of male participants wanted jobs in the private sector because of higher salary prospects.

Mercy Corps – Training session for youth and community leaders in conflict management, fighting corruption, and communication skills. Lahj and Aden governorates. (Photo courtesy of Mercy Corps)

If government jobs were unattainable, an overwhelming majority (91 percent) of youth interviewed expressed interest in entrepreneurship. Without access to soft credit for purchasing start-up supplies, however, most youth could not pursue this option. Of the female respondents, 18 percent reported lack of support from family as a reason they could not start their own businesses. Apart from the financial hardships that come with being unemployed, our interviews suggested that youth joblessness and disillusionment may increase susceptibility to engaging in illegal activity.⁷ Although there is also widespread concern that terrorist groups might similarly recruit youth who need money, terrorist groups were not mentioned during the YMEP assessment surveys.

The on-going projects implemented by the partners, along with findings from this assessment confirm that Yemen's disproportionate percentage of youth in its population has a bearing on stabilization⁸ as well as on more traditional development. The correlation between youth

⁵ CIA World Factbook 2009

⁶ "Steady" and "regular" employment refers to jobs with monthly salaries as opposed to short-term work without benefits.

⁷ Youth interviewed in Marib said they participated in illegal activities to earn money. Among examples reported were setting up road blocks and cutting high voltage cables for various conflict factions.

⁸ Stabilization efforts focus on providing targeted assistance that most effectively decreases levels of violent conflict or the potential for violent conflict.

joblessness and instability has been noted by organizations⁹ working with youth in Yemen, as well as within literature specific to the region. Research by an implementing partner,¹⁰ for example, noted that youth are more likely than adults to initiate conflict or break established truces.

Under the right circumstances, a large youth population can be a boost to economic development and stabilization efforts. USAID-funded projects currently target youth, but additional specifically targeted programming is needed to provide young people with quick and direct benefits and longer-term prospects for economic development. As one leading Yemeni gender and youth specialist noted during an interview, “Results take time to achieve when working with youth. Too many international donors expect results in one or two years. Programs that run five years or more would produce better outcomes than short-term efforts.”

Key Findings

The key findings from this assessment that emerged from the research methods used—key informant interviews, FGDs, questionnaires, review of program reports, and a review of current Yemen literature—reflect the urgent need to respond to youth’s current issues, especially given the momentum gained as a result of the recent 2011 protests. The negative impact of severe economic stress, isolation, unemployment and political uncertainty that grip Yemen today has a particularly devastating effect on young people.

- 1. Unemployment:** Yemeni youth find themselves in a quagmire of joblessness and pervasive poverty. Those interviewed expressed feelings of hopelessness that they will ever be able to have decent jobs so they may have a life, marry and start families. Many say they are in a state of limbo, forced to postpone their adulthood far beyond the normal transition from school to job to adult life. The assessment found that only 10 percent of young people surveyed are employed in a salaried job. Of the educated¹¹ youth surveyed, only 12 percent of the males and 9 percent of the females were employed. In the case of uneducated youth, none of the females had jobs and only 8 percent of males had salaried jobs. Most relied on income through selling things when they could. When asked, “How do you get money?” a frequent response was, “Selling *qat*.”
- 2. Difficulties getting jobs:** Both educated and uneducated youth said that even when they have the skills, they must also have connections (i.e. know someone) to get a job, or they must pay a bribe. Often, the poor cannot afford to pay bribes nor are they well networked to know where to find job opportunities. Twenty-five percent of those surveyed reported that the biggest obstacle in getting a job is the demand for bribes or a requirement to have connections. Poor youth often have no ability to overcome such obstacles.
- 3. Lack of marketable skills:** Many youth expressed frustration that their education did not prepare them with skills needed for employment. Uneducated youth asked for technical skills training to prepare them for trades or to start small businesses, such as

⁹ CHF International quoted in an OTI report (July 2011), “Unemployed youth are one of the drivers of instability in Yemen. Although many have finished secondary school or even university, most of them do not have the necessary skills to meet the demand of the job market. Some towns are posting 70 percent unemployment rates. Many experts agree recent unrest has been instigated by unemployed youth, especially males.”

¹⁰ NDI research cited in April - June 2011 Quarterly Report.

¹¹ *Educated youth*, refers to students who have completed at least their secondary level education; *uneducated youth* refers to those who have not completed the 9 years of compulsory education or have not entered school at all.

plumbing, small appliance repairs, or construction trades. Many complained that the education they received was impractical and therefore wasted time.

4. **Lack of life skills:** Both educated and uneducated youth need life skills to enable them to be more productive. Findings from FGDs revealed that youth are eager to learn basic life skills to enable them to plan, to manage their lives, to know how to market products, and to acquire language and computer skills.
5. **Political life:** Youth are disillusioned with government leadership. On the one hand, they want a total change in government; on the other, youth are fearful of total chaos if the current government falls, and the foreign forces they believe will take over Yemen. They would prefer reform of the present government. They are quick to blame problems on “the other side.” For example, youth interviewed in Tahreer Square expressed the desire to destroy the “opposition” (i.e., students demonstrating in Change Square), stating “We’ll crush them.”
6. **Gender roles:** While evidence suggests that the social status of women has improved somewhat over the past five years,¹² women and girls still cope with lingering repressive cultural practices, such as restrictions on their mobility, which limits their economic and educational opportunities; physical, verbal and psychological abuse in the form of gender-based violence; early marriages; and so forth.¹³ On the other hand, the highly visible participation of Yemeni women in the 2011 public demonstrations, as was seen throughout the Middle East, speaks volumes about the possible changes in women’s lives and about their willingness to let their voices be heard in public places. Likewise, we are seeing that severe economic pressure is causing some families to allow women and girls to work outside the home to bring in crucial, additional income.¹⁴ Women were thankful for female participation in the public demonstrations, and the fact that they spoke out. As one young woman said, “We have much to accomplish, but we will never go back to the way it was. A door has been opened for us.”
7. **Early marriages:** Despite concerted efforts by leading Yemeni women activists to influence parliamentarians to pass a law for a higher legal age for marriage, even after putting the issue on a ballot, lawmakers refused to vote to change cultural practices.¹⁵ Respondents noted that the age of marriage, particularly for girls, varies around the country, but they are seeing that girls are marrying even younger these days. They noted that this was happening in Aden, for example, and attributed this to reducing financial stresses on households.¹⁶ Statistics showing very high maternal



BEST - Heads of Mother’s Council conduct awareness campaign about early marriage to girls of grades 8-11, Rayma Governorate. (Photo courtesy of AED)

¹² JICA Yemen: Country Gender Profile 2009

¹³ Women’s Rights in the Middle East and North Africa 2010

¹⁴ Youth Empowerment in Yemen Baseline Report, Save the Children, 2009

¹⁵ Women’s Rights in the Middle East and North Africa 2010

¹⁶ Marriage in the Arab World, 2005

mortality rates (430 per 100,000) and high infant mortality¹⁷ (82 per 100,000 live births) are also linked to early-age pregnancies that result from early marriage. The assessment found that in some areas, the age of marriage has actually gone down even more than in the past because of household poverty.

- 8. Youth discontent/disenfranchisement:** Interviews with young demonstrators in Sana'a on both sides of the political divide revealed a pervasive frustration with life, a lack of both trust and optimism for the future, and a suspicion of the opposite side. Those who supported the President felt the opposition wanted to destroy the Constitution and overthrow the government; they also felt that the protestors were being guided by outsiders.¹⁸ Youth in Change Square said they were there primarily to stop corruption in government so people could have a better life, better education and more freedom. About 60 percent of youth participants in FGDs said that youth perpetuate conflict; 40 percent said that youth try to stop conflict. They saw the role of men as protecting their country and families; the role of women was to help keep the situation calm and peaceful (these views were shared almost equally by male and female youth). Such perceptions of these roles speak to social hierarchies and gendered roles, which have a bearing on conflict mitigation.

Youth expressed a great deal of concern about the political situation and ongoing conflict in Yemen. Their comments showed that youth are worried about stability in their country and are afraid of civil war. The question is whether or not their strong feelings, along with new found social activism for many, mean that a segment of youth are becoming engaged and moving away from the "disaffected" youth image.

Key Recommendations

- Based on an analysis of education trends, development programs targeting youth and youth-targeted donor efforts, the YMEP Assessment Team recommends using a standard age range of "14-24 years" as the desired range for USAID youth-targeted programs unless project mandates involve targeting older cohorts.
- All USAID funded research processes should be comprehensively documented and all completed data collection instruments, captured data and analyses should be archived by the organization responsible for the study for a period of four to five years following the study. Should USAID wish to conduct DQAs retrospectively, this requirement should be incorporated into the contractual obligations of the funding recipient.
- A standardized mini- youth and gender assessment tool can be developed based on existing tools that IPs have successfully used. The aim would be to adopt an easy to use and simple tool that leads to a rapid assessment with the aim of formalizing assessment findings to inform the planning process. Assessment findings would lead to a quick social analysis (specifically a youth and gender analysis) of each new district or area where programs are to be implemented.
- Investments in the formal education system are essential for any country's future. Given Yemen's, economic, social and equity challenges, such investment is even more essential.

¹⁷ World Bank CAS for Yemen, 2010-2013

¹⁸ "Outsiders" refers here to foreign individuals but no specific nationality was mentioned.



Activities to be focused on should include improved access for and retention of girls in the basic education system, which has the potential to yield very positive results over time, and will also contribute to the overall stability of the country. Results, however, are long-term rather than immediate.

- Investing in the vocational education sector remains a key development input for the challenges facing the country. Although it is not a panacea for the country's youth exclusion problems that include unemployment, poverty and political exclusion, vocational education can help many young Yemeni men and women gain the skills to become employable. Given the current urgency around youth demands, the YMEP Assessment Team recommends that IPs (especially CLP) continue to provide accelerated training programs designed to prepare youth to work in sectors with higher job potential in conjunction with a rapid labor market analysis to determine the best job possibilities in the current Yemen labor market.
- Life skills training for youth, both male and female, is also an important input to couple with most skills development activities targeted at youth. This activity is already being done within CLP and OTI youth activities and it is recommended that this component continue. Life skills training needs to be focused on building self-confidence, mitigating conflict, building leadership skills and introducing initiative and self-employment concepts. USAID and its IPs can build on existing life skills training programs that they have developed to have a standardized program that can be used by all IPs. In the longer term, IPs can build the capacity of the appropriate central and local institutions that can be responsible for amending, adapting and disseminating life skills training programs at the local level.
- The effectiveness and responsiveness of programs targeted at populations with lesser access to services and benefits, in this case youth and women, is improved when implemented through the local government level, through local CSOs and community based organizations (CBOs) and in coordination with national offices of the ROYG.
- Continued capacity building of civil society organizations and community based organizations to assess needs, develop plans and strengthen the service delivery system at the local level. Strengthening selected NGOs' capacity to provide services to youth and to have youth participate in the development programs (i.e. youth units within each NGO per Save the Children's YEP) is an additional area for continued investment.
- USAID IPs can identify new emerging youth NGOs in urban centers that are committed to increasing the participation of youth in the development dynamics of the country. IPs would provide technical support and training to the organizations and their leaders in a range of organizational development skills such as advocacy and lobbying, strategic planning, management and establishing networks with other NGOs to create constituencies around particular objectives.
- As needed, modify policies and strategies to improve the lives of young people that account for the disruption in the normal cycle of transition—school to work in particular where youth get stuck in a jobless state—and are forced to put on hold their transition from work to marriage/family that is a normal and important part of Yemen culture. An examination of the current economic dynamics of marriage in Yemen, along with the



effect of the attitudes of parents would be a useful contribution to the literature and help in the understanding of the influences and pressures affecting Yemeni youth.

- Develop a comprehensive, unified vision for mainstreaming gender into USAID's overall development impact. USAID could articulate the goal, for example, of increasing investments to programs that pay special attention to women, and set basic objectives that address participation aspects of development.
- CLP, RGP and OTI, as the largest and most comprehensive projects currently funded by USAID, should continue to develop project level gender strategies that tackle equality issues for women, improving the status of women and defining what that means at the project level. This is a long-term goal since the final objective is to change behaviors and attitudes around women's access to and use of services, resources and opportunities.
- Ensure that young women and young men – those who are to benefit from IP activities – participate in the identification and development of these activities. The YMEP Assessment Team also recommends that IPs ensure they have youth working on project design and holding leadership roles in implementation of its activities.



1 Introduction

This Youth and Gender Assessment, working through the USAID-funded Yemen Monitoring and Evaluation Project (YMEP), aims to assess current youth programming and to make recommendations for future programming. This work follows an initial assessment of youth issues that was commissioned by USAID/Yemen and completed in 2008.¹⁹ The current work not only updates information from the initial assessment but also adds a gender analysis in its assessment of current USAID programming and lessons learned: it provides guidance for successful youth programming and dealing with commonly occurring challenges.

The data collection was carried out in five governorates during a highly insecure period in late May and early June 2011 (IBTCI evacuated its US consultants at the end of May). The YMEP Assessment Team, consisting of two US consultants and a Yemeni nongovernmental organization (NGO), Grassroots Up, began the assessment on April 17, 2011. The fieldwork was completed June 3, 2011 as a result of delays caused by a lack of security on the ground as well as fuel shortages, which reduced the team's mobility.

USAID/Yemen used the 2008 assessment as a reference resource in developing the Mission's 2010-2012 Strategy. Since 2008, unfolding events have confirmed the importance of strengthening our understanding not only of the roles youth have played, but also how complex gender issues influence stabilization efforts. The participation of male and female youth in sit-ins and political protests—both against President Saleh's government and in support of the government—underscores the necessity of having updated information about youth and gender, and the importance of applying a gender lens to both the Mission's Strategy and its programs.

¹⁹ Yemen Cross-Sectoral Youth Assessment: Final Report, November 2008



2 Background

2.1 Yemen's Challenges

Major events in Yemen during the 1990s, including the reunification of the country, the first Gulf War, and the civil war in 1994, had a devastating effect on the economy of Yemen. These events also worsened Yemen's already poor social indicators, which have still not recovered significantly even two decades later.²⁰ Social reform programs such as the Social Fund for Development were meant to build up the private sector and develop a market-based economy. However, Yemen remains at the bottom of the economic rankings in the Middle East/North Africa (MENA) region. Yemen also is last in the region on social indicators, and was ranked 133 out of 169 countries listed under the UN Development Index in 2010.

Yemen has many challenges and very limited natural resources; since reunification, the country has struggled with poverty and lack of social and economic development and has not resolved its north/south conflict. The Government's attention to an increase in armed conflict in the north of Yemen, which has worsened living conditions over the past five years, and the increasing push in the south for secession, have enabled the growing presence of Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP). The influential tribal and patriarchal social structures contribute to the complexity of Yemen's governance systems. Poor delivery of basic services to Yemenis has exacerbated the situation in Yemen further. Beginning in January 2011, as the burgeoning youth movement spearheaded public demonstrations, clashes with government representatives and failed negotiations to restrict the power of the current government as part of the broader "Arab Spring."

Following the Arab Spring uprising in Yemen, at this writing, President Saleh remains out of the country for medical reasons. Several young Yemenis expressed concern about their country's immediate future and there is uncertainty about leadership within the government expressed by both sides of the protests. Despite severe shortages around the country including electricity, petrol and cooking fuel, Yemenis are managing to maintain their lives under hardship conditions. The longer range future augers an even worse situation ahead as fresh water sources dry up and gas and oil reserves are depleted. Clearly, innovative ways of addressing the issues associated with the disproportionate youth population's challenges are needed.

Demographics and Basic Facts

As the facts in the ensuing box indicate, Yemen is unlikely to reach key Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by 2015. In 2010, Yemen's population stood at 24,658,362, with an annual population growth rate of 2.7 percent. Yemen is a mostly rural country, with only 26 percent of the population living in urban areas.²¹ Subsistence agriculture is the norm in the country, and *qat* production (*qat* is a mild narcotic plant, the leaves of which are chewed by more than 72 percent of Yemeni men and an estimated 33 percent of women) takes up a large percentage of arable land, consuming scarce water resources. Because of

²⁰ "Yemen - Background", Bureau New Eastern Affairs, US State Department, May 20, 2011 and Youth Exclusion in Yemen: Tackling the Twin Deficits of Human Development and Natural Resources, Ragui Assaad, et al. Wolfensohn Center for Development, Nov 2009

²¹ USAID Country Health Statistical Report: Yemen. May 2010.

Yemen's widespread habitual use of *qat* and its role in the social and cultural fabric of the country, many young people interviewed said they are able to earn money selling *qat*.

□

Yemen Demographic Data

- 40 percent of Yemen's 23 million people live in poverty on less than \$2 a day; one-third face chronic hunger.
- Yemen is the region's poorest country, ranking 133 of 169 countries on the 2010 Human Development Index.
- Number of children enrolled in basic education: approximately 4.3 million (2007).
- Infant mortality is 82 per 1,000 live births, child mortality is 65 per 1,000 live births, and maternal mortality is 430 per 100,000 live births.
- Nationwide, only 47 percent of households have access to electricity; in rural areas, only 20 percent have access to electricity.
- Water is scarce in Yemen, and 90 percent of Yemen's rapidly depleting groundwater reserves are used for agriculture.
- 72 percent of men and 33 percent of women use *qat*, further exacerbating existing challenges to improved health and productivity.
- Yemen's birthrate is 6.2 births per woman, resulting in a demographic youth bulge: 50 percent of the population is aged 15 years or younger.
- Yemen's per capita GDP is US\$930.

Data source: World Bank's CAS for Yemen, 2010-2013 and UN Human Development Index 2010

Partly in response to international conventions and pressures, the government of Yemen has developed policies and legislation to alleviate poverty, improve health and education services for children, and ensure rights for women who care for children. However, government programs have not adequately followed through on these commitments and have largely failed to respond to the demands and needs of Yemen's population—a situation that has exacerbated the population's discontent and is one of the primary reasons for recent unrest and demonstrations in favor of ousting President Saleh.

Health

Less than half of Yemen's population of 23 million people has access to basic health services, a problem made all the more complicated in rural areas by widely scattered and remote geographical locations. The challenge is to both improve the quality of health services and to get those health services – and the supporting logistics of medical supplies and drugs – to communities not served by fixed health facilities that are unreachable for around half the rural population. Health coverage is only 25 percent in rural areas, compared to 80 percent in urban areas. Only 22 percent of pregnant women receive prenatal care from a trained health worker.²²



Low access to health services is a major challenge. These seventh grade girls are conducting an awareness campaign about cleanliness in their school, part of the BEST program in Hodeida Governorate (Photo courtesy of BEST)

The child mortality rate in Yemen is 55.1 deaths for each 1,000 live births²³, the highest rate in the Middle East and North Africa region. At 58 percent for children under 5, Yemen also has the second-highest rate in the world of stunting at 51 percent, a measure of child malnutrition for height and age. Maternal mortality is the second highest in MENA after Djibouti.

²² National Strategy for Women's Development, 2006-2015, WNC

²³ CIA World Fact Book 2011

Agriculture

Currently, Yemen has little potential for agricultural self-sufficiency. Most of its food products are imported. *Qat* is the main cash crop, but very little *qat* is exported because it is highly perishable. Industrial farmers grow fruits and vegetables using irrigation techniques, but cannot meet all of domestic demand. Agriculture is the predominant sector in the labor force, yet only three percent of Yemen's land is arable. Employment in the agricultural sector accounts for 94 percent of female and 70 percent of male workers²⁴. Gender segregation has traditionally made it difficult for women to gain access to agricultural extension that is provided by men. In order to reach a critical number of women extension agents, it will be necessary to increase the number of women extension workers trained under existing CLP programming, and to place more of these women in extension jobs. One of CLP's specific objectives in this regard is: "To provide much-needed experience and training for rural women to generate new and enhanced family food and income generation opportunities."

2.2 Yemen's Youth Bulge Issue

Yemen's burgeoning youth population is linked to a number of health, economic and social factors, including the country's birthrate (at 6.2²⁵ children per woman, the highest in the region), conditions fueled by extreme widespread poverty, inadequate access to child spacing information, and ongoing cultural norms that tend toward larger families, among others. Other developments, such as the eradication of certain diseases through aggressive immunization and public health education campaigns, which also led to a reduction in infant and child mortality, have inadvertently contributed to the emergence of Yemen's youth bulge.

Separately, Yemen's economy is still feeling the effects of the post-Gulf War period, when more than a million workers were forcibly repatriated from Saudi Arabia and neighboring countries. The loss of remittances, combined with the arrival back home of a huge labor pool that could not be absorbed into the job market, has fundamentally altered job possibilities for the large youth population that is continuing to grow.

The aforementioned effects have combined to make Yemeni youth feel excluded from economic opportunity and increasingly weighed down by a range of negative economic, demographic, political, and social realities. The main stress factors²⁶ for Yemeni youth include:

- a high rate of unemployment among youth;
- population pressures and the youth bulge;
- endemic illiteracy and poor educational prospects and attainment;
- health concerns such as high infant mortality linked to early marriage and childbearing and poor nutrition for children;
- a significant gender gap in terms of economic participation, educational attainment and political empowerment;
- a general lack of hope about the future and chances of earning good salaries; and
- increasing disparities in poverty between urban and rural areas.

²⁴ Thematic Supervision in Agriculture Projects in Yemen, World Bank, Gender & Development, 2011.

²⁵ CIA World Factbook 2009

²⁶ Yemen Cross-Sectoral Youth Assessment: Final Report, 2008.

The lack of education-to-employment transition and the rising costs of marriage and raising a family also contribute to the feelings of exclusion among Yemen's youth, especially among young urban men transitioning to adulthood. *Qat* consumption also hampers youth development: although *Qat* is a longstanding cultural institution throughout the country, it has been shown to have a negative impact on income and overall productivity.

A recent study on youth exclusion in Yemen found that being employed was not strongly correlated with educational attainment, although educational attainment did have a strong influence on the *type* of wage work Yemeni youth were able to secure. Unemployment was highest among men with a primary- through secondary-level education. The small percentage of women in Yemen who work for wages were highly educated and urban, as compared with most Yemeni women, who have less than a secondary-level education and who have never participated in the formal labor market.²⁷ In fact, gender inequalities are particularly marked among youth: 8.8 percent of Yemeni boys in the 15-19 year old age group are economically inactive, compared with 51.9 percent of girls in the same age group. For the 20-24 year old age groups, 8.6 percent of young men are inactive, compared with 65.5 percent of young women.²⁸

Small enterprises dominate the economic landscape in Yemen, but they do not have the capacity to generate a large demand for labor. Yemen's investment climate is not conducive to private sector development due to government fiscal and business development environment that constricts business growth. The inability of Yemen's education system (whether formal, informal, or vocational) to prepare young people for the labor market also contributes to unemployment. Employers have reported general skills shortages in English language, accounting, and computer capabilities.

Both donors and the Republic of Yemen Government (ROYG), through the Ministry of Technical Education and Vocational Training (MTEVT), have invested heavily in building and equipping new vocational education centers. But while fully six percent of the education budget is dedicated to TEVT, only 0.2 percent of enrollments are to be found there, and those who graduate face challenges in finding employment.²⁹ The system serves two percent of the basic education graduates and six percent of secondary school graduates. High dropout rates persist in these institutions, and employers complain of being dissatisfied with the skills of TEVT graduates.³⁰ Investment in female human capital is generally limited in Yemen: the vocational education arena shows profession biases, gender biases in the curriculum, a pronounced lack of courses that appeal to women (so-called "feminine" courses) and a dearth of female teachers in TEVT institutions. Women's underrepresentation



Young women at OTI sponsored youth summer camps in Hajjah City participate in computer training. (Photo courtesy of OTI)

²⁷ Youth Exclusion in Yemen: Tackling the Twin Deficits of Human Development and Natural Resources, 2009.

²⁸ Silatech: Phase 1 Pilot Country Environment Analysis – Yemen, 2008

²⁹ Silatech: Phase 1 Pilot Country Environment Analysis – Yemen, 2008

³⁰ Education Assessment Report, RGP, March 2011

in education is exacerbated by the general preference of Yemeni families to have their daughters educated in unisex schools past the age of puberty.³¹

Vocational education, apprenticeships/internships and job placements for at-risk youth activities are part of CLP's economic development component. The objective is to provide market-based vocational training along with life skills to enable youth to become employed. A number of private companies participate by accepting interns and providing training on plumbing and painting. For example, women interned at Mohammed Hayel Hospital and many were subsequently offered employment by the hospital. The successful results seen under the CLP contrasts with the level of quality currently found at the government technical training facilities.

2.3 Gender Dimensions of Exclusion in Yemen

Yemeni women face a broad range of additional challenges in their daily lives. Established cultural attitudes, patriarchal structures, and Islamic fundamentalism traditionally have relegated Yemeni women to a subservient role in the family and community. Women are subject to various forms of violence and discrimination, including domestic abuse, deprivation of education, early and/or forced marriage, restrictions on freedom of movement, exclusion from decision-making roles and processes, denial of inheritance, deprivation of health services, an female genital cutting (FGC) as a health issue for many Yemeni women and girls.

Although Yemen's inheritance laws follow *shari'a* laws, which allow women to inherit half the share of a brother, women do not have control over their land—especially in rural areas. Through a combination of poor education, lack of awareness or knowledge of their property and inheritance rights, women relinquish management of lands they own to male members of their families.³²

Yemen also remains the only country in the world to have closed less than 50 percent of its gender gap,³³ the differences in equality between men and women reported on by the World Economic Forum in its Global Gender Gap Index since 2006. Among the 134 countries in this year's report, Yemen was ranked last – for the fourth consecutive year.

From the perspective of the country's recent history, prospects for Yemeni women are not promising. After the country's unification in 1990 and the ensuing civil war, Yemen's constitution was modified with respect to family law, incorporating more conservative and gender-biased provisions. These changes were considered a setback for southern Yemeni women, who had previously enjoyed legal equality in family affairs.

Although Yemen has signed the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), it ranks last on the Global Gender Index of the World Economic Forum as well as on United Nations Development Programme's (UNDP) gender empowerment measures. Until a decade or so ago, the concept of "gender" was virtually nonexistent in Yemen. Through a concerted effort of sensitization, promotion and discussions, gender has become more mainstreamed into political and civil society circles.³⁴

³¹ Silatech: Phase 1 Pilot Country Environment Analysis – Yemen, 2008

³² Yemen: Country Gender Profile, JICA, March 2009.

³³ World Economic Forum Report 2009.

³⁴ From interview with Houria Mashhour, ex-Chairwoman of the Women's National Committee.

Education

In 2004/2005, the gross enrollment rate for basic education was 63 percent for girls and 88 percent for boys. However, gaps in enrollment between boys and girls increase as students enter the higher grade levels, and even fewer girls enroll in secondary schooling. Differences are also pronounced when comparing gross enrollment in rural versus urban areas, especially among rural females. For example, in 2003, enrollment for children for the 6-11 age group split across gender and geographic lines as follows: urban male (84.6 percent); urban female (83.7 percent); rural male (70.3 percent) and rural female (47.9 percent). Enrollment rates for the 12-14 age groups in urban areas were almost comparable for both boys and girls. The enrollment rate for rural boys was 82.8 percent, but was only 41.4 percent among rural girls.³⁵ Girls begin to drop out of school in the fourth grade, and throughout the rest of the formal education system, the dropout rate for girls remains high compared to that of boys. The main reasons girls drop out or never enroll in the basic education³⁶ include:

- a lack of schools, particularly gender-segregated schools;
- a lack of female teachers (a major issue, since cultural norms and parental protectiveness preclude girls from being taught by men after reaching puberty—usually in the fourth or fifth grades);
- parents' low aspirations and expectations for their daughters' education (which dovetails with the cultural traditions of early marriage in Yemen);
- lack of facilities (functioning latrines, access to water), which affects girls' school attendance more so than boys;
- low self-esteem resulting from unfair treatment by teachers. The Safe School Manuals and training materials implemented through the BEST program in USAID's supported schools address the issue of teacher/pupil relationships and gender sensitization. MOE has ownership of these materials and should be encouraged to continue to use them in all basic education schools. Studies suggest that teachers discriminate against girls by calling more often on boys, having boys sit in the front of the class, and providing boys with praise and attention while ignoring girls; and
- verbal harassment from both male students and teachers (which exacerbates the issues noted above).



Lack of access to water is affects the girls' school attendance more than boys. Here, Mothers Council members provide drinking water for girls in at a school in Houdaidah, 7 July 2011 (Photo courtesy of BEST)

³⁵ Accelerating Girls' Education in Yemen: Rethinking Teachers' Recruitment and School Distribution, UNICEF.

³⁶ The Joint Lessons Learned Assessment of The Basic Education Support and Training (BEST) Project

At the secondary level, the net enrollment rate is 49 percent for boys and 26 percent for girls. The Development Plan for Poverty Reduction (DPPR) has a goal of increasing the number of girls completing a high school certificate to 36 percent.³⁷

*Yemeni Children's Educational attainment by gender (percentages)*³⁸

	No formal education	Less than primary education	Primary	Intermediate	Secondary	Post secondary
Female	56	14	7	8	12	2
Male	18	16	9	16	30	11

Female: n = 1,993

Male: n = 508

Totals do not add to 100% percent because of rounding

Despite the aforementioned figures, Yemen has made great strides in increasing enrollment in basic education overall, and in narrowing the ratio of males to females in enrollment rates. Educational attainment rates are much higher for young people: only 29 percent of respondent women ages 18-24 have no formal schooling compared to 98 percent of women 65 years or older.³⁹ Illiteracy rates also are markedly lower for Yemen's youth than for their parents. The literacy rate for the 15-24 age group is 93 percent for males and 67 percent for females. Adult literacy, on the other hand, is 77 percent for men and 40 percent for women.⁴⁰ Still, women's representation in the education sector labor force remains limited. Women's share of the education labor force is 20.4 percent, as compared to 79.6 percent for men. As for women headmasters, only 4.9 percent of those positions are held by women.⁴¹

The Ministry of Education (MOE) developed a National Basic Education Development Strategy in 2002 that aims to increase basic education enrollment to 90 percent by 2010 and 95 percent by 2015. The MOE also has been working to reduce the gender gap in educational attainment a further 11 percent by 2010.⁴² The MOE and the MTEVT have both established a Girls' Education Division in the MTEVT, which is almost exclusively supported by the German Agency for Technical Cooperation (GIZ). Nonetheless, despite gains in gross enrollment ratios over the past two decades and concentrated efforts to expand the basic education system, Yemen will not achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) of 100% primary school completion and parity between boys and girls enrollment by 2015.⁴³

Economic Participation

Many Yemeni women are employed informally in agriculture, an economic sector with low productivity and incomes. For educated women, the preferred professions are teaching and medicine, although women are under-represented in both those professions. Women constitute only 10 percent of the civil service, a figure that the DPPR specifically targeted for improvement.⁴⁴

In 2009, the total labor force comprised 6 million people, of which 21 percent were female. Fully 74 percent of males between the ages of 15-64 participated in the labor force, compared

³⁷ Yemen: Country Gender Profile, JICA, March, 2009

³⁸ The Status of Women in the Middle East and North Africa (SWMENA) Project: Focus on Yemen – Project Overview and Respondent Demographics, 2010.

³⁹ Ibid

⁴⁰ Yemen: Country Gender Profile, JICA, March 2009.

⁴¹ National Strategy for Women's Development, WNC

⁴² Ibid

⁴³ Republic of Yemen, Education Status Report: Challenges and Opportunities. World Bank, June 2010.

⁴⁴ Ibid

with 21 percent of females in that same age group. The percentage of male unemployment in the male labor force was 12 percent in 2009, compared with 41 percent unemployment among females labor force.⁴⁵

Apart from issues of attitudes towards women working and a limited employment market, women in Yemen also have inferior access to resources such as land and capital. Mobility constraints make owning and running a business difficult because women have no access to public government offices and cannot buy and sell in the market. Women also have less access to training, professional development opportunities, and promotions.

Several Yemeni governmental documents address women's access to education and employment. The DPPR emphasizes the need to promote opportunities for women to join the labor market, while the ROYG's Strategic Vision 2025 focuses on the need to narrow the gender gaps in education and health. These mandates have not been successfully converted into actual programs or policies.

Early-age Marriage

Early marriage, especially for girls, is a specific challenge to the development of Yemen and a major detriment to the health of young girls. Early marriage cuts short a girl's education and starts her reproductive life at an early age, often resulting in health problems; one third of maternal deaths are the result of child marriage pregnancies. Approximately 900,000 teenage Yemeni women give birth annually. Notably, the current girls' average marriage age in Yemen has increased to 14.7 years from 10.2 years a little more than a decade ago. Over the same period, men's average marriage age has increased slightly, from 20.97 to 21.54⁴⁶. The Women's National Commission (WNC) led a four-year campaign against early marriage and attempted to ratify a law making 17 the minimum permissible age for marriage. Unfortunately, a few parliamentarians who were opposed to the legislation were able to block its passage.

Gender Based Violence

Gender based violence can take many forms including domestic violence, harassment and bullying in schools and, in the case of Yemen and other countries in the region, FGC is practiced by some groups. Almost 23 percent of Yemeni women have been circumcised; women between the ages of 15-19 and rural women are less likely to be circumcised than women over 20 years of age and urban women. There are regional variations in prevalence rates with 69 percent of women in coastal areas being circumcised while only 15 percent of women living in mountainous regions were circumcised. The most unexpected correlation variation is between level of education and circumcision. While 35 percent of urban Yemeni women are circumcised, only 21 percent of their rural counterparts have been circumcised. Almost all were circumcised during the first month of life.⁴⁷ However, some positive headway has been made on this issue. The WNC, working with the Ministry of Endowments and Religious Guidance, has developed a manual for religious leaders on women's health issues. One of the issues included in the guidance are the negative health effects of FGC⁴⁸.

⁴⁵ World Bank Gender Statistics – Gender at a Glance: Yemen, 2009

⁴⁶ Power to Lead (PTL): Baseline Assessment, CARE/Yemen, June 2010

⁴⁷ Demographic Mother and Child Survey, Chapter 11. USAID, 1997

⁴⁸ Yemen: Country Gender Profile, JAICA, March 2009.



Data on domestic violence in Yemen is difficult to find since women who are victims of domestic violence or spousal rape frequently do not report the assault to the police.

National Strategy for Women's Development

Under the leadership of the WNC, Yemen has seen some positive developments in policies regarding women. The WNC struggled to ensure that gender was included in the DPPR and has championed key legislation, such as the aforementioned minimum marriage age law, and legislation providing for a quota system in the electoral system. The WNC also worked to develop Yemen's *National Strategy for Women in Development*, which concentrates advocacy and lobbying efforts with the central government and with national decision makers around the following six issues that it deems strategic to improving conditions for Yemeni women:

- Provide basic education for all by 2015; ensure gender equality in other education levels; and reduce illiteracy among women and girls to half.
- Expand women's access, through the life cycle, to necessary and improved health care and services with affordable costs; ensure wide involvement of women in health sector in employment and policy design.
- Reduce percentage of poor women by half; enhance women's independence, economic empowerment, and active participation in economic and environmental decision making.
- Increase women's participation in decision making positions by quantity and quality; upgrade the representation of the governmental mechanisms concerned with women's issues; and support institutional capacities of NGOs.
- Facilitate women's actual exercise of their human rights guaranteed by *shari'a*, national laws and international conventions especially CEDAW and eliminate all forms of violence against women.
- Expand women's participation and enhance their role in media and communication to support women's advancement and reflect balanced images.

3 Assessment Methodology

This youth and gender assessment was conducted using three different information collection sources. The first was a comprehensive literature review that was given additional urgency by the limited ability of the YMEP Assessment Team to travel within Yemen and even remain in Yemen because of the volatile security situation and required evacuation of the expatriate consultants. The second information source was data collected in the field through Focus Group Discussions (FGD) and Key Informant Interviews (KII). The third source of information was interviews conducted with members of implementing partner (IP) staff and national NGOs and youth advocates.

The YMEP Assessment Team found the literature on youth to be substantive, and reviewed a vast array of documents. The literature on gender issues and challenges, including field studies that are strictly focused on issues affecting both women and men, is not as rich or extensive as those for youth. The existing literature on gender issues does not delve past the somewhat obvious constraints and challenges facing women and general male attitudes toward tempering some of these challenges that are socially-defined. The reports that were selected for inclusion into the annotated bibliography (see Appendix C) were deemed the most pertinent and relevant to this assessment. They contribute useful information and data on the situation of young men and young women in the country while also imparting key knowledge on program design challenges targeted at youth, lessons learned in terms of program implementation and recommendations on programmatic “dos” and “don’ts”.

The field study portion of the assessment was aimed at assessing the challenges and needs of young men as well as the gender-specific constraints and challenges that are particular to young Yemeni women. Data collection was carried out in ten districts of five governorates representing the various geographical areas in Yemen (see chart below). Participants in FGDs and KIIs for the field assessment were youth, ages 15 to 27 years, NGOs or civil society organizations (CSO) working with youth, school headmasters, community leaders and the directors of the governorate office for the Ministry of Youth and Sport in each governorate.

Data collection fieldwork was carried out by Grassroots Up during the period of 25 May to 3 June 2011, by five teams of data collectors. Each team comprised of six researchers experienced in conducting similar qualitative surveys in similar settings, and received additional intensive training before fieldwork. Day-to-day supervision of data collection was entrusted to two field supervisors to ensure quality control, with distant troubleshooting and daily follow-up and monitoring by the main survey team from the Grassroots Up office in Sana’a (See Appendix B for Expanded Assessment Methodology).



Women participating in Grassroots’ data collection field work (Photo courtesy of Grassroots)

The selection of governorates for data collection took into consideration security and access along with meeting the objective of ensuring a representative sampling population that encompassed: both urban and rural areas; political divisions of north and south; tribal and

other regional and local interactions of various sects and groups. The selection also ensured that data collection was carried out in USAID-funded project implementation governorates.

	Governorate	Districts
1	Sana'a (the capital)	Sit-in Squares Sheraton
2	Aden	Sheikh Othman Tawahi
3	Marib	Al-Goba Al-Wadi
4	Abyan	Zingibar Ge'ar
5	Amran	Kharif As Sud

FGDs consisted of four different types of groups: a) educated males; b) educated females; c) uneducated males; and d) uneducated females. Definitions in the context of this assessment for Educated and Uneducated are as follows:

Educated: refers to those who completed at least their secondary level education

Uneducated: refers to those who dropped out of school before completing Grade 9 (the compulsory level of education in Yemen) or those who never attended school.

Challenges Affecting the Assessment

In mid-May, Yemen's security situation began to worsen when heavy fighting broke out in the Hasaba section of Sana'a near the airport. Meeting with IPs in Sana'a became difficult because of restrictions to mobility, and because many IP staff and other USAID, USG and other donor personnel left Sana'a. By the last week of May, the USAID Embassy issued an ordered evacuation of nonessential staff and contractors under its authority. IBTCI headquarters made a decision to evacuate its expatriate team from Yemen; the Team Leader and Co-Researcher departed Sana'a on May 26, cutting short their length of time in Yemen. The team conducted the remaining KIIs by telephone from the USA.

Security was not the only issue affecting the assessment: severe shortages of petrol, cooking oil, and propane gas limited mobility and caused delays for the data collection teams moving from Sana'a out to the governorates to conduct research activities. Moreover, in the governorates, numerous roadblocks were set up, making it impossible to pass through many areas as fighting broke out sporadically. Further hampering efforts to conduct the assessment was the limited availability and soaring cost of petrol, which increased in price to YER 8,000⁴⁹ for a 20-liter can, and increase of more than 500 percent.

Despite these challenges, the field data collection teams managed to travel to the governorates in most cases. Abyan, however, became impassable when fighting between ROYG forces and Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula intensified, rendering the situation too dangerous to conduct focused research there. The data collection teams from Abyan and

⁴⁹ 20 Liters of petrol prior to May 2011 conflicts cost around YER 1500.



Aden collected data by interviewing displaced people from those governorates at the displaced persons' temporary compounds.

Some of the challenges faced by the field data collectors can be summarized as follows:

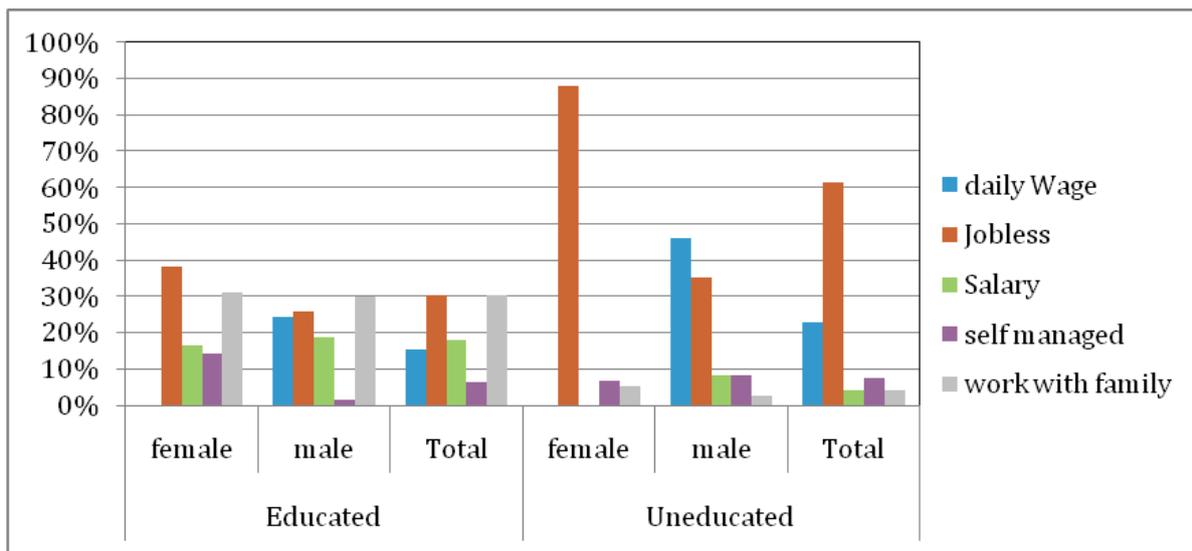
- Events affected the flow of the FGD sessions. Many people wanted to talk only about politics and the changes that were taking place and not answer the focused questions of the data collectors.
- The political events taking place in Yemen affected the willingness of young people to participate in the surveys. On several occasions, meetings were planned, but at the start of the meeting many participants did not attend as promised—which happened especially in Sana'a, Abyan, Aden, and Marib. Some of the participants said they were concerned about retaliation if one of the YMEP local partner study team members had a SIM card that could be traced to a US government funded program (they claimed this had occurred in the past). There was also a great deal of suspicion and fear on the part of the demonstrators about participating in focus groups or being interviewed.
- In some areas, particularly in Marib, people were used to receiving payment for participating in FGD sessions, something this assessment did not offer.
- During late May when clashes broke out in the Hasaba section of Sana'a, young women no longer agreed to participate in the focus group discussions because their families were concerned about their safety.
- When people protesting in the squares were interviewed, some did not answer survey questions about what they did in their leisure time because of the serious nature of the demonstrations.

4. Data Assessment and Findings

The YMEP Assessment Team’s findings from its KIIs and FGDs confirmed that one of the most critical issues facing Yemeni youth is unemployment and the potential of a bleak future in which they will not be able to afford to support themselves, let alone a family. Lack of economic resources and the idleness of unemployment can increase the risk that young people will engage in criminal activity or be recruited into terrorist groups. Unemployment may also act as a destabilizing force and contribute to internal conflicts such as tribal and regional disputes. On the other hand, as other studies have pointed out (see Youth Exclusion, Violence, Conflict and Fragile States) a high relative youth population may support a causal claim of a higher risk of violence and destabilization, but it does not prove causality. Regardless of the “youth bulge” the majority of youth do not get involved in violent behavior. What is more apparent is that young men are postponing adulthood by remaining single for longer periods while they try to save money to marry, while the strategy some parents use to offset the cost of household food and other expenses is to marry off their daughters at very young ages.

4.1 Jobs and Job Opportunities

High Unemployment: The assessment data show that overall, 10 percent of youth participating in the FGDs are employed and earning a regular salary. Disaggregation of this data by sex and level of education revealed that of the total educated youth surveyed in the assessment, only 9 percent of females and 12 percent males were employed in a steady job that pays a monthly salary (see chart below). Among the uneducated youth participating in the focus groups, none of the females were employed on a monthly salary and only 8 percent of the males have regular salaries. These findings shows that more educated youths are employed with regular salaries compared with the surveyed uneducated youth, and that girls who complete their education have a higher chances of being employed on a monthly salary. However, the findings also showed that most youth are jobless.



Preference for Government Jobs: This assessment found that 91 percent of Yemeni youth interviewed desired government jobs above other employment (see table below). Respondents noted, “If you have a government job, your family will be taken care of when you die or if you become sick.” Although they acknowledged that government jobs were scarce, difficult to obtain and highly competitive, such jobs usually offered higher salaries than the private sector. This preference for government jobs was consistent in four of the five governorates and for both men and women except for Sana’a, where 38 percent of the male participants preferred to have a job with the private sector because it had a relatively higher salary scale than the public sector. Such an exception reflects the variety of businesses available in Sana’a and the higher standard of living.

Table: Would you prefer to work in a government job?

	Sana'a		Aden		Abyan		Amran		Marib		Total
	Female	Male									
Yes	90%	62%	92%	100%	100%	87%	100%	100%	100%	83%	91%
No	10%	38%	8%			13%				17%	9%
Total	29	34	39	35	14	15	41	41	37	47	332

The assessment found that all young Yemenis in the survey—regardless of their level of education—have expectations of getting decent jobs. Interviews and FGDs also found that after government jobs, many participants wanted to be in their own businesses. Youth expressed strong desires to have control over their economic situations.

Available Local Jobs: Male and female youth participating in the FGDs were separately asked the following question: “What kinds of job are available in the area for male youth, and what kinds of jobs are available for female youth?”

For male youth, the most frequently cited available job was working as a daily wage laborer in construction work (23 percent), followed by positions in government (12 percent), working in restaurants, grocery shops or small businesses (10 percent), selling things, including fishing/ selling fish in the market (10 percent), driving a taxi, a bus or a motorbike (10 percent), selling *qat* (8 percent), agricultural work involving *qat* (7 percent), other agricultural work (7 percent), and working as a mechanic, in handiworks/handicrafts or in telecommunication centers (4 percent each). These jobs were ranked differently in each of the targeted governorates, and the rankings frequently reflected the physical, social, economic and/or political characteristics of the governorate in question. For instance, fishing was reported in Aden, because it is a coastal area.

It should be noted that illegal work such as manning roadblocks and cutting high voltage cables, was mentioned as a job for youth in Marib. Although respondents were aware that such practices were unlawful, such work was viewed as legitimate and just compensation for not being able to share in the oil resources extracted from Marib by the state. Oil companies operating in Marib offer limited job opportunities, particularly to the uneducated or those lacking the skills and experience required by these oil companies. Marib youth are thus left working as guards or drivers, and would not accept work as cleaners or cooks, because these jobs have low status in the tribal community.

Obstacles to Getting a Job: The most prevalent obstacle to obtaining a job, according to 25 percent of respondents, was the perception that jobs were offered based on patronage, bribery

and connections. Other challenges mentioned included: a lack of money and of job opportunities (18 percent); a lack of skills and experience, or lack of awareness in how to start and manage projects and assess market needs (18 percent); a lack of qualifications or not having completed the required education level (13 percent); and no financial support to start one's own business (7 percent). Youth expressed discouragement because they could not afford to pay bribes and most did not have political connections to get jobs. Those who expressed interest in starting a business lacked funds to buy necessary equipment and supplies and lacked access to credit. Those interested in starting businesses also noted their need for business skills and specific skills such as trades and practical training that would enable them to earn livelihoods.

Conversely, 25 percent of young people interviewed for this assessment felt that to obtain a job, acquiring the required skills and experience in a profession was a necessary step, while a sizeable number of respondents – 18 percent – stated that it was necessary to obtain the proper connections, pay a bribe, and have the correct political affiliations.

4.2 Entrepreneurship

When participants were asked if they were interested in starting their own businesses, 91 percent responded positively. A majority of them (55 percent) cited a lack of resources and financial support as the main reason why they were unable or unwilling to proceed. Another set of mentioned barriers included not having the requisite skills and experience, not being aware of how to start and manage such a business, and not knowing how to assess market needs (18 percent). Female participants cited the lack of encouragement from family (18 percent) to start their own business.

Around a quarter (26 percent) of the respondents (46 percent of females in Aden, 50 percent of females in Sana'a; all males in Sana'a, and 80 percent of females in Amran) mentioned that there is some support in their areas in the form of credits/loans, but the amount of money offered is limited, and the borrower has to provide a guarantor to get the loan and to pay interest; 11 percent mentioned that the interest rate is too high. Paying interest for loans is a controversial issue in Islam, and in some areas, such interest-based loans are opposed by some religious scholars. Social Fund for Development (SFD) offers micro credits in various forms through small micro-enterprises, which are scattered across the country. The borrower pays small administrative fees (not interest) to ensure sustainability of the scheme, and the loan does not require a guarantor, but has the group guarantee, which requires a small group of borrowers to be mutually responsible. In Sana'a, CAC bank and other financial institutions offer loans for employees guaranteed by their salaries.

Support Requested by Youth to Start Their Own Businesses: To start their own businesses, the greatest number of FGD participants stated that the most important form of support would be easy access to credit with no interest and no guarantor (49 percent). A distant second form of requested support (28 percent) was technical assistance to get the skills and experience in how to start and manage a business, and how to assess market needs. Seventy four percent claimed that support is available in their communities in the form of credits/loans, but they cannot utilize such support for the reasons outlined directly above. Other support available at the community level, but not often utilized, is training; there are training centers, but training fees are not affordable, and youth have not found it worth the money when one cannot get a job easily.

4.3 Gender Roles

In response to a question on how they felt gender roles were changing, the overwhelming majority (85 percent) said there had been some changes in these roles. As evidence of such changes, they referred to the greater number of work opportunities that women now have outside the house than they did before (9 percent of participants), as well as the fact that more women are now working in high government positions (also 9 percent).

Factors Positively – and Negatively – Influencing Changes in Gender Roles: The two main factors that are facilitating such changes in Yemen today are: (a) the fact that more women are now educated, thus changing old traditional and cultural norms; and (b) the financial difficulties currently facing families, which have increasingly required women to seek employment to contribute to household income, which in turn empowered women. Other factors mentioned include modern science; the “invasion” of other cultures and democracy; girls’ success in education; and government and family encouragement for girls’ education and employment.

The two main factors negatively influencing gender roles that help to maintain the status quo include: (a) traditional clothing and culture; and (b) lack of job opportunities suitable for women. Other negative factors mentioned by participants included the presence of conflicts and war, as these prevent women from leaving the house; lack of gender equity at household level and disrespect of women’s rights to work; illiteracy of women; lack of self confidence and family concerns maintained existing gender roles; lack of encouragement and support for women; family preference for women not to work; and parental concerns about their daughters’ safety which lead to restricted movement.

Female Employment: Regarding whether girls should be concerned about earning money for (and contributing money to) the household, 68 percent said that they should, noting that the current high cost of living and limited family income made this a valid step. Other justifications mentioned by lower numbers of respondents included women’s desire to feel responsible and be independent, to help their husbands, and to make the marriage relationship work better. The respondents who did not think females should be concerned about earning money for and contributing to the household justified their response by the fact that traditionally the responsibility for household income is vested with male household members. Moreover, males had better opportunities in education and employment than females, which meant that females could not compete with males.

4.4 Perspectives of youth protestors at the Sit-in Squares

This assessment coincided with the political crisis facing Yemen, which was triggered by youth and other key players in February 2011 as part of the broader wave of change currently spreading across the Middle East. The assessment conducted FGDs with youth who were participating in the anti-government sit-in at the Change Square and the pro-government sit-in at Tahreer Square. The aim of the FGD sessions was to capture their perspectives



RGP - At the closing ceremony of training courses for Change Square youth. Change square, Sana'a May, 2011 (Photo courtesy of RGP).

regarding why they were participating in such protests, and what would happen if their objectives are not achieved. The demonstrators were not as forthcoming about their motives and expectations related to the political events as the assessment team would have liked. Not only were the students distracted by the tension and excitement at the demonstration sites but they were also afraid to expose their views to the research team who were not known to the demonstrators. Despite the mistrust found in both demonstration sites towards the data collectors it was clear that youth were experiencing a level of participation and engagement in political events that affected their lives in ways that most had never dreamed would be possible. It was also clear that young women were speaking out—for most for the first time in their lives—for what they hoped and wanted for their futures.

Youth at the Change Square claimed that they were there to overthrow the corrupt government regime (40 percent of FGD participants), while smaller percentages stated that they were seeking to build a modern state of institutions (20 percent), improve Yemen's reputation in the world (20 percent), end corruption (10 percent), as well as to strengthen educational prospects (10 percent).

In contrast, those at Tahreer Square in Sana'a stated to a large extent that they were there to safeguard unity and protect the country (42 percent), but even more said they were present to show solidarity with the President, support his initiative for dialogue and stand for constitutional legitimacy (51 percent), and demand constitutional rights (8 percent). Youth at Tahreer Square accused those at the Change Square of being misled, wanting to create chaos, and to undermine the constitution and Yemeni law in order to seize power – and believe they have a foreign agenda.

Youth on both sides claimed that adults and people older than they share the same objectives and are also concerned about the situation. Those in the Change Square think that the regime will impose authoritarian control, may take revenge on protestors, and will experience defeat and frustration. Youth at Tahreer Square said that they will join the armed forces to strike “with an iron fist” at those who violated Yemeni law.

The urgent need to improve the standard of living and reduce poverty through job opportunities was a consistent theme on both sides of the demonstrations. The young protestors want training and jobs.

4.5 Conflict

This assessment analyzed ways in which conflict manifests itself in Yemen, with particular emphasis on the role of youth in community- and household-level family conflicts. Family conflicts were studied from the perspective of socioeconomic and cultural factors that can lead to the erosion of community and household ties. At the level of the household, family conflicts are linked to low salaries, the increasing prices of commodities, and disproportionate expenditures of household income on *qat* at the expenses of other basic needs.

The YMEP Assessment Team also was cognizant of the need to view the role of youth through a broader regional- or national-level “political conflict” lens. At the national level, for example, some Yemeni youth have played a role in triggering the current national political conflict in what is called the youth revolution, which has included demonstrations and civil disobedience that have badly affected the economy and impacted the livelihoods of



families and individuals, including youth. Some youth have also been injured or lost their lives as a result of the physical violence and the use of force against demonstrators, with the legal system doing little to protect the victims or prosecute the offenders. In Aden, political conflicts and family conflicts were reported: the political conflict exhibited itself in the form of civil disobedience and disruption of infrastructure and transportation routes, such as the electricity black out, disconnection of the public water supply and communication links, the blocking of roads and the closing of shops, health facilities and schools. Such conflict is instigated by some youth, but also affects other youth who are in need of such services.

Household Conflict Mitigation: Young people participating in the FGDs sought to pinpoint the most effective roles for the involvement of household members in conflict mitigation. The assessment's findings revealed the following suggestions from the FGD youth:

Fathers can play a role in reducing conflicts as suggested by youth by:

- Providing advice and guidance to family members
- Supporting and encouraging children to complete their education

Mothers can play a role in reducing conflicts as suggested by youth by:

- Providing advice and guidance to family members
- Helping fathers make the right decisions
- Supporting and encouraging children to complete their education

Male youth can play a role in reducing conflicts as suggested by youth by:

- Raising awareness on conflict and playing an active role in conflict mitigation
- Learning conflict resolution skills and applying knowledge and skills in daily life
- Advising other youth to turn away from religious fundamentalist messages
- Establishing organized youth groups to deal with conflicts and disputes
- Protecting neighborhoods by forming "watch" committees
- Continuing their own education or vocational training

Female youth can play a role in reducing conflicts as suggested by youth by:

- Raising awareness on conflicts, and offering advice and guidance
- Taking a job to contribute toward family income
- Continuing their own education and obtaining the required qualification
- Seeking the council of older, wiser relatives when disputes arise

Local Groups Addressing Conflicts: When asked about whether there are any local NGOs or groups involved in conflict mitigation 60 percent of the participants responded positively. The following table indicates the type of individual/group identified by the FGD participant conducting this conflict mitigation work, and where they operate.

Table: Groups and individuals involved in conflict mitigation

	Sana'a		Aden		Abyan		Amran		Marib	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Youth groups that work on solving problems								✓		
Social Fund for Development									✓	
Sheikhs			✓				✓	✓	✓	✓
Religious leaders										✓
Police		✓								
Members of local councils		✓								
Marib's Female Association									✓	
Marib's Youth Council									✓	
Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) is involved in solving current national conflict	✓									
Female religious guides									✓	
Fathers' Councils								✓		
Community leaders	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓		✓
Youth Association, community leaders and influential figures					✓					

The KIIs with the Marib Youth Council revealed that the NGO received support from the National Democratic Institute (NDI) and from USAID. The Marib Generation (Ajial Marib) Association and Marib Girls' Association mentioned receiving support from Partners Yemen and USAID. In the FGD session, the Marib Youth Council was mentioned as an NGO working with youth, but not in conflict resolution (yet). In the female FGD session in Marib, a group of women mentioned working in conflict mitigation through religious guidance sessions, and in child rearing, claiming that these are self-driven initiatives with no external support. Another NGO, the Al-Mustaqbal (Future) Association, indicated receiving support in the past (in 2007-2008) from NDI and Partners Yemen.

Human Resource Providing Guidance for Youth: Participants reported turning most frequently to friends to provide such guidance (26 percent), followed closely by family

members (particularly elder brothers or sisters) at 23 percent, parents and religious scholars/leaders (9 percent), elderly persons (6 percent), educators (e.g., teachers, headmasters) (5 percent), and sheikhs (2 percent).

Participants were asked, “What individuals and groups influence youth in your area the most?” In response, 25 percent mentioned parents, 24 percent indicated friends, 10 percent mentioned religious scholars/leaders, and 9 percent said family members (particularly an elder brother or sister). Other less-frequently mentioned individuals/groups included sheikhs, educators, and government officials or local council members. The latter was exclusively mentioned by 20 percent of the males in Abyan and 32 percent of the female in Amran. The results differ widely within each governorate and by male and female.

When asked about whether youth are more influenced (motivated) by family, public figure or religious leader, school teachers, and/or close friends, 27 percent indicated the television and Internet wielded the most influence, followed by parents (27 percent), and friends (23 percent), as the other major influencers.

4.6 Sources of Income

The main source of income for 49 percent of the participants was their fathers. Smaller percentages of participants stated that the source was from the individual’s own steady job, from “borrowing money to get by,” and from “extralegal” means (e.g., road blocks, the cutting of high voltage cables) to get money. This latter, extralegal source only came up in Marib, but was articulated by 30 percent of the Marib male respondents. Many married females are supported by their husbands, but female respondents did reference some available jobs and income sources, such as sewing, embroidery, handicrafts, and the making and selling of incense (59 percent of respondents), followed by government jobs in health and education. These two jobs seem to be the most common in each of the five governorates. Hairdressing was also mentioned as a job for females in Aden.

The widespread poverty among households and high unemployment rates among youth impact considerably on households and their members, particularly youth, who are expected to work, get married and contribute towards household income or start their own small families. Yet, youth with low educational attainments and lack of skills are idle and jobless. A situation that results in extreme youth frustration with prolonged dependency on their fathers for a living, or being forced to depart from their homes ending up exploited, in conflict with the police, or joining extremists groups using violence as a means of expressing their frustration and assigning blame to the state and community.

Most youth’s wishes expressed as dreams are actually basic human and constitutional rights (getting a job, getting married, etc.), which the government has failed to support. Youth’s needs and concerns have been prioritized in the National Strategy for Children and Youth and its action plans, but nothing has materialized thus far. The National Action Plan for Poverty Reduction includes a number of MDG goals but does not include target 16, which is relevant to youth “develop and implement strategies for decent and productive work for youth.”

4.7 USAID/Yemen’s Youth and Gender Targeted Interventions

USAID is implementing a variety of interventions that target youth as well as gender through a variety of IPs. The Community Livelihoods Project (CLP) and the Responsive Governance

Project (RGP) as well as the Office of Transition Initiatives (OTI) portfolio are the largest USAID funded projects and are cross- as well as multi-sectoral. CLP, USAID's flagship project, has a mandate to focus on youth and women in their programming. CLP emphasizes integrates gender very effectively in health and education. Health interventions directly address issues of access, awareness and capacity with particular focus on pregnant and postpartum women, newborns and children less than 5 years of age. In education, CLP has leveraged best practices from the Basic Education Support and Training (BEST) project while also expanding the scope of activities that aim to improve the provision and delivery of education services to enrolled and non-enrolled boys, and especially girls. Activities implemented for the education sector benefit girls while also benefitting the system's quality and responsiveness including quick impact grants for improving school infrastructure

In other sectors, CLP is concentrating activities on providing young men and young women with different type of vocational education and entrepreneurship activities through alternative training modalities that are coupled with internship and job placement programs that also deliver life skills training. In agriculture, CLP community mobilizers in targeted provinces have been training women agricultural workers on enhanced food sources and new income generation opportunities.

The RGP has also been addressing both youth and gender issues. As part of its Institutional Strengthening (IS) program for civil society organizations in Yemen, RGP will be working with CSOs at the local and each is expected to develop an action plan with specific activities that aim at enhancing their respective capacities to mainstream youth and gender issues and priorities in their overall programs and activities. RGP will train NGO/CSO partners on gender mainstreaming and gender issues. RGP is in the process of reviewing manuals and identifying the appropriate training materials which will then be adapted to the local Yemeni context.

Concurrently, RGP is working with stakeholders at the national level to support and promote youth and gender mainstreaming at the policy level. They have initiated a Gender and Youth Thematic Group consisting of key government stakeholders with the expectation of including both CLP and USAID in the near future. RGP has also been addressing youth needs through a New Social Media training for Youth leaders to equip Yemeni youth groups in the use of media to enhance their participation in formulating public issues. The training targeted youth across all ideological and political beliefs.

OTI has a large presence in Yemen as well and provides grants for a range of activities.



Women playing table tennis at OTI sponsored 2011 summer camp (photo courtesy of OTI).

Grants were given to support summer camps for youth, both male and female in 2010 and 2011. The summer camps involved a range of activities including: building, repairing, or rehabilitating sports clubs and sports courts and providing sports equipment as well as sewing machines with the objective of creating the space for young men and young women to enjoy constructive activities in their free time. Additionally, grants for repairs or rehabilitation of schools and medical facilities also benefit youth.



One such activity is summer camps for youth. The summer camps involve a range of activities including: building or repairing or rehabilitating sports clubs and sports courts and providing sports equipment as well as sewing machines with the objective of creating the space for young men and young women to enjoy constructive activities in their free time.

Under the USAID program Basic Education Support and Training Project (BEST) gender sensitization training has been conducted for the heads of Girls' Education and the divisions of Community Participation and Inspection from several governorates. This innovative training is the first of its kind and responds to the gender disparities within their targeted schools, especially regarding the performances of teachers and headmasters. The gender sensitization training benefits were enhanced by having the participants of the training train other teachers. BEST developed gender training materials which dealt with the negative impact of the prevailing gender roles and helped participants with indicators that target challenges of creating gender-friendly school environments and introduced girl-friendly teaching methodology.

Other, smaller but more targeted, USAID programs also tackle youth and/or gender related constraints and needs. The Engaging Youth for Stable Yemen (EYSY) project is dedicated to increasing levels of communication and cooperation between youth, local authorities and community groups; developing stronger connections with their communities by addressing issues of mutual concern (including development, protection and reconciliation); and providing mentorship to 400 youth.

The Yemen Community-Based Conflict Mitigation Program (Y-CCM) has is mainly focused on women and youth, both as beneficiaries and participants. CMM selected leaders – 50% male and 50% female – and trained them as facilitators in conflict mitigation, community outreach and facilitation skills. The facilitators then trained 400 volunteers who were able to out to 1,000 community members to create discussion spaces in communities on issues related to conflict; develop systems and approaches with the community to address conflict; and introduce concepts and strategies on how the youth leaders can help facilitate and mediate conflict.

The Promoting Youth for Civic Engagement (PYCE), implemented by AmidEast, aims to improve the livelihoods of Yemeni youth in vulnerable areas by supporting USAID's strategy to engage dynamic, responsive, and credible religious leaders in the governorates of Sana'a, Aden, Abyan, Amran, and Marib. PYCE targets youths exclusively and focuses on strengthening the role of religious actors and establishing and supporting youth and recreational programs.

The Basic Education Support and Training (BEST) Project began implementation in September of 2007 under USAID/Yemen's previous strategy as a basic education project. BEST's objective is to strengthen the capacity of communities, schools, and the MOE to sustain educational improvements. CLP has been working with BEST to adopt and/or build on key BEST lessons learned, best practices, approaches, and training and teaching materials.

The Strengthening the Role of Youth in Cross-Tribal Conflict Mitigation Process and Community Development focuses on increasing youth engagement in conflict and the shortcomings of traditional conflict mediation. This project specifically targets youth and considers the inclusion of women to be a critical part of the formation of youth councils.

5. Recommendations

USAID/Yemen, through CLP, RGP, OTI and other smaller programs has put in place many different types of interventions that address some of the key known constraints to the youth issue. There are activities that tackle improving the skills of youth through alternative vocational training, apprenticeship and mentoring programs. Training programs also focus on life skills, entrepreneurship and career preparation. USAID is increasingly focusing on entrepreneurship skills development for youth to encourage youth to establish small businesses. Some of USAID's smaller programs work with youth on conflict mitigation; an area that is extremely pertinent at the present time. The recommendations provided below either identify areas that need attention and strengthening while other recommendations reinforce on-going investments and recommend continued focus on them.

5.1 Macro-Level Recommendations

5.1a Gender Mainstreaming

Although most of USAID's IPs mainstream gender into their programming, Yemen remains the worst performing country within international gender indices. While the health and education sectors are concentrated on addressing gender imbalances in the country, efforts to address gender equality related to economic and political participation have proven more difficult. These efforts require increases in participation and therefore stimulating demand for change in a country where women's mobility is constrained by the system, by their male relatives, and by varying degrees, by cultural practices, depending on the locale. USAID/Yemen would benefit from developing a clear vision statement with specific goals and objectives for the cross-cutting issue of gender.

The YMEP Assessment Team acknowledged the sensitivities in Yemen with regard to relationships between women and men and the role of women in the public arena. USAID/Yemen is under exceptional pressure to address development issues that contribute to the greater inclusion of youth and to its broader mandate to stabilize the country. Integrating women equitably into the development formula is, therefore, critical to effectively addressing Yemen's many development challenges.

Although CLP, RGP and OTI have gender elements as part of their program implementation, a comprehensive approach that mainstreams gender objectives is still missing. This type of comprehensive approach would flow out of the Mission's gender mainstreaming vision. In the education and health sectors, gender and youth mainstreaming are natural by products of two sectors that are focused on delivering services to women and children. The same is not true for sectors that are about participation rather than service delivery such as economic or political participation. In those areas, USAID's IPs are currently including numbers of girls, young women or women when implementing activities. However, there is insufficient emphasis on developing concepts and meaning of youth empowerment for Yemeni girls. This



RGP – A female participant at an activity for youth, held by the youth council. (Photo courtesy of RGP)

is especially the case for empowerment and the labor market.⁵⁰ Participation of girls and women is crucial but participation alone does not ensure that the end results will achieve gender equity or greater empowerment.

Girls are the most difficult population group to reach in Yemen. Overcoming restrictions in order to increase girls' participation in economic activities, life skills training and vocational training programs requires an extensive negotiated introduction process to local government and community leaders. Changing behavior and attitudes among men and leaders in the community is therefore an underlying condition for changing young women's access to and use of resources and benefits. This type of integrated approach to gender mainstreaming in more difficult sectors places a large burden on USAID and its IPs, and emphasizes long-term results rather than immediate outcomes. Nevertheless, in a country with social and economic indicators such as Yemen, investing in improving the status of women on multiple fronts is an essential input into the development and stabilization equation.

Additionally, such inclusion is a key imperative to empower youth and women as participants in the development and implementation of projects that benefit them, and in the identification of their own needs. In keeping with the majority of youth or gender assessments conducted in Yemen and elsewhere, the YMEP Assessment recommends that USAID and its IPs remember to not only include young men and young women in all stages of activity development and implementation but to also measure program impact on gender related empowerment.

Recommendations

- Develop a comprehensive, unified vision for mainstreaming gender into overall development impact. USAID could articulate the goal, for example, of increasing investments to programs that pay special attention to women, and set basic objectives that address participation aspects of development.
- As needed, modify policies and strategies to improve the lives of young people that account for the disruption in the normal cycle of transition—school to work in particular where youth get stuck in a jobless state—and are forced to put on hold their transition from work to marriage/family that is a normal and important part of Yemeni culture. An examination of the current economic dynamics of marriage in Yemen, along with the effect of the attitudes of parents would be a useful contribution to the literature and help in the understanding of the influences and pressures affecting Yemeni youth .
- CLP, RGP and OTI, as the largest and most comprehensive programs currently funded by USAID, should continue to develop project level gender strategies that address equality issues for women, improving the status of women and defining what that means at the project level. This is a long-term goal since the final objective is to change behaviors and attitudes around women's access to and use of services, resources and opportunities.
- Continue to make a special effort to ensure that young women and young men – those who are to benefit from IP activities – participate in the identification and development of these activities. The YMEP Assessment recommends that IPs ensure they have youth working on projects and having leadership roles in activity implementation and opportunities to voice their ideas and opinions.

⁵⁰ Youth Empowerment Program: Final Report and Evaluation, 2011

- Engage the leading women's organizations and thought-leaders for a conference series to address current and emerging gender issues. Enlist the participation of female journalists who can promote and report on the series for a wider coverage.

5.1b Youth Age Category

The YMEP Assessment Team's review of donor policies and program targets for youth found age targets as young as 12 and as old as 35. Given that 75 percent of Yemen's population is under the age of 25, if USAID programming is to have an immediate impact on youth who are most susceptible to exclusion and marginalization, then IPs should concentrate their shorter-term activities on youth at least under the age of 26. Although there are arguments to support targeting "older" youth from ages 25-35 in some cases for certain programs. As an example of the rationale for including persons aged 25-35 in the youth age range for targeted USAID activities, in July 2011 twelve OTI-sponsored summer camps for 3,800 youth in seven districts of Hajjah governorate. Based on comments made to OTI field staff by representatives from the Ministry of Youth and Sports (MoYS)⁵¹, the camps were "*able to undermine militant efforts to recruit idle young men during the summer vacation*". Since Yemen militants recruit aggressively among idle youth and unemployed men in Hajjah districts, engaging youth and unemployed males up to the older age limit in sports and skills-based summer camps can help mitigate potential recruitment of youth by militants during summer.

The Conflict Mitigation and Management (CMM-Yemen) project noted the importance of flexibility in selecting participants by age, and the need to balance program objectives and targets. For example, the CMM project includes youth up to the age of 35 in their training and dialoguing programs because most northern tribal leaders are themselves in the 28-35 age range. The tribal leaders have strong personal relationships with younger people, as well as with the 35-45 age groups. The program thus has the opportunity to leverage these relationships and utilize the strong allegiances within tribal groups to open the gate to participation and buy in from all. Although extending the age range of the category of youth poses certain challenges for project monitoring and results reporting, in certain cases it cannot be avoided.

Basic education for students in grades one through nine is compulsory for all Yemenis. Under normal circumstances, students in those grades would range in age from 6 to 14. However, it is not uncommon to find much older children in those grades for a variety of reasons. From a programmatic perspective, activities designed and targeted to the under-14 age group are localized in the education sector; both formal and non-formal education. In terms of skills, knowledge and competencies, the aim by grade nine is to ensure that girls and boys have achieved basic literacy and numeracy. Even life-skills training and other interventions targeted at this age group are usually implemented with the school at the center of activities. After the period covered by compulsory education ends, the situation is quite different. Young boys and girls can choose among several options: continue formal education; enroll in a vocational education program; seek employment suitable for unskilled workers; or remain idle. The option for most girls after completing compulsory education in Yemen is marriage. Youth without direction, jobless and out of school are more likely to experience social and economic exclusion, which can contribute to instability.

⁵¹ OTI Weekly Report, August 8, 2011

Recommendation

- Based on an analysis of education trends, development programs targeting youth and youth-targeted donor efforts, the YMEP Assessment recommends using a standard age range of “14-24” as the desired range for USAID youth-targeted programs unless project mandates involving targeting older cohorts.

5.1c Data Quality Assessment

One aspect of this study was to conduct a Data Quality Assessment (DQA) on data used to justify findings in earlier studies, which in turn were used to support the current study. The purpose of this was to ensure that recommendations made in this report are based on empirically valid findings (see Appendix D for more on DQA).

In order to conduct a DQA, the raw data, along with all data-collection instruments and information on research processes must be made available to the assessor. This proved not to be possible for the prior studies that fed into the current Yemen youth and gender assessment. While the YMEP Assessment Team does not wish to cast any doubts on the veracity of findings of prior studies, and thus the conclusions drawn from and the recommendations based upon them, it has not been possible to verify the quality of the data upon which prior reports are based. That the raw data was not available to researchers a relatively short time (two years) after the studies were conducted, suggests poor data management practices which negatively impact on data quality.

Recommendation

- USAID funded research processes should be comprehensively documented and all completed data collection instruments, captured data and analyses should be archived by the organization responsible for the study for four to five years following the study. Should USAID wish to conduct DQAs retrospectively, the requirement to archive data should be incorporated into the contractual obligations of the funding recipient.

5.2 Implementation-Level Recommendations

5.2a Conducting Standardized Youth and Gender Assessments as Entry Points into New Areas for Implementation

It is critical to understand, to the extent possible, the social structures and constraints of each district where programs are to be implemented, and to do so before actual implementation. Preceding implementation, communities to be targeted should be assessed and mapped out so that gender constraints, employment constraints, youth issues, tribal structures if applicable and the patronage patterns in the area are identified before entry into the region.⁵²

This is essential for understanding the social construction of that region so that:

- a) Area-specific youth and gender issues are identified and understood;

⁵² Finding presented in the: Youth Empowerment Program (YEP) Final Report and Evaluation and the Bilqees Initiative Assessment Phase Report

- b) Area-specific relational politics are well understood;
- c) Appropriate local, district or governorate level implementers of the program are identified and vetted for suitability to carry out the implementation;
- d) Prepare the communities for the intervention and raise awareness about it; and
- e) Explore gender or youth roles in sectors that are not well known, i.e. youth in agriculture or women and small business development.

Recommendation

- A standardized mini- youth and gender assessment tool can be developed based on existing tools that IPs have successfully used. The aim would be to adopt an easy to use and simple tool that leads to a rapid assessment with the aim of formalizing assessment findings to inform the planning process. Assessment findings would lead to a quick social analysis (specifically a youth and gender analysis) of each new district or area where programs are to be implemented-

5.2b Building the Skills of Youth

Investing in the Formal Education System

Investing in the formal education sector, particularly in improving access to and the quality of grades 4, 5, and 6 is a strategic investment, particularly if targeted at improving girls' access to and retention in the education system, which can lead to positive social outcomes. As numerous studies have demonstrated, increasing the number of years girls spend in school decreases the likelihood of early-age marriage, reduces the number of children a woman may have, and raises the level of health and other care she provides to her children.

Increasing access to the basic education system would build on USAID investments through the BEST project. It would expand teacher training programs, learning materials and pedagogical approaches for Yemen's education system.

On the other hand, investing in improved access to and the quality of education is a long-term objective which does not lend itself to immediate returns. The number of female teachers needs to be increased in order to increase the number of girls who attend school. It is important to find strategies for recruiting, training and assigning more female teachers, particularly in rural areas. Education, however, does not automatically ensure participation in the labor market because most school graduates do not have the right skill sets that are in demand in the labor market.

Programmatically, interventions in the education sector would serve to: a) increase the availability of girls' only schools; b) ensure a hospitable and safe learning environment; and c) improve the overall quality of the education system so that drop-out rates are decreased and graduates are able to meet some of the labor market's needs in English proficiency, basic math and accounting skills, and leadership and initiative skills.

Recommendation

- Investments in the formal education system are essential for any country's future. Given Yemen's, economic, social and equity challenges, such investment is even more essential. Activities to be focused on should include improved access for and

retention of girls in the basic education system, which has the potential to yield very positive results over time, and will also contribute to the overall stability of the country. Results, however, are long-term rather than immediate.

Vocational Education

CLP has been offering vocational training, apprentice opportunities and job placement for at-risk youth as a component of its economic development strategy targeting youth. CLP's



CLP Vocational Training Students from Al-Jawf, Ma'rib, Shabwh and Taiz attend Graduation Ceremony after completion of business training, June 2011 (photo courtesy of CLP)

vocational education component is an extremely crucial component of USAID's workforce development strategy that was designed and currently being implemented by CLP. The next phase of CLP's vocational education project will train and seek to help secure employment for 3,000 at-risk Yemeni youth over the next two years.

The Responsive Governance Project recently conducted an informative assessment of the technical vocational education and

training (TVET) sub-sector.⁵³ RGP's recommended approach is to concentrate investments on identifying lower cost, alternative settings through which training can be delivered rather than burden the already over-expanded, but unsustainable, government training centers. This approach is flexible, can respond better to actual labor market needs and can react more rapidly to changes for improved efficacy. This type of intervention requires developing modular training programs that can be delivered in different types of settings and respond to the needs of employers assessed at the local level.

Longer term investment in the existing formal TVET sector would require extensive resources, has uncertain returns to the investment and will invariably move more slowly than is currently needed. The YMEP assessment team supports: provision of TEVT using diverse delivery avenues; developing linkages and student flow between training programs and apprenticeship and internship systems with private sector employers; and exploring job placement and career counseling systems that can assist youth in searching for employment.

Recommendations

- Continued investment in the vocational education sector is a key development input for the challenges facing the country. Although it is not a panacea for the country's youth exclusion problems that include unemployment, poverty and political exclusion, vocational education can significantly help many young Yemeni men and women become employable, especially if it is coupled with follow-on apprenticeship

⁵³ *A Follow up Education Assessment: M-TEVT: Ministry of Technical Education and Vocational Training – International Donors' Projects.* March, 2011.

opportunities and supporting graduates with job placement. Given the current urgency around youth demands, the YMEP Assessment Team recommends that IPs continue to provide accelerated training programs designed to prepare youth people to work in sectors with higher job potential in conjunction with a rapid labor market analysis to determine the best job possibilities in the current market.

- Life skills training for youth, both male and female, is also an important input to couple with most skills development activities targeted at youth. Life skills training would be focused on building self-confidence, mitigating conflict, building leadership skills and introducing initiative and self-employment concepts. USAID and its IPs can build on existing life skills training programs that they have developed to have a standardized program that can be used by all IPs. In the longer term, IPs can build the capacity of the appropriate central and local institutions that can be responsible for amending, adapting and disseminating life skills training programs at the local level.

5.2c Continued Support for Building Local Capacity

Building the Capacity of Local Government

In Yemen, the style of governance, decision-making and cultural practices are highly localized and are becoming more fragmented as the security situation becomes less predictable. Continuing to build the capacity of local government entities such as governorate and district offices to assess needs, make decisions and solicit participation of those they are supposed to extend services to, is a key strategy for addressing the needs of those who are marginalized: women and youth. Per the recommendation made in the 2008 Yemen Cross-Sectoral Youth Assessment, programmatic impact would be improved if IPs used local capacities to implement youth projects while coordinating with national offices charged with implementing the youth strategy.



*Mercy Corps –Training session for youth and community leaders in conflict management, fighting corruption and communication skills. Lahj and Aden governorates.
(Photo courtesy of Mercy Corps)*

Furthermore, building the capacity of civil society organizations and community based organizations to assess needs, develop plans and deliver certain services, strengthens the service delivery systems at the local level. It is important to continue strengthening selected NGO's capacity to provide services to youth and to have youth participate in the development programs, i.e. youth units within each NGO per Save the Children's Yemen Empowerment Project (YEP). Recognizing the current situation as an opportunity to affect positive change when it comes to the participation of traditionally marginalized groups such as women and youth, RGP supported CSOs in conducting FGDs among youth to determine their development priorities.

Recommendation

- The effectiveness and responsiveness of programs targeted at populations with lesser access to services and benefits, in this case youth and women, is improved when implemented through the local government level, through local CSOs and community based organizations (CBOs) and in coordination with national offices of the ROYG.

Supporting Youth NGOs

With the Arab Spring underway at the time of the writing of this assessment, and the youth movement having an impact on the political situation in Yemen, USAID and its IPs would benefit by strengthening support to youth NGOs working in this arena. This is obviously an extremely delicate area for USAID intervention, but these youth NGOs that are engaging the political establishment also function as release valves for pent up frustration and anger. USAID IPs could increase youth leadership skills building opportunities by providing support and technical assistance to new and emerging youth organizations in urban centers. Activities would include strengthening the capacity of new youth organizations in urban areas in lobbying and advocacy supporting them in developing and engaging in community work and connecting them with youth service delivery NGOs.

Recommendation

- Continued capacity building of civil society organizations and community based organizations to assess needs, develop plans and strengthen the service delivery system at the local level. Strengthening selected NGOs' capacity to provide services to youth and to have youth participate in the development programs (i.e. youth units within each NGO per Save the Children's YEP) is an additional area for continued investment.
- USAID IPs can identify new emerging youth NGOs in urban centers that are committed to increasing the participation of youth in the development dynamics of the country. IPs would provide technical support and training to the organizations and their leaders in a range of organizational development skills such as advocacy and lobbying, strategic planning, management and establishing networks with other NGOs to create constituencies around particular objectives.

5.3 Recommendations for Further Studies

During this period of insecurity and continuously changing political dynamics in Yemen, it is difficult to determine how USAID's strategy, and therefore its programmatic directions, will evolve. However, based on the current analysis and information available, the YMEP Assessment Team identified the following gaps in youth and women targeted USAID program interventions that would benefit from further analysis and study by USAID:

Youth and Microfinance Assessment: Both RGP and CLP have included analyses of certain aspects of microfinance and micro-enterprise in their sector assessments or technical vision statement. However, a comprehensive assessment of the sector targeted specifically on understanding youth and their needs is not yet available. Although urban Yemen has a vibrant microfinance sector that includes a network for microfinance, several local banks with extensive expertise in the sector, and programs under the Social Fund for Development that promote micro-finance, two particular areas in micro-finance have been insufficiently explored. These are: a) microfinance and youth initiatives that require different types of



services by microfinance institutions; and b) micro-finance in rural areas, for both women and youth.

Microfinance for youth: Microfinance for youth, particularly in a conflict situation, requires a review of existing services that target youth and provision of the appropriate combination of services necessary for supporting youth. Microfinance, from the perspective of borrowing and credit programs, may not be appropriate for all youth. In fact, for the early stages of youth, deposit services that enable the accumulation of assets and increased familiarity with financial institutions and their benefits, coupled with life-skills training, may be the better programmatic option. As for credit programs aimed at the later stages of youth, it should be noted that youth cannot become entrepreneurs simply by being provided with credit. In addition, they would probably require appropriate training in financial and life skills, along with a mentoring, apprenticeship or internship program, and close oversight during the start-up phase of their work.⁵⁴

Extension of Microfinance to Rural Areas: According to discussions with RGP staff, RGP has established an understanding with French Cooperation, a quasi-French government agency, regarding an upcoming microfinance assessment focused on rural Yemen. French Cooperation, was slated to conduct this assessment, which would have included governorates of focus by USAID IPs. However, because of the current situation in Yemen, the agency has put a hold on its activities and was forced to call off the assessment. If USAID proceeds on this trajectory, it would need to explore the most appropriate types of programs for microfinance in rural Yemen. This would best be accomplished by USAID conducting its own microfinance assessment for rural areas, and place a strong emphasis within that assessment on mainstreaming gender in the rural context and benefiting rural youth, thus directing its focus toward the two most marginalized groups in rural Yemen.⁵⁵

Recommendations

- Conduct an assessment of microfinance for youth that can provide appropriate programmatic recommendations for USAID. The assessment should also look at the impact of extending microfinance for youth programs into rural areas, and the feasibility of doing so.
- Conduct a study of market potential for agricultural products with value chain analysis, which should be linked to CLP's current agriculture value chain component.

⁵⁴ Microfinance, Youth and Conflict: Emerging Lesson and Issues, March 2005

⁵⁵ Youth Exclusion in Yemen: Tackling the Twin Deficits of Human Development and Natural Resources. November 2009.



6. Conclusion

Yemen's future progress and current stability depend, to some extent, on effective strategies to address the urgent issues affecting youth. The disproportionately large youth segment—an estimated three fourths of the population—must be the focal point of all development and stabilization efforts. This report highlights many of the complex issues related to youth and gender and reviews USAID projects currently being implemented. The USAID/Yemen portfolio addresses the pervasive poverty and community stabilization through OTI, CLP and RGP along with several other smaller but important projects focused on youth, governance and, to a lesser degree, gender. The recent upheaval of the government brought to the forefront by youth-led demonstrations delivered a clear message that Yemenis want more, not only relief from poverty, they also want a more democratic and fair government.

This YMEP Youth and Gender Assessment found that most of the same issues affecting youth brought out in the 2008 Yemen Cross-Sectoral Youth Assessment Report⁵⁶ persist and, in many cases, have worsened. The updated vision for strategic planning and programming recommends a much-expanded focus on strategic economic and livelihood focused youth interventions, and a more purposeful, outcome-based gender approach for all USAID funded projects. In particular, job creation linked to appropriate skills training and micro-finance assistance that will enable young people to have a steady form of employment and income. This report points to the importance of social networking for youth. Yemeni youth can become a vibrant, positive force in Yemen's development but youth, including women, need to be brought in as decision-making members of development, as well as government endeavors.

While not without limitations, the role women played in the public demonstrations also delivered a strong message that Yemeni women are not satisfied to remain silently in the background. The path ahead for Yemeni women to achieve equality will be long and steep and will need tremendous support from the international community. USAID/Yemen can respond by scaling up the gender components of all its existing and future projects. Gender equality must be a purpose rather than merely increasing the number of women participants in project activities. Yemeni women are now on the "radar screen" making this a key time for taking bold steps towards helping reduce the social, economic and political power inequalities between women and men, girls and boys.

⁵⁶ Yemen Cross-Sectoral Youth Assessment: Final Report, EQUIP-3, Education Development Center, Inc. 2008



Appendix A: SCOPE OF WORK: Assessing Gender and Youth Programming in Yemen

1 Objective of the Assessment

The purpose of this scope of work (SOW) is to assess current youth programming and to make recommendations for future youth programming in Yemen. A by-product of the assessment will be a vision statement for USAID's youth programming. The assessment will include the following essential considerations:

- a gender analysis to identify roles and influences within family and tribal structures that must be understood in order to design appropriate youth programming; gender analysis is to be integrated throughout this assessment;
- an understanding of the influence structures that contribute to youth choices and behaviors;
- an examination of development age categories and formulation of a practical definitional tool to distinguish development age cohorts with recommendations on appropriate categories for USAID programming;
- an analysis of the assumptions supporting USAID's and other donor's recent and current youth projects and activities, with identification of linkages to the objectives of the USAID/Yemen Strategy;
- an assessment of current programming methods, lessons learned, best practices, common challenges, actual & prospective impacts to guide recommendations regarding programming gaps and to improve prospects for successful youth programming;
- an assessment of the current collective plans for USAID youth programming in terms of comprehensiveness and coverage;
- recommendations for how youth can serve as entry-points for progress in livelihoods, job creation, governance and economic development.

2 Context: Mission Strategy

Yemen faces an uncertain future as it enters a probable transition from the current regime to an unknown governance structure.¹ The existing USAID Mission Strategy describes a single performance goal to see "Yemen's stability increased through targeted interventions in vulnerable areas." USAID/Yemen recognizes the need to examine the influences on Yemeni youth that can lead to violence, poor decision-making and destructive behaviors as well as the positive influencing structures. USAID seeks from this assessment series of recommendations for youth programming that have a high probability of achieving more positive social outcomes.

Achieving stabilization is grounded in a different theory than what is commonly seen in the strictly development context. The grounding of stabilization emerged from conflict sensitive programming,

¹ The Republic of Yemen Government (ROYG) is currently facing significant political and civil challenges that may alter USAID's strategic focus in the immediate future. This SOW may need to respond on short notice to changes in USAID Yemen's strategic focus.



fragile states strategy and peace building illustrated in approaches such as the Tactical Conflict Assessment and Planning Framework (TCAPF) and the Interagency Conflict Assessment Framework (ICAF, see Annex B for the Yemen Inter-Agency Conflict Assessment). Programming with conflict sensitivity implies an understanding of the operational context and the impact of interventions within that context. Thus prospects for increasing instability are decreased (do no harm) and programming has greater likelihood of facilitating a positive impact on stabilization. Understanding the context essentially means that programs act locally and engage with the necessary level of complexity to inform meaningful decisions.

The essence of achieving stabilization through conflict sensitive programming is to provide targeted assistance that most effectively decreases levels of violent conflict or the potential for violent conflict. Measuring the effectiveness of assistance in terms of stabilization is the subject of the USAID Yemen Mission's PMP. Determining the impact of USAID's youth programs on stability is complex and difficult to measure. Difficulties in measurement occur because program implementation is local and diverse and is responsive to local grievances and local manifestations of instability. It is recognized that Yemen's "youth bulge" is a factor that has strong potential to drive instability – or, if properly harnessed, of positively impacting the country's future.² Youth issues were identified in the Mission PMP and can be summarized as: high numbers of male youth are disaffected and prone to destabilizing behaviors because they are unemployed and/or have poor engagement in other legitimate activities coupled with limited opportunities for youth to engage productively in society. However, this assessment is expected to dig deeper beyond the strictly male dimension to expose the gendered influence structure of Yemeni youth at home, in the community, media and society. This assessment is to attempt to answer to the question of what triggers the youth bulge to violence and destructive influence rather than constructive roles, and to identify the resiliencies that prevent violence and promote positive influences.

Stabilization is a concept with many dimensions typically measured through indicators of youth's perceptions about "stability", or occasionally through proxy indicators (by postulating what youth would be engaged in if stability were at hand). Gaining ground against youth drivers of instability is not linear; it does not compare to an objective like literacy where as more and more youth are taught to read and write literacy unfailingly improves. The volatility that youth's perceptions of stability embody can change radically based on a single local incident such as the assassination of a local leader that can easily reverse months of positive change add to the challenges of youth programming and the measurement of its impact on stabilization and development.

3 Context: Youth Programming

Within this stabilization context, USAID's vision for youth programming needs a clarity that is built on an understanding of conflict sensitive programming, on previous assessments of Yemen youth grievances and on examples of what has worked in the past to alleviate the grievances and destabilizing behaviors of youth. This assessment will bring that clarity of purpose to USAID's vision for youth programming using evidence and examples to support findings.

Of particular interest is the influence of gender in youth decisions and behaviors (both positive and negative) and in the reduction of conflict. Factors such as a low female labor force participation rate and

² USAID Yemen: 2010-2012 Yemen Country Strategy



high fertility rates have been shown to be strongly correlated to incidents of internal conflict.³ It is therefore fundamental that issues of gender are rigorously examined to enhance understanding and the prospects for successful programs. The Save the Children (SC), Youth Empowerment Program (YEP) noted in its lessons learned (see Annex C for YEP's and other project's lessons learned, recommendations and findings) the need for: "Overcoming difficulties in the restrictions for girls to participate in programs. Youth empowerment has a strong male aspect to it and often there is not much thinking on what empowerment means for girls. This is especially the case in terms of empowerment and the labor market..." The gender analysis for this assessment seeks to develop our understanding of these "difficulties and restrictions" for female participation and is to provide recommendations on how USAID youth programming can become a catalyst for change.

The context for youth in Yemen from Save the Children, Youth Empowerment Program Final Evaluation

"The challenges facing Yemen are multiple, complex, and deeply rooted in the history of the region, its political disputes, on-going internal conflict, tribal culture, and socio-economic situation. It is a small, resource scarce country with an estimated population of 22.2 million. Of that, almost three-fourths live in rural areas and more than 50% is under the age of 18. Yemen's population growth rate is one of the highest in the world. Poverty in Yemen is extreme, with an estimated 42% of the population lives below the national poverty line. Child malnutrition rates are amongst the highest in the world, with an estimated 30% of children aged 2-5 severely stunted. Literacy rates among the population 10 years and older are 47%, and among rural women the rate is only 24%. School enrollment rates for basic education are 66.5% overall, whereas girls' enrollment rate is 51.5%, with only 29% of girls in rural areas enrolled in school.

Recent historical developments in Yemen contributed to the prevalence and depth of youth exclusion. Youth in Yemen face significant educational challenges. Women and rural residents have been particularly excluded from educational gains. A fifth of youth have never enrolled in school. Moreover, youth who are able to obtain adequate amounts of schooling are constrained by the poor quality of education in Yemen. Employers complain that graduates lack critical cognitive, management, language and computer skills that are necessary in the workplace but not taught in Yemeni public schools. Unemployment is high across all education levels, with exceptionally high levels for "middle-educated" men with primary through secondary education and highly educated young women."

"The perception and definition of 'youth' vary historically and culturally. It can be demographic, cultural, biological, or economic. However, sociologically, the term "youth" is often defined in a chronological age. For these reasons, the spectrum of youth has been variously defined as ranging from the ages of 10 or 11 years (as in some countries in the Middle East) to as high as 35 years (as in South Africa)." ⁴ Current programming in Yemen has inconsistent age references for youth: young youth 13-20, middle youth 20-26, young adult 26-35; others classify youth categories as 13-19, 20-24 and 24+. Save the Children (SC) in its Youth Empowerment Program (YEP) targeted "youth between the ages 10 – 24 years, with a focus on 10-18 year olds and special attention paid to adolescent girls, out-of-school youth, internally displaced persons (IDPs), youth living in rural areas, street youth and other vulnerable and marginalized groups."⁵ Recommendations concerning age categorization of youth and appropriate targeting will be an outcome of this assessment.

³ M. Caproili (2005), "Primed for Violence: The Role of Gender Inequality in Predicting Internal Conflict", *International Studies Quarterly* (2005), Vol 49, pages 161-178.

⁴ Save the Children (SC), Youth Empowerment Program (YEP) final evaluation, January 2011, page 28

⁵ Op. cit.



This assessment will recommend how to best target Yemen's youth based on evidence from past programs like YEP, the current youth focused CMM funded projects, and other non-USG funded Youth programs in Yemen. If there is justification to support context-based targeting of youth rather than an age-specific based targeting this should be proposed. For example, one of SC's YEP lessons learned is to ensure that "... decision makers are aware that the largest group of youth and the most vulnerable are those that did not complete secondary education and who need access to opportunities. Within this group, the members of marginalized groups are the most vulnerable and special effort needs to be taken to include those young people."⁶

The Republic of Yemen Government (ROYG) has been engaged in youth programming through its Ministry of Youth and Sports (MYS). In the past MYS has cooperated effectively with USAID, GTZ and other donor agencies to promote and acknowledge its concern for youth. The MYS developed the "National Child and Youth Strategy 2007-2012," an important reference for purposes of this assessment. The MYS strategy has been recently updated. This assessment should be mindful of current MYS strategy and recommendations for USAID's youth programming should be informed by the ROYG strategy.

The previous Yemen Cross-Sectoral Youth Assessment: Final Report reported the following findings⁷. This YMEP assessment should explore, validate and elaborate on these existing findings, particularly in areas where they challenge widely held assumptions and can better inform youth programming:

1. Reasons behind youth violence and extremism. Youth violence and extremism are associated with the exclusion and isolation they experience within their families and communities, as well as the injustice they face under weak and corrupt law enforcement and security systems. This finding refutes the mainstream assumption that youth resort to violence because of lack of tolerance to other religions or the West.

2. Low communication and high isolation. Most youth focus groups highlighted parents' lack of understanding of youth's needs, reluctance to communicate with their children, violence and suppression of children, and overprotection of children. Youth feel their families and communities do not value and appreciate them, which pushes them to the streets where they mix with the "wrong peers" and become vulnerable to recruitment by extremist groups.

3. Disconnect between school and employment. Secondary school and university curricula do not provide students with necessary skills and tools to prepare them for life. Students finish their studies memorizing theories and then discover these theories do not help them get jobs. They said schools lack basic practical learning tools, such as chemistry labs, where students can practice what they have learned in books. The youth say this leads to frustration and lack of self-esteem, which leads to failure in their studies.

4. Uneven access to political processes. Youth widely perceive that only people with connections and power can obtain jobs, access to study opportunities, and government services. Most youth feel hopeless because their aspirations are blocked by corruption, which leads some of them to resort to violence, such as carjacking government cars, kidnapping foreigners, and blocking roads to pressure the government.

⁶ Op. cit.

⁷ Education Development Center, Inc. (EDC), Yemen Cross-Sectoral Youth Assessment: Final Report, November, 2008



5. ***Law enforcement inefficiency, corruption, and tribal revenge.*** Many young people feel their rights are violated by people who are “above the law” and take revenge when the system cannot bring guilty parties to justice. The youth also pointed to arbitrary arrests, unfair trials, and delays in processing cases through the law enforcement system. Some youth described prisons as places where innocent people or those committing minor crimes are so mistreated that they become all too willing to commit violence against the government.

6. ***Unemployment and poverty exacerbate vulnerability and hopelessness.*** Young people are torn between social pressures, which demand they continue their education, work, and start a family, and economic hardships. The absence of guidance and role models frustrates youth, who find themselves unable to manage increasing cultural and life demands. In Aden and Taiz governorates, facilitators found it difficult to get the youth groups to even talk about their dreams and hopes for facilities or programs that they would like to see.

7. ***Dominant role of religious extremists.*** Half of the focus groups mentioned the misunderstanding of Islam, spread of extremist Islamic views, and lack of observance of Islamic values as serious problems. Several groups from Aden, Sana’a, and tribal areas said that, along with the weak role of religious preachers and scholars, extremist groups are trying to recruit youth who are eager to learn and have passion for their religion.

8. ***Aggressive behavior modeled in the media.*** One-third of the focus groups said one important reason behind youth violence, gang formation, and drug abuse is exposure through the Internet, video games, and action or violent movies.

9. ***Manipulation by political parties.*** A few focus groups said political parties and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) associated with them use religion to strengthen their position and brainwash youth with religious passion, sparking antagonism and violence in order to create gaps between the youth and their families and communities.

10. ***Triggers.*** Increasing prices, higher dowries, deteriorating living standards, and upcoming elections, to say nothing of ongoing tension with Shiite extremists in the North and recent Al Qaeda terrorist attacks against foreign and Yemeni government sites, no doubt will be strong trigger factors for even more conflict and extremism in the months ahead.

4 Methodology.

4.1 Conduct a literature review.

Yemen has benefited from several recent assessments of youth and gender. The starting point for this assessment is a review of these reports and baseline data guided by the aims of this assessment. The key existing assessments and other documents that, at a minimum, are to be consulted for this assessment are listed in Annex C. Additional references are listed in Annex D and the assessment is expected to reveal other current, related literature. The document review should be conducted by a Youth Specialist and a Gender Specialist working with local counterparts recruited by YMEP’s local partner. An output of the literature review should be a more comprehensive reference list of literature germane to youth in Yemen, youth and conflict, and gender issues. A summary report on the literature review is to highlight gaps and variances in our understanding of youth and gender issues that are to be explored through key informant interviews (KII).



4.2 Design Key Informant Interview (KII) instruments based on the literature review.

The literature review should reveal where there are gaps in our understanding of how gender and youth issues drive instability and whether this understanding is diverse. Is there a common understanding, or is the understanding diverse? The study team is to refer to those gaps and variances in our understanding revealed in the summary report and develop a KII instrument that addresses those gaps and verifies the basis for divergent views. The KII instrument is to include questions that will help to answer the concerns expressed in Annex A and is directed to address the objectives of this study.

USAID implementing partners should be asked about their understanding of the purpose of their cooperative agreements and how their project activities link to project objectives and USAID Mission Strategy. This is intended to reveal whether there is fidelity between the project implementation, the cooperative agreements and Mission Strategy.

Particular attention should be paid to the Lessons Learned and Recommendations from the SC YEP and EDC Youth Assessment as well as other recent baseline studies. These are provided in Annex C.

4.3 Conduct KIIs with the Youth Program stakeholders.

A list of recommended interviewees for the KIIs is provided in Annex F. The study team is free to identify other stakeholders for interview they deem important.

4.4 Assess the need for further studies.

The study team is expected to produce an assessment of current youth programming in Yemen, both USAID funded and projects funded by other donors. In the course of developing this assessment the team is to identify the evidence that supports the findings from earlier assessments and evaluations (see above Section 3). Identifying existing evidence is to result in a catalogue of data on youth and gender in Yemen. The evidence supporting earlier findings is to be subjected to a data quality assessment (DQA). Where the study team finds high levels of risk in the evidence using YMEP's DQA tool they are to propose further studies that will validate or reject our previous understanding. The aim is to prepare a vision statement for USAID's youth programming that to the extent possible is evidence based.

Examples of further studies might include sample surveys designed to clarify specific issues of youth or gender. The design of the sample surveys should be constructed based on an hypothesis about the issue, the proposed data analysis, and how statistical power analysis might be used to determine sample size. However, this SOW does not encourage or discourage the use of sample surveys or quantitative analysis. Other studies can be equally valid in revealing the complexities of youth and gender within the influence structures that contribute to their choices and behaviors in Yemen. Whatever study is proposed should include a definition of the rigor needed to conduct that study so that results from it have a high probability of providing valid and meaningful information.

5 YMEP Yemen Youth Evaluation Team Composition

Proposed international STTA for the project will include one Youth expert, one Gender specialist, one Research Methods specialist, and one Data Quality Assessment specialist. A local Yemen company is proposed to inform the assessment, recommending on key stakeholders, research questions, survey



methodology, and conducting key informant interviews, identify local young leaders and youth activists, and to validate previous findings from earlier studies and data collection activities.⁸

6 Reports

At the outset, there will be an in-brief with the Assessment Team providing the general findings of the Desk Review.

The YMEP team will be required to provide a mid-term course-correction briefing to USAID's COTR during the study and an exit briefing that explains draft findings to the COTR or Acting COTR and other designated USAID staff (e.g. Technical Office specialists), and the Mission Director. A Draft Final Report on findings and recommendations shall be provided to the Mission no later than August 20, 2011, with the Final Report, incorporating USAID feedback to be finalized by August 31, 2011.⁹ It is expected that the youth programming recommendations resulting from this assessment will inform the Mission's annual Portfolio Review as well as having implications for current and future programming.

The study report will be in the following format:

1. One page summary of report findings and recommendations
2. Executive summary not to exceed five pages.
3. Main body of the report findings and recommendations not to exceed 25 pages.
4. Relevant annexes or appendices may be unlimited.
5. Report will be formatted in accordance with USAID publication, "Constructing an Evaluation Report," dated April 14, 2006.

The Final Report will include the following:

- Analysis of current realities and risks for youth in Yemen, including identification of all relevant reports, contacts and information sources;
- Examination, including rigorous gender analysis, of youth influence structures, distinguishing, as appropriate between urban & rural or with geographic distinctions;
- An assessment of USAID/Yemen's youth program activities to identify best practices, lessons learned, current & anticipated impact, key challenges, soundness of assumptions & change theories, gaps & needs, and links to USAID's stabilization strategy;
- A recommended vision for USAID/Yemen's youth programs linking them to USAID's stabilization hypothesis and with specific programmatic recommendations to address gaps and improve impact;
- Analysis and recommendations regarding links to Government initiatives, especially the Ministry of Youth & Sports and the 2007-2012 Youth Strategy and other potential partners and opportunities.

⁸ Yemen is currently on the brink of possible political transition and there are currently travel restrictions and advisory messages urging US citizens to leave Yemen. Hence, international STTA may not be allowed entry into Yemen to conduct this assessment. Therefore, YMEP may substitute qualified local experts for proposed international STTA.

⁹ Note – the final report submission was delayed due to USAID request for YMEP to wait for final USAID Technical Team comments following the Eid holiday in early September 2011.



- Identification of other donor-funded initiatives with key lessons learned, best practices and possible linkages to USAID.

Guidelines for this assessment

The following broad outline, consistent with initial discussions held with USAID in November 2010 identifies USAID's requirements for this Assessment. This information is intended to allow IBTCI to both proceed with identification of required STTA and to develop a full Scope of Work (SOW).

1. Conduct a rigorous gender analysis to identify roles and influences within family and tribal structures to improve understanding of influence structures contributing to youth choices and behaviors in Yemen. The gender analysis will contribute to basic understanding to enable USAID and its implementers to approach gender in a cross-sectoral, integrated way. The gender analysis will examine different developmental age categories (see point 2 below) so that the needs of boys and young men, girls and young women are better understood at various stages of youth.
2. Based upon the local context and the diverse concerns and needs of Yemeni youth, devise a practical definitional tool to distinguish developmental age cohorts within the broader category of youth. This will be used to assist USAID and its partners to clearly identify and more strategically target different categories of youth and to prioritize age appropriate needs - for instance, the problems facing "young youth" ages 13-20 as distinct from the needs and dilemmas of "middle youth" ages 20-26.
3. Analyze, systematize and recommend priorities regarding the assumptions of USAID's current youth projects & activities linking them to the stabilization hypothesis. Identify any questionable assumptions and make recommendations for those that require testing. For example, are "out of school" youth and employment issues the most significant threats to stability?
4. Based upon 3 above, assess the collective plans for USAID youth programming in terms of comprehensiveness and coverage. Identify any gaps and make recommendations concerning current and future programmatic or geographic coverage to improve prospects for success. For example, how can USAID interventions better address isolation, lack of critical thinking and decision making skills through projects and activities that help guide their development as individuals and future leaders.
5. Finally, as an end product based upon the above analysis, produce a recommended vision statement for USAID's youth programming that prioritizes the key challenges of Yemeni youth and points the way to interventions that will help build the promise of Yemen's youth as citizens and leaders of a stable Yemen.



Appendix B: Adjusted Methodology as Used in Field Data Collection

The youth and gender assessment was conducted using three different information sources. The first was a literature review that was exhaustive in nature, made more so by the limited ability of the assessment team to travel to and ultimately within Yemen because of the volatile security situation. The second information source was a field level assessment to collect data in five selected governorates. The field study was designed to assess the challenges and needs of young men and women, as well as the gender-specific constraints and challenges that are particular to young Yemeni women. The third information source was interviews with USG implementing partners, national Yemeni NGOs working on youth and gender, and international donors.

A. Literature Review

The literature review examined all pertinent reports, studies, and analytical working papers generated for Yemen on youth and gender since 2005. The assessment team looked at studies from before that date in order to gain a broader perspective and historical relevance. Therefore, the literature review that informed the assessment and contributed to the annotated bibliography included in Appendix C relied mostly on work done after 2005. Please see Appendix C for a complete annotated bibliography. Furthermore, secondary sources became essential because of the inability of the US-based team members to spend sufficient time in Yemen and the travel constraints Grassroots Up, the Yemeni partner in the assessment team, faced while collecting data within Yemen. The volume of field studies, assessments, research studies, evaluations, and policy reports undertaken in Yemen on the subject of youth is extensive. Although gender is addressed in most of the reports and studies the assessment team reviewed, gender issues and gender mainstreaming provided a less robust array of information sources than was the case for youth.

B. Field Study on Youth and Gender

The field study on attitudes and challenges facing young men and young women was carried out using two main data collection tools: focus group discussions (FGDs) and key informant interviews (KIIs). Participants in FGDs and KIIs for the field assessment were youth, aged 15 to 27 years; NGOs or CSOs working with youth; school headmasters, community leaders, and the Director of the Governorate Office for the Ministry of Youth and Sports (MOYS) where possible in each governorate.

Data collection for the field study portion of the assessment was carried out in five governorates: Amran, Abyan, Aden, Marib, and Sana'a. A team of six data collectors (3 male and 3 female) were responsible for data collection in each governorate enabling the team to divide along gender lines in response to cultural norms. Four members from each team (2 male and 2 female) worked in pairs as a facilitator and note-taker for FGDs, while the other two members conducted KIIs. Each data collection team was headed by a male team leader to maximize access to and communication with the local populations in a male dominated society. In addition, each team made use of two resource persons (a man and a woman) in each targeted district to liaise with the community, arrange neutral sites for FGDs, make an initial selection of focus group participants, and to act as gate-keepers during FGDs.

All the data collectors had skills in qualitative research, group facilitation, note-taking, and interviewing and were recruited from the targeted governorates for security reasons and because of their local dialect. The data collection teams were supported by key experts in charge of troubleshooting when necessary, as well as by two fieldwork supervisors who supervised all the teams in the field. Grassroots Up maintained daily follow up and provided necessary administrative and logistical support from Sana'a. Immediately



after completing each FGD session, the note-taker and the facilitator (or in the case of KIIs - the interviewer) met to review and clarify notes to make sure that all the data was captured. The next day the team performed initial detailing and transcribing of the notes into field registers. The field supervisors joined each team at the start of fieldwork to ensure proper transcription. At the end of the fieldwork period, the team leader for each governorate led their respective teams in compiling the final transcription thus ensuring that the data was entered in an agreed format that would enhance data analysis.

The data collectors received four days of intensive training on data collection methodology, aims and objectives of the study, and the use of the data collection instruments. Guidelines for in-depth interviews and FGDs were reviewed with the team, while the training provided an opportunity to test the instruments and provide feedback to the main research team.

The data collection teams were provided with a fieldwork manual that included guidelines, criteria and tools and techniques conducting FGDs and KIIs. For FGDs, the data collection teams were provided with guidelines and criteria for the composition of the focus groups and selection criteria for FGD participants to ensure an equal balance of men and women and the appropriate combination of educational levels for each group. Guidelines were also provided for: identification of appropriate venue to conduct the FDG; procedures and protocols for conducting FGDs; reviewing responses within teams at the end of each day; and data inputting of data collected. For KIIs, data collection teams were provided with specific protocols and instructions for: conducting KIIs; key topics to be covered during KII; appropriate length of KIIs for this study; and techniques and tools for providing the interviewee with the needed time and space to talk and answer the questions.

Pre-testing and Piloting

Upon completion of the training, the data collectors performed a one day pre-testing exercise in Sana’a to ensure that the instruments were appropriate. The pre-testing also served to provide feedback on the reactions of key informants and FGD participants to the issues and questions raised before conducting the comprehensive research in the field.

Data Collection

FGDs and KIIs were conducted in two districts in each of five governorates.

	Governorate	Districts
1	Sana’a (the capital)	1. Sit-in Squares 2. Sheraton
2	Aden	3. Sheikh Othman 4. Tawahi
3	Marib	5. Al-Goba 6. Al-Wadi
4	Abyan	7. Zingibar 8. Ge'ar
5	Amran	9. Kharif 10. As Sud

The following two tables present the number of FGDs and KIIs that were conducted as part of the study. FGD participants were youth between the ages of 15 and 27. In each district, four different FGDs were



conducted based on gender segregated groups and divided into two categories: 1) Educated – those having completed the appropriate education level for their age group or currently studying; and 2) Uneducated – those having dropped out of school before completing grade 9 which is the level of compulsory education in Yemen, and those who never attended school.

Target Number of FGDs	Target Groups Youth (male and female)
8 FGD sessions (4 per district)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 1 with educated male youth ▪ 1 with un-educated male youth ▪ 1 with educated female youth ▪ 1 with uneducated female youth
Total number of FGD sessions planned in all the 5 governorates (10 districts)	40 FGDs

Field circumstances permitted the teams to conduct the following: 36 FGDs The data collection teams were unable to conduct the remaining four for the following reasons:

- Two (2) FGDs in Ge'ar district of Abyan governorate, because the data collection team was not able to access the governorate due to hostilities erupted between the Yemeni army and Al-Qaeda leading to the evacuation of families from Abyan to Aden.
- Two (2) FGDs in Sana'a; one with a pro-government group and one with an anti-government group in the sit-in square: The team had a difficult time identifying groups of youth who could be categorized as “uneducated” within the parameters of the study.

Number of KIIs	Target Groups Key Informant Interview (KIIs)
16 KIIs in each governorate	<p><u>At district level, 6 KIIs in both districts: 12 KIIs</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 2 with community figures ▪ 2 with education officials (teachers, headmasters) ▪ 2 with influential youth <p><u>At governorate level 4 KIIs</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 3 with Youth’s NGOs or CSOs working with youth ▪ 1 with the Director of Ministry of Youth & Sports
Total number of KII interviews planned in all the 5 governorates (10 districts)	78 KIIs

Only 69 KIIs were completed in the field. Of the other nine KIIs that were also supposed to be part of the study, most were local level government officials. During the time frame of data collection, Yemen experienced a high level of insecurity with increases in the number of armed conflict situations causing most government offices and agencies to close their offices and cancel all meetings and appointments. The nine KIIs that were supposed to be included in the study consisted of:

- Four KIIs with the Directors of the Ministry of Youth and Sports in four governorates. They did not answer their phones and were not available in their offices;
- Two CSOs at the district level;
- One community leader; and
- Two influential youth in the community.



C. USAID Funded Implementing Partners and National Level Organizations

The final source of information for the assessment was from projects and organizations based in Sana'a. The objective of these interviews was to collect a range of information including:

- Lesson learned, best practices, reports, and success stories on gender and youth programming from donor projects being implemented in Yemen;
- An understanding of the national policy issues developed by the ROYG for addressing gender and youth issues;
- An understanding of the role and objectives of national Yemeni NGOs in moving the dialogue forward, particularly on gender issues in different branches of the government.
- An analysis of USAID implementing partners' youth and gender programming within the context of different projects, their lessons learned and best practices, and identification of gaps in youth programming and gender mainstreaming. For USAID implementing partners, the assessment team interviewed project staff

The assessment team faced challenges in carrying this portion of the assessment due to the security situation in Yemen. The US based consultants who were conducting the interviews and meetings with project implementers were evacuated from Sana'a before the completion of the assessment. The team continued interviews by telephone from the US, but was unable to interview every technical staff person because of issues associated with continued instability and periodic communication problems in Yemen.



Appendix C - Annotated Bibliography: Studies and Reports Key to USAID Gender and Youth Assessment, 2011

Reports included in this annotated bibliography are classified in terms of level of importance: high, medium, and low. The National Children and Youth Strategy of the Republic of Yemen and the National Strategy for Women's Development both have a high ranking since they are ROYG's strategies for those particular populations. The youth strategy is extremely ambitious, while the women's development strategy is much narrower and strategic in scope and has a constant champion in the WNC. The Yemen Cross-Sectoral Youth Assessment Final report, conducted by EDC under the EQUIP 3 mechanism for USAID/Yemen, provides the most comprehensive data and information on Yemen's youth, their access to resources and opportunities, and their participation in community, economic, and political life. There were multiple Save the Children baseline data collection reports and assessments on knowledge, aptitude, and perceptions. Save the Children reports classified as high in importance, were related to the USAID funded Youth Empowerment Program (YEP), while the other reports were of some interest, but would really be of greater use for assessing issues in specific sectors, particularly basic education.

The MEPI funded Bilqees Initiative reports also contain very useful information. The Assessment Phase Report was particularly informative and builds on the existing body of work in Yemen that explores the challenges, constraints, and issues that drive Yemeni youth to different types of unrest, while underlining the gender gaps across all aspects of daily life in Yemen. Two reports, one from the Wolfensohn Center and the other by DFID, address implications of the youth bulge, its linkage to increased participation in violence and extremist movements, and a distillation of programmatic approaches that donors are using in addressing the youth bulge. The Wolfensohn Working Papers is specific to Yemen while the DFID report is of particular interest because it is the result of a very comprehensive review and analysis of the available literature on youth issues and programs in the context of conflict and fragility.



1. The National Children and Youth Strategy of the Republic of Yemen, 2006- 2015

Author/source: The Government of Yemen

Date: 2007

Rank in importance: High– Medium – Low

Location/web link:

http://www.bankofideas.com.au/Newsletter/Downloads/Executive_Summary_National_Agenda_Yemen.pdf

Relevance to Yemen Youth Assessment

The ROYG's strategy document is the key policy document targeted at improving services, opportunities, skills, and participation of youth. It is a key element for the dialogue on youth and youth development in Yemen since it is a national strategy that addresses youth issues. The coordinating body for implementing the strategy is the Higher Council for Motherhood and Childhood (HCMSC).

Summary of Report and Findings

This strategy document frames children and youth development within a Life –Cycle approach. The document divides the policy and programmatic objectives into three age groups within the life-cycle:

- 0-5 years with an emphasis on strengthening child health and developing ECD;
- 6-14 years with an emphasis on school health, inclusive education, and increasing qualified female teachers; and
- 15-24 years with an emphasis on youth inclusion, extension of services to youth, reproductive health, and youth employment.

The ROYG's strategy presents goals, objectives, and interventions along with three life-cycle stages while highlighting the risks and opportunities associated with them:

1. Pregnancy, birth, and early childhood (0-5 years): emphasizes improvements in maternal health and under 5 health services.
2. School Age (6-14 years): emphasizes provision of primary education to all including mitigating high drop-out and repetition rates, increasing completion rates, and improving the quality of education while also extending the service to underserved areas.
3. Adolescence and youth (15-24 years): emphasizes life and livelihood skills with a focus on accessing new information and knowledge. Within the life-cycle framework, level of risk, and vulnerability during adolescence and youth is very much related to access to opportunities and resources in the preceding two stages.

The report presents a cause and effect paradigm within a life cycle approach. Missed opportunities during ages 6-14 (early school drop out, lack of school health and nutrition, limited leisure options, not reaching school dropouts and disadvantaged, etc.) lead to risk and vulnerability in ages 15-24 (e.g. unemployment/ inactivity, lack of access and retention in secondary and tertiary education, risky behaviors, and lack of participation in development policy and processes).

The strategy's life-cycle approach to its recommendations, key services, and learning that is unavailable for children 0-5 assumes adverse effects in the next two life cycle stages. Nonetheless, a summary of the section is omitted here since the age group does not directly relate to youth as it is defined in this assessment.



The strategy defines the following priority interventions for the 6-14 year period:

- A. *Enhancing Inclusive Education*** - Priority interventions include:
- Develop school and community based initiatives to enable re-entry of young people into education
 - Build the capacity of teachers to work effectively with disadvantaged children
 - Ensure an enabling environment which accommodates the special needs of disadvantaged children
- B. *Strengthening and scaling up school health and nutrition*** -. Priority interventions include:
- Identify the situation of school health in accordance with its duties.
 - Design school health programs that include health service, health education and school environment.
 - Develop and expand the food program in rural areas with the specific aim of attracting girls enrollment in school
 - Design and implement school nutrition programs which would improve student's nutrition and health
- C. *Increasing qualified female teachers***- Priority interventions include:
- Secure the commitment of all relevant and responsible agencies for strong action to encourage and support rural female teachers
 - Conduct awareness campaigns on the importance of education in general, and specifically in relation to girls' education
 - Develop legal and practical mechanisms that provide incentives for female teachers working in rural areas
 - Provide job training and qualifying programs for rural female teachers, accompanied by financial incentives
 - Provide proper and safe housing for female teachers coming from outside the area
 - Raise the awareness of local communities on the importance of respecting rural female teachers and appreciating
- D. *Protecting disadvantaged children***- Priority interventions include:
- Establish data base information to provide better understanding of the situation of disadvantaged children
 - Find common awareness principles and strengthen group work about special groups of disadvantaged children
 - Ensure social protection measures
 - Strengthen the judiciary and legislation reform for juvenile such as raising the age of criminal responsibility and using alternative sentences arrangements.
 - Work towards elimination of violence against children and young people, and create counseling and reintegration for victims
 - Improve coordination among institutions to eliminate duplication.



The strategy highlights the importance of the following key investment areas for the 15-24 age group:

- Recognizing that youth unemployment is a consequence, first and foremost, of insufficient job creation in the economy as a whole.
- Recognizing connection between increasing private sector investment and employment generation
- Recognizing that youth employment challenge requires an integrated and coherent approach combining macro and micro economic interventions
- Adopting four global employment priorities: a) investing in education and vocational training; b) giving young women the same opportunities as young men; c) making it easier for young people to start and run businesses; and d) placing employment creation at the centre of macroeconomic policy.

The strategy defines the following priority interventions for the 15-24 year period:

A. *Designing and Implementing a National youth Employment Action Plan-* Priority interventions include:

- Promote small and micro enterprises.
- Invest in promising production sectors that require potential and intensive labor force to create job opportunities for both males and females.
- Ensure better connection between the education and training institutions and the labor market.
- Provide training opportunities for the school drop outs in order for them to join the labor market.

B. *Strengthening national identity, youth inclusion and participation-* Priority interventions include:

- Encourage the participation of young Yemenis at the national, local and international levels.
- Raise Yemeni community awareness regarding youth rights and obligations and the national identity.
- Strengthen the participation of young people in the process of decision-making in national institutions.
- Support the formation of analytical knowledge about the situation and prospect of the Yemeni young people.
- Support the formation and development of youth establishment and initiatives which aim to expand youth democratic participation in community life.

C. *Increasing leisure option and creating child/youth friendly urban planning* – Priority interventions include:

- Implement a consultation methodology with young people regarding their preferences.
- Prepare planners and local community leaders about the needs of young people.
- Implement national and local plans to assign public areas and youth centers and integrate different leisure activities for young women and men.
- Develop information plans to promote larger participation by young men and women in sport and cultural activities.
- Establish partnerships among creative young people and schools, local organizations and cultural institutions to support opportunities of art and culture.
- Target sports and leisure as one field of equal opportunity between both sexes and expand girls participation beyond traditional sport and leisure activities.
- Expand Youth Fund's and Cultural Development Fund's scopes of intervention.



- Put in place the necessary procedures, mechanisms and program for preventing Qat chewing and smoking according to the by-laws.

D. Prevent early pregnancy and reduce reproductive health risks – Priority interventions include:

- Strengthen initiatives in which aim is to encourage girls to continue their secondary education.
- Develop national awareness campaign about the risks of early marriage.
- Recommend suitable legislation aimed at achieving a minimum marriage age.
- Target youth awareness through school work programs about the risks of early marriage.
- Expand reproductive health services to cover all youth people.
- Strengthen female positions and facilitate their integration in the work environment.



2. Yemen Cross-Sectoral Youth Assessment: Final Report

Author/source: Education Development Center (EDC) conducted through EQUIP 3

Date: November, 2008

Rank in importance: **High** – Medium – Low

Location/web link: http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PNADN990.pdf

Relevance to Yemen Youth Assessment

The 2008 Youth Assessment conducted by EDC is the most relevant document of all those reviewed for this youth and gender assessment. It holds a wealth of information about the status of young men and young women in Yemen, their access to services and resources, and their perceptions about the lack of opportunities in the country. The Cross Sectoral-Youth Assessment also provided a range of programmatic recommendations for USAID/Yemen.

Summary of Report and Findings

The EDC Youth Assessment was conducted in 2008 and derived its data from 25 youth focus groups, 16 group interviews, and 120 key informant interviews from Sana'a, Taiz, and Aden. The assessment was undertaken within the context of three key Yemen specific realities: a) lack of stability; b) emerging new conflicts and escalating old ones; and c) an unstable economy currently depleting its main source of revenue – oil production.

The assessment presents an interesting conflict analysis framework, developed by the UN that the assessment team found appropriate for the Yemen context. The framework is predicated on three categories of conflict factors: structural, proximate/motivational, and trigger. Structural factors include political factors (nature of regime and governance), security factors (conflict and violence situations that tolerate extremism), and socioeconomic factors that can fuel discontent and exclusion and lead to violence and extremism. Proximate/ motivational factors refer to the evolving situation in a country – whether political developments are improving or deteriorating and the behavior of the security system. Finally, triggers are single acts or events that lead to escalation.

The assessment also includes a very useful analysis of social issues that plague Yemen and has a strong impact on Yemeni youth. Key pressure factors for youth include: population pressures and the youth bulge; rising rates of youth unemployment; endemic illiteracy and poor educational attainment; health concerns such as high infant mortality, early marriage and childbearing and poor nutrition for children; a real gender gap in terms of economic participation, educational attainment and political empowerment; increasing disparities in poverty between urban and rural Yemen; and social stigma around mental health and use of psychological services.

Yemen's urban and non-urban areas provide very little space for young men and young women to develop their personal, professional and social skills, capacities, and goals. Free time seems to be spent on the streets for young men and in homes helping their mothers with chores for young women. Qat consumption as a pastime is also a key challenge for developing the skills and capacities of young Yemeni men. The report contains a review of the: ROYG's youth programs including the current state of non-formal, formal secondary and tertiary and vocational education and training program; donor initiatives; and established Yemeni NGOs that provide services and programming for youth.

The assessment findings present some key forces that push Yemeni youth towards violence and extremism. Most of the reasons are related to their perception of lack of access to services, resources and opportunities, and the unfairness and arbitrariness of the political, judicial and legal system. According to the assessment, Yemeni youth feel:



- exclusion and isolation within their families and communities;
- their parents do not understand them, are reluctant to communicate with them and are over-protective;
- understand that there is a disconnect between what they learn in secondary school and universities and the tools they actually need to prepare them for life and for the actual labor market;
- corruption, nepotism and unfairness prevalent in Yemen's political system and process precludes ordinary Yemenis from accessing learning and work opportunities as well as government services;
- that their rights are violated because of the inefficiency and unfairness of the legal and police systems that include arbitrary arrests and unfair trials as well as the tribal revenge systems that supersede Yemeni law and justice;
- extreme tension between competing demands that they continue their education, find work to bring income into the household, and marry and have families of their own;
- growing confusion around the role of religion, extremist tendencies, and misunderstanding of Islam;
- exposure to violence through multiple media modalities (TV, internet etc.) exacerbates the situation;
- political parties and their affiliated non-governmental organizations use religion as a tool to brainwash youth; and
- economic pressures such as increasing food prices, higher dowries, deteriorating standards of living, and the unstable situation in the country.

Programmatic areas for investment recommended by the assessment are focused on: communication and awareness, recreation, sports and culture, workforce development and training, youth leaders and organizational capacity building, and research on youth issues. Ideally, the assessment recommends that clusters of activities that are multisectoral should be focused on a few neighborhoods in Sana'a, Taiz, and Aden to totally saturate the target areas. The assessment recommended the following programs targeted to youth:

1. Use local capacities to implement youth projects while coordinating with national offices charged with implementing the youth strategy.
2. Ensure that young men and women participate in planning and implementing programs for their own development.
3. Use trained and vetted youth to run youth targeted programs at the community level.
4. Create short-term training programs on key youth needs: self-awareness and life skills, community service, and practical work skills.
5. Create female-only safe spaces with communities' participation where young women can study and participate in leisure activities.
6. Intentionally tackle attitudinal change by working through local clergy to tackle youths' feelings of isolation, hopelessness and poor communication with those older than them.
7. Promote positive youth engagement and contributions through an awareness campaign using media and internet.
8. Provide high quality training events where youth outreach workers, NGOs, volunteers, the government and others on youth-centered non-formal education and development activities.
9. Develop public private partnerships to communicate and connect the needs of the market place with non-formal and formal education options.
10. Establish or foster the development of Study Centers that function as centers for inquiry, dialogue, reflection and data gathering on youth related issues in Yemen.



3. Youth Empowerment in Yemen: Baseline Report

Author/source: Save the Children

Date: May 2009

Rank in importance: High– Medium – Low

Relevance to Yemen Youth Assessment

This report contains useful data on livelihoods, competencies and assets. The data was collected to set the baseline for the Youth Livelihood Development Index (YLDI) that generates aggregate scores for *Human, Social, Financial and Physical Livelihoods Capital*. The YLDI combines three survey tools: a) Development Asset Profile – DAP (external and internal development assets); b) the Livelihood Competencies Profile (LCP); and c) Tangible Assets Profile (TAP).

Summary of Report and Findings

Baseline data for this report were collected through 46 focus group discussions with 441 participants including 292 young people and 600 young people between ages 14 and 24 who were interviewed through a cluster household survey. Data collection was concentrated on four governorates: Aden, Abyan, Ibb, and Sana'a. In terms of age categorization, Save the Children's (SC) focus groups were divided into: a) adolescents (14-18); and b) youth (19-24).

Respondent characteristics:

- 39.3% of survey respondents were girls and 60.7% were boys.
- 75.2% of respondents had a 9th grade or more education while 24.8% had less than a 9th grade education.
- 39.8% of boys were working and 10.6% of girls were working.

Focus Group Findings included

- Youth contribute economically to their families through work in the informal sector.
 - The most popular activities in the *informal job market* for participants were as follows: i) sales in retail for females 14-18; ii) sales in industry and food for females 19-24; iii) sales in retail and qat for boys 14-18; and iv) sales in retail and food for boys 19-24.
 - The most popular jobs in manual occupations were: i) constructions for boys 14-18; and ii) hairdressers and computer industry for girls 14-18.
- Females contribute economically to their families through handmade products.
- 53.13% of all FGDs reported high risk activities such as theft, gangster acts, and working as pimps.
- Adolescents, youth, and parents have modest abilities to identify available resources and opportunities: most young adults identified agriculture as a key livelihood resource including working in qat production. Other livelihood resources such as hospitality, human capital, and industry were identified by only 30%-35% of participants.
- Youth and families have a good understanding of the planning steps that are necessary for livelihood success including: need for education and training; looking for financial resources; matching plans with markets' needs; and identifying tools/resources that will be needed.
- Youth indicated an interest in self-employment opportunities and were able to identify the following planning steps: market research, feasibility studies, and time management, among others.
- Youth, particularly young men, see migration as a solution to the unemployment problem.
- Youth and their families can identify livelihood skills. 75% of females also identified handicraft skills. 25% of girls and boys in 14-18 category, 50% of girls and 75% of boys in 19-14 category



indicated that education (in different forms – formal, non-formal, vocational, etc.) was essential for successful livelihoods. Other livelihoods skills that were indicated included communication skills, listening skills, leadership, planning, self confidence, flexibility, work ethics, public speaking and innovation.

- Youth's major expense involves contributing to family wellbeing that involves a range of things such as paying utility bills and rent, buying food, buying clothing, helping siblings get married, and contributing to father's need of qat. Youth also spend on their education and small business development.

Household Survey Findings

Youth rate themselves as having good levels of external and internal development assets, slightly lower levels of livelihood competencies, and very low levels of tangible assets.

- Of the 58 questions on the DAP, the lowest score was on Constructive Use of Time, Schooling and Neighborhood Safety. The highest scores were on Internal Strength, Safety at Home, Learning Tolerance, Feeling Valued and Parental Support. Youth rated community support as the lowest developmental support.
- Four types of capital were assessed: human, social, financial, and physical. Youth rated their human and social capital as higher than their financial and physical capital.
 - The higher score for human capital (70%) reflected their positive views of their level of education and health, although the lowest rating under human capital was for their level of work skills.
 - For social capital (score of 67%), the highest rated factor was family support while the lowest for support outside of the family.
 - Low physical capital (score of 47%) reflects youths' low rating for their ability to access land, natural resources, tools and materials, and physical space.
 - Low financial capital reflects youths' inability to access credit and loans.

Youth Characteristics

- Youths' level of developmental assets and livelihoods competencies is most influenced by the location of where they live and the social and cultural systems in their area.
- Boys, in general, scored higher than girls on livelihood competencies. Female access to credit and physical capital was ranked much lower than that of boys.
- Livelihood competencies increased marginally with level of education
- Working youth had much higher levels of work skills, enterprise, problem solving and saving skills than non-working youth.

Discussion and Recommendation

1. Introduce youth to labor laws to expose them to their rights/duties and to prevent exploitation.
2. Education is not highly featured, especially not by girls, displaying perhaps, social attitudes towards education for girls.
3. Integrate awareness sessions on reproductive health including STDs, HIV, safe sex, and the negative effect of qat.
4. Incorporate practical and practice-based financial market literacy that builds on existing knowledge and supports youth in growing small businesses.
5. Explore links to microfinance providers.
6. Incorporate community mapping so that youth are better able to identify the resources that exist in their communities and how to access them.
7. Introduce youth, through SC toolkit Siraj, to the importance of building partnerships with adults.
8. Use sports as an entry point and way to positively engage youth in thinking about their futures.



4. National Strategy for Women's Development, 2006-2015

Author/source: Women's National Committee (WNC)

Date: 2006

Rank in importance: High– Medium – Low

Location/web link:

<http://www.yemen-women.org/reports/3469b438422be4STRATEG%20EN.pdf>

Relevance to Yemen Youth Assessment

This is the national strategy for development by the Women's National Committee in consultations with the ROYG and its central ministries and governmental structures. It is a strategy that identifies the most pressing and urgent needs of Yemeni women and includes a guideline for key policy reforms.

Summary of Report and Findings

The strategy is essentially divided into six key strategic issue areas. Each strategic area section provides a discussion, with useful data, of the challenges, problems and objectives necessary to redress key issues in the area. The six strategic sections also include strategic goals for 2015, interim objectives for 2006-2010, executive measures during the ROYG's 3rd (2006-2010) Five Year Plan for Development and Poverty Reduction and expected outcomes by 2010. The six key areas in the strategy and their corresponding 2015 goals are outlined below:

1. Goals for the education sector are:
 - a. Provide basic education for everyone by 2015
 - b. Achieve gender equality in other education levels
 - c. Reduce illiteracy among women and girls to half what it is now
2. Goals for health care and health services are:
 - a. Expand women's access to adequate healthcare throughout the life cycle and improve quality of care and its cost
 - b. Ensure wide involvement of women in health sector in employment and policy design
3. Goals for poverty alleviation and economic participation are:
 - a. Reduce percentage of poor women by half
 - b. Enhance women's independence and economic empowerment and active participation in economic and environmental decision making.
4. Goals for participations are:
 - a. Increase women's participation in decision making positions by quantity and quality
 - b. Upgrade the representation of the governmental mechanisms concerned with women's issues
 - c. Support institutional capacities of NGOs
5. Goals for promoting women's human rights are:
 - a. Facilitate women's actual exercise of their human rights guaranteed by sharia, national laws and international conventions especially "Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women"
 - b. Eliminate all forms of VAW



6. Expand women's participation and enhance their role in media and communication to support women's advancement and reflect balanced images



5. Youth Empowerment Program (YEP) Final Report and Evaluation

Author/source: Save the Children Yemen for USAID/Yemen

Date: January 1, 2011

Rank in importance: High– Medium – Low

Relevance to Yemen Youth Assessment

The YEP Final Evaluation report provides exceptionally useful information on lessons learned for youth programming in Yemen. The report sheds light on capacity issues in the country and types of activities that can be implemented to improve the livelihood skills of youth.

Summary of Report and Findings

The two year program was implemented in four Governorates: Abyan, Aden, Ibb, and Sana'a. The implementation mechanism was to award grants to 32 national and local NGOs to implement different types of activities. The youth target groups were especially marginalized groups. The program's main strategies and approaches were focused on:

- a) ***Increase the availability of and access to youth leadership skills building opportunities.*** This strategy involved multiple activities to achieving results: i) mapping youth NGOs and then selecting the 32 partner organizations that would receive funding to implement activities; ii) build the capacity of these partner organizations; iii) provide technical assistance and a training package on marketing, administration and leadership skills; and iv) establish two youth media centers that became financially sustainable and are now under the supervision of the Ministry of Youth and Sports.
- b) ***Improve the quality and relevancy of youth services in 4 target communities.*** Strategies included: i) 16 operational capacity assessments with youth to identify their needs and involved youth in the development of program planning and implementation; ii) identified youth leaders from the 32 participating NGOs who were trained in a range of issues including TOT for project planning and monitoring; and iii) participating NGOs received technical assistance to develop and implement a range of activities that provide services to youth.
- c) ***Increase the leadership and livelihoods skills and knowledge of marginalized youth in four target communities.*** Strategies included: i) targeting vulnerable youth, especially those with disabilities, refugees, and children from extremely disadvantaged socio-economic groups; and ii) provide a two-month internship opportunity to 310 young people in 32 companies. This latter program proved very popular with both youth and companies, so an additional 176 youth did one month internships with 68 companies.
- d) ***Improve the policy environment for youth empowerment.*** Strategies included: i) conducting household surveys at the beginning of the program and used evidence-based results for advocacy; ii) supporting youth-related events such as organizing national and governorate level events for International Youth Days, the Youth Regional Conference in Yemen that developed an action plan which was endorsed by the Ministry of Youth and Sports; and iii) printing and disseminating 6000 booklets including messages on youth issues for the Girls' Guides Association.

Several interesting facts provided by the report include (p. 29):

- Youth exclusion in Yemen is gendered and regionalized; females and rural residents are much more likely to be excluded than males and urban residents.
- A fifth of Yemeni youth have never enrolled in school.



- 30% of children aged 2-5 are severely stunted.
- Employers complain that school graduates lack critical cognitive, management, language, and computer skills.
- Unemployment is very high among youth with exceptionally high levels for “middle-educated” men with primary through secondary education and high educated young women.

Some of the lessons learned from the YEP program are extremely pertinent to current programming and implementation issues.

- In order for Yemeni youth to work together on activities and projects, certain class and ethnicity differences had to be addressed and overcome.
- It is critical to understand each environment/area/district where programs are to be implemented. A full understanding of the situation is necessary before detailed implementation plans can be made.
- Teamwork between the participating NGOs was weak and identification of the right young people to be involved in these projects was slow.
- The Youth Media Center proved to be a very popular program resulting in wide buy-in for the program but also a longer implementation process.
- It took some time to build the capacity of local partners to develop and implement innovative activities.
- The largest group of youth and the most marginalized are those that did not complete secondary school and they need access to other types of opportunities.
- Any youth empowerment program must have excellent monitoring systems in place to ensure fairness and transparency for the youth.
- The program found it very difficult to overcome restrictions for girls’ participation in the program. There has been insufficient work done on the meaning of youth empowerment for Yemeni girls. The project had planned to have a 50%-50% male-female beneficiary pool but ended up with a 30% female pool only. One recommendation is to develop a network amongst the participating girls.



6. The Bilqees Initiative (TBI) Assessment Phase Report

Author/source: Marta Colburn for Partners for Democratic Change

Date: November 29, 2009

Rank in importance: High – Medium – Low

Relevance to Yemen Youth Assessment

The Bilqees Initiative's Assessment report contains an extremely useful investigation and analysis of, among other things, the drivers of instability in Yemen. The assessment identifies youth as one of the main drivers of instability, but within the context of a youth bulge, political instability (both at the local and national levels), and deteriorating economic conditions. The report builds on an existing body of work in Yemen that explores the challenges, constraints, and issues that drive Yemeni youth to different types of unrest while underlining the gender gaps across all aspects of daily life in Yemen.

Summary of Report and Findings

The Assessment Phase Report of the Bilqees Initiative lays the groundwork for the MEPI funded program's rollout in Marib and then Shabwah. TBI is a leadership development and community-level awareness raising program targeting women and youth. The assessment investigated the development priorities of Yemenis from Marib, Al Jawf, and Shabwah through focus group discussions and key informant interviews. The top four priorities in order of importance were: awareness-raising on development issues; fair distribution of jobs and benefits; job creation, particularly for youth; and improving education quality. The assessment also provides a concise and useful analysis of service provision – or lack thereof – in education, health, and water.

Economic and political issues were the most significant factors consistently identified at the top of the list of drivers of instability. The assessment breaks down these political and economic factors into several subdivisions:

Demographic Imperative

1. Population explosion over the past three decades so that the population has doubled since 1990 and is projected to double again by 2025.
2. Increasing income disparities between urban and rural areas (where 73% of Yemenis live) exacerbated by lack of services in hard to reach mountainous rural areas.
3. Youth bulge with nearly 50% of the population under the age of 15 and 76% of the population under the age of 28. Unemployment for youth, which is double that of adults, is a key factor contributing to youth vulnerability. A whole range of negative factors impact youth as well: increasing cost of living and marriage, lack of productive or constructive activities for youth, an education system that does not provide youth with the needed skills for the labor market, and a tradition of strict obedience in the family subverting any independent decisions. In particular, the report lists the top eight factors perceived by youth to contribute to youth violence:
 - a) Economic (unemployment)
 - b) Social isolation by families and communities
 - c) Economic (poverty)
 - d) Misunderstanding Islam: that Islam is about peace not violence
 - e) Too much free time and no places to go
 - f) Corrupt and inefficient law enforcement system and institutions
 - g) Endemic Corruption
 - h) Exposure to violence through media and internet



Economic Dimension

1. High levels of poverty and unemployment
2. Weak private sector caused by a weak investment climate, poor access to credit, security issues, weak legal framework for investment, unresponsive government institutions, and extortion and corruption.
3. Subsistence agriculture with 73.5% of Yemenis getting their primary direct or indirect income from agriculture. Unfortunately, land available for agriculture is limited and water scarcity is a critical factor for the country.

Political Dimension

1. Limited state presence in many parts of the country including provision of services.
2. Weak rule of law causing many people to fall back on the *urf* tribal legal system to resolve commercial and personal legal issues. One interesting note is that in the absence of established rule of law through the government, the introduction of new resources (projects, manufacturing etc.) into any area can either escalate existing tribal or local conflict or can spark a new one.
3. Endemic corruption at all levels; it is almost institutionalized in both the government system and the tribal systems that govern the country.
4. High levels of conflict resulting from Yemeni historical traditions of raiding for wealth accumulation. In the modern age, these raids have translated into conflict over existing resources, jobs, or access to influence. However, the tribal system has established conflict prevention and resolution processes including using arbitration, mediation, and/or a well established compensation system.

Cultural Dimension

1. Ignorance and illiteracy.
2. Violent extremism and radicalism promoted through the presence of returned *mjahideen* compounded by idle, dissatisfied, and unemployed youth who are vulnerable targets for recruitment.
3. Tribal dynamics that: use conflict to battle over benefits and control over extractive industries in their areas and can do so in the absence of government presence; continue to practice revenge, provide rule of law and arbitration in the absence of government. One other negative aspect is particular to the PDRY. Because of PDRY government practices, tribal traditions were dismantled, but were artificially reinstated when southern Yemen united with the North.
4. Exclusion of women from economic and political participation and from the public sphere of life in general. Respondents felt that this exclusion is in large part due to low female literacy levels and weak girls' educational outcomes as well as societal and cultural norms that discourage women from working.

The assessment contains three very useful and pertinent programming recommendations:

- A. All training and communication materials for a program/project should be adapted to the context of local communities.
- B. Before entering any region/area to implement a new project, the communities of that particular region should be assessed and mapped out so that particularities, resources, NGOs, decision-making structures, tribal structures, the patronage system and key decision-makers in the area are identified before entry into the region.



- C. Based on the assessment, identify appropriate entry points into each region/community to ensure that implementation has a chance of success.



7. Youth Exclusion, Violence, Conflict and Fragile States

Author/source: Lyndsay McLean Hilker and Erika Fraser: Report prepared for DFID's Equity and Rights Team

Date: April 30, 2009

Rank in importance: High– Medium – Low

Location/web link: <http://www.gsdrc.org/docs/open/CON66.pdf>

Relevance to Yemen Youth Assessment:

This DFID study discusses the well known factors that contribute to youth exclusion such as the lack of livelihood opportunities; insufficient, unequal and inappropriate education and skills provision; poor governance and weak political participation; gender inequalities and socialization; and a legacy of past violence. However, the greater utility of the report lies, not so much in its presentation of well-established factors, but in the conceptual framework it constructs around youth issues of exclusion, violence, conflict and fragile states. The DFID study is also informative because its findings and conclusions on the causes of youth exclusion and their participation in violence very much reflect the patterns exhibited in Yemen.

Summary of Report and Findings

The source information for this report is a desk based literature review as well as key informant interviews with DFID staff, other donors, academia and youth groups. Some pertinent definitional elements of the report are:

- A focus on people aged 15-24 since the United Nations General Assembly defines youth as the age between 15 and 24.
- Conceptually, the study defines youth as the transitional stage between childhood and adulthood.
- Exclusion is defined as exclusion in a number of arenas including the legal, education and/or health systems and from the household.
- Young women can be invisible and therefore doubly disadvantaged and are left out since the perception is that they are not a threat.
- In fragile states that suffer from weak governance as well as weak political and social systems, grievances, disputes, and competition for resources can escalate into violence.

Issues and Evidence Around Youth Exclusion and Violence

The report posits that certain “proximate” factors, coupled with structural factors around youth exclusion, can lead to youth participating in violence. Structural factors are described as factors that have become embedded in the policies, structures and fabric of society and may create conditions for violence:

- Un- and underemployment and lack of livelihood opportunities.
- Insufficient, unequal, and inappropriate education and skills.
- Poor governance and weak political participation.
- Gender inequalities and socialization.
- Legacy of past violence.

“Proximate” factors are contributors to a climate that lends itself to violence or the escalation of violence:

- Recruitment, coercion and indoctrination
- Identify politics and ideology
- Leadership and organizational dynamics
- Trigger events



Theories of Youth Engagement in Violence

The DFID study postulates that youth's involvement in violence is caused by multiple and diverse reasons. These reasons include:

1. Greed or conditions that provide opportunities for groups to engage in violence. For example, a large population in the 15-24 age group provides abundant labor with low opportunity cost.
2. Deprivation and exclusion promotes grievance which can fuel conflict since violence becomes a rational means to address these grievances.
3. Developmental stages with biological, psychological, and social explanations for tendencies to violence.
4. The "blocked transition to adulthood" that involves an interplay of personal, institutional and macroeconomic changes such as: i) leaving home and setting up their own establishments; ii) complete full time education; iii) form close personal relationships, the most important of which leads to establishing a family; and iv) settling into an essentially stable source of livelihood. These changes, that are key to the transition process, have become unattainable for young people.

Resilience Among Youth

The report also argues that some youth, despite being subject to the same pressures of exclusion and blocked transition, do not get involved in violence. According to some evidence, preventative factors include:

- International or national migration that functions as a key safety valve for youth discontent especially when there is a youth bulge.
- The other factor is focused on the characteristics of societies, communities and individuals. Resilience based on strong community is defined by: a) a membership with shared values and beliefs; b) relations between members that are direct and many sided; and c) practices within the community of generalized reciprocity. Furthermore, study findings also reveal that youth in communities with a high degree of social capital (resilience, integration and trust) are less likely to display violent behavior.

At the individual level, factors that promote non-violent versions of manhood that positively impact youth behavior preventing them from participating in violence are:

- High degree of self-reflection and space to rehearse new behaviors.
- Constructing positive lessons out of witnessing violence.
- Tapping men's sense of responsibility and positive engagement as father.
- Rites of passages and traditions that have served as positive forms of social control.
- Family members that model more equitable or non-violent behaviors.
- Employment and school enrollment can expose men to alternative forms of conflict resolution and critical thinking.
- Community mobilization around the vulnerabilities of young men.

Policies and Programs to Address Youth Exclusion and Violence

Some of the major lessons learned from previous programming for youth and violence indicates that:

- Programs should be based on a context-specific analysis of the youth population and risk factors.
- Youth must be involved in program design, implementation and evaluation.
- Both structural and proximate factors should be addressed since they together lead to youth exclusion and violence.
- Programs should work at the both local/community and national levels.
- Girls and young women are still under-represented in policies and programs.
- Information on impact is limited, therefore programs need to include more systematic evaluations.



A variety of donors have developed toolkits or program guides for addressing youth exclusion, and youth participation in violence. The donor list includes the World Bank, USAID, GTZ, and UNDP, among others. An examination of their policies reveals some common percepts for programming. The first is recognizing the importance of youth as both partners in and beneficiaries of development and conflict prevention. The second is developing a specific policy or practice guide on youth and violence prevention that addresses: a) evidence on key drivers of youth engagement in violence and how to analyze the drivers at the country level; b) lessons learned about approaches to address these drivers; and c) guidance on specific programming options.

USAID/Yemen Commissioned Study on Youth

Finally, the report singles out the USAID, *Yemen Cross-Sectoral Youth Assessment: Final Report* conducted by the Educational Development Center in 2008 as an excellent example of involving young people themselves in an assessment. In fact, a summary of the assessment is included in the annexes as the only example of a country-level youth assessment.

Special Note

Page 10 of the report has a specific reference on policy implications in Middle Eastern Countries According to the researchers' findings from the literature review, development programs and policies that promote youth inclusion in the Middle East in particular are:

1. Literacy and high quality education that are coupled with on-the-job training as well as skills training in schools;
2. Development and promulgation of job creation policies with youth in mind such as providing support for youth entrepreneurs and self-employment in the formal sector;
3. Establish or expand public or private employment and job search services; and
4. Offer youth a diverse range of positive outlets in the arts, technology, sports, and environment, etc.



8. The Status of Women in the Middle East and North Africa (SWEMNA) Project: Focus of Yemen

Author/source: International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) and the Institute for Women's Policy Research (IWPR) – funded by the Canadian International Development Agency

Date: December, 2010

Rank in importance: High– Medium – Low

Location/web link:

<http://www.ifes.org/Content/Projects/Middle-East-North-Africa/MENA/Status-of-Women-in-the-Middle-East-and-North-Africa/Nav/Yemen.aspx>

Relevance to Yemen Youth Assessment

This comprehensive gender study was carried out between June 5, 2010 and June 26, 2010 by the Yemen Polling Center. This report was rated high because it provides a series of reports resulting from very recent data and information gathered on gender issues facing Yemen in different arenas within everyday life. The report, however, does not provide extensive analysis on the implications of the findings nor is it within the purview of the report to provide programming related insights or recommendations.

Summary of Report and its Findings

The sample size for this survey was 2,501 persons that included 1,993 women and 508 men. The findings report is divided into 7 mini-reports focused on key sectoral data on women's participation in Yemeni life in additions to the introductory section of the report which presents general demographic data.

1. Project overview and respondent demographics:

- The sample size consisted of 2,501 women and men distributed through the 17 Governorates of Yemen and the Capital. Only the Governorates of Al-Dhale and Sa'ada were excluded from the sample due to security reasons.
- 82% of the female respondents were under the age of 44 as were 75% of the male respondents.
- 56% of the female respondents had no education as compared to 18% of male respondents; 30% of the male respondents in the survey had a secondary education.

2. Freedom of movement and freedom from harassment and violence topic brief:

- Slightly over half of women respondents Yemen (56%) feel completely free to associate with persons of their own choosing.
- 60% of women reported that they feel restricted about moving around in public areas because of husband or parental opposition to their going out.
- Younger women report greater restrictions on their freedom to leave the house.
- 75% of urban respondents and 68% of respondents living in small town or large villages indicated they have heard that women experience harassment in rural areas and small villages.

3. Social attitudes toward women topic brief: this topic brief explores women's and men's attitudes towards women's participation in the political arena including running and holding office.

- 56% of women respondents agreed that women are able to make their own decisions when they vote while only 33% of male respondents agreed with the same statement.
- Both men and women respondents opposed women working: in tourism (M 88%; F69%); national security (M71%; F66%); women traveling without male relative escort (M98%; F91%); women participating in political protests (M66%; F63%).



- Alternatively, there was support for women holding various types of political roles: women as government ministers (M50%; F33%); women members of parliament (M45%; F30%); women members of political party (M40%; F 30%).
- The majority of women respondents agree that men are better political leaders and business executives; women with higher levels of education are more likely to disagree with this statement.
- When asked about completing secondary level of education for their daughters, 90% of women and 90% of male respondents answered yes.
- 83% of women respondents and 68% of male respondents would allow their daughter to work outside the home if chose to do so.

4. Educational attainment and career aspirations topic brief:

- 56% of women and 18% of men have no formal schooling; 86% of women and 60% of men report that they have less than a secondary-level education.
- However, educational attainment rates are much higher for younger people: only 29% of women ages 18-24 have no formal schooling compared to 98% of women 65 years or older.
- There are differences in educational attainment between rural and urban women.
- Educational aspirations are highest in the south where 70% of young women want at least a secondary education.
- Women are most interested pursuing post-secondary in medicine, religion/Islamic Studies and computer science.

5. Paid work and control of earnings and assets topic brief:

- 61% of Yemeni men work for pay while only 7% of women work for pay.
- Unmarried women and women who live in urban areas and small towns are more likely to work than their other women.
- 23% of women who complete secondary school and 48% of women who complete a post-secondary education are working for pay.
- Comparing men's and women's occupations yields some interesting information. 46% of working women are managers, professional and technical specialists, while 12% work in clerical, service and sales and 12% are self-employed. 31% of men work in clerical, service and sales while 23% work in skilled and manual labor and 20% are employed as managers, professionals and technical specialists.

6. Opinions on early marriage and gender quotas topic brief:

- Early marriage remains a widely spread phenomenon in Yemen.
- 37% of male respondents mentioned 18 as the minimum acceptable age for a girl to get married while 30% of men believe it is acceptable that girls marry at age 16 or younger.
- 37% of female respondents think age 20 is the minimum acceptable age of marriage for a girl while only 20% of women respondents would accept 16 or younger as age of marriage for a girl.

7. Health care access topic brief:

- 48% of women respondents indicated they have access to health care services while only 37% of male respondents indicated they had access.
- Access to health care is most prevalent in urban areas (72%) and the Midlands region (78%) while it is lowest in the Northern region (76%).
- 53% of women in the Western region completely lack medical care while 61% of women in the Eastern region cannot easily access care.



- Only 39% of women with no education report having access to health care while 67% of women with a university degree or higher have access to health care.
- Reasons given for not seeing a healthcare provider during their last illness: 36% of women and 24% of men reported that illness was not deemed serious; 20% of women and 17% of men reported lack of money; and 12% of women and 26% of men reported that the healthcare provider or clinic is too far.

8. Civic and political participation topic brief:

- 5% of Yemeni women say they are members of political parties as compared to 47% of men.
- Men tend to have membership in other types of organizations such as trade unions, cooperatives, and/or religious groups.
- For women with a primary level education, 5% are members of at least one organization while 8% of women with a secondary level education are members of at least one organization.
- 29% of male respondents, as compared to 2% of female respondents have taken part in a protest, march or demonstration.
- Findings indicate that only women in the age group 18-24 (8% of respondents), tend to engage in activities where they express their political or social views.
- In terms of participation in local council and presidential elections in September 2006, 61% of women and 86% of men reported voting in these elections.
- Women between 35-44 have the highest voter turnout while voter turnout for younger women, 21-24, is 51%.



9. Title of Documents

- a. **Baseline Report: Inclusive Education Project – Abyan, Lahej and Aden**
- b. **Violence Against Children in Yemen**

Author/source: Save the Children Supported by UNICEF and Dubai Cares

Date: August 2009, 2011

Rank in importance: High– Medium – Low

Relevance to Yemen Youth Assessment

The Violence Against Children Report is something of a subset of the Inclusive Education Report and they are summarized together in the sections below. Much of the information in the Inclusive Education Report around violence and punishment including: teachers' perceptions of student behavior, parent perceptions of student behavior and students' perceptions of parents and teachers punishment choices are the data and issues presented in the Violence Against Children report. These two studies, in general, would be more useful for assessing issues in the basic education sector since most of the data collection is concentrated on basic level schools, their catchment areas, and the communities in their environment.

Summary of Report and Findings

Some interesting data from the report:

- Only children between the ages of 7-17 were eligible to be in the survey.
- Until the age of 12, enrollment for both boys and girls remains above 90%. Rates begin dropping after that especially for girls. Enrollment rate for girls' between 12 and 17 was 77% and 87% for boys.
- 65% of the children who had never enrolled in school or had dropped out were girls and 35% were boys.
- 52% of girls and 73% of boys interviewed indicated that they had attended *other* forms of education; the most popular form on non-formal education was religious education.
- Most children not attending school report that they were needed to assist in the household or in outside work.
- Parents' educational expenditure are for: school uniforms, school supplies, and fees – though they are no longer required.
- 60% of children reported that teachers hit them with an object, while 75% of children reported the use of more positive disciplinary methods by teachers.
- 80% of both boys and girls believe that the best age to get married is after 18 years old.
- 29% of girls interviewed reported they were circumcised.

Perceptions around school attendance, drop-out and completion, especially as it relates to boys as compared to girls:

1. Responses with the highest percentage in terms of teachers' perceptions of why girls do not attend school were - in decreasing order of importance: a) costs for attending school are too high; b) girls get engaged/married; c) daughters need to stay home and help with chores; and d) formal school education is not as important for girls as it is for boys.
2. Responses with the highest percentage in terms of teachers' perceptions of why boys do not attend school were - in decreasing order of importance: a) boys do not like school; b) costs for attending school are too high; c) boys need to help their father; and d) boys are not clever.



3. Responses with the highest percentage in terms of teachers' perceptions of why girls attend school - in decreasing order of importance: a) girls like to go to school; b) girls who attend school can get a job/earn an income; c) girls learn important skills at school; and d) girls who attend school become better mothers.
4. Responses with the highest percentage in terms of teachers' perceptions of why boys attend school - in decreasing order of importance: a) boys who attend school can get a job/earn an income; b) boys like to go to school; c) boys who attend school become better fathers/leaders; and d) boys learn important skills at school.
5. Responses with the highest percentage in terms of parents' perceptions of why girls do not attend school were - in decreasing order of importance: a) education is not as important for girls; b) girls need to help with household chores; c) girls become engaged/ married; and girls do not want to go to school.
6. Responses with the highest percentage in terms of parents' perceptions of why boys do not attend school were - in decreasing order of importance: a) boys don't want to go to school; b) the cost of attending school is too high; c) boys are not clever; and d) boys must help their father.

The interviews also explored a variety of other issues around discipline, education and child rearing practices including: use of physical and humiliating punishment; types of punishment/discipline used by teachers; types of punishment/discipline used by parents; verbal and physical aggression; and symptoms of violence observed by teachers.

The Violence Against Children in Yemen Report includes a useful discussion section on the trends indicated by the findings. The researchers concluded that violence against children is widespread and both teachers and parents use physical and humiliating practices in child rearing and teaching practices. The report also indicates that parents and teachers mix negative and positive disciplinary methods leading children to be confused and do not support appropriate learning or development of children. There are no appropriate reporting or documentation structures in place and made accessible to children.



10. The Balqees Initiative (TBI): Baseline Survey Report

Author/source: Marta Colburn for Partners for Democratic Change, Partners Yemen

Date: January 31st, 2010

Rank in importance: High– Medium – Low

Relevance to Yemen Youth Assessment

These are the results of a baseline survey for Mareb. The survey generally looks at priorities for development as seen from the perspective of Yemenis. Some of the survey questions focus on drivers of instability and communication channels, both of which have relevance to youth issues and youth programming.

Summary of Repots and Findings

The Baseline Survey for Mareb Governorate was conducted for the MEPI funded TBI. TBI is a leadership development and community-level awareness raising program targeting women and youth in Mareb and Shabwah. 980 surveys were completed from 18 target districts (14 in Mareb, 2 in Al Jawf and 2 in Shebwah).

- Survey respondents were approximately 50% male and 50% female;
- 72.3% of the respondents were from Mareb;
- 54% of respondents were between the ages of 15-24;
- 42.8% of respondents had a high school degree;
- 53.4% of respondents were unmarried (probably because half the respondents were under the age of 24) while 41.3% were married; and
- 49.9% of respondents were students, 13.3% were housewives, 8.3% were teachers, and 7.8% were farmers.

Key baseline survey findings:

Basic Services and Development Priorities: From a universe of 30 issues related to security and stability, the four top ones were: 1) quality of education for boys and girls; 2) educational administration and school reform; 3) electricity services; and 4) basic health services. Other youth related issues were also included. Vocational Training Programs for Youth came in at number 8. Youth Training Programs Meeting Labor Market Needs came in at number 10. Finally, Youth Activity (summer camps, clubs, and competitions) came in at number 13.

Barriers to development contributing to instability: Respondents were asked to rank 18 barriers in order of importance for contributing to instability. The top four selections were: 1) proliferation of arms; 2) unemployment; 3) illiteracy and ignorance; and 4) weak rule of law. Poor education came in at number 6 while Lack of Positive Activities for Youth came in at number 11.

Awareness Raising Priorities: Respondents were asked to rank 31 awareness raising development issues in order of importance. The top 4 were: 1) religious guidance and awareness; 2) raising parents' awareness on the importance of boys' education; 3) importance of vaccinations; and 4) reducing impact of conflicts and revenge killing on development in general and specifically education. Other youth related issues included: youth's responsibility to their families (ranked 6); promote parents' awareness in dealing with teenagers (ranked 10); raising parents' awareness on the importance of girls' education (ranked 11); and involving and guiding youth towards vocational training (ranked 26).



Communication and Media: The most startling information in this section of the baseline survey are the gender differences in communication channels.

- Women ranked “mosques and religious settings” as the number one source – as did men but with a lower percentage (64.93% and 57.08% respectively).
- 52.51% of women ranked Sheikhs as the number 2 source of information while 38.54% of men ranked Sheiks second.
- Other results indicate that women listen to the radio and watch satellite channels in greater numbers than men: 31.67% of male respondents indicated social settings and informal gatherings as a source of communication while only 27.45% of women indicated this medium as a source of information.
- The most unexpected finding is on written materials, such as books and newspapers. 31.26% of women respondents as compared to 18.75% of men respondents get their information from newspapers and magazines, while 57.70% of women respondents as compared to 27.29% of male respondents get their information from books. Given the low rates of female literacy in Yemen, these responses are somewhat surprising.



11. Youth Exclusion in Yemen: Tackling the Twin Deficits of Human Development and Natural Resources

Author/source: Ragui Assad, Ghada Barsoum, Emily Cupito and Daniel Egel
Wolfensohn Center for Development, Dubia School of Government
The Middle East Youth Initiative, Working Paper No. 9.

Date: November 2009 **Rank in importance:** High– Medium – Low

Location/web link:

<http://www.shababinclusion.org/content/document/detail/1510/>

Relevance to Yemen Youth Assessment

This working paper provides some useful insights into youth exclusion in terms of resources and opportunities including education, training, health, livelihoods, jobs, and family formation. Some of the recommendations are extremely pertinent to USAID programming and echo recommendations put forth through other reports and data from assessments.

Summary or Report and Findings

This working paper focuses on youth exclusion in Yemen which, in the context of this working paper, is focused specifically on: youth exclusion, educational attainment, livelihood, and family formation.

Youth Exclusion

75% of Yemen's population is under the age of 25 and many youth face social exclusion, whereby they are cut off from the resources and institutions that could assist them in transitioning into adulthood. Youth exclusion is highly gendered and regionalized with females and rural residents more likely to be excluded than male and urban residents. Specific challenges facing youth are:

- Qat usage, which is a major pastime activity for Yemenis and has “adverse consumption, productivity and health consequences”.
- High levels of illiteracy and limited access to basic education impacts youths' prospects for employment.
- Youth are unable to access the resources and support they need, in the early stages of the life cycle, to productively participate in and benefit from society.

The working paper contains a very rare and illuminating explanation of the stratified class system that affects access and use of resources (pgs. 11-12) in Yemen. Three tiers of hierarchy define Yemeni society: a) the Sayyids are the highest group in the pecking order and hail from the northern part of the country; b) the tribespeople, Qabilis, include the majority of rural Yemenis; and c) Yemenis working in the service sector in urban areas (butcher, baker, mechanic, etc.). The most marginalized group, the Akhdam or servants, however, are outside this structure and provide the services that all other Yemenis consider beneath them. They have the least access to resources and opportunities such as education and health services.

Education

Delayed entry, coupled with high repetition rates, result in large numbers of overage students in the classroom. Low girls' enrollment rate is not because Yemeni's are opposed to the idea of education for their girls, but because they are dubious about the circumstances in which education happens: co-educational settings, long distances to school, lack of female teachers, and participating in a heavily male dominated setting.



For young Yemeni men, the study found that being employed was not strongly correlated with their education, although their educational attainment had a strong effect on the type of wage work they had; educated men, in general, work in the public sector. Most women with less than a secondary education, on the other hand, have never participated in the formal labor force. Those women who work for wages are usually highly educated and urban. The highest unemployment levels are for: “middle educated” men with primary through secondary education and highly educated young women.

Employment and Livelihood

Livelihood in this context refers to young people’s income and work arrangements. The report divides the types of work done by Yemenis into non-market subsistence and domestic work and market work, which includes agricultural and non-agricultural wage work as well as non-wage work in both agriculture and non-agriculture sectors. When work is expanded to include non-market subsistence and domestic work, then young rural and urban women are more likely to be working than men. Women who do engage in paid work, on average, earn higher wages than men since they tend to be highly educated and are almost exclusively employed in NGOs and government sectors. 26% of urban employed men and 17% of rural employed men have formal employment with salaries and benefits and most of these jobs are in the government or public sector; an emphatic commentary on Yemen’s private sector. As for Yemeni women, 8% are engaged in market work; non-wage agriculture work in rural areas and salary work in urban areas.

The correlation between education and employment yields some interesting findings. Men with some type of education are more likely to have market work as compared to men who are illiterate. However, men with high school and university degrees are less likely to have market work; a phenomenon that is explained as both a result of lack of opportunity for men with higher education coupled with higher expectations in terms of wage and employment that cannot be met in Yemen’s current economy. The researchers also found marked variations in male engagement in market work by region and that married men are more likely to have market work than unmarried men – mostly because in order to secure a marriage, men must have sources of income. The working paper posits that factors related to education, marriage, region, and migration are accurate predictors of female market work as well. Highly educated women usually engage in market work while married women are more likely to be engaged in subsistence and domestic work.

Finally, qat purchasing and consumption are time consuming activities that place additional economic burdens on families and youth themselves. According to the data, in households that are headed by youth and consume qat, expenditure on qat consumption is approximately 20% of total household expenditure. Qat chewing also decreases productivity by almost 25%.

Family formation

More than half of young Yemeni women marry while they are teenagers. Urban Yemeni males, on the other hand, have to wait longer to marry because of their increased lifestyle expectations that are engendered by higher levels of education, but are unmatched by what the labor market can actually provide. The working paper states that women are also experiencing some delays in the age of marriage; a generally positive indicator for social and economic development. Early marriage has adverse health effects on young women especially in rural Yemen where access to reproductive health services can be non-existent. Furthermore, when young women study participants were asked about their participation in decisions about their own marriage, less than 75% of those who were married agreed with the marriage. Instead, 11% stated that they were not asked for their opinion and 14% kept voluntarily silent.



The researchers also found that men with a primary, secondary, and university education marry earlier than illiterate men. The reasons include the fact that: illiterate men have fewer sources of income and opportunities for employment and men who are educated will generally belong to “better” families. However, unlike other parts of the Middle East, the bride’s educational background and employment potential does not impact her ability to get married.

Policy Implications for the Way Forward

National Youth Strategy

- The ROYG has adopted an integrated childhood and youth strategy to tackle these issues. The goals of the strategy are to assess the situation for the different age groups and to analyze the specific risks that affect each age group.
- In September 2006, the ROYG abolished school fees for girls enrolled in grades 1-6 and for boys in grades 1-3. However, studies on the impact of fee abolishment concluded that increases in enrollment are tied to structural and quality factors of schools and schooling rather than direct educational costs.

Developing the Education System

- In 2007, the Ministry of Education instituted a Conditional Cash Transfer (CCT) to encourage the retention of girls in grades 4-9 by making them eligible for the CCT.
- The ROYG is trying to tackle the dearth of female teachers by: providing additional incentives to female teachers willing to relocate to rural areas; and investigating the possibility of qualifying female secondary school graduates from villages themselves as teachers.
- The ROYG has also developed a Technical Education and Vocational Training Strategy that stresses the need for a shift from a supply-driven approach to a demand driven model involving: diversification of offerings, linkages to the labor market and devolution of management responsibility to the training institution level.
- The current TVET system absorbs only 3.2% of secondary school enrollment and the strategy seeks to expand that percentage to 15.

Employment and Livelihood

- The three main recommendations are: Increase foreign investment; reduce qat consumption; and introduce labor market reforms to encourage small and medium size firms to join the formal economy.
- Yemen needs to: improve the security situation; institute policies; and decrease the cost of formalizing, so that talented and well educated Yemeni’s will be attracted to the private sector as well as the public sector.

Overall Recommendations for Moving Forward

1. Use a holistic approach and assist youth in multiple ways and across multiple markets since the challenges they face are multi-dimensional.
2. Improve access for women and girls to the public sphere: make schools safe and more girl-friendly; increase the number of female doctors who can provide women with adequate health care; and encourage firms to more pro-actively hire female employees.
3. Focus on micro-institutional factors rather than indiscriminately investing in large and expensive construction projects. Competition among service providers for youth has to be increased to ensure responsiveness.



12. Baseline Data, Knowledge Attitudes and Practices: Young People and Their Health, Southern Yemen

Author/source: Save the Children/Yemen

Date: January 201

Rank in importance: High– Medium – Low

Relevance to Yemen Youth Assessment

The KAP, although it provides useful information that reflects findings from other youth surveys conducted by Save the Children in Yemen, is less useful than those other documents since the population surveyed for this KAP's baseline consisted mostly of refugees and Yemeni returnees.

Summary of Report and Findings

Save the Children's study KAP baseline survey was conducted in refugee camps in Lahej and Basatin; two areas with a high number of refugees and Yemeni returnees from the Horn of Africa. The assessment explored the following issues among these refugee populations: formal and non-formal education, violence in schools, violence at home, marriage, access to health facilities and health services, hygiene practices, adolescent health, circumcision, HIV/AIDS, substance abuse, and nutrition and worms.



Appendix D - USAID Implementing Partners Brief Project Descriptions

This annex presents a summary of USG funded projects that are currently being implemented in Yemen. The security situation was extremely fluid in the country at the writing of this report, and USAID/Yemen programmatic and strategic approaches are likely to undergo changes in response to the changing situation. Nonetheless, the summaries below provide a snapshot of USAID implementing partners' proposed activities and interventions as of June 2011 to contextualize and frame the discussion provided in this assessment report.

A. Responsive Governance Project (RGP)

RGP is a three-five year, \$43 million project (with additional cost-share from the prime IP, Counterpart) that was launched in May 2010 with a current end date of April 2013. The project operates in the eight target Governorates that were identified in the USAID Country Strategy 2010-2012 as key investment regions for stabilization. The Governorates are: Amran, Al Jawf, Marib, Shabwa, Aden, Abyan, Lahaj, Al Dhaleea and Sana'a.

RGP leans heavily towards formulation and reform of policies at the sector level while exploring process oriented policies that enable the ROYG to conduct its business as efficiently and inclusively as possible. The Project's goal is to: "Facilitate a more equitable socio-economic development by strengthening public policies and institutions that will contribute to mitigating the drivers of instability in Yemen." The project has three main components:

- *Component One:* Strengthened policy formulation and implementation capacity
- *Component Two:* Increased transparency and public participation in Government of Yemen processes and decisions.
- *Component Three:* Civil society participation in policy development and implementation promoted.

By the end of RGP, Yemen would have:

1. New public policies in place promoting equitable social and economic development;
2. Measurable improvements in government services; and
3. New community institutions and mechanism in place to increase and sustain citizen participation in locally-driven solutions and good governance.

RGP's sectoral foci are Education, Health and EG with the latter divided into three subsectors: EG and Agriculture, EG and Microfinance and EG and Water. In addition, RGP focuses on cross-cutting issues, namely: Decentralization, Transparency, Rule of Law, Data Collection and Gender and Youth. Thus far, the project has conducted and disseminated the following sectoral and cross-cutting assessments.

- Institutional Mapping of Line and Key Ministries
- Anticorruption Capacity Assessment
- Health Policy Capacity Assessment
- Water Policy Capacity Assessment
- Education Policy Capacity Assessment
- Economic Growth Policy Capacity Assessment
- Data Collection Capacity Assessment
- Policy-based Communications Strategy



At the same time, RGP does have an implementation presence at the local level since one aspect of the project is to identify and then strengthen the capacity of CSOs. Once the CSOs have sufficient capacity and expertise to carry out their work, they would be responsible for facilitating regional public policy forums, building the capacity of local CSOs and government officials, and monitoring government operations and service delivery. Through a competitive selection process that involved review committees, RGP has selected 13 CSOs in the 8 target provinces to carry this aspect of strengthening civil society structures and their engagement in the development process.

Gender and Youth in RGP

Youth and Gender are considered cross-cutting across the project's sector programming and cross-sectoral activities.

At the policy level, RGP implemented several gender and/or youth specific activities including:

1. Conducted a ***Gender Policy Rapid Assessment*** providing an overview of ROYG's efforts to mainstream gender in national policies. The assessment was focused on the sectors that RGP works in (ED, Health and EG and its subsectors).
2. Implemented two ***Youth Priorities Assessments*** which were attended by youth leaders in Sana'a and Aden. The first session was organized in cooperation with one of the RGP CSOs partners in Sana'a, All Girls Development Association and the second one in Aden in cooperation with the Vulnerable Youth Organization. The objective of the meetings was to identify priority issues from the perspective of youth to be incorporated into the RGP Policy Issue Agenda.
3. Established the ***Gender and Youth Thematic Group*** consisting of key government stakeholders with the expectation of including both CLP and USAID in the near future.
4. Organized two ***Women's Platform Development Workshops*** that provided women activists with a forum where they could engage in a comprehensive dialogue to formulate women's priorities, aspirations, and demands from the political system, during and after the current political situation. The outcome of the workshop was a comprehensive document outlining women's demands and priorities and identifying mechanisms for achieving demands.
5. Conducted a series of ***Youth Advocacy Focus Group*** meetings that mainly focused on assessing previously conducted Advocacy campaigns in Yemen, the issues covered in the campaigns, as well as lessons learned. A total of 9 youth organizations were represented in these focus groups. The aim of the Advocacy Focus Groups was to gather information that could be utilized in the formulation of the RGP Advocacy Policy vision, scope and to give recommendations on an advocacy action plan.
6. Conducted ***New Social Media training for Youth leaders*** to equip Yemeni youth groups in the use of media to enhance their participation in formulating public issues. The training targeted youth across all ideological and political beliefs.
7. Conducted a policy prioritization workshop/consultative meeting with the Women's Development Division in partners' line ministries.
8. RGP is in the planning stages of a youth assessment that identifies youth issues in the sectors the project works in.

As part of its Institutional Strengthening (IS) program of Civil Society Organizations in Yemen, RGP conducted a comprehensive Participatory Organizational Development Assessment (PODA) of its CSOs partners in eight targeted governorates. The POD Assessment focused on a number of functions including the existence of Youth and Gender mainstreaming in the CSOs plans and structure. Consequently, each CSO developed an action plan with specific activities that aim at enhancing its capacity to mainstream youth and gender issues and priorities in their overall programs and activities. There have, in addition,



been two main activities around youth and/or gender in terms of the community mobilization component of RGP.

1. Discussion groups with adult community members centered on key community issues, such as access and availability of education and health services, and issues related to water usage and scarcity. 50% of the discussion group participants were men and 50% were women, although the discussion groups had to be segregated into male and female groups in rural areas.
2. The second set of discussion groups targeted youth only, ages 17/18-35. Again 50% of the participants were men and 50% were women and much like in the case of adults, they had to be in gender specific groups in rural areas. The group discussions were focused on challenges facing young men and women, such as early marriage, girls' education, and access to employment.
3. The long-term objective is to create a National Convention for youth to focus on youth issues. It is hoped that through this process, the discussions will percolate up to the national level and become part of the policy dialogue on youth and development.
4. CLP will train NGO/CSO partners on gender mainstreaming and gender issues. RGP is in the process of reviewing manuals and identifying the appropriate training materials, which will be adapted to the local Yemeni context.

The primary implementer is Counterpart International (CPI) in partnership with Research Triangle Institute (RTI) and National Democratic Institute (NDI).

B. Community Livelihoods Project (CLP)

CLP is a three-five year US\$125,000,000 project that was launched in May 2010 with a current end date of May 2013 and is responsible for mitigating the drivers of instability in eight Governorates: Al Jawf, Amran, Marib, Shabwa, Abyan, Lhaj, Al Dahla, Aden and Sana'a. CLP is designed to compliment RGP's policy reform and central level targeting by working with communities, civil society, and governorate and district levels of the ROYG.

CLP implements activities in five sectors: Agriculture, Health, Education, Economic Growth, and Governance. Its implementation modality is rapid response grants to fund activities that address the root causes of unrest and build trust between communities and government authorities. In the longer term, CLP is expected to build on these quick impact projects to develop larger scale and longer term activities that tackle more complex problems. CLP's objectives are to:

- Increase employment opportunities through micro-enterprise development, micro-finance and agriculture, with a special focus on youth, whose unemployment rate in Yemen is a staggering 35%;
- Increase access to quality basic services, including health care, education, water and electricity;
- Promote community participation and empowerment that will allow communities to prioritize and articulate their needs and grievances through community organizations and civic action; and
- Strengthen local governance and improve interface between local councils, line departments, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and communities.

More recently, CLP developed a technical vision paper for each of the sectors it targets in the project. The technical vision papers outline specific strategies and expected activities required to meet program objectives.



Gender and Youth in CLP

Like most current USAID projects, CLP has a mandate to focus on youth and women in their activities. The following is a brief outline of activities at the sector level which focus specifically on youth and women.

Health: Most of the programming in the health sector benefits women and children since it is heavily focused on maternal and child health. CLP health interventions directly address issues of access, awareness, and capacity with particular focus on pregnant and postpartum women, newborns and children less than 5 years of age. Relevant activities include:

- Training more female midwives in a range of areas including improving their clinical skills in modern methods of family planning and couple's counseling, IUD insertion, and general health education and services to women from conception to post-delivery and early child-rearing stages.
- The midwife training program focuses on getting teenage mothers into postpartum family planning since birth intervals for teenage, married women are very short.
- CLP is utilizing the MoPHP endorsed health education flipchart which promotes 42 key health messages including messages on early marriage, women's rights, etc. A local NGO will print the flipchart and conduct training. A Yemen based NGO will then lead the printing of materials and provision of training on use of materials.
- CLP will also support linking community midwives to existing community health educators to increase demand for utilization of antenatal, delivery, and post-partum care, especially among adolescent mothers. This type of outreach will include educating husbands and other family members on the importance and availability of care in their communities and the particular risks faced by young mothers.

Education: CLP has leveraged best practices from the BEST project while also expanding the scope of activities that aim to improve the provision and delivery of education services to enrolled and non-enrolled boys, and especially girls. Activities implemented for the education sector directly, and occasionally indirectly, benefit girls while also benefitting the system's quality and responsiveness. Apart from quick impact grants for improving school infrastructure and demonstrating commitment on the part of the project, education sector activities are expected to include:

- Early grade programs for reading and math that include training teachers on effective practices and providing them with training guides.
- Non-formal, pre-service teacher training where CLP identifies high school level graduates at the local level and trains them to become teachers. This program will emphasize recruiting young women to increase the number of female teachers in schools.
- An Accelerated Learning (ACL) program that allows students, especially girls, to attain a 9th grade education. Currently, the existing accelerated training program, implemented by the Literacy Adult Education Organization (LEAO), provides ACL to the 4th or the 6th grade.
- A scholarship program provided to disadvantaged youth, both male and female, to attend higher education institutions when none are available in their own communities.

Economic Development: CLP economic development activities specifically benefiting youth and young women are concentrated in vocational education and entrepreneurship development. The range of activities targeting youth planned for this component include:

- Providing market based vocational and technical training coupled with internship and job placement programs. CLP recently worked with Al-Khair organization to provide construction and entrepreneurship training to 50 youth in Lahj and Taiz.



- Providing life skills and career training to at-risk-youth. Through the Yemen Education for Employment Foundation, CLP has provided career skills training to at-risk youth in Al-Jawf and Marib.
- Providing entrepreneurship and small business development training, especially to youth to support them starting their own businesses. CLP is strengthening its relationship with the Youth Leadership Development Foundation, which recently began designing a micro-business training program for youth in Aden, and the Holool Foundation, which has worked with youth to support the establishment of production-based microenterprises in Marib.
- Supporting Al-Amal Bank to scout locations in Lahj and Aden for small branches providing microfinance services.

Planned activities for CLP include promoting business associations and cooperatives to improve market access and increasing the availability of finance in under-served areas to improve market access. Much as in CLP's other sectors, activity implementation is carried out through the local level and by local entities and NGOs that receive grants from CLP. Specific planned activities include: catalyzing the engagement of youth in business enterprises in Ma'rib; improving the economic situation of young people in Aden through access to entrepreneurship and micro-finance; supporting female youth from Amran, Al-Jawf and Marib to establish micro- enterprises; creating income-generating opportunities for youth through building capacity, job placement, and distributing appropriate toolkits to each beneficiary; putting youth to work through short-term employment in Marib, Sana'a, Ta'iz, and Aden; and improving Youth administrative and career skills through the establishment of a Career Development Center (CDC).

Agriculture: a specific project objective targeting women “provides much-needed experience and training for rural women to generate new and enhanced family food and income generation opportunities”. CLP community mobilizers in targeted provinces work to establish relationships at the community level that allows them access to rural women who are mostly illiterate and work extensively in agriculture and the informal sector. CLP has and will continue to provide women agricultural workers with training on enhanced food sources so they become informed of new income generation opportunities.

C. Engaging Youth for Stable Yemen (EYSY)

EYSY is an approximately US\$1,200,000 program that was launched in September of 2010 and has an end date of September 2012. EYSY's goal is to “Enhance Stability in Yemen by Constructively Engaging Young People Within their Communities”. The program operates in 8 districts in the Governorates of Aden and Hajjah. Program objectives and activities implemented contribute to stabilization efforts:

- Objective One: Increase levels of communication and cooperation between youth, local authorities and community groups in 8 districts in Yemen.
- Objective Two: Youth develop stronger connections with their communities by addressing issues of mutual concern (including development, protection, and reconciliation).
- Objective Three: 400 youth gain a stronger sense of purpose and opportunity through mentorship by positive role models.

The program is implemented by Mercy Corps and they have established a sub-grantee partnership with a well established Yemeni NGO, the Youth Leadership Development Foundation (YLDP).



Gender and Youth in EYSY

The program is completely dedicated to addressing youth concerns. Activities under EYSY's three Objectives include an array of planned youth-targeted interventions. Other activities target improved relations between communities and local government representatives and service providers.

Mercy Corps is preparing to begin a training cycle for 100 youth and 100 community leaders in the fields of Good Governance and NGO Management, Anti-Corruption, and Dialogue. This training will include modules covering Rules and Regulations on Good Governance, Management, Decision Making, Reasons and Causes for Corruption, Tools to Fight Corruption, Community Monitoring, Budgeting, International Laws and Regulations against Corruption, Communication, Leadership, and Conflict Management.

Mercy Corps has been meeting with various religious, tribal, government, and CSO leaders to build support for its mentorship program.

D. Yemen Community-Based Conflict Mitigation Program (Y-CMM)

Y-CMM is an approximately US\$590,000 project launched in April 2010 and with an April 2012 end date. The project's three specific objectives are aimed at:

- Increasing in-country capacity to manage conflicts over natural resources and availability of basic services among others.
- Enhancing the ability of CBOs and local council to implement participatory, community, conflict-mitigation programs
- Empowering CBOs and local councils to establish sustainable systems and structures for community-based conflict mitigation and reconciliation.

This project is being implemented by a Yemeni organization, Partners for Democratic Change in Yemen, with extensive experience in development programming in tribal areas in Northern Yemen. The program is targeting the eight districts in the governorates of Marib, Al-Jawf, Shabwah and Al-Baida. To ensure the program's acceptance, the Y-CMM is first obtaining decrees of support from local councils.

In the first year of the program, Y-CMM has trained Community Facilitators, completed a conflict-sensitive program manual appropriate for the Yemeni context, trained community leaders, and selected members for local commissions.

Gender and Youth in Y-CMM

The project has a strong focus on women and youth, both as beneficiaries and participants. Y-CMM selected leaders – nearly half were women and/or youth – and trained them as facilitators during a 20-day training on conflict mitigation, community outreach, and facilitation skills. The facilitators then trained 448 volunteers who are supposed to reach out to 1,000 to create discussion spaces in communities on issues related to conflict; develop systems and approaches with the community to address conflict; and introduce concepts and strategies on how the youth leaders can help facilitate and mediate conflict.

There are different types of implementation challenges that are related to equity and inclusiveness. In Al-Jawf, Y-CMM has established a group that works strictly with women on women-related conflict issues. Given the diversity of population groups in Yemen, Y-CMM is paying special attention to include youth, women, and other participants in the group from different tribes and population groups.



In addition to eight planned commissions, Y-CMM established an additional commission seeking a greater role for women in conflict management.

E. Promoting Youth for Civic Engagement (PYCE)

PYCE, a US\$3,500,000 project implemented by AMIDEAST, was launched in September 2010 and will end in September of 2012. The goal of the PYCE project is to improve the livelihoods of Yemeni youth in vulnerable areas by supporting USAID's strategy to engage dynamic, responsive, and credible religious leaders in the governorates of Sana'a, Aden, Abyan, Amran, and Marib. The project has two main tasks:

- Task One: Strengthening the Role of Religious Actors
- Task Two: Establishing and Supporting Youth and Recreational Programs

Gender and Youth in PYCE

The PYCE project targets youth exclusively. Key activities proposed under its two main tasks are outlined below:

Task 1: Strengthening the Role of Religious Actors

PYCE will establish a Peer Network consisting of a diverse group of individuals who are under 30 years of age. Once the Peer Networks are established, they will be trained on Participatory Analysis for Community Action (PACA) activities. The next step will involve curriculum design and piloting, and further survey development to prepare PYCE Peer Network members to provide their peers with training on self-confidence, leadership, teamwork, community development, volunteerism, and youth and sports. The Governorate Steering Committees established by PYCE will, in the meantime, award Rapid Response Grants, with up to 25 grants averaging US\$500, during the first year and a similar amount in year 2 of the project.

Task 2: Establishing and Supporting Youth and Recreational Programs

As Peer Networks conduct TOTs, the PYCE team will begin limited renovations of seven identified youth center sites. Renovations will provide enclosed multipurpose courts for sports like indoor soccer, basketball, volleyball, and handball. The indoor court(s) will permit women's access—either full access that is properly segregated from males, or through women-only hours. The sites affiliated with the PYCE Project will ensure female-only spaces as these do not currently exist on a wide scale. A special effort will be made to reach out to coaching and training female managers and sports enthusiasts. PYCE is planning on fielding Arabic-speaking trainers – at least one of whom will be female to provide a TOT for 30 soccer, basketball and volleyball coaches and referees. Trained coaches will then form teams of youth and provide coaching on the sport. The project expects that there will be intramural and possibly inter-Governorate competitions through league structures.

Specific Examples of PYCE Activities:

To address the climate of negative messages targeted towards youth, PYCE held a positive messaging workshop for Peer Network members in a neighborhood in Aden Governorate. A workshop for female Peer Network members was also held in the same neighborhood to help build self confidence, emphasize the idea of female participation in physical activities, and provide support for women against male harassment.



F. Basic Education Support and Training (BEST) Project

BEST, an approximately US\$17,400,000 project, began implementation in September of 2007 under USAID/Yemen's previous strategy as a basic education project and will end in December of 2011. Project activities are implemented in three Governorates: Hodeidah, Rayma and Amran. BEST's goal statement is "to strengthen the capacity of communities, schools, and the Ministry of Education to sustain educational improvements for their children and their children's children". BEST's project objectives are:

- To enhance the capacity of targeted MOE units at all levels to support educational improvement consistent with the national decentralization policy.
- To expand work on improvement of Education Management Information Systems (EMIS), learning environments, teacher training, Mothers' and Fathers' Councils (MFCs), learning materials, and adult literacy in the schools and communities.
- To develop, with the MOE, a community school policy to address the issue of parity between boys' and girls' enrollment and retention in schools.
- To support development of policies and actions that result in recruitment and retention of female teachers.

Gender and Youth in BEST

The BEST project's beneficiaries are Yemeni's enrolled or eligible for enrollment in grades 1-9. BEST also leaves behind extremely useful lessons learned and best practices in interventions or combinations of interventions at the school level that positively effect enrollment and retention, especially for girls. BEST is essentially a basic education project with a girls' education mandate leading to a slew of activities that aim to increase girls' enrollment and retention in the system. Some useful Yemen- specific targeted interventions are listed below:

- Gender-related issues were addressed in every programmatic activity by developing and distributing a menu of gender mainstreaming approaches entitled, "Promoting Gender within the BEST Yemen Activities" for Component Coordinators.
- Developed two "Gender Sensitization Training materials" for the MOE which were the first national level gender-sensitization materials to be implemented by the Girls' Education unit within the ministry. These materials addressed all of the issues that form major barriers to girls' education: dropout, early marriage, unavailability of facilities, shortage of female teachers, cultural perceptions of girls and women, and lack of unisex schools for girls.
- Develop life skills materials that are being piloted in 9 cluster schools. The materials include life skills exercises of specific interest for girls with the objective of increasing their self-confidence, leadership and teamwork skills.
- Trained teachers, headmaster, heads of Fathers' Councils, and school social workers on a Multi-faceted Approach to Safe Schools (MASS). The training enables them to respond to School Related Gender Based Violence (SRGBV) by reinforcing teaching practices and attitudes that promote a safe learning environment for all students, both girls and boys.
- Conducted a summer program that was an academic, personal, and life skills enrichment program developed with and for all members of the community. As a result of a range of activities in the summer programs including sports for girls, the summer camp experience created new influential female community mobilizers.



- Trained social workers in their roles and responsibilities as community mobilizers responsible for engaging fathers' and mothers' councils and creating gender-friendly environments.
- Formed and trained Mothers' Councils resulting in a massive increase in girls' school attendance rates. MCs have helped re-enroll girls who have dropped out of school, conduct awareness raising campaigns on early marriage, and started adult literacy classes while recruiting secondary school teachers to work as volunteer facilitators.

BEST is implemented by the Academy for Educational Development. CLP's education sector activities have been working with BEST to adopt and/or build on key BEST lessons learned, best practices, approaches, and training and teaching materials.

G. Yemen Monitoring and Evaluation Project (YMEP)

YMEP is a US\$7.7 million project that was launched in May 2010 and will end in April 2013 (or April 2015 if both option years are exercised). YMEP is a monitoring and evaluation project that supports implementation of USAID's 2010-2012 Country Strategy. YMEP provides continued, on-the-ground monitoring, verification and evaluation of the impact, output and outcome results, communications support for the Mission and environmental compliance of USAID's entire portfolio of activities in Yemen in an effort to measure and report on progress towards achieving stabilization. Within the parameters of its scope of work, YMEP monitors the USAID funded RGP, CLP, OTI, BEST and four CCM projects.

Among YMEP's six main deliverables is an assessment and evaluation component that envisions regular assessments on the stability situation of the country in addition to sector or thematic assessments. This current Youth and Gender Assessment is being conducted under this component of YMEP.

YMEP is required to include all recently funded USAID programs under their mandate, but also include BEST as that is ongoing 18 months into the YMEP contractual period, even though it will end later this year. YMEP will technically support the M&E efforts of CLP, RGP, OTI, BEST (as requested by the Mission), and the 4 CCM partners (Amideast, NDI, Mercy Corps and Partners Yemen) as well as monitor the program achievements and environmental compliance.

H. Office of Transition Initiatives (OTI)

OTI launched the Yemen Stabilization Initiative (YSI) with an overall budget of US\$33,000,000 in April 2010 and is currently slated to end by April 2012. YSI is presently implementing specific activities in the Governorates of Abyan, Aden, Al Dhale'e, Al Jawf, Amran, Hajjah, Lahj, Marib, Sa'adah, and Sana'a.

The overarching objective of the OTI program in Yemen is to pilot activities that enhance the legitimacy of local government institutions while strengthening their ability to respond to community needs, as well as serve as relationship-builders for other USAID activities in the targeted areas. Specifically, YSI has two main goals:

- Improving government accountability and image with the Yemeni people by responding to community grievances using the strategy of Republic of Yemen Government (ROYG) service delivery; and



- Lay the groundwork for other Mission programs, most specifically the Community Livelihoods Program (CLP).

YSI programs are quick impact projects that are funded through a wide range of grants in support of service delivery in multiple sectors such as agriculture, education, electricity, governance, health, non-agriculture livelihoods, water and sanitation, and youth, among others. YSI's geographic strategy for selecting interventions is intended to mitigate the influence of negative ideologies, violent extremism, and intolerance by bolstering government responsiveness in key districts and vulnerable regions. The following drivers of instability are addressed by YSI through specific programmatic interventions:

- Unemployment;
- Limited productive opportunities to engage youth;
- Ineffective/inefficient state institutions; and,
- Lack of management of natural resources.
- Lack of ROYG capacity and responsiveness to community needs; and,
- Lack of government transparency, corruption and abuse of power.

The types of activities most commonly undertaken focus on the rehabilitation, furnishing, and equipping of health centers, schools and sports, social and cultural clubs or the rehabilitation of roads, water networks and wells and electricity supply infrastructure. Activities that receive funding are based on ideas from government interlocutors which are then ground-truthed at the community level by the YSI team. These activities are only undertaken where non-infrastructure elements will be provided by the relevant government authority and where there will be ROYG involvement. This serves the objective of having ROYG and the communities work together on the activities, thereby building the credibility of ROYG in the eyes of the community.

Youth and Gender

OTI grants have been given to support summer camps for youth, both male and female in 2010 and 2011. The summer camps involved a range of activities including: building, repairing, or rehabilitating sports clubs and sports courts and providing sports equipment as well as sewing machines with the objective of creating the space for young men and young women to enjoy constructive activities in their free time. Additionally, grants for repairs or rehabilitation of schools and medical facilities also benefit youth.

Specific examples of these activities include:

- Hosted 19 summer camps in 2010 for 4,450 vulnerable youth in 13 districts in Marib and Al Jawf, and
- Hosted 57 summer camps in 2011 for over 14,000 youth in Amran, Dhale, Hajjah, Jawf and Marib districts.
- Equipped the Hazm General Hospital in Al Jawf with an ultrasound machine and two generators.

Focusing on quick-impact youth-oriented activities is part of YSI's pragmatic response to the Arab Spring. These activities focus on keeping the youth occupied with summer camp activities and equipping sport and cultural centers to reduce the likelihood of idle Yemeni youth being mobilized by insurgent groups.

The implementing partner for the YSI is the International Organization for Migration (IOM).



I. Strengthening the Role of Youth in Cross-Tribal Conflict Mitigation Process and Community Development

Implementation of Strengthening the Role of Youth in Cross-Tribal Conflict Mitigation Process and Community Development began in May 2010 and will run through October 31, 2011, under the implementation of NDI. The project aims to address increased youth engagement in conflict and the shortcomings of traditional conflict mediation.

This 18-month program strives to engage youth across tribal boundaries as key stakeholders in resolving conflict and to build effective relationships between youth and community leaders to address local issues that contribute to violent conflict. The program is based on the theory that as youth develop the capacity and relationships to engage in local civic processes that directly impact issues of primary concern to youth, they are more likely to address conflict through those processes than resort to violence.

This program aims to achieve the following objectives:

- Youth, across and within tribes, in Marib and Shabwa employ conflict prevention mechanisms as a tool for enabling community development; and
- Local leaders and cross-tribal youth councils collaborate on community development planning.

The implementing partner for this project is NDI

Youth and Gender

This project specifically targets youth and considers the inclusion of women to be a critical part of the formation of youth councils. When recent circumstances required NDI to relocate activities in Shabwa governorate to Sana'a, many young women were not allowed to undertake the necessary travel. As a result, NDI chose to delay work until women could fully participate.

NDI delivered a program in May 2010 to provide youth in the Juba district of Marib and the Ain district of Shabwa conflict prevention and mediation tools and tools to interact and advocate with local councils and tribal leaders. In July 2010 NDI established the Marib Youth Council for Development and Social Peace (MYCDSP) in Juba district of Marib. The second youth council, in the Ain district of Shabwa, was established in April 2011.

During this year's civil unrest, the MYCDSP has been working with other youth to form committees to protect government building and reopen schools. MYCDSP has also been working with youth in Ain to develop plans to create peer mediation groups in Ain district schools. CMM has also encouraged the Ain Local Council to emphasize engagement with youth, while facilitating meetings between the Ain Local Council and the Ain youth council to find areas where both can coordinate their efforts at conflict mitigation.



Appendix E: Survey Instruments

Key Informant Interview Guides

Three Key Informant Interview guides were developed by the assessment team and used to conduct interviews with different groups of interviewees: a) community leaders, teachers/headmasters, women or men's group leaders, youth leaders and/or other key stakeholders at the local level; b) Community Service Organizations and youth organizations; and c) USAID implementing partners.

Key Informant Interview Guide A:

Community leaders; teachers/headmasters; women/men group leaders; youth leaders; and other key stakeholders

1. There is a lot of conflict in the region and in Yemen. What do you think the impact of conflict has on youth?
2. Conflict appears in communities and in the home, what is the impact of conflict on the attitudes and actions of youth?
3. Do you believe youth have the ability to stop conflict or are they more likely to perpetuate conflict because they see so much of it?
4. What role could youth have in mitigating conflict?
5. What is the response to violence in the home in this community?
6. What kind of support does your community provide for youth? Are there youth clubs?
7. What is the relationship between community leaders and youth? Is there trust between youth and communities?
8. How does conflict affect women and girls? Is that different than how it affects men and boys? If so explain how?
9. What kinds of programs or assistance could this community provide that would help young people have skills and employment? (ask for specific examples of youth programs now and potential).
10. Are young people getting married at older or younger ages than a decade ago? Explain.
11. Some families marry their daughters at very young ages. In your opinion, what are the reasons for early marriages? What is the best age for girls to marry? Boys?
12. What special problems do female youth face that males do not?
13. What is the best way to help young people become involved in community service and civic engagement?



Key Informant Interview Guide B: USAID Implementing Partners

1. Can you please provide an overall brief description of your project, key objectives and date launched? (Please provide written project summaries if available to supplement responses)
2. What are the project's activities that are directed at youth? How does gender fit into youth programs? Do you have disaggregated data that shows the participation of women and men?
3. Who implements the youth activities? Do you have gender specific programs or activities? Please provide contact names and information?
4. Where (in what governorates/districts) are the youth and gender specific activities implemented?
5. What are the main problems/constraints that women/girls face in the areas were you are working? How do your programs address the needs of women and girls?
6. What has been the impact (effects) of your youth/gender specific activities?
 - a. Describe the successes?
 - b. What have been the unforeseen failures/disappointments?
 - c. What are the implementation challenges (besides the security situation)?
 - d. What are the lessons learned?
7. What has been the reaction of the local community to your projects, with regards to youth and gender in particular? What could the community (government) do to support the needs of youth? Is the local government receptive to taking action to support youth/gender interests? Describe/give examples if possible.
8. What other types of programs/activities are needed to benefit youth and also to benefit young women?
9. Do you have any further comments concerning youth and gender issues?



Key Informant Interview Guide: Youth Organizations or Community Based Organizations

1. How did your organization become established? And how long have you been an organization that serves the interests of youth?
2. What is your aim or vision as an organization? What are your objectives in terms of helping Yemen's youth?
3. In your experience, what types of problems do the youth of Yemen face?
4. What special problems do female youth face that males do not?
5. Are there things that parents and families can do more of or do better to support youth?
6. What role does the community play in terms of the lives of youth? What types of programs or assistance could this community provide that would help young people have skills and employment? (ask for specific examples)
7. What types of programs/projects does your organization carry out for youth? How many youth do you think have benefited from your program?
8. How do you get funding to do your programs? Are you all volunteers or do you have some paid staff? How many people work in this organization?
9. There is a lot of conflict these days in Yemen. What do you think is the impact of conflict on youth?
10. What role do youth seem to be playing in this conflict? Are they contributing, mitigating or playing some other role in the conflict?
11. How does conflict affect girls and young women? Is that different than how it affects men and boys?
12. Do you have any other comments concerning youth or gender in Yemen that you would like to share with us?



Appendix F - Data Quality Assessment

A Data Quality Assessment (DQA) examines in detail the quality of data at each step in the data management cycle and ensures that data quality is maintained throughout the processes that data is subject to in order to change raw data into useful information. The data quality parameters (validity, reliability, precision, integrity, and timeliness) are tested at each of the points at which data is affected by researchers, their team or any other individuals interacting with the data (source, collection, collation, analysis, reporting, and use).

In terms of the collection process (process of obtaining data from the source) YMEP examined:

- The collection process to ensure that the correct sample was accessed at the correct time by the appropriate individuals;
- The instrument for coherence and logic to ensure that good research principles have been adhered to in the design of the instrument;
- Any translation of the instrument and ensure that accepted translation processes were used;
- The data on instruments for inconsistencies indicating untrained interviewers, incomplete, incomprehensible, or mistranslated data;
- Ensure that the instrument was comprehensively completed for all records used; and
- Any quality control processes put in place by the researchers and the effect of those on the quality of the data;

A risk score is calculated for the data based on the findings of the DQA. The risk score provides users with an indication of the risks associated with the use of data at the time of the DQA. Data is usually classified as:

- High risk data – data with very poor quality where significant errors were uncovered and the errors occurred frequently in the data. This data has very poor quality and cannot be used for decision making. Data management processes and quality control on these processes require substantial effort to improve data quality.
- Medium risk data – data where errors are low to medium in severity and occur infrequently. There are concerns regarding data quality that need to be addressed. Data quality is not critical, however decisions based on this data may not result in anticipated outcomes. Data should be reported with a caution.
- Low risk data – Good quality data where the errors are both infrequent and not significant. This data can be used with confidence.



Appendix G – List of Persons Met and Interviewed

ORGANIZATION	NAME AND TITLE OF PERSON MET, May 2011
USAID Implementing Partners	
Counterpart International	Abdel Kareem El Ouj, DCOP
Responsive Governance Project	Rana Jarhum, Gender & Youth Technical Officer, Policy Team
	Tahani Khaibah, Gender Specialist, Community Mobilization
	Najeeb Al-Hammadi, Sectoral Policy Technical Officer, Economic Growth
	Aswan Othman, Sectoral Policy Technical Education Officer
Creative Associates International	Craig Davis, Chief of Party
Community Livelihoods Project (CLP)	Husnia Al Qadri, Senior Gender and Youth Advisor
	Sylvia Ellison, Senior Education Specialist
	Sam Loli, Senior Public Health Specialist
	Sami Sofan, Economic Growth Specialist
	Kawkab Al-Thaibani, M&E Specialist
Academy for Educational Development (AED) BEST	Salwa Azzani, Gender Specialist, Basic Education Support and Training
Mercy Corps Engaging Youth for Stable Yemen (EYSY)	Sarah Ferris, Country Representative Umelto Betuben, Deputy Country Representative
AMIDEAST Promoting Youth for Civic Engagement (PYCE)	Sabrina Faber, Country Director
Partners for Democratic Change Yemen Community-based Conflict Mitigation Program (Y-CCM)	Nadwa Al-Dawsari, Executive Director
International Office for Migration (IOM), Implementing Partner for OTI Yemen	Philippe Branchat, Manager
National Democratic Institute (NDI)	Heather Therrien, Country Director



International and Yemeni Organizations	
CARE	Marta Colburn, Country Director
For All Foundation	Sabah Badri, Executive Manager
UNICEF	Tammy Smith, Chief Social Policy & M&E
Women's Commission	Houria Mahshour, Ex-Chairwoman
USAID	
USAID/Yemen	Dana Stinson, Deputy Technical Director and AOTR
USAID/Yemen	Caryle Cammisa, Assessment COTR
USAID/Yemen	Afrah Al-Zouba, Democracy and Governance Specialist
USAID/Yemen/OTI	Sara Skahill, OTI Country Representative Ahmed Mokhtar, OTI Deputy Country Representative
USAID/DC/OTI	Sarah Charles, OTI Program Manager (Washington, DC)
	Gretchen Murphy, Program Assistant (Washington, DC)
USAID/CMM	Cybele Cochran, Gender Specialist (Washington, DC)
Implementing Partners HQ Staff in DC	
Academy for Educational Development	Uzma Anzar, Senior Education Officer
	Liza Baron, Program Manager Student Council Project
Counterpart Responsive Governance Project (RGP)	Amal Al Azzeh, Senior Program Manager
	Anna Sahakyan, Senior Manager
Creative Associates	Phyllis Forbes Senior Education Advisor
Microfinance Information Exchange	Blaine Stephens, COO



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