



## MONTHLY HIGHLIGHTS

JANUARY 2012



### U.S. Deputy Chief of Mission Visits Labor Intensive Rehabilitation Project in the Old City of Sana'a

On January 9, 2012, the United States Deputy Chief of Mission Elizabeth Richard visited the USAID-funded Labor Intensive Rehabilitation project in the Old City which was employing 110 Old City residents to beautify their neighborhood. With Minister of Culture Dr. Abdullah Aawbal, she visited one site where workers employed through the project were removing construction waste and planting trees.



*U.S. Deputy Chief of Mission Elizabeth Richard during a visit to the Labor Intensive Rehabilitation project site in the Old City of Sana'a. Photos: US Embassy*

The “Labor Intensive Rehabilitation” activity is implemented through the Community Livelihoods Project (CLP). In 2011, many parts of the Old City became dumpsites as a result of the interruption of municipal services, including waste removal, during the protracted Arab Spring conflict. Some streets even became impassable with mountains of garbage blocking the way. Rehabilitation activities started on December 10, 2011, and each day, workers employed by the project removed approximately 25 tons of trash from the streets, to the relief of 95,000 Old Sana'a residents and merchants who live and work in this legendary part of the city. Also, workers removed 108 tons of construction waste that had piled up over the past year, repaired sidewalks and planted trees to beautify their very special community. Old City residents hope that initiatives like these will help make Old Sana'a the thriving residential neighborhood and tourist destination that it once was.

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The Old City of Sana'a is a UNESCO World Heritage site that must be protected, and this project helped achieve that by raising awareness of the importance of good stewardship, water conservation and the unique history of the neighborhood. The project also rehabilitated public gardens and taught residents how to recycle wastewater. “We need donors to get behind more projects such as these to protect this beautiful place and also afford youth an opportunity to work,” noted Mohammed Abdulqader, head of Together Stronger, which is helping CLP implement the project.

The Labor Intensive Rehabilitation activity focuses on providing short-term employment opportunities for previously unemployed residents. Following the success of the activities' first phase in Sana'a, Aden, Marib and Taiz, USAID has expanded the project to 13 more sites across Sana'a that will employ over 6,900 men and women through March 2012.

With the ongoing economic crisis in Yemen affecting citizen livelihood throughout the country, USAID is committed to supporting short term and long term job creation opportunities in both urban and rural areas across the country.

**IN FOCUS****Yemen Transitional Democracy Project**

*USAID is helping the Yemeni government meet immediate electoral needs, through repair and procurement of voting booths, and provision of badges for security personnel, among other things. Photo: YTDP*

Following the signing of the Gulf Cooperation Council's transition agreement in late 2011 to transfer presidential power after the election scheduled on 21 February 2012, USAID initiated a new project called Yemen Transitional Democratic Process (YTDP) program worth \$3.4 million.

The YTDP program, implemented by the National Democratic Institute (NDI) and the International Federation for Electoral Systems (IFES) through the Consortium for Elections and Political Process Strengthening (CEPPS), promotes the development of a democratic political system in Yemen through citizen engagement and monitoring of the following processes: (1) elections for a new President of Yemen; (2) monitoring of the elections and constitutional reform process including reform of electoral processes and preparations for a popular ratification process; (3) monitoring the upcoming Parliamentary election process including any voter registration or updates to the voter list and other preparations related to this election; and (4) technical support for Yemen's Supreme Commission for Elections and Referenda (SCER), including assistance with the procurement of election materials.

**DISTRICT NEWS****Amran Authorities Inaugurate USAID-Funded Girls' School Expansion**

*The Deputy Governor of Amran cuts the ribbon at the inauguration ceremony of the Aisha Girls' Primary School expanded through a USAID grant. Photo: USAID*

Amran governorate officials led by the Deputy Governor, Baker Ali Baker, inaugurated the recently expanded Aisha Girls' Primary School in Dhi Bin District, a project undertaken through a USAID grant. The \$70,000 grant financed the rehabilitation of four existing restrooms, expansion of three additional classrooms, building three new restrooms and the installation of a steel staircase leading to the roof, all of which will directly benefit 240 students of the school.

Tribal allegiances in Amran have made communities accustomed to violent inter-tribal conflict, leading to frequent clashes between aggrieved tribes and government entities. This is compounded by the strain on host communities caused by the influx of over 50,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs) from the conflict in neighboring Sa'ada governorate. This grant was intended to demonstrate that the Yemeni government is responding to community priorities following its completion of a needs assessment in May-June 2010. Strengthening the government's presence in Dhi Bin district creates a buffer, making separatist Houthi expansion efforts towards the capital more difficult.

After the ceremony, the Deputy Governor spoke with residents concerning other potential school projects in the district and promised to follow-up the issue with the Governor of Amran.

## USAID Supports Anti-Corruption Training for Junior Staff of Key Government Offices



*(Top photo) The United States Deputy Chief of Mission Elizabeth Richard and USAID Mission Director Robert Wilson open the anti-corruption training for junior civil servants in Yemen with the chairpersons of the Yemen oversight institutions. (Below) Key Ministers of Education, Agriculture and Local Administration were among the audience during the opening ceremony. Photos: YMEP*

In a move that signals their unity and seriousness to combat corruption throughout the transition period and beyond, Yemen's anti-corruption bodies Supreme National Authority for Combating Corruption (SNACC), the Central Organization for Control and Audit (COCA) and the High Tender Board (HTB), with the support of USAID's Responsive Governance Project (RGP), jointly kicked off a three-week training workshop for junior staff of key government ministries and anti-corruption bodies on January 7, 2012 at the Moevenpick Hotel in Sana'a.

The United States Deputy Chief of Mission Elizabeth Richard, joined the Chairpersons of SNACC, Engineer Ahmed Mohammed Al-Anisi; COCA, Dr. Abdulla Abdulla Al-Sanafi; and HTB, Engineer Abdulmalek Ahmed Al-Arashi in opening the Peer Learning and Mentoring Program. In a show of support for the anti-corruption initiative, several ministers also attended the event, including: Minister of Agriculture, Fared Mujawar; Minister of Education, Dr. Abdulrazaq Al-Ashwal; and Minister of Local Administration, Ali Alyazadi. "This represents the start of a partnership towards implementation of the National Strategy for combating corruption, to root out corruption and prevent it. The implementation of the National Anti-Corruption Strategy will not succeed unless we have everybody on board," said SNACC's Chairperson Al-Anisi. This sentiment was echoed by the chairpersons of COCA and HTB, who emphasized real partnership and integration to ensure the success of anti-corruption efforts.

The Chairpersons of the three oversight institutions invited various ministries to send their key procurement, warehouse, financial auditing and tendering staff, considered the most crucial fields in anti-corruption efforts, to attend the training course. A total of 134 union staff together with 22 civil society organization representatives attended the USAID-funded Peer Learning and Mentoring workshop.

"The work you are beginning today is a good first step. However, in the next phase of transition, the National Consensus Government and all Yemenis must address the problem of corruption head-on and I believe they are committed to the task," said Richard. She added: "On behalf of the United States, I am pleased to partner with the SNACC, COCA and HTB to offer this training and to support the anti-corruption institutions, the National Consensus Government, and the Ministries represented here today in their efforts toward making a transparent, corruption-free government a reality for Yemen."

This is the first phase of the PLMP, a program aimed to motivate junior staff of government offices to protect public funds and combat corruption. Eventually, the program will include 490 government employees from key government ministries including education, health, water, agriculture, relevant civil society organizations as well as the oversight institutions.

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*After attending the USAID - supported series of community service workshops, 10 Adeni youth decided to rehabilitate the Yumuria Neuro-Psychiatric Teaching Hospital in Aden. Photo: EYSY*

### **SUCCESS STORY**

#### **Adeni Youth Give Hospital Ward a 'Five-Star' Makeover**

After attending a series of community service workshops under USAID's Engaging Youth for a Stable Yemen (EYSY) project, 10 Adeni youth decided to rehabilitate the Yumuria Neuro-Psychiatric Teaching Hospital in Aden's Sheik Othman District -- the only public psychiatric hospital in the country. Over the course of three days, they cleaned and painted the 208-patient ward, and provided new sheets for the ward's beds.

"It is now a 'five-star' section of the hospital thanks to this rehabilitation. It is the first time an organization and youth have come to help us," said Waheed Hussein Mogani, a doctor in the said hospital. "It is good for the hospital and also for the youth. We appreciate that they are doing something for our patients."

"I used to pass by this hospital every day and had wanted to do something to help," said Yousry Maedi, 23, a student of business management at the University of Aden. His brother Yasir Maedi, 21, and friend Iman Hamood, 20, added: "We wanted to do something to develop our lives and community." All three young men attended the USAID-supported training workshop and were part of the group that rehabilitated the hospital as part of a series of community service projects supported through the project.

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The group wants to continue the project and is now looking for additional funds to rehabilitate the ward's toilets and ceiling. "We want to do more, but we need to find more funding for this project." says Yousry. Currently, they are making plans to approach other international and local organizations to extend the project.

EYSY is a two-year, \$1.2 million program, which helps young people in the southern governorates of Aden and Lahj form positive social connections overcoming generational and community divisions through a combination of conflict management, consensus building and leadership training, community-government-youth dialogues, community service projects, and job internships. It is implemented by Mercy Corps in coordination with Youth Leadership Development Foundation and Creative People Solutions.

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