



Empowering Yemeni Youth Towards Peace: Ensuring Access To Information And Participation

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SAVE THE DATES

- 21 June:** Launch of an online debate
8 July: Public debate will take place in Aden
July: Results of the survey "*Peace process we want*" will be published

FOREWORD

Dear readers,

I am pleased to introduce you to the third newsletter of the project "Empowering Yemeni Youth Towards Peace: Ensuring Access To Information And Participation" managed by UNESCO GCC and Yemen office. This newsletter aims at raising the voices of Yemeni youth through sharing their perspectives and stories with decision makers, duty bearers, and international and regional actors. Through its different sections, this newsletter edition will shed light on some of the activities done part of this project and by the youth in support of the peace building process in Yemen, from March to May 2021. Field activities, survey findings and success stories of young Yemeni peacebuilders will be highlighted periodically through this series of newsletters.

I hope you will find this reading interesting and that it will contribute to support and empower the voices of the Yemeni youth.

Yours sincerely,

A.Paolini, UNESCO





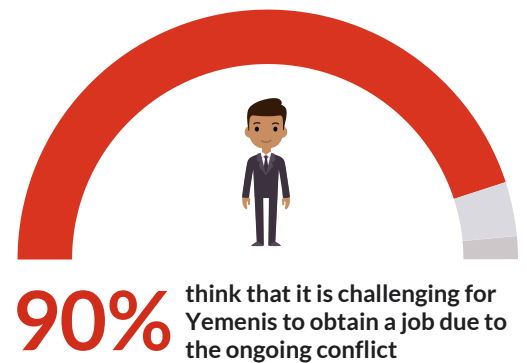
Facts and Figures

In April 2021, RNW Media in partnership with UNESCO GCC and Yemen office launched a survey to capture the perspective of the youth on the economic impact of the war in Yemen. Through a mixed method approach, the team was able to gather 1,019 responses from youth aged 18Y-30Y from the different Yemeni governorates. The survey included questions around the economic impact of the war on the individuals and their families, employment and income sources, and economic coping strategies.

The results of the survey show that a large majority of the youth (90%) think that it is challenging for Yemenis to obtain a job due to the ongoing conflict, while around a quarter of them are unemployed and actively searching for a job. The impacts of conflict include being unable to meet the basic living expenses (53%), due to income losses (33%), the stopping of welfare support (33%), missing on potential work opportunities (28%), as well as the surge of prices, the use of two banknotes with different values throughout the country which leads to exchange and transfer losses, among other factors.

To improve and address the economic challenges, the youth emphasized on the importance of taking action to fight and stop corruption and hold those corrupted accountable.

The participants expressed the urgency to regularly pay the salaries of the employees and cover the unpaid sums of those concerned, as well as looking into the divided banking system to stop the currency fluctuation and avoid monetary losses. Additionally, the youth encouraged investments in the agriculture and local production sectors, and facilitating the work of businessmen who are willing to contribute to the flourishing of the economy. Suggestions discussed revising the prices for essential commodities to regulate and reduce the surge of prices and ensure access to the basic needs for all citizens, as well as looking into improving the management of the oil and gas fields to contribute to a better economic sector.



My Solution

In August 2020, UNESCO GCC and Yemen office and RNW Media launched "My Solution", a call inviting young Yemenis to submit their ideas to achieve peace building in their country. In the first cycle, 62 submissions were received, among which 7 proposals were selected and supported to achieve their objectives.

The winning proposals were submitted by youth-led local initiatives working directly to empower the youth in Yemen: Wanna Live, Human Voices, Shabebh Aden, Full Stride, Sameh, Fkr and Takween Cultural Club.

The selected initiatives planned online and offline activities which were implemented in three different phases, including the production of visual content, the implementation of the offline training and debates, and the launching of online campaigns. The themes covered throughout the activities discussed a range of topics related to peace building, to include countering hate speech and violence, awareness raising on the National Security Council Resolution 2250, training a new generation of peace builders to take on projects, raising the awareness of the youth on the importance of supporting peace related initiative and engaging in peace discussions, among other similar issues.

Through their participation in My Solution, the initiatives were able to reach a greater number of youth throughout Yemen and engaging with them on important conversations around peace building. The initiatives were also able to increase their visibility which facilitates spreading awareness on peace building efforts in the society and among the youth. Abdelrazzak Al-Azazi, director of Wanna Live initiative, explains that, "Through participating in "My Solution", we were able to revive our campaign and reach a much greater audience." The youth managing the projects also gained valuable skills that will help them in planning future peace building efforts. Zainab, a member of Shabebh Aden, highlighted that "Our participation not only contributed to spreading positive awareness among the youth, but also helped the young members of Shabebh Aden in learning some important skills related to field work activities management."

The support also contributed to the sustainability plan of the initiatives as it encouraged the teams to continue working on peace efforts, and even placed some of them steps closer to reaching greater goals such as becoming established organizations. In the upcoming months, the project will continue in supporting 7 other peacebuilding initiatives through its second "My Solution" phase, which was recently announced.





Activity in the Highlights

In March 2021, UNESCO GCC and Yemen office in partnership with the Community Media Network (CMN) in Jordan, invited Yemeni radio stations to participate in a program aiming to build their capacity in producing peace related reports and programs targeting Yemeni youth. Out of the 11 applications received, 5 radio stations from different Yemeni governorates were selected to first participate in a 10-days hands-on training

which provided them with the tools needed to prepare radio reports, programs and podcasts, while ensuring gender and conflict sensitivities and promoting peace building discussions.

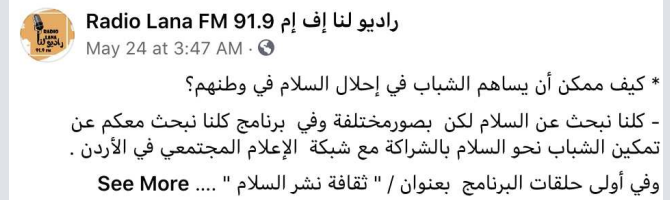
The technical training empowered young radio professionals with the skills needed to produce professional radio programs, including writing scripts, choosing discussion topics, introducing the episodes and delivering field radio reports, among other issues. Samia Kurdieh, trainer and CMN project manager, mentioned "The training allowed the participants to think outside the box on how to handle conflict sensitivities, it helped them address fears they had and encouraged them to ensure balanced coverage of peace efforts by unifying the radio speech throughout the country". Sara Al-Shoaibi, participant, radio host and social media manager at Lana station, shared "I was able to add to my knowledge on how to present the topics in a way that reaches better the youth, especially on peace issues. The trainers helped us in viewing the topics from different angles, and for the first time I experienced working on producing podcasts. Through the training's collaborative spirit, I was able to empower myself and others."

Following the training, the 5 radio stations will continue to receive technical support throughout the production of 140 radio programs 70 field radio reports and 10 podcast episodes which are currently being broadcasted throughout Yemen. The radio stations broadcast episodes developed internally as well as rebroadcast ones produced by other stations. Samia Kurdieh, explained "The program structure allows collaborative broadcasting to encourage peace discussions among the youth across the country."

Kurdieh added "The activities heavily engage with youth, around 200 young Yemeni women and men from different governorates, by surveying them, inviting them to engage in the discussions and participating as guest speakers".

Through their participation in this project activity, the radio stations were able to highlight important societal and peace related issues and engage with the youth, decision makers and experts on issues such as the role of youth and women in peace building, the economic impact of the war, the role of art, culture and sports, among other topics. Sara Al-Shoaibi explained "By inviting both the youth and the decision makers to participate in the radio discussions, we were able to raise the voices of the youth and demand quick solutions to urgent issues." Al-Shoaibi added "We also invited experts to share accurate and credible information to educate the community and raise their awareness on pressing matters such as COVID-19."

While the episodes are currently being broadcasted till July 2021, the radio stations plan to continue reaching out to the youth on societal and peace related issues even after the end of the program. Al-Shoaibi explains "The youth's ideas are like treasures, very innovative and solution oriented. They should have a place on the discussions tables and their voices must be raised and heard." Al-Shoaibi explained that at Lana Station they plan to continue tailoring their programs to target women and youth in particular.



Peacebuilding Story



With the aim of promoting peacebuilding stories and efforts, RNW Media in partnership with UNESCO GCC and Yemen office, produced 360 degrees virtual reality videos featuring success stories of young Yemenis who were able to overcome difficulties endured due to the ongoing conflict. The videos, which are posted on Manasati30 website and shared on their social media platforms, encourage the youth to engage with the peace related videos filmed using the interactive technique.

The series of videos features young women and men with impactful stories such as those of Dalila, Sami and Labib. Dalila, a lady who accidentally stepped on a mine causing the amputation of her legs only three days before her wedding, turned her life around by opening a small grocery store helping her rely on herself. With the COVID-19 outbreak, Sami and Labib decided to open a cotton factory to support the production of masks and later expanded their production to cotton clothing, employing over 45 women and 15 orphans. Such initiatives support the local economy, empower the youth, and provide them with income-generating sources, contributing to the reduction of the unemployment and the poverty rates.

Link to the 360 VR of Dalila: manasati30.com/society/14047/
and the 360 VR of Sami and Labib: manasati30.com/society/15070/

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ABOUT THE PROJECT

This collaborative project, led by UNESCO in partnership with RNW Media and funded by the United Nations Peacebuilding, is a timely and much-needed intervention to reconnect Yemeni youth with the peace-building process, by raising their voices, fostering the free flow of information and having a two-way communication. The project aims to empower the Yemeni youth through its different activities with the skills, knowledge and tools to create information, content and dialogue in support of the peace-building process.

For more information about the project, its activities or this newsletter, please visit the project website page:

<https://en.unesco.org/YemenUNPBFProject>