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متوفر لدى جميع
الموزعين المعتمدين
ومراكز خدمة سبأفون

400

ريال إشتراك شهري
حسب سنة الإشتراك

200

فائز شهرياً



خُطَّ الفوترة لَسباً حُلة جديدة ومزايا فريدة

67%

تخفيض في خدمة
الأهل والأصدقاء



100%

الخط مجاني



800

ريال بداية لباقات
الإنترنت



خط سبأ الجديد كلياً ... تحدث ، اربح ، شارك ، قل مرحباً بمزايا لا حصر لها .

- قيمة خط الفوترة سبأ مجاناً (فقط دفع مبلغ التأمين) .
- إشتراك شهري يبدأ من 400 إلى 750 ريال ، وذلك حسب سنة الإشتراك حيث يحصل المشترك على 5% تخفيض عن كل سنة .
- فقط 150 ريال إشتراك لخدمة الأهل والأصدقاء ، أول 6 أرقام تضاف مجاناً وبخفيض في المكالمات والإشتراك الشهري يصل إلى 67% .
- تأهل للسحب ضمن 200 فائز شهرياً بجوائز قيمة وذلك لكل 2500 ريال يتم سدادها شهرياً وتستطيع مضاعفة فرصك للفوز .
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Supreme Judiciary Institute graduates reject prosecution appointments



Graduates from the Supreme Judiciary Institute protested outside of the Supreme Judiciary Council building in Sana'a on Monday. The graduates feel they are entitled to judicial positions, instead of the prosecutor positions they were appointed to last year.

Graduates demonstrated outside of the council building on Monday

Story and photos by Amal Al-Yarisi

SANAA, Feb. 3—Graduates from the Supreme Judiciary Institute who have been appointed to prosecutor positions staged a protest outside the Supreme Judiciary Council building in Sana'a on Monday. The graduates protested the appointments and demanded judicial appointments instead.

The Supreme Judiciary Council appointed 500 recent graduates work as prosecutors. After graduating from the institute, graduates are eligible—but not entitled—to work as judges, provided that they are not under 30 years of age.

"The graduates obtained master's degrees from the [institute] after three years of study. They also [have] bachelor's degrees," said Mujahid Al-Hassani, a recent graduate.

Haza Abdulla Al-Yousifi, the secretary general of the Supreme Judiciary Council, declined to comment on the story.

Another source in Supreme Judiciary Council that requested anonymity, said the decision is not based on the law but it is very important

"because appointing them as prosecutors is a way of training them." A member of the council told the Yemen Times that recent graduates were not qualified to join the judiciary right away.

"How could these graduates work as judges while they have not received enough experience?" he asked.

This is the second protest staged by the graduates. The first was held in November 2013.

KOGAS agrees to pay market price for LNG

Total still paying \$1 per million BTUs

Ali Saeed

SANAA, Feb. 3—The Yemeni government said Wednesday that the Korea Gas Corporation (KOGAS) has agreed to purchase Yemeni liquid natural gas at \$14 per million BTUs, according to Yemen's state-run Saba news agency.

The new price was made effective retroactively to Jan. 1, 2014 and negotiations are still underway with other global buyers, Abdulqawi Al-Odaini, head of the Media Department of the Ministry of Oil and Minerals, told the Yemen Times.

KOGAS imports two million metric tons of gas per year from Yemen. Yemen's total production capacity is estimated at 6.7 million metric tons annually, according to the state-run Yemen Liquefied Natural Gas Company.

The former price paid by the South Korean company was \$3.15 per million BTUs. Agreement was reached on this new price following lengthy negotiations. The former price had been fixed in a 20-year contract signed in 2005, though they did not begin purchasing the liquefied gas until 2009, when it first became available for sale on the global market.

The new price is expected to boost the government's coffers, which are heavily reliant on oil and gas revenues.

Yemen is still on a mission to convince the French company Total, a major buyer of Yemeni LNG, to agree to a higher price to bring it in line with the pricing agreed to with KOGAS, according to Al-Odaini.

France's Total has been purchasing LNG at the far-below-market price of \$1 per million BTUs since November 2009, according to an official quoted in Saba.

On the same day, the local news website Al-Masdar Online quoted an unnamed Yemeni official who threatened to sue Total if the latter refused to agree to a price hike.

The official also accused members of the former regime of signing an unfair sales contract, which, he claimed, proves corruption on their part.

The Yemen Times contacted Total, but they declined to comment.

During the 2011 uprising, demonstrators demanded that gas deals be canceled because they cheated Yemen out of massive revenues.

"Negotiations are taking place with Total but no agreement has yet been reached," said Al-Odaini.

Yemen could earn \$3 billion annually if its gas is sold at the global market price, said Dr. Mohamed Jubran, a financial analyst at the University of Sana'a in a previous interview with the Yemen Times.

Federal region defining committee: Yemen will have six regions

Mohammed Al-Hassani

SANAA, Feb. 3—The Regions Defining Committee approved on Sunday a six-region federalist structure, two regions in the south and four in the north, according to Nadia Al-Sakkaf, one of the 22 members of the committee.

Hadramout, Al-Mahra and Socotra Island will form one region and the rest of the southern governorates will together comprise the other southern region, according to Al-Sakkaf.

There will four regions in the north, but only one of the northern regions—consisting of Ibb and Taiz—has been determined, she said. The composition of the remaining three northern regions will be decided in the coming days.

Some leading members of the Southern Movement have voiced their objections to the six-region design, describing it as an attempt to break up the south.

"The people of the south will thwart this attempt to divide the south and [the new structure] will not be implemented no matter the price," said Qasim Askr, a member of the Southern Movement.

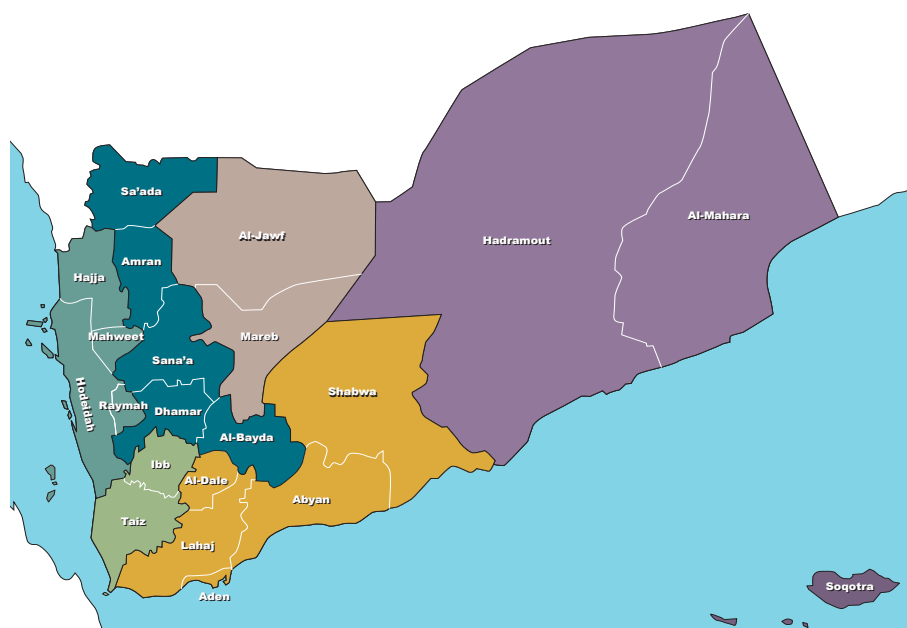
"We hold President Abdu Rabu

Mansour Hadi and the interim government accountable for any negative consequences of this action on security and stability, not only in Yemen, but also in the region and the world," he said.

Brigadier general Nasser Al-Taweel said in a conversation with the Yemen Times that he supports the two-region proposal—one region in the south and the other in the north—because it is the most-accepted choice among southerners.

"Subdividing the South into two regions is the best solution under a federal structure as it will ensure fair wealth distribution between the federal government and the region," said Hameed Al-Kuraibi, an NDC member from Shabwa.

In late January the NDC approved its final comprehensive document, which stipulated that Yemen will be a federal state and



Former South Yemen will be divided into two regions and former North Yemen will be divided into four. The new federal system will be included in the new constitution once it is drafted and will be put to referendum within a year.

that the government must prepare [appropriate] laws and legislation for Yemen's transition from a central state to a federal system.

According to the NDC final document, this new governmental structure will be effected by draft-

ing a new constitution and holding a referendum for public approval of the constitution within one year.

Full disclosure: Nadia Al-Sakkaf is also the Editor-in-Chief of the Yemen Times.

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Battles intensify in Amran between Houthis and the Hashid tribe

Nasser Al-Sakkaf

SANAA, Feb. 3—Fierce fighting between the Houthis and their tribal opponents is taking place in the Arhab district of Sana'a governorate and the Hashid area of Amran governorate. The Houthis said they are gaining ground in Amran, adding that they have taken control of the Hawth district and the Al-Khamri sub-district, which is the hometown of the Al-Ahmar family, a powerful Yemeni tribe.

Ali Al-Madhlaei, a resident of Amran, said, "What is happening is that about 1,000 Houthi fighters from Sa'ada have invaded Hashid and are terrorizing the local people."

Clashes began as far back as June 2013. At that time, a Houthi

family was killed in a restaurant in the Hawth district and the Houthis accused the Al-Ahmar family of responsibility. Since then, there have been ongoing, sporadic confrontations; however, clashes have been particularly intense in the past two days.

Al-Madhlaei said, "Local tribesmen gave up many places to the Houthis such as Qaroon Al-Saba, Qarn Qasim and other places. The tribesmen have been displaced to remote areas."

Mohammed Al-Bukhaiti, a leading Houthi figure in Sana'a, said, "There is a now a state of calm in the Hashid area following a Houthi takeover of Hawth district, Al-Khamri sub-district, and Ajarm Mountain."

He said that a mediation com-

mittee had attempted to achieve a three-day ceasefire as of Monday, but that negotiations were unsuccessful.

Al-Bukhaiti said there will be negotiations with the Arhab and Hashid tribes in an attempt to secure the Sa'ada-Sana'a and Sa'ada-Amran roads. He said roadblocks were the main cause of this round of confrontations.

At the beginning of December, tribes in Arhab who oppose the Houthis blocked the road leading to Sa'ada, a Houthi stronghold. They did this in retaliation against the siege imposed by the Houthis on Salafis in Dammaj. As a result, fighting broke out.

Abduljaleel Sinan, an Arhab tribal sheikh, said, "The state should step in and [take the leading role]."

The two groups [who are fighting] both belong to Arhab, but one group is siding with the Houthis and other is opposing them," said Sinan.

The fighting has claimed dozens of deaths, but so far no exact number is available.

Abdulqadir Helal, the mayor of Sana'a, said on his Facebook account Sunday that there should be prompt efforts to end fighting in both the Hashid and Arhab areas. He called on politicians, clerics and sheikhs to support the mediation committees in stopping the fighting between the two sides.

Helal said he will accompany a presidential mediation committee in an effort to reach an agreement between the two sides and stop the fighting.

Two foreigners kidnapped in Sana'a



Nasser Al-Sakkaf

SANAA, Feb. 3—Two Westerners were kidnapped in Sana'a over the span of 36 hours, starting with a German national Saturday evening and a British national Monday morning.

According to one eyewitness, the abduction of the British national on Monday morning took place at 8 a.m. on Hadda Street, near the German embassy.

The abducted British national reportedly worked for an oil company. A tribe from Marib, 170 km east of the Yemeni capital, has claimed responsibility for the kidnapping of the German national.

The press secretary of Marib governorate, Ali Al-Ghulaisi, told the Yemen Times that the kidnappers are from the Al-Damashqa area of Marib. They are demanding that the central government in Sana'a release

their tribesmen.

"The abductors are demanding the release of prisoners who were detained five months ago on criminal charges," said Al-Ghulaisi.

Abdulmalik Al-Marhabi, an advisor to the German Ambassador in Sana'a, said that the embassy has received information about the kidnappers and their location, but declined to comment further.

According to local media outlets, the abducted German, in his 60s, came to Yemen to study Arabic.

Tribes often take foreign hostages as bargaining chips with the central government to gain money or services.

In December 2013, Abdullah Al-Shulaif, head of the Raqeb Human Rights Organization, an NGO that deals with issues related to kidnappings in Yemen, told the Yemen Times that the majority of abductions of foreigners end peacefully.

Revolutionary detainees go on hunger strike

Nasser Al-Sakkaf

SANAA, Feb. 2—Youth from the 2011 uprising being held in Sana'a and Hajja Central Prisons went on a hunger strike Saturday to protest their continued detention.

The detainees called for the immediate implementation of the NDC document that stipulates their release.

"We were happy about the NDC document, but we will not be satisfied until it is implemented and the detainees are set free," said Abdulkareem Tha'bal, head of the Revolutionary Detainees General Council.

In a press conference held Saturday, a detainee named Ibrahim

Al-Hamadi called in to the conference.

He told those gathered that "[being locked up in prison] while marking the third anniversary of the revolution is a disgraceful black mark on the revolutionaries who today walk free, including the political leadership represented by President Abdu Rabu Mansour Hadi, the revolution-affiliated ministers, and all of the revolutionary youth leadership."

Tha'bal said they will escalate their campaign to free detainees in the coming days.

The hunger strike poses potential dangers to their health, according to Emad Al-Majri, a physician working at the German Hospital.

He said that it is possible for hunger strikers to survive for more than two months without food. However, this varies from person to person and has to do with each individual's physical build and amount of body fat.

Abdulrahman Barman, a lawyer for the National Organization for Defending Rights and Freedom (HOOD) said the detainees were being held illegally.

"A detention is not legal unless a suspect's case is heard by a court within six months of arrest." The first of the hearings were not scheduled until August 2013, he said.

The judge in the case, the head of the Specialized Criminal Court,

Hilal Mahfl, stepped down in August.

The five remaining detainees were arrested in June 2011, accused of participating in the bombing of Al-Nadain mosque inside the presidential compound while former President Ali Abdullah Saleh was attending Friday prayers together with senior state officials. Twelve people died and dozens were wounded in the blast.

The detainees continue to be held in Sana'a's Central Prison.

This is the second hunger strike since the detention of the five in 2011. Their first strike was in June of 2013. That strike resulted in the release of 17 detainees from Sana'a's Central Prison.

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The data base Manager will report directly to SFD's related to head unit.

Submission guideline:

The application should comprise of a one-page cover letter explaining the applicants' interest and suitability for the position, indicating earliest joining date if selected, and detailed CV.

Interested candidates should submit their application by email to: hr@sfd-yemen.org before February 15th 2014. Applications received after the closing date will not be considered. Only short-listed candidates will be contacted for interviews.

وَبَشِّرِ الصَّابِرِينَ

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المعزون

18 Soldiers killed, five injured in Hadramout



Ali Ibrahim Al-Moshki

SANA'A, Feb. 3—Eighteen soldiers were killed and five others injured in Hadramout on Friday while on duty at a Shibam security checkpoint, according to security and military officials. The soldiers, who belong to Armored Brigade 37, were returning from Friday prayer, said the officials, who indicated that an unknown number of militants also died in the clash.

Lt. Badr Al-Shaymi, a soldier from the brigade, said dozens of armed men riding in Hilux pickup trucks attacked the western entrance checkpoint of Shibam city from all directions. He said the soldiers killed a number of the militants during the fighting, and that their fellow militants took away their corpses.

Military vehicles spread throughout the area and pursued the gunmen in an attempt to capture them and bring them to justice, according to Al-Shaymi. Investigations are underway to determine who was behind the attack, he said.

"The defense ministry formed a fact-finding committee to investigate the deaths of the soldiers," said Hadramout security manager, Colonel Fahmi Mahroos. "Those who are guilty will not go unpunished."

The interior ministry published the names of the deceased sol-

diers. They were Lt. Col. Abu Ahmed Ghalib, Ahmed Saeed Al-Salmi, Ali Al-Gumaei, Ibrahim Al-Najar, Dares Ahmed Al-Arbi, Nasr Al-Shalh, Wael Taj Al-Deen, Abdurazaq Tamish, Yahia Al-Hali, Hussein Al-Hakami, Saleh Al-Kadiri, Abdulrahman Al-Arifi, Yahia Al-Rabi', Mohammed Al-Makali, Nasser Qahtan Al-Hakami, Abdulmajeed Tamish, Mohammed Qutaish and Bassam Hassan Al-Raimi.

Local authorities in Hadramout issued a statement on Friday responding to the attack.

"This is a cowardly terrorist act, and it reveals the immorality and impiety of those who carried it out," the statement read. "This...is part of a plot aimed at undermining stability and security in the country."

Gunmen have launched many attacks in Hadramout, targeting army and security personnel. In September, armed men broke into the headquarters of the Second Military Region in Mukalla, leaving a number of soldiers and militants dead. Al-Qaeda later claimed responsibility for the attack.

On Jan. 12, fighting broke out between armed men and the army in Al-Shihr district. The fighting resulted in the deaths of nine soldiers and one militant, according to local sources.

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Indian sailors' death off Hadramout coast denied by officials

Ali Ibrahim Al-Moshki

SANAA, Feb. 3—The Indian Embassy in Sana'a and local authorities in Hadramout on Sunday denied earlier news reports that 12 Indian sailors had drowned off Yemen's coast.

Ahmed Madi, security chief of Al-Shehr district in Hadramout, told the Yemen Times that all crew members had been rescued and that there were no casualties. "The news about their deaths is untrue. They are now in Al-Shehr and the ship is stranded off the coast near Al-Shehr [Thursday night]."

An official at the Indian Embassy in Sana'a confirmed to the Yemen Times that all of the Indian sailors are in good health.

According to local security officials, the ship's cargo had been unloaded and other vessels

moved the ship to Al-Shehr.

The Ministry of Interior reported on Saturday that the stranded ship was loaded with car wheels and mattresses but no details were released about the health of the crew members.

The ship had left Dubai bound for Mukalla, Madi said, and due to a technical failure ran aground, damaging its hull.

The Ministry of the Interior announced on Sunday via its website that a Yemeni team from the Maritime Affairs Authority has begun to investigate the incident and they will also check the cargo and supervise its unloading.

The ministry added that the ship is carrying cargo weighing 90 tons, with a crew of 12, and operating under Indian registration.

Sana'a witnesses two late-night explosions

Ali Ibrahim AL-Moshki

SANAA, Feb. 3—Two were injured in two consecutive explosions using bombs and shells in Sana'a just after midnight Sunday, according to security sources.

The first explosion took place in front of the Civil Aviation and Meteorology Authority, about 500 meters from the Defense Ministry, while the second occurred next to Al-Kumaim shopping center in the Hadda area, according to Col. Mohammed Hizam, deputy head of the Public Relations Department at the Interior Ministry.

Hizam said that two pedestrians walking near the ministry sustained injuries but it is not yet known whether they were injured in the explosion, or afterward by military gunfire in response to the explosion. A minibus was slightly damaged in the same area, near Bab Al-Yemen.

Hizam confirmed that investigations are underway to identify the perpetra-

tors who fired shells near the French embassy in Hadda street, blowing out windows in a nearby building.

Hizam also said that, concurrent with the two explosions, the security forces found and defused a bomb in the Al-Hassaba area, near the interior ministry.

The explosions created panic among residents, particularly residents of Old Sana'a, because they initially thought that the Defense Ministry had been attacked again.

Afaf Al-Belili, a resident of the Old City, said, "We couldn't sleep out of fear...My children were crying because whenever they hear an explosion, they remember the scenes of the last attack on the Defense Ministry that were aired on Yemen state TV."

Al-Qaeda stormed the Defense Ministry on Dec. 5, 2013. The attack left 56 dead and 215 injured.

Yemenia Airways to respond to French manslaughter charge

Ali Ibrahim Al-Moshki

SANAA, Feb. 3—Yemenia Airways spokesman Nabeel Al-Haidri said the airline will hold a press conference on Tuesday to respond to France's charges of manslaughter against the company. 152 people died in a 2009 crash of a Yemen Airways Airbus A310 near the Comoros Islands.

The airline was charged by a French judge on Nov. 15.

This week an association of the victims' families welcomed the move as a leap towards justice, calling it "the end of four-and-a-half years of contempt, repeated hurdles, cowardice and impunity."

Dozens of French citizens were among the 142 passengers plus 11 crew members that died in the June 30, 2009 crash.

Passenger Bahya Bakary, then 14, was the sole survivor.

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Investment atmosphere improving in Yemen

Mohammed Al-Hassani

Despite the political unrest and tenuous security situation in Yemen following the 2011 uprising, there was a large increase in the number of companies investing in projects in Yemen in 2013.

According to statistics from the Ministry of Trade and Industry, the number of companies investing in Yemen saw a 58 percent increase, from 300 in 2012 to 476 in 2013, due to assistance provided by the ministry, such as abolition of the Banking Certificate, which had obliged the owner of an investment firm to guarantee assets by escrow-

ing funds at a bank. The ministry also did away with the requirement that a business have a Yemeni partner.

Another measure adopted by the government to boost and facilitate the investment included a one-stop shop system which brings together all government bodies concerned with business in one building, enabling investors to do business quickly as well as to more easily resolve any problems that they may encounter. The General Investment Authority is in charge of this system and currently houses 12 offices of different bodies associated with business investment.

"Companies investing in Yemen are operating normally and there are more businesses that want to invest in the country," said A'iad Riyadh, director of corporate affairs of the Ministry of Trade and Industry.

Some media outlets reported in early January that more than 100 businesses had left Yemen, but the ministry denied these reports and claimed, on the contrary, that the number of local and foreign companies doing business in Yemen has actually increased.

According to officials in the ministry, investment in Yemen has promising economic potential and opportunities, particularly because some of its natural resources are as yet underutilized, and in addition, sectors such as tourism, agriculture and fisheries have not been fully developed.

However, according to the Global Competitiveness Index of 2013-2014, Yemen dropped five places in ranking, coming in 145th this year, compared to 140th last year. The index ranks 148 countries in total.

Economic analyst Rasheed Al-Haddad explained this contradiction, saying that Yemen's low rank-

ing on the index is due to a number of factors, including legislative hurdles, economic volatility and lack of capital markets.

He added, "There are also other [complicating factors], such as an unskilled workforce, a weak judiciary, ongoing land disputes, low levels of income, and insufficient security, not to mention the personal intervention of influential figures that form a barrier to the flow of foreign investment."

Those running the General Investment Authority believe that Yemen has started recovering economically, and point to the stability of the national currency and low levels of inflation.

"We do not have a magic wand that can change the situation, but there is an indication of improvement," said Yahya Saleh, the head of investment authority.

The investment environment

Engineer Mohammed Hussein, head of the authority's promotion sector, said that the investment authority is moving toward issuing a new investment law, but that President Abdu Rabu Mansour Hadi postponed implementation until after the conclusion of the National Dialogue Conference. The new law will provide investors with access to many exemptions, advantages and privileges.

According to a report by the General Investment Authority published in January, the number of projects newly registered by the authority increased from 95 in 2012 to 142 in 2013. The new projects had a total value of YR75.2 billion (almost \$350 million), fixed assets of YR37 billion (just over \$172 million), and created over 4,000 job opportunities. The statement also reported that capital investments in 2013 increased by six percent

	Trade	Industry	Contractors	Services	Exchange	Total
Limited Companies	204	37	41	163	0	445
Private Companies	7	0	1	13	5	26
Shareholding Companies	0	3	0	2	0	5
Total	211	40	42	178	5	476

According to statistics from the Ministry of Trade and Industry, the number of companies investing in Yemen saw a 58 percent increase, from 300 in 2012 to 476 in 2013.

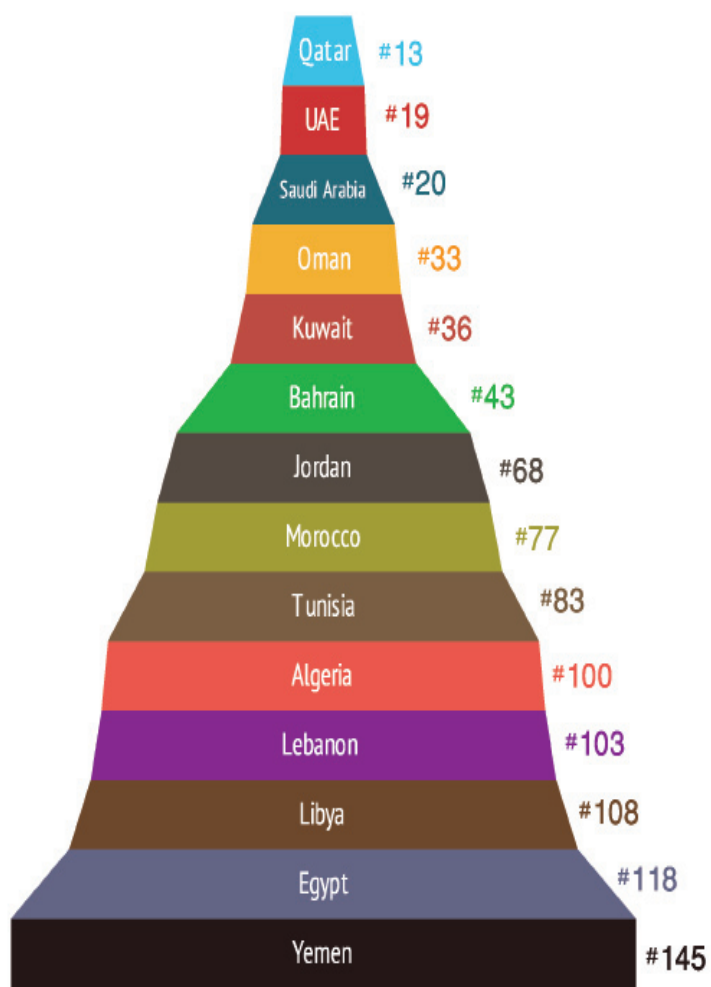
compared to 2012.

Furthermore, it said, these investments included 129 projects of Yemeni origin, with a value of \$28 million, and 13 from foreign companies, with a value of over \$64 million.

Saleh said, "The 2010 investment law did away with some tax exemptions that had been put in place in 2002, replacing them with a steep reduction in corporate profit taxes from 35 percent to 15 percent." He told the Yemen Times that the loss of tax exemptions has

negatively affected the investment atmosphere, however, he believes that, "a new law will be issued soon that provides bigger benefits to investors."

Hussein added that investing in Yemen is attractive given Yemen's strategic location, its 2500-km coastline, and its huge, untapped, workforce. "Yemen is a very promising country. We are serious about clearly defining standards and specifications in order to create a competitive environment both at home and abroad."



The ranking of Arab countries on the Global Competitiveness Report 2013-2014

Data Source: World Economic Forum | Visualized by the Yemen Times



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Turkish Ambassador Fazli Çorman to the Yemen Times: “Now is the time for Yemen to do some privatization”

Within just one week of his posting to Yemen, the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries' initiative was signed on November 23, 2011. Ambassador Fazli Çorman said he decided to do everything in his power to help Yemen take advantage of what he calls a “historic niche.”

His experience in countries that include Iraq, and his work representing Turkey at the U.N. have given him insight into the complexity of Yemen's transition but more importantly, the opportunities he believes Yemen should seize on its journey to prosperity.

“Turkey has the ability to share its own experiences with Yemen... because unlike countries that have other kinds of support to offer, I believe that we are the country best positioned to help because of our history, which is very similar to Yemen's history,” said Çorman.

“...when I see the things happening in Yemen I remem-

ber the situations we had twenty and thirty years ago in my country while we were struggling with very similar problems. The best thing that Turkey can offer Yemen is to share the solutions, knowledge and learning we had in our very similar journey many years ago.”

He compared this journey to that of a mouse finding its way through a maze. To a large extent, Turkey has already found its way after much hard work and after hitting many dead ends. Turkey's ambassador to Yemen is offering to help Yemen, if Yemen wants, with shortcuts so as to save time and get a head start on the future.

The ambassador believes that Yemen should maintain its proud culture and strong traditions while at the same time, embrace modernization and economic development.

Interview by Nadia Al-Sakkaf

Economic development through smart privatization

“Your problems will be solved when there is good economic development and people feel their income increasing. It is not about the country being rich, but about a fair distribution of wealth to the citizens,” said Çorman.

Turkey has gone through all that and has arrived at a balance between socialism and capitalism through a gradual empowerment of the private sector. After the collapse of the Ottoman Empire post WWII, there was a deliberate attempt to reduce reliance on imports by encouraging local production. This has strengthened the local economy and infrastructure, and when the time came to integrate with the EU, Turkey opened its doors to its European neighbors.

This is precisely what Yemen is going through now, argued the ambassador. Now that Yemen has joined the WTO, it will experience greater integration into world markets and only competitive, high quality, Yemeni products and services remain. Those of lower quality will fade away, and this will be very good for consumers.

Even more important is Yemen's amazing opportunity to delegate management of many state-controlled services through privatization or outsourcing.

“Now is the time for Yemen to do some privatization. Privatization will help reduce costs and increase the efficiency of basic services. However, great care must be taken in Yemen's move towards privatization [to ensure] that it is not done in a corrupt environment—otherwise Yemen will lose everything!” the ambassador declared.

The state's assets must be sold at a very good price and money generated from this sale must be wisely invested by the state.

After the second world war, Turkey implemented statism—what is known as state economy—where the state manages and provides citizens with all basic services such as electricity, water, telecommunications, etc. After more than three decades it was Turgut Özal who liberated the economy in the 1980s and introduced the concept of privatizing state economic enterprises (huge public companies).

In the 1980s and 1990s the Turkish government invested the cash they received from privatization in large infrastructure projects in energy, telecommunications and transportation. Their goal was to create an inviting environment for invest-



“Turkey has the ability to share its own experiences with Yemen...because unlike countries that also have support to offer, I believe that we are the country best positioned to help because of our history, which is very similar to Yemen's history,” said Çorman.

ment and economic growth. Today Turkey is undergoing a second phase of privatization by outsourcing services. For example, the Turkish government buys electricity from the private sector on a contractual basis, and private companies in Istanbul are now responsible for collecting garbage and performing other services that used to be managed by the municipality of Istanbul.

“The municipality is monitoring the work of these companies to ensure quality services are provided to the public and at good prices,” he clarified.

Ambassador Çorman wants to make sure that he utilizes the time remaining in his posting as ambassador to Yemen to support Yemen's transition as much as possible and [take advantage of this historic moment in time].

He has been quite active in the Yemeni community, whether talking to officials, the media, political entities or individuals, and sharing with them the Turkish experience.

“Turkey stands equidistant from all Yemeni political and social entities,” he said.

He realizes that Yemenis pay close at-

tention to events that have been taking place in Turkey and has been asked whether he is worried about stability in his own country while helping Yemen become a stable state. His answer to Yemeni friends' concerns is that Turkey is a mature democracy and long ago created a strong institutional structure. Turkey decided in the 1950s to have a multiparty political system and the success they have attained today did not come painlessly or overnight. The country had been ruled by coalitions for many years and it was only in the last two decades or so that they have seen elections won by a comfortable majority, which has allowed the country's very visible progress to take place.

In 2014 Turkey will hold two elections and possibly a third one, either by the end of the year or early next year. Yemen will also hold elections and referenda this year. The ambassador confirmed that Turkey is willing to support Yemen in its coming elections in all ways possible.

Security issues

Ambassador Çorman believes that the country's security issues could be resolved in the space of a month—if all stakeholders agree to put an end to violence and work together to ensure the country's stability.

“It is up to the Yemenis: all Yemenis—tribes, military, political parties and even citizens—can enjoy stability if they really want it,” he said.

He recognizes that the situation today is far from ideal and there are concerns regarding kidnappings, armed militias and other acts of violence. The security problems have led many Turkish families to flee the country and others to change how they live in order to adjust to this reality.

Lawlessness has led to arms smuggling, and lack of state control has

encouraged some people to abuse the situation in Yemen for financial gain.

Ambassador Çorman talked about a situation in which Turkish manufacturers smuggled shipments of blank pistols into Yemen. These were then turned into deadly weapons when a real barrel was inserted in them.

“Now we understand the details of this issue. The Turkish manufacturers [took advantage of] a loophole in our legal system that does not criminalize the production and sale of blank pistols, even if they look very real. [Creative Yemeni criminals...] turned them into weapons to sell in Yemen for at least ten times the cost,” explained the ambassador.

He said that by working together, Yemeni and Turkish security authorities managed to turn this problem into an opportunity with the result of strengthened security ties between the two countries.

More importantly, Turkish law will be changed [so that this does not happen again].

The last shipment captured was in July 2013 and since then, both Yemeni and Turkish authorities have been very aware of the issue and have worked together to put an end to such criminal activity, he said.

Yemen's bright future

According to Çorman, a country is as happy as its least happy citizen and is as democratic as the rights enjoyed by the most marginalized. This is why it is important that all Yemenis enjoy equal citizenship and live in prosperity.

As to how he sees Ye-

men's future, he believes “It is all in Yemen's hands now.” And as a country, Ambassador Çorman believes Yemen has made great strides, especially recently with the successful conclusion of the National Dialogue Conference.

He is personally impressed and proud of the Yemeni men and women who, against all odds, were able to accomplish this work, he said. He believes this is yet another example of how difficult circumstances can be handled peacefully and harmoniously.

“Yemeni wisdom played an important role in making this happen. And together with the equally important role of the P5 and GCC countries, this could be seen as a unique model to be replicated elsewhere, especially since Yemen is blessed to have this unified international support,” he said.

“I am very proud that my Yemeni brothers and sisters were able to do this!”

“Yemeni wisdom played an important role in making this happen. And together with the equally important role of the P5 and GCC countries this could be seen as a unique model to be replicated.”



Turkish support to Yemen

Nadia Al-Sakkaf

Political, and technical support and the wisdom of experience are not all that Turkey has to offer Yemen. Turkey is an active member of the friends of Yemen group and a country that has had close diplomatic ties with Yemen since 1988. Turkey is also a supporter of Yemen in terms of support for educational and medical projects and advancement.

For 2014 the number of seriously ill patients receiving full coverage of the costs of their medical treatment has increased four-fold from 25 patients per year to 100 this year.

In addition, six medical teams visited Yemen in 2013 and will be returning again this year to provide free medical treatment, including needed surgery, for patients who would not otherwise be able to afford this care. Last year, over 1,200

individuals with complicated medical cases were treated by medical teams in several Yemeni governorates.

The Turkish government has also sponsored four dialysis centers—in Hodaida, Sana'a, Aden and Taiz—with a total of 60 machines, and in Dec. 2012 they sent a 30-doctor delegation to work in five hospitals and provide free consultations and operations. This team wrapped up their stay by sponsoring a Turkish-Yemeni medical week in both Aden and Sana'a. A similar delegation is scheduled to arrive in Yemen sometime in the next few months.

In terms of support for education, the Turkish government has increased the number of scholarships it awards from 50 last year to 206 in 2014. In April 2013 the Turkish embassy sponsored a college fair, bringing representatives of public and private universities to Yemen to promote their institutions.

"I was really surprised to see the interest in Yemen that I received from Turkish universities. Representatives of 35 universities came, including seven deans," exclaimed Çorman.

He added that, as a result of this fair, one of the universities, Tayyip Erdogan University, awarded scholarships to 24 top Yemeni students. Smiling at the recollection, he said that the scholarship recipients each received a certificate, similar in style to a university diploma, on which was written, "Work Hard, Come Back, Rebuild Yemen."

Another recent project, with a total cost of \$2.6 million, is the furnishing of a vocational institute affiliated with the Ministry of Technical Education and Vocational Training. The trades that will be taught at this institute include carpet weaving, jewelry making, ceramics, graphic design and photography.

Although it has not yet been of-

ficially opened, the institute has already admitted 141 full-time students, 18 of whom are women. Another 47, all women, have been accepted for in several short courses. Teachers include nine Turks and 36 Yemenis.

On the cultural front, the Turkish government has just completed the renovation of a hall in the Manuscript Museum. In addition, Turkey is offering to help restore and digitize historical manuscripts in a project similar to Istanbul's IRCICA (The OIC Research Center for Islamic History, Art and Culture) which has digitized the Holy Quran from the time of Ali bin Abi Talib—from Sana'a—which is one of the oldest Qurans in existence. Facsimile copies are now available for purchase by the public from the IRCICA.

Although Turkey has participated in all Friends of Yemen meetings from the very beginning, it has recently decided to take a more active



Tayyip Erdogan University, awarded scholarships to 24 top Yemeni students. The scholarship recipients each received a certificate, similar in style to a university diploma, on which was written, "Work Hard, Come Back, Rebuild Yemen."

role by offering to sponsor a conference on investment in Yemen via the group in the near future in order to attract international businesses to Yemen once the political situation is more stable.

"This [conference] is still up for discussion but there is general agreement and I think we can set a date for this conference during our next Friends of Yemen meeting in Riyadh this coming March," he said.

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

Individual Consultant Environmental and Social Impact Assessment Review (ESIA) Individual Environmental Specialist

Country and Beneficiary: [Republic of Yemen –Ministry of Public Works and Highways]
Project Name: [Second Rural Access Project]
Consulting Services: [Environmental and Social Impact Assessment Review (ESIA) for Three Rural Roads Sub- Projects Located in Baydha Governorate Governorates with total length of 35km]
Grant No #: [Additional Financing Grant for Credit No.4121 YEM]

The Government of Yemen has received additional financing in the form of a grant from the International Development Association (IDA) in various currencies towards the cost of the Second Rural Access Project, and intends to apply part of the proceeds of this grant to hair a highly qualified and experienced Environmental expert (individual) to ensure the quality of the safeguards documents according to the World Bank requirements. The environmental specialist will need to carry out the following tasks:

- To have a thorough review of all ESIA reports prepared previously by consulting firms including all environmental impacts, mitigation measures, monitoring program, Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP) for each sub-project road in order to get these reports approved by the World Bank and launch these roads for bidding.
- To carry out field visits to verify the accuracy of the information regarding the baseline conditions expected environmental impacts during construction and maintenance phases, and whether all mitigation measures have been introduced with quantities and cost.
- To revise all ESIA reports based on the desk review and the findings of the fieldwork.

Tasks and duties

The duties of the environmental specialist will include but be not limited to:

- Review all Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) Reports that have been prepared previously by consulting firm for three Rural Roads Sub- Projects Located in Baydha Governorate Governorate with a total length of 35km. The environmental specialist should use the Bank's checklist for reviewing quality of the ESIA report.
- Ensure that all ESIA's reports are in conformity with category (A) or (B) requirements of the Environmental Assessment Operational Policy (OP 4.01) as well as the guidelines set in the Sectoral Environmental Assessment (SEA) manual prepared for RAPCMO depending on the nature of the road impacts.
- Check whether the project description is sufficiently comprehensive and detailed to allow prediction and assessment of environmental impacts. It should include diagrams, maps, tables and descriptive text. The following elements should be presented: design of various road components; complete layout and profiles, nature and duration of construction works; nature, quantities and source of construction materials; schedule and description of construction activities; facilities and support; maintenance activities. Propose any modifications based on the field and desk review.
- Review the baseline conditions section of the ESIA report to verify that they are comprehensive, sufficiently detailed and accurate. At least the following aspects should be included: physical (climate, surface and groundwater, geology and soil, topography, noise, air quality, waste); biological (biodiversity, rare or endangered species, sensitive habitats, nature protected areas). Specific data (such as noise levels, air quality, water quality, animal and plant species). Propose any modifications based on the field and desk review.
- Review all expected environmental impacts (negative, positive, direct, indirect, minor major, reversible and non-reversible, short- and long-term, residual, cumulative), their significance during both construction and maintenance phases. Ensure that the impact assessment is comprehensive and covers at least the following aspects: air quality, noise, surface water, groundwater, soil, biodiversity, protected species, protected areas, landscape, waste management, resources use, health and safety. Ensure that the impacts identified are accurate and propose any modifications based on the field and desk review.
- Review all proposed environmental mitigation measures during both construction and maintenance phases to ensure that they respond to the environmental impacts identified, and are accurate and costed. Ensure that the mitigation measures include at least the following aspects: minor design modifications, technology modification, time schedule modification, location, compensation for residual impacts, costs of measures (individual and total). Propose any modifications based on the field and desk review.
- Review of the monitoring plan to ensure the it is comprehensive and includes monitoring frequency, parameters, location, equipment, responsibilities and monitoring costs. Propose any modifications based on the field and desk review.
- In case the project description, baseline conditions, expected impacts and mitigation measures are not comprehensive and inconsistent, the environmental specialist is required to modify the reports and bring it to acceptable level.
- The environmental specialist should work in coordination with the social specialist in order to combine all social issues within the same report during the period of the contract.
- The environmental specialist should work in coordination with the RAPCMO Environmental and Social Unit and utilize all relevant reports and previous studies such as the Sectoral Environmental Assessment Study, Resettlement Policy Framework guideline, Social Framework Agreement, etc. He should ensure that the relevant recommendations and guidelines are included in the ESIA reports.

Duration of Services

The Environmental Specialist should finish review of all ESIA, ESMP within 1.5 month from signing the contract. Subsequently, after receiving comments from the WB and the Client, the environmental specialist should incorporate all comments into the final review and submit the final up-dated reports within two weeks.

Qualification and experience

- The expert is required to demonstrate the following:
- BSc in Environmental Engineering or Science
 - Must have at least eight (8) years of experience in the field of preparation and review of Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) studies for road projects.
 - The Consultant must be familiar with the World Bank Operational Policies (OP4.01, 4.04) and the relevant Yemeni laws and regulation for EIA.
 - The candidate should have strong background in conducting field surveys and application of impact assessment methods.
 - He should have good writing communication and reporting skills.

The Ministry of Public Works and Highways - Rural Access Program Central Management Office - now invites eligible Individual Consultant to indicate their interest in providing these services. Interested consultants must provide detailed information indicating that they are qualified to perform the services (CV, description of similar assignments, experience in similar conditions, etc.).

A consultant will be selected in accordance with the procedures set out in the World Bank's *Guidelines: Selection and Employment of Consultants by World Bank Borrowers issued on May 2004 and revised on October 2006 (section V. Selection of Individual Consultants)*

Interested consultants may obtain further information at the address below during office hours, 8:00 to 15:00, Sun-Thu. at the following address: -

Ministry of Public Works and Highways (MPWH)
Rural Access Program, Central Management Office (RAPCMO)
Act. Program Director
Eng. Mohamed Al Mohaya
Hadah St, Hadah Complex, Building No 4
P.O.Box: 16472, Sana'a, Republic of Yemen
Phone: 00(967-1)- 264143 / 246473
Fax: 00(967-1) 246516
Email: rapcmo@gmail.com

Expressions of interest must be delivered to the address above by [20th Feb., 2014].

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

Individual Consultant Environmental and Social Impact Assessment Review (ESIA) and Social Consultation(SC) Individual Social Specialists

Country and Beneficiary: [Republic of Yemen –Ministry of Public Works and Highways]
Project Name: [Second Rural Access Project]
Consulting Services: [Environmental and Social Impact Assessment Review (ESIA) and Social Consultation(SC) for Three Rural Roads Sub- Projects Located in Baydha Governorate Governorates with total length of 35km]
Grant No #: [Additional Financing Grant for Credit No.4121 YEM]

The Government of Yemen has received additional financing in the form of a grant from the International Development Association (IDA) in various currencies towards the cost of the Second Rural Access Project, and intends to apply part of the proceeds of this grant to hair a highly qualified and experienced social specialist (individual) to ensure the quality of the safeguards documents according to the World Bank requirements. The social specialist will need to carry out the following tasks:

- To have a thorough review for all ESIA reports prepared by previous consulting firm including all social impacts, mitigation measures, monitoring program, Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP) and land donation and/or land acquisition process for each road in order to get these reports approved by the World Bank and launch these roads for bidding.
- To carry out field visits to verify the accuracy of the information regarding the land donation and/or acquisition through consultation with local people and Beneficiary Committee
- To revise the ESIA reports based on the desk review and the findings of the field work.

Tasks and duties

The duties of the social specialist will include but be not limited to:

- Review all Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) Reports that have been prepared by previous consulting firms for sub-projects listed in (Annex A) below.
- Ensure that all ESIA's reports are in conformity with category (A) or (B) requirements of the Involuntary Resettlement Operational Policy (OP 4.12) and the guidelines set in the Sectoral Environmental Assessment (SEA) manual prepared for RAPCMO depending on the nature of road impacts.
- Review all land donation and/or land acquisition process prepared for each individual sub-project;
- In case of the land is not obtained through voluntary land donation, the social specialist will need to ensure adequate mitigation measures are taken by following the requirements of the Resettlement Policy Framework OP 4.12.
- If the land is obtained through voluntary land donation, the social consultant should do the following:
 - Conduct a field survey and check the total land area and total percent of land taking to ensure that land donation does not exceed 10% of land holding.
 - In case of some land owners donated more than 10% of their holding, then conduct social consultations with those land owners and Beneficiary Committee to find the significance of the impacts on their livelihood and income and to develop mitigation measures.
- The social specialist will also have to review all Environmental and Social Management Plans (ESMPs) tables for each road during both construction and maintenance phases.
- The social specialist will have to up-date theses tables and include quantities and cost of mitigation measures for each specific road which will be part of the bidding documents during the implementation period and operation phase.
- The social specialist should review the mitigation measures and recommend a set of specifically designed mitigation measures addressing the potential negative impacts during the design/construction and operational phases if not included in each specific report. Subsequently, calculate the additional cost of these mitigation measures to be inserted into the Bill of Quantities and Road Design.
- The social specialist should work in coordination with the environmental specialist in order to combine all social issues within the same report during the period of the contract.
- The environmental and social specialists should work in coordination with RAPCMO the Environmental and Social Unit and utilize all relevant reports and previous studies such as the Sectoral Environmental Assessment Study, Resettlement Policy Framework guideline, Social Framework Agreement, etc., and incorporate the relevant recommendations and guidelines in the reports. These documents will be made available upon request.

Duration of Services

The social specialist should finish review of all ESIA, ESMP within 1.5 month from signing the contract. Subsequently, after receiving comments from the WB and the Client, the environmental specialist should incorporate all comments into the final review and submit the final up-dated reports within two weeks.

Qualification and experience

- The expert is required to demonstrate the following:
- BSc in Social Science
 - Must have at least six (6) years of experience in the field of Social Impact Assessment (SIA) in road works.
 - The Consultant must be familiar with the World Bank Operational Policies (OP 4.12, 4.11) and the relevant Yemeni laws and regulation for EIA's.
 - He should be capable of preparing resettlement plan for land acquisition and/or destruction of buildings based on OP 4.12.
 - The (SS) must demonstrate experience to conduct social consultations including: formal and informal interviews, focus groups, social impact analyses, customary forms of land and other dispute resolution, and;
 - Good knowledge of English language will be an advantage.

The Ministry of Public Works and Highways - Rural Access Program Central Management Office - now invites eligible Individual Consultant to indicate their interest in providing these services. Interested consultants must provide detailed information indicating that they are qualified to perform the services (CV, description of similar assignments, experience in similar conditions, etc.).

A consultant will be selected in accordance with the procedures set out in the World Bank's *Guidelines: Selection and Employment of Consultants by World Bank Borrowers issued on May 2004 and revised on October 2006 (section V. Selection of Individual Consultants)*

Interested consultants may obtain further information at the address below during office hours, 8:00 to 15:00, Sun-Thu. at the following address: -

Ministry of Public Works and Highways (MPWH)
Rural Access Program, Central Management Office (RAPCMO)
Act. Program Director
Eng. Mohamed Al Mohaya
Hadah St, Hadah Complex, Building No 4
P.O.Box: 16472, Sana'a, Republic of Yemen
Phone: 00(967-1)- 264143 / 246473
Fax: 00(967-1) 246516
Email: rapcmo@gmail.com

Expressions of interest must be delivered to the address above by [20th Feb., 2014].

Cautious celebration for Yemen's National Dialogue

Danya Greenfield
Atlanticcouncil.org
First Published Jan. 29

Typical headlines from Yemen usually highlight a recent assassination, damage from a drone strike, or violent tribal feuding, so it's worth noting the positive milestone in the country's transition process with the official close of Yemen's National Dialogue. Yemen's achievement should be heralded—particularly since it is the result of the only negotiated transfer of power among the Arab awakening countries and the first to complete an inclusive dialogue process in the region.

The National Dialogue process was a core component of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)-sponsored agreement—which paved the way for former president Ali Abdullah Saleh to step down in exchange for immunity in November 2011—and was designed to be an inclusive process addressing the myriad of challenges facing the country. After multiple, hand-wringing delays, the 565-member body completed more than ten months of painstaking work and agreed upon more than

1400 articles laying out recommendations on the conflict in Sa'ada, demands from Southern secessionists, economic development, transitional justice, and expanding rights and freedoms. The Dialogue broke down important cultural barriers—allowing youth to engage on equal footing with tribal elders and introducing unprecedented acceptance of women's participation in all facets of government and public life.

Yet before the United Nations, the Friends of Yemen, and the G10 Group of Ambassadors in Sana'a rejoice in congratulatory backslapping and move to the next stage, observers should note three major issues of concern that will continue to haunt Yemen's ability to live peacefully, attend to critical humanitarian and economic issues, and move toward a truly democratic, pluralistic, and representative system of governance.

First, the way that the National Dialogue finally came to a close is extremely worrisome and could undermine tentative gains in revamping political and cultural norms. At the 11th hour, behind closed doors, a group circumvented the agreed-upon protocol for the National Dialogue and ultimately forged an

agreement to break the logjam on the Southern Issue, a maneuver that smacked of a Saleh-era backdoor deal. The lack of transparency, the narrow circle of elite actors making final decisions, pressure from international figures, and unilateral action from the president that ultimately rammed through a final decision without adhering to the Dialogue's official protocol left a bitter taste for many who had hoped the dialogue would turn a new page on Yemeni politics.

Yes, perhaps this was the only way to get past the stalemate and move to the next much-needed stage of Yemen's scripted transition process (constitution-drafting and elections), but the cost of such action should be acknowledged. Of these, the flagrant lack of transparency is the most damaging. Some may have forgotten, but the rallying cry of the 2011 youth uprising was against the abuse of power, mismanagement, and corruption that was so pervasive within the former regime and its circles of power. The dialogue's unceremonious end sends a message to many Yemenis that little has changed over the past three years.

Second, a solution regarding

Southern demands for independence—the most contentious issue addressed in the dialogue—was essentially kicked down the road, but without clear agreement on how this would be decided in the future. While delaying a decision about how many regions would be included in a new federal system (two vs. five or six) may have been the only way to bring the dialogue to a close, it avoided addressing the heart of the issue and postponed compromises that ultimately will need to be made. Perhaps more importantly, the fact that many Southern representatives ultimately pulled out of the Dialogue and that a plurality in the South reject its premise altogether means that President Hadi and his government have some serious work to do building trust if a unified, federal system has any chance of success.

Third, the country has witnessed an uptick in violent activity in the north between the Salafis and the Houthis, fighting in the Hadramout governorate between powerful tribal groups and government forces, ongoing attacks on oil pipelines, and targeted assassinations of military and intelligence personnel in the near-term period. Conflicts in

nearly every corner of the country is testing a delicate balance of power that has reigned since the negotiated transfer of power—a degree of stability that has been shaky but will be required for any of the National Dialogue's gains to come to fruition. The fact that no single military faction or political power has a monopoly over force has been both a blessing (no threat of an Egypt-style military coup) and a curse (government forces unable to confront Houthis or tribal militias). The coming months will present a serious challenge for President Hadi to exert his influence and continue with much-needed military restructuring and consolidation.

Ultimately, the inability of the government to deliver tangible change and the struggle over political and economic power is at the heart of each of these issues. Unfortunately, the completion of the dialogue on its own won't resolve these conflicts, nor will it improve economic conditions or mitigate malnutrition. These are the daily realities that plague most Yemenis, who worry about the lack of security and meeting their families' basic needs. They have yet to see the benefits of the political transition or an

improvement in the quality of their lives, and this should weigh on Hadi's shoulders as he proceeds with the extension of his presidency.

Despite the shortcomings of the GCC initiative and the National Dialogue, Yemen has a great deal to be proud of at this moment—not the least of which is avoiding a bloody civil war like what rages in Syria—and there is a dynamic cohort of newly empowered youth leaders who will fight for a more democratic, inclusive, transparent system. With the end of the dialogue, it will be up to them to keep these guiding principles in mind and moving the country forward. Now the pressure is on for Yemen's leaders to put the interests of the country ahead of narrow, parochial interests and make good on the demands of those who bravely put their lives on the line for change three years ago.

Danya Greenfield is the acting director of the Rafik Hariri Center for the Middle East at the Atlantic Council and the co-chair of the Yemen Policy Initiative, a joint effort of the Atlantic Council and the Project on Middle East Democracy.

The end of Arab paternalism

Hassan Mneimneh
Realclearworld.com
First Published Jan. 31

From its inception, the expression "Arab Spring" always appeared to be on rhetorically weak ground. Today, pessimists' skepticism about that wave of popular protests across the Middle East and North Africa might appear to be justified. Egypt is on the path to restoring a rigid autocracy, Libya is in chaos; Yemen is a failed state torn by separatism and militancy; Syria has witnessed the failure to uphold the responsibility to protect; Bahrain has been the subject of global indifference; and Iraq is descending once again into a fratricidal war. Only in Tunisia has there been some modest progress, with a new draft constitution accepted by the main secular and Islamist parties and a National Dialogue process in place to preserve the frail legitimacy of the post-revolutionary order. Yet, it would be a mistake to perceive the Arab Spring as a failure.

The Arab Spring was the result of long-term structural transformations affecting the Middle East and North Africa. The nation-state system that took root in the region in the aftermath of World War I enabled the consolidation of paternalistic centralized states, but failed to provide for societal checks and balances. By 2011, popular social, political, and economic demands by the region's citizens could no longer be contained by various autocratic governments. All that was required was the catalyst of the Tunisian uprising, which began in December 2010.

The subsequent unraveling of that brief moment of enthusiasm

can also be simply stated. To ensure their own survival, the institutions created by autocratic regimes demonstrated resilience, adaptability, and ruthlessness. Meanwhile, the immature and heterogeneous character of the revolutionary movements made them susceptible to opportunistic radicalism. As a result, the permanence of the current configuration of borders and governments in the Middle East and North Africa is now in serious question: from Syria and Iraq (where the central governments are central only in theory) and Yemen (where secessionist forces have declared their intent) to Libya (where the state remains on life-support) and Egypt (where the Sinai is out of control). But, at the same time, one can be fairly certain that there will be no permanent return to the paternalistic model of governance that enabled dictators to flourish, and tempted the international community to accommodate them.

It is evident that the military is hoping to restore a paternalistic state in Egypt, with support from Saudi Arabia and other Gulf states. Egyptian Gen. Abdel Fattah el-Sisi's expected election as president may create such a temporary illusion. However, such developments are likely only to postpone the inevitable. The injection and adoption of ideas is important, but so is the untenable balance sheet of the region's governments. The tacit social contract - that of providing a growing population with the false promise of education, employment, and retirement in exchange for its acquiescence to the state's paternalism - may still be a viable option, but only for a while and only in wealthy Gulf countries. Saudi largesse, driven by shifting geostrategic considerations, may shield Egypt for now from the drop in in-

ternational aid and support that will accompany the changing global economic landscape. Not only are citizens largely on their own now, but so are governments. States in which fast-growing populations are placing greater stress on public resources have been forced to scale back their promises and increase their repression, which only perpetuates regional volatility.

Behind the empowerment of the Arab Spring and its novel focus on citizen sovereignty lies a deeper realization: the realization that the state can no longer provide. The implications of this sober fact are yet to be properly understood. In cultures geared toward a dependence on the state that borders on subservience, a transition towards a meaningful independence is not automatic. The act of raising pictures of deposed despots by farmers in rural Tunisia, tribesmen in Libya, and the rural poor in Cairo is not an expression of affection or nostalgia, but a desire to revert back to the impossible promise of the paternalistic state.

The transatlantic community realized at the outset of the Arab Spring that it had inadvertently contributed to the longevity of a bankrupt system of governance. It ought not be tempted, because of the lack of immediate alternatives, to rationalize the return to autocracy. In Tunisia, modest steps are being made toward a new social contract, with citizen sovereignty and responsibility. Helping to replicate that across the region is the necessary path forward, and one that is more compatible with Western values and interests.

Hassan Mneimneh is a senior transatlantic fellow with the German Marshall Fund of the United States in Washington, D.C.



FOOD SECURITY CLUSTER
Strengthening Humanitarian Response

Food Security Vulnerability Study On Yemeni Returnees Migrant Families Terms of Reference and Invitation to Application

1. Background

The Food Security and Agriculture Cluster (FSAC) in Yemen is established in 2012 and is co-led by WFP and FAO. Yemen is facing large-scale displacement, civil conflict, political instability, food insecurity, high food prices, endemic poverty, a breakdown of social services, diminishing resources and influxes of refugee and migrants. In 2012, WFP conducted a Comprehensive Food Security Survey, which found that more than 10 million people—almost half the country's population—either hungry or on the edge of hunger. Five million of those, 22 percent of the population, were found to be severely food insecure; unable to produce or buy the food they need. The same survey found child malnutrition rates are among the highest in the world with close to half of Yemen's children under 5 years, that is two million children, stunted and one million acutely malnourished. In 2013 the Government of Saudi Arabia decided to revise the national working visa policy. This has led to loss of income for thousands of Yemeni families that were surviving on their remittances.

2. Purpose of Food Security Assessment

In a bid to improve and strengthen its understanding and coverage for profiles of food security and build partners awareness, Food Security and Agriculture Cluster Yemen recognizes the need to improve upon its vulnerability analysis, so as to ensure better understanding of localized factors behind food insecurity. Accordingly, the Food Security and Agriculture Cluster seeks to undertake a food security sensitive assessment in order to acquire an enhanced understanding of the macro and micro level dynamics of Yemeni returnees migrants and their families. The scope of the study is to build awareness around this particular group of the Yemeni society and the perception by all actors on the ground, from communities, government institutions, the international community, CSOs. More broadly, the Food Security and Agriculture Cluster intends to utilize the study outputs for advocacy purposes and to promote vulnerability-sensitive and protection mainstreaming based approach for programming amongst the humanitarian community in Yemen.

3. Food Security Vulnerability Assessment Outputs:

The production, of an analysis on food security vulnerabilities, among the Yemeni returnees migrants and their families, in three Yemeni governorates (Taiz, Hoddeidah and Hajja) will include:

- Desk review of national and international frameworks on food security, framework and already conducted researches on Yemeni migrants;
- The identification of their families coping mechanisms, assessing positive and negative practices in terms of health and nutrition;
- Vulnerability analysis of the targeted group (based on age and gender disaggregated analysis);
- Identification of possible humanitarian advocacy strategies targeting national and international actors;

4. Outputs, Methodology and Location

The methodology should be primarily based on qualitative research methods, with data to be collected in three governorates identified by the Food Security and Agriculture Cluster. The final output will be a report in English of minimum 40 pages (not counting the annexes).

5. Timeframe and Duration

The Study will commence from February and end in March 2014. The research organization will include following specific activities in the study and will indicate in their proposal number of days they propose for each activity to be discussed and agreed with the Food Security and Agriculture Cluster Coordinator.

6. Submission of Expression of Interest

The deadline for the expression of interest is 9th February. Consulting companies/research organizations and national NGOs that meet the above requirements should submit an expression of interest, which should include the following:

- Cover letter including the individual research person/organization suitability for the assignment (been already operating in the country or been able to independently obtain the necessary visa) and current contact information;
- Supporting documents providing evidence of required qualifications by research;
- Person/organization, including name of reports, relevant experience, CV of the person who will lead this study, as well as proposed research team details;
- A detailed work plan;
- A budget (lump sum fee) for the Study (with accompanying budget outline/justification).

All applications should be send to FAO-YE@fao.org

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Life at the end of the world's largest refugee repatriation



A hairdresser in Sheikh Misra returnee refugee settlement on the outskirts of Jalalabad. Naik Mohammad (pictured) was born in Pakistan but returned in 2004.

John James
Irinnews.org
First Published Jan. 31

Just before his 18th birthday, Naik Mohammad relocated to Afghanistan, a country he only knew from family stories and the television news.

Mohammad, an Afghan refugee born and raised in Pakistan, was part of the world's largest voluntary repatriation of refugees - the return of nearly six million Afghan refugees in the aftermath of the U.S.-led invasion of their country and the defeat of the Taliban in 2001.

But the returnees' fortunes, like that of their homeland, have been mixed.

Eight years after arriving, Mohammad runs a barbershop on what amounts to the high street in the Sheikh Misri returnee settlement in Nangarhar Province. "This is my own country. I have my own business and no one hassles us. Things are not perfect, but it's better to be here. It is home, and we now have friends," he told IRIN.

Millions of Afghans fled over the border to Pakistan following the communist takeover in the late 1970s. Now, the majority have returned, transporting their belongings, and hopes, back home in overloaded trucks up the Khyber pass and across the Torkham border post.

"The three generations of Afghan refugees in Pakistan all have slightly different expectations," said Neill Wright, the U.N. Refugee Agency's (UNHCR) representative in Pakistan. "For the younger two generations who choose to repatriate, they have never lived in their own country, but they've decided that it's time to try. For the older ones, they know more or less what they're going back to, because they left it in the first place... but there remain

huge challenges in reintegrating them successfully in Afghanistan."

The overthrow of the Taliban brought with it the promise of peace and billions in development money, while in Pakistan the closure of certain refugee camps persuaded many Afghan families to return.

Currently, refugee families heading back home through the UNHCR-supported voluntary repatriation scheme get \$150 per person, plus some non-cash aid, and help with transport costs to help them return to their village of origin. Most of those in Pakistan are ethnic Pashtuns from provinces close to the Pakistan-Afghan border.

But for returns to be sustainable, humanitarians say refugees need a number of key things: land, jobs and basic services, all in the right place. So far, the returnees—who make up around a quarter of Afghanistan's current population—have been struggling.

Urban homes

For many refugees, fleeing to Pakistan meant transitioning to a more urban environment. As they return, many are choosing to live close to urban centers.

"You haven't seen many refugees returning and then going back to Pakistan immediately. But it's a tough environment to come to, and I think there are a number of issues," said Nigel Jenkins, Afghanistan country director for the International Rescue Committee (IRC). "You have to remember that Afghanistan is primarily an agrarian country, and a lot of these refugees came from rural areas that are less secure. They've been brought up in camps in many cases, so they're used much more to an urban-type environment."

Kabul and Nangarhar provinces are home to more than a third of all returnees, according to UNHCR.

"They have clearly voted with

their feet, and if offered shelter and even land in rural areas, they go for urban sites, even in a tent, because they perceive there to be better livelihood opportunities and services," said Bo Schack, head of UNHCR Afghanistan.

Sheikh Misri township, close to Jalalabad, has been one of the more successful land allotment projects for returnees, but even then the settlement's site is far from ideal.

"When we came, the [Afghan] government gave us this land in the desert, full of mines," Mohammad told IRIN at the dusty township, 15km from the nearest road and the outskirts of the city.

The allotment was one of five areas in a national pilot scheme to allocate land to refugee returnees, organized under presidential decree number 104.

"It's difficult being in the desert so far from anywhere," said Qari Rahmatullah, a member of the Sheikh Misri Shura (council). Most of the refugee families here originally came from Nangarhar Province, and now prefer living close to Jalalabad for the security, jobs and schools. "The first year was hard, but we're in a far better position than when we arrived. Still, life is not particularly easy."

Around 1,800 families now live on the site, where they have received a wide range of assistance from U.N. agencies, development actors and NGOs, which helped install water pumps, build roads and set up four schools.

But while the formal land allotment and the proximity to Jalalabad has allowed the township to resemble a well-organized community, more than five years on, responsibility has yet to pass, as planned, to the local municipality. In the eyes of many local officials, it remains a camp rather than an integrated part of the city.

That local buy-in is crucial, ac-

ording to UNHCR's Schack.

"Increasingly, land allocations are way outside of current communities. If there's no water, if there's no clear engagement of national authorities and integration in national programmes, then these won't work. It needs political buy-in and a general willingness to integrate a community in the existing set-up," he said. "It has to be led both by the community and the authorities—if one element isn't there then the whole thing falls apart."

Landless in their homeland

Getting land rights is seen as a key part of successful refugee returns, an issue marred by a trend towards land grabbing.

Head of the Jalalabad offices of the Directorate of Refugees and Repatriation, Alhaj Ghulam Haider Faqeerzai, says they have registered

142,000 returnee families and 128,000 applications for land, but they have just two formal settlement sites with roughly 10,000 families.

Many of the rest are squatting on land that does not belong to them.

"The efforts are always there, but we have immense problems. Other provinces have more adequate land. The problem here is not with resources but with the land," said Faqeerzai.

Those without land titles are frequently threatened with eviction, and humanitarian and development actors face restrictions in providing services and support to families when they are living on someone else's land. There are also increased chances of creating tension with the pre-existing population.

At the start of the gravel track that leads to the Sheikh Misri township is the informal settlement of Lower

Sheikh Misri. There, communities squat on land owned by the water and sanitation authority.

"We turned down the chance of moving to the land allocation site because we wanted to stay near the road," said Allah Gul, head of the shura in Lower Sheikh Misri. "With time, the numbers here have decreased—there is no work, security or land."

They hold out for the promise of getting land rights, but until then they will receive little support.

Returning to work

Aid workers say that just as significant an issue is job opportunities. In some cases, refugee returnees are unable to find work and end up going back to Pakistan—this time as undocumented migrants.

Continued on the back page

Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean

ORGANISATION MONDIALE DE LA SANTE
Bureau regional de la Mediterranee orientale



Vacancy Notice: POL/01-2014

TITLE: Polio Eradication Officer
OFFICIAL STATION (COUNTRY): Sana'a – Republic of Yemen
ORGANIZATIONAL LOCATION/UNIT: Office of the World Health Organization in Yemen
CONTRACT TYPE: SSA
DURATION OF CONTRACT: 6 Months
OBJECTIVES OF THE PROGRAMME: To provide Technical Support to Polio Eradication Programme in Yemen

THE SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATE WILL:

Under the technical supervision of the WHO Representative, the Polio Eradication Officer will be responsible of all the polio eradication activities in the assigned district (s) and will undertake the following duties:

AFP Surveillance

1. Support district health authorities in ensuring that there is a system in place for comprehensive AFP case detection and response.
2. Complement district health authorities / staff efforts to ensure timely investigation of all AFP cases including timely stool collection and transportation and appropriate actions are under taken in response to the surveillance findings.
3. Undertake regular site visits to reporting sites to ensure that no AFP cases are missed/ not reported.
4. Facilitate that all data from AFP cases are properly collected, line-listed, analyzed and interpreted timely; and forwarded to provincial office.
5. Regularly monitor the quality of surveillance data in the district(s) of responsibility.
6. Participate in detailed epidemiological investigations of urgent (hot), confirmed and compatible polio cases and AFP cases with zero routine OPV dose.
7. Participate in training for health care workers on AFP surveillance.
8. Assist in ensuring inclusion of all high risk/ underserved/ migrant population in the Surveillance network and all AFPs are reported from them.
9. Assist with the strengthening of measles and MNT surveillance activities.

Supplemental Polio Vaccination Campaigns (SIA)

1. Provide technical support to pre-campaign activities particularly planning, preparing and monitoring the quality of area level Micro-planning, at districts levels.
2. Monitor the availability of human and material resources and provide necessary support to augment them.
3. Ensure selection of appropriate vaccinators and supervisors
4. Monitor and support the trainings in the pre-campaign phase; for various categories of health workers involved in vaccination and supervision.
5. Monitor and supervise the work of all categories of health workers during the Implementation phase of the campaign and share the key observations and recommendations / action points with responsible authorities on daily basis.
6. Monitor the utilization of resources and report issue, if any.
7. Thorough analysis of the post campaign independent monitoring data after every vaccination round to: a) making corrective measures as per guidelines; b) identifying the issues to be addressed before the following vaccination round and c) reporting for actions required, if any.
8. Support in analyzing the vaccination and (administrative and monitoring) data and modify operations if needed.
9. Help to prepare a report in line with National Emergency Action Plan and seek support from public sector and NGO/Private sector as well.
10. Provide special focus on the high risk populations during all the phases of the campaign in line with the special strategies devised by MoH for risk populations and the National Emergency Action Plan for Polio Eradication.

Routine EPI

Assist in the various aspects to ensure development, maintenance, and monitoring of routine EPI, and participate in SIAs related to other EPI diseases.

QUALIFICATIONS REQUIRED:

- Specialization degree in MD, Community Medicine or Public Health.
- Minimum Five years experience in similar functions.
- Very good knowledge in English and Arabic.

CLOSING DATE FOR APPLICATIONS: 13/02/2014

APPLICATIONS SHOULD BE SENT TO :

World Health Organization, Al Hasaba area,
Ministry of Health and Population building
PO BOX 543 , Sana'a , Republic of Yemen
Tel: 01 252213, Fax: 01 251612

ONLY CANDIDATES UNDER SERIOUS CONSIDERATION WILL BE CONTACTED FOR INTERVIEW AND TEST.
ANY APPOINTMENT/EXTENSION OF APPOINTMENT IS SUBJECT TO WHO STAFF REGULATIONS,
STAFF RULES AND MANUAL.

Ministry of Education (MoE)
Project Administration Unit (PAU)
(Global Partnership for Education Grant)

VACANCIES

The Project Administration Unit (PAU) of the Ministry of Education (MoE) administers Activities under The Global Partnership for Education Catalytic Fund awarded to the Government of Yemen under the supervision of the UNICEF. The grant supports the implementation of the Medium Term Results Framework (MTRF) through the Global Partnership for Education (GPE). PAU is now seeking applicants for the following position:

Financial Officer

- Prepare requests for funding of GPE program activities ensuring that they confirm with the quarterly and annual plans of the Ministry of Education and other partners in the GPE program; Ensure that budgets are in line with the set sector set rates and other rates as agreed within the GPE program.
- Regularly monitor the financial follow of the GPE program so that funds are optimally utilized; prepare quarter and annual financial needs and follow of funds and advice when to request additional funds.
- Prepare regular financial reports on funds utilized, outstanding and any other important financial reports necessary for the effective and efficient implementation of the GPE program; regularly contribute to the periodic and other reports as necessary.
- Oversee the preparation of goods receipts; ensure that contractors documents, invoices and correspondences associated with payments in place.
- Enter all the financial transactions on daily basis into the Financial Sys.
- Prepare all necessary accounting documents.
- Prepare bank reconciliation for all bank accounts on monthly basis.
- Prepare initial financial analysis of data & preparation of the project basic data (plans, cost, budget, actual... etc).
- Prepare The Financial Monitoring Reports and Cash Disbursements Plans.
- Deal with the external auditors.
- Assess the FMs capacities at the governorates level.
- Maintain overall integrity of financial statements and accounting records.
- Developing, propose, implement & support changes or improvements to financial policies & procedures.
- Any other tasks as required by the project Financial Officer and the Project Director.

Qualifications:

- A minimum of Bachelor's degree in Accounting or Business Administration with major in accounting and finance.
- Minimum of 5 years of professional experience in a financial management and accounting position, preferably in the private sector.
- Familiarity with the government's and GPE financial management requirement is a plus.
- Experience in the use of accounting programs and software.
- Proficiency in both Arabic and English.
- Good Interpersonal and communication skills.

All applications along with a detailed resume and supporting documents should be submitted by 13/2/2014 to the following address:

Education Development Project Administration Unit
60M Southern Road, Bait Meyad
Tel: 01-619163/4 Fax: 01-619219
Email: Bilqis6@hotmail.com

وَبَشِّرِ الصَّابِرِينَ

الَّذِينَ إِذَا أَصَابَتْهُمُ مُصِيبَةٌ قَالُوا إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ

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المعزون: أعضاء مجلس ادارة مؤسسة يمن تايمز
وجميع موظفي المؤسسة



Female dancers challenge conservative attitudes, long for pre-unity openness

Amal Al-Yarisi

“As a folk dancer, I find myself ostracized by my neighbors and by society in general,” said Fathia Al-Amrani, a traditional dancer affiliated with the National Folk Music and Dance Troupe.

Dancers, singers and actors are known in Yemeni society as mazainah, a term used to describe people of the lowest social class. Even if an individual's family is from a higher social class, if they choose such a profession they will be scorned by society and find it virtually impossible to marry into a higher social class. It is especially unacceptable for women to work in these professions.

Al-Amrani embarked on her career 18 years ago, beginning as an

actress, then moving into traditional singing and dancing. Originally from Sana'a, she chose this profession because she has always loved to dance, even as a child. Her mother and aunt were performers as well—they used to sing at weddings. “I inherited my love for [the arts] from my mother and aunt but unlike them, I started out as an actress and later switched to traditional song, then dance.” She was well aware from the outset that she would face societal discrimination.

“I used to [focus on singing] but then I realized that female folk dancers have more opportunities to travel abroad and earn money, so I concentrated on dancing,” added Al-Amrani. Nonetheless, she calls herself a “singer” rather than a “dancer” because she is acutely aware that being called a dancer is even more socially unacceptable.

Dancers are generally believed to be morally loose women.

Her chosen career has also caused problems in her personal life.

Al-Amrani married 13 years ago. Initially happy, problems gradually began to emerge. “[We] had two daughters. Although my husband and his family had known from the start that I am a dancer, they [tried to convince him to divorce me],” she said. “To appease his family, my husband married another woman and then lied to his family about having divorced me.”

Though still married, her husband stopped supporting her and their two daughters, but Al-Amrani has tolerated the situation because she still loves him, she said. However, out of necessity, she had to return to dancing in order to support her children and herself. “I am [the one who is financially] responsible now....

I'm also used to having money in my pocket. And I can't change professions because I don't have any educational qualifications,” said Al-Amrani.

Although Al-Amrani currently owns a car, a house and a bank account, all paid for by her dancing, she was emphatic about not allowing her daughters to embark on the same career. “One of my neighbors used to teach children the Quran but she refused to teach my daughters because they are the daughters of a folk dancer,”

she said.

Al-Amrani has not been able to ensure a stable life for her family due to the harassment of neighbors. In recent years she has been compelled to move her family several times. “I bought a house not long ago...but the people in that neighborhood forced me out, so I had to [rent it out] and move to another area where the neighbors don't know that I'm a dancer.”

Even though the female dancers performing with the National Folk Music and Dance Troupe represent Yemen at national and international folk festivals—and regularly perform at events inside Yemen—Al-Amrani and other dancers suffer from discrimination and social isolation.

Sabreen Abdu, a dancer from Dhamar, started performing with the national troupe four years ago after a big fight with her family, who were concerned that she would ruin not only her own reputation, but theirs as well. She has not had any contact with her family since then.

While working, Abdu fell in love, but her partner's family didn't allow him to marry her because of her work. “We married in secret but his family found out about the marriage after 20 days and forced him to divorce me [even though I had stopped dancing after we got married],” said Abdu.

“I had to resume working as a dancer because my husband disappeared after the divorce and I couldn't find any other work. I only have an elementary school certificate.”

Abdu and other dancers who work with the orchestra earn YR21,000 (about \$100) per month. “Even though there are just a few of us, the Ministry of Culture doesn't [provide enough support for us],” she said.

She wants the ministry to provide them with a living wage and to help

them earn some respect from the wider society for their skills and their role in preserving this part of Yemeni cultural heritage.

There are several types of Yemeni folk dances but there are only about 20 female folk dancers nationwide, according to Suad Haider, former advisor for the Arts and Traditional Dancing Section of the Ministry of Culture. The dancers perform dressed in traditional outfits in styles from all over Yemen, such as Sana'ani, Taizi, Adeni and Hadrami.

“There are only four dancers living in Sana'a, so whenever we have any shows here we have to bring in dancers from Aden, Taiz and Hadramout,” Haider said.

Haider, originally from Aden governorate, said that [attitudes toward] folk dance and song had changed for the worse following unity in 1990, adding that in the past, particularly in the south, families had been very keen to enroll their daughters in folk dance troupes.

“What used to be more than acceptable in the past [has become unacceptable],” Haider said. Since unity, “The customs of the north [have] dominated South Yemen.”

Haider joined the folk troupe in the 1970s to learn folk dancing. She worked hard to maintain a balance between academics and dance. “I was 13 at the time. I would go to school in the morning and then attend dance lessons in the afternoon.”

Haider was trained at the Fine Arts Institute in Aden by dancers from the Soviet Union.

“Society at that time encouraged us to enroll, and families urged their



“As folk dancer, I find myself ostracized by my neighbors and by society in general,” said Fathia Al-Amrani, who has been dancing for 18 years.

daughters to join the institute,” she said. “I still remember how some girls fainted when they learned they had failed the entrance exam!”

Haider has participated in folk festivals in more than 50 countries worldwide through the Ministry of Culture and with the sponsorship of Yemeni communities abroad.

“For 30 years I performed 150 kinds of dances and overcame multiple obstacles. We [dancers] have to take care of ourselves and safeguard our reputation because we live in a cruel society.”

When the dancers go out on stage, the audience enjoys their performance. But back in the real world, they are treated differently, they say.

Although Haider hopes to attract new dancers by visiting schools to recruit both male and female students, it is an uphill battle. “Even the venerable and renowned folk troupes of Hadramout and Aden don't have but two or three female dancers,” she said.



Sabreen Abdu had to marry her sweetheart secretly because his family did not approve of her profession. When they found out, the couple was forced to divorce.

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such a problem with debt.”

That is not an opinion shared by Bashir Ali, a returnee who had previously fled to London through Iran and Turkey but was eventually sent back home: “There’s no work, no money and no security.”

In the formal Sheikh Misri township, investment in construction created work when residents first moved in, but that has since diminished. Some day-labour is available in Jalalabad, but for a day rate of 400 Pakistani rupees (the main currency in eastern Afghanistan, about \$3.80), half is lost to the transport costs required just to get to the city.

The recent resurfacing of the main access road has improved transport links, but the lack of nearby jobs is a major reason why only around 20 percent of the 10,000 potential family land plots are occupied at Sheikh Misri.

Both the formal and informal communities spoke of sending their children to work in the brick kilns in Kabul during the summer months to generate some income.

Some vocational training schemes are available. The International Organization for Migration (IOM) recently trained 350 undocumented returnees in skills like wiring, construction, plumbing and motorbike repair. But the vast majority of returnees have few skills to peddle, and the land they are given is rarely suitable for farming.

Undocumented returns

Not all the Afghans living in Pakistan have refugee status. IOM staff say there are at least a million undocumented Afghan migrants in Pakistan, many concentrated in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province.

Because they are not part of the formal return process, they are particularly vulnerable when returning

home, and may be exposed to deportation or harassment from the authorities in Pakistan.

At the IOM transit centre just after the Torkham border crossing, around 200 vulnerable undocumented families receive help in an average month. Such returns spiked in April 2013, when more than 750 returning undocumented families were recorded, around 400 of whom received support.

“Most of them share the same story. The military or police threaten to destroy their home and they say they were forced [or feel forced] to return,” said IOM’s Omar Majeedi, who is responsible for assisting undocumented returnees. “They have a totally different experience coming back from official refugees,” he said.

Because of the risk of their moving back and forth across the border to claim aid—known as “recycling”—no cash is given to undocumented returnees. But they do get a meal, a food package from the World Food Programme (WFP) and some other non-food items, including blankets, cooking pots and soap.

Some returnees who have spent more than two decades outside the country do not remember the name of their home district, requiring guidance from IOM staff.

Reintegration

The returns pose “considerable challenges to the country’s absorption capacity,” according to the 2014 Humanitarian Needs Overview from the U.N.’s Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

While official refugee returnees are generally thought to receive more support and have stronger coping mechanisms than the country’s 620,000 conflict-affected internally displaced people (IDPs), in reality their situations can be quite

similar.

Aid industry jargon in Afghanistan now talks about “returnees living in IDP-like-situations.” Aid workers in the field reported that while refugee returnees seem to have an easier time getting identification documents than IDPs, there are challenges moving them from humanitarian aid support to regular Afghan development services.

“We push the returnee issue,” said Schack, “but we need to make sure that returnees become Afghans.”

Around 1.6 million registered Afghan refugees continue to live in Pakistan, waiting for land and livelihood solutions that will offer them a reason to leave their host country.

“We tell people to return from Pakistan,” said Rahmatullah at the Sheikh Misri Shura. “The situation there is not so good. But then what will happen here in 2014? We’ll be keeping our eyes on the transition,” he adds.

The government, meanwhile, acknowledges that any sudden rise in returns would overwhelm their current capacity.

“We cannot accommodate them [refugees in Pakistan]; we are not ready or prepared to receive them,” said Faqeerzai, of the Directorate of Refugees and Repatriation.

But thanks to communication between Afghan refugees abroad and returnees, and the occasional “go and see” visit organized by UNHCR, those in Pakistan probably have a good sense of what is best for them.

“These people have ears and eyes here,” said Mahir Safarli, the head of the UNHCR sub-office in Jalalabad. “They know better than we do whether it’s safe to come back.”

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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 10

Life at the end of the world’s largest refugee repatriation

Sher Ali, who moved to Lower Sheikh Misri from a refugee camp near Peshawar in 2008, has been happy with the return to a country he only saw as a small child. Like many returnees, he relies on finding work as an unskilled labourer.

“Honestly, I’m happy with the decision to move back here. There is more work here, and I don’t have

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