



**USAID | YEMEN**  
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## SUCCESS STORY

### Training Inspires Aden Youth to be of service to communities

USAID's Engaging Youth for a Stable Yemen program, is a two-year program (September 2010-September 2012) implemented by Mercy Corps, which aims to address the drivers of instability and prevent the spread of discontentment and radicalization by providing young people in South Yemen alternative ways to finding connection, meaning and direction in their lives.

Aden, Yemen – *"The training showed me that young people can be creative if they get the opportunity. This is the first time I have worked with a team and got along with them in Yemen,"* Areej Abdo Wareh, was talking about the life skills training offered by USAID's Engaging Youth for a Stable Yemen (EYSY) program implemented by Creative People Solutions (CPS) on behalf of Mercy Corps. She is among 200 young people from Dar Saad and Sheikh Ottman districts in Aden who participated in 20 hours of CPS training on leadership, civic engagement and life skills over ten days between July 2-August 16, 2011. The training, which was fun and inter-active, was a revelation for the Yemeni youth, used as they were to rote classroom learning.



The USAID-supported experiential training on leadership, civic engagement and life skills, was a revelation for the Yemeni youth, used as they were to rote classroom learning.

*"I hope that this training will never finish,"* said participant Hadeel Samir, adding that the training method was *"amazing"*. Seven out of the nine courses were mixed (two of the courses were exclusively for males as they were held in the evenings); each course had between 15-30 participants. One of the courses was offered in English for upper intermediate-advanced English speakers while the remaining courses were in Arabic. To help carry out the activity, 12 Yemeni youth facilitators were trained by CPS Egyptian Master Trainers beforehand in a six-week intensive training of trainers.

*"The biggest issue is, like everyone else in Yemen, the youth don't trust each other. There are so many levels of mistrust here, based on familial and tribal loyalties. This is, in a way, a training workshop in building trust,"* said Mike Pola, general manager of *Creative People Solutions (CPS)*, who designed and implemented this training for EYSY/Mercy Corps. In fact, the experiential learning approach and many of the teambuilding exercises were adapted from CPS programs conducted over the last three years with top level leaders from the private and public sectors in Yemen. The youth facilitators also gave daily challenges for participants to conduct small 'experiments in change' – with their family and friends related to the session topic and their personal action plan. This 'bottom-up' local approach empowers youth to 'be the change' that they want to see in their own environment and community.

