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**STATE OF THE FIELD IN  
YOUTH-LED DEVELOPMENT**  
THROUGH THE LENS OF THE  
UN-HABITAT'S URBAN YOUTH FUND

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## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The *State of the Field in Youth-Led Development* report is the second report in the Global Youth-Led Development series. Informed by earlier findings from a web-based survey of youth-led development initiatives, it analyzes data derived from UN- Habitat Urban Youth Fund projects. In contrast to the first report, the report focuses only on registered youth-led groups, drawing on application and monitoring and evaluation data from the Youth Fund applicants to examine the organizational context, operations, and capacity of these groups. The report reveals some key aspects of organizational functioning that deserve more attention and support, and suggests potential leverage points where outside funding or other types of support (training, space, equipment, technical assistance, etc.) might make the most difference in supporting the organizations engaged in youth-led development.

All reports in the series are available at [www.globalyouthdesk.org/research](http://www.globalyouthdesk.org/research)

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## FOREWORD

This report is the second volume the Global Youth-Led Development Series, a collection of themed papers created to expand the knowledge in the area of youth-led development. Youth-led development (YLD) is a term first popularized by Peacechild International to reflect a faith in the power of young people to contribute constructively to the good of society.<sup>1</sup> YLD places youth at the centre of their own and their communities' development, moving youth from passive receptors of development, to agents of positive change.



"Fighting urban poverty without involving youth is like trying to extinguish a forest fire with a garden hose".

**Erik Berg, Senior Advisor,  
 Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Norway)**



Building on Peacechild's definition, UN-Habitat in 2005 published a report leading up to the World Urban Forum in Vancouver, which looked at YLD as practiced by youth-led agencies.<sup>2</sup> This report was a critical step in building an evidentiary base for YLD, as it focused on self-organized youth, and explored how these YLD agencies can become more than the sum of their parts through collective action. The report's conclusions became part of the basis for UN-Habitat's development of new YLD programmes, supported by the Government of Norway. In 2007, UN-Habitat convened representatives from its four One Stop Resource Youth Resource Centres based in East Africa to identify principles and promising practices for YLD.

From this meeting a series of training manuals was developed for the One Stop Centres based on those principles.

UN-Habitat continued to develop innovative YLD programmes with the launching of the Urban Youth Fund in 2008. The Fund, one of the first of its kind, was created to support grassroots youth-led initiatives globally. To inform the fund a number of research projects were undertaken, further exploring the role of youth-led agencies in development. Informed by earlier findings from a web-based survey of youth-led development initiatives, additional research was conducted on the organizational context, functioning, and capacity of youth-led initiatives, by analyzing the Urban Youth Fund applicant organizations and grantees. This report focuses on the results of that analysis, and suggests some new directions for both research and practical support for YLD.

Together, the Global Youth-Led Development series of papers forms a mosaic that sheds light on how youth are positively impacting their community. This report series emphasizes how youth can be assets to their communities, and how local, national and international governments can both engage and support youth and youth-led initiatives. Research for each paper in the series draws on the most cutting edge research in this newly acknowledged area of youth development. Lessons from this series provide a knowledge base from which youth and those interested in working with youth can develop programmes and policies that assure youth's meaningful engagement in community development. The Series seeks to demonstrate the complexities of youth-led development, while as well inspiring people to action. In the end, this series aims to contribute new insights to the emerging global dialogue on youth-led development.

1 Woolcombe, D. (1977). *Youth-Led Development - Empowering Youth To Make Poverty History*.

2 Ragan, D. (2005). *Child and Youth Friendly City Dialogue paper*

## BACKGROUND

As the second volume the Global Youth-Led Development Series, this report seeks to expand the knowledge on youth-led development and agencies through investigating the functioning, needs, assets, and outcomes of youth-led development initiatives funded by UN-Habitat's Urban Youth Fund. This report is an "engaged" research effort, in that it is not a hands-off, uninvolved approach to social inquiry; rather, UN-Habitat is deeply involved in supporting the health and well-being of urban communities, and in this instance, equally involved in supporting the role of young people as community assets and agents of positive change. This engagement is informed by, and subsequently informs, the types and levels of support that is recommended by (and often provided by) UN-Habitat. Further, this engaged research approach has spanned many years, and has involved a number of different, but related, investigations.

First, a web-based survey on youth-led initiatives was conducted from 2008 to 2012. This survey, developed by Douglas Ragan, was created to gain a better understanding of youth-led agencies, with this knowledge then informing the development of the Urban Youth Fund. The Fund was established in 2009 to support the work of youth-led organizations doing a variety of community development projects and programs in urban contexts throughout the world through small grants. The preliminary analysis of this youth-led survey has been presented in the first report in this series: "The Challenge and Promise of Youth-Led Development" authored by Carole MacNeil.

The Fund afforded UN-Habitat a second source of data, with the applications for these funds providing an opportunity to learn about the operations and goals of these efforts. Third, as grantees begin to implement and then complete the projects for

which they have been funded, mid-term and final evaluations offered new perspectives on the challenges and successes of these youth-led initiatives. Finally, looking forward, new applications—and the opportunity to track new grantees according to some of the lessons learned from past grantees and baseline studies—give us a chance to test some of the emerging findings from current investigations.

All of these data sources and analyses are complementary, providing an opportunity to explore the concept and practice of youth-led development through a range of lenses, and over a range of time. To be more precise, the youth-led survey data, because it was not an application for funding, gave us some important insights about what youth-led initiatives do, how they operate and are structured, what challenges they face, what kinds of support they think are most useful, and why their work is important.<sup>3</sup> *What it didn't tell us* was what they accomplish when they get at least a minimal level of financial or other support.

However, we were able to address this question by collecting information about outcomes from some early Youth Fund grantees. The early grants provided a critical level of financial support that survey respondents said they needed, with the goal of helping these youth-led initiatives be successful in their mission. The evaluation reports that the first tranche of grantees provided described what they accomplished with that financial support. It was clear from the survey that financial support was one important source of support. So, when some of these youth-led initiatives received that financial support, what did it allow them to do? What kinds of outcomes did they achieve?

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<sup>3</sup> See the UN-Habitat Report, "The Challenge and Promise of Youth-Led Development" (MacNeil, 2012).

What the survey also revealed, though, was that financial support is not the only kind of institutional support needed to create the conditions for success of youth-led initiatives. There are other considerations, like staffing and space and equipment to do their work. The survey also highlighted specific types of support the initiatives felt they needed, like training and mentoring, and other human and material resources that might be realized through funding or potentially through other mechanisms. The role of adults also in “youth-led” initiatives also emerged to become a critical, and little understood, aspect of youth-led agencies. This is one of the core reasons why the Youth Fund is giving all the project leaders from the granted projects training in project management, financial management and monitoring and evaluation skills before they start their projects.

One difference between the data source of the youth-led survey analysis done in *The Challenge and The Promise of Youth-Led Development* and this investigation is the formal structure of groups. *The Challenge and Promise* talked about initiatives, registered or not, while this report analyzes registered youth groups who have received funds from the Urban Youth Fund. Funding for these groups doesn't go to activities; it goes to organizations, which then implement the activities according to the application. The organizational context, then, is the intermediary between the funding and the work on the ground, so we need to understand better how these organizations work and how they do or might create an enabling environment for implementing the work.

So, in the revised applications for funding in 2011 and 2012, specific questions were included to increase our understanding of how these youth-led initiatives and organizations operate (and how they survive or thrive). How do they perceive and articulate their organizational capacity? What specific challenges or risks do they face in trying to implement a

project? How do they build in sustainability to their work? What kinds of financial or other partnerships do they create to strengthen their effectiveness?

While the evaluation data from groups that received funds in 2009 helped us understand what grants enabled the organizations to do, they do not tell the whole story. The 2011/12 application data are telling us more about the organizational context, functioning, and capacity. Now, what we also need to understand is how the organizational context (its operations, infrastructure, etc.) creates conditions for success, and which conditions need to be met so that a small infusion of funding can make the biggest difference. The next step will be to try to understand the interplay between the «right» organizational conditions and the infusion of funding (and the amount), and how that interplay affects the chances of successful implementation of youth-led initiatives. The analysis of organizational capacity through the 2011/12 applications will allow us to make some predictions about which initiatives will be most successful. The follow up evaluations (to be completed in 2013 and 2014) will test those predictions and shed some light on what «pre-existing conditions» are the ones that make for the most fertile ground for funding (or other) assistance.

As the reader will see, this report analyzes first the data from the applications in the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> call for applications (2011 and 2012). In the first section, there is first a general analysis of all eligible applications before we go one step further and analyze the groups that were selected to receive funding. In the next section, the report focuses on the groups from the 1<sup>st</sup> call for applications that started their projects in 2010. The participatory evaluation reports from this group give us important knowledge about how youth-led organizations perform when they receive funding from external sources. Finally, the report looks ahead and gives the direction for further research in the Global Youth-Led Development series.



## SECTION 1: WHO APPLIES TO THE YOUTH FUND? - OVERVIEW OF THE ORGANIZATIONS

In this first section, we present a general portrait of the youth-led organizations that applied for Youth Fund grants in 2011 and 2012. Only those organizations that passed an initial eligibility check (i.e., they met the basic requirements of the grant) were included in this analysis (a total of 1347 applications). This overview provides the larger context of youth-led development initiatives, and will be followed by a more in-depth analysis of the subset of organizations that were selected to receive funding.

To be eligible for the grants, applicants were required to substantially involve young people (ages 15-32 years) in both the governance of the organization and in the management of its activities. They also needed to involve women in the management

and governance structures. Projects had to take place in a city of more than 10,000 inhabitants and somehow connect to one of seven key areas of focus related to the mandate of UN-Habitat, as well as target disadvantaged youth (as defined by UNDESA). Eligible applicants also needed to meet some basic structural conditions, such as being registered and having a bank account (although this condition could be met through a fiscal or programmatic partner, a “facilitating organization”).

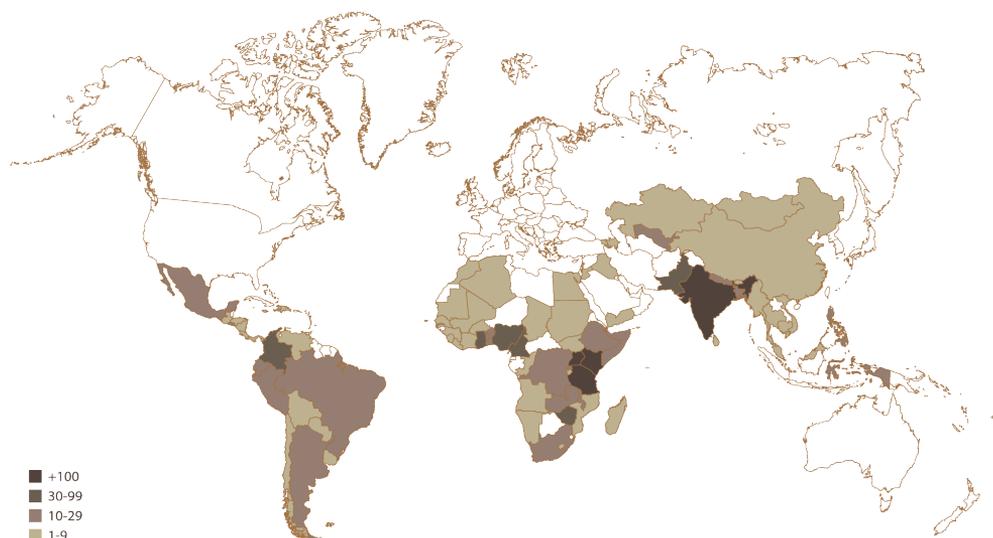
A total of 756 applications passed the eligibility check for 2011, and in 2012, 591 applications passed the eligibility check, for a total of 1347 applications. A breakdown of these applications by region is below.

**TABLE 1: Eligible Applications by Region and Year**

|              | Africa           | Asia, the Pacific and Oceania | Latin America and the Caribbean | Total       |
|--------------|------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------|
| 2011         | 419              | 269                           | 68                              | 756         |
| 2012         | 366              | 151                           | 74                              | 591         |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>785 (58%)</b> | <b>420 (31%)</b>              | <b>142 (11%)</b>                | <b>1347</b> |

Among the 1347 eligible applications, 1178 (87%) were registered; 169 (13%) were not registered. 174 Applicants (13%) used a facilitating organization. These organizations described their “organizational type” in a wide variety of ways, from

NGO’s to CBO’s to Cooperatives, to various types of associations (see the table below for a breakdown of the types of organizations, as described by applicants).

**FIGURE 1: Eligible applications by country 2011/2012**

**TABLE 2: Types of Organizations (as described by applicants)**

| Type  | 2011 | 2012 | Total |
|---|------|------|-------|
| Association   | 5    | 6    | 11    |
| Association à but non lucrative/nonprofit org. or corp. | 9    | 8    | 17    |
| Association de jeunes/youth association                 | 4    |      | 4     |
| Association registered under act of Parliament          | 1    |      |       |
| CBO   | 147  | 148  | 295   |
| Charitable Trust  |      | 1    | 1     |
| Civic/Civil Society org                                 |      | 2    | 2     |
| Collective  |      | 1    | 1     |
| Community   | 1    |      | 1     |
| Community based youth organization                      | 1    |      | 1     |
| Cooperative Society                                     | 13   | 2    | 15    |
| Cultural practitioners                                  |      | 1    | 1     |
| Disabled People's Organization (DPO)                    | 1    |      | 1     |

| <b>TABLE 2: Types of Organizations (as described by applicants)</b> |             |             |              |
|---|-------------|-------------|--------------|
| <b>Type</b>   | <b>2011</b> | <b>2012</b> | <b>Total</b> |
| Education Institution   | 1           |             | 1            |
| Entrepreneurship Company  | 1           |             | 1            |
| Faith-based Organization  |             | 1           | 1            |
| Federation  |             | 2           | 2            |
| Foundation  | 1           | 1           | 2            |
| <b>National Association</b>   |             | 1           | 1            |
| Network   | 1           | 2           | 3            |
| Non-governmental organization (NGO)                                 | 552         | 390         | 942          |
| Public Trust  | 1           | 1           | 2            |
| <b>Radio, media</b>   |             | 1           | 1            |
| Registered Counseling/ Training Organization                        | 1           |             | 1            |
| <b>Social Enterprise</b>  |             | 1           | 1            |
| Society   | 2           | 2           | 4            |
| Self help group   | 4           | 1           | 5            |
| Trust   | 2           | 2           | 4            |
| Volunteer group   | 1           | 2           | 3            |
| <b>Youth Business Enterprise</b>                                    |             | 1           | 1            |
| Youth group   | 5           | 9           | 14           |
| Youth Theatre group   | 2           |             | 2            |
| Youth network   | 1           | 2           | 3            |
| Youth Volunteer Movement Registered as Guarantee                    | 1           |             | 1            |

Similarly, there was a wide variety of responses when applicants were asked to describe the level of their work (local, state/province, national, interna-

tional); applicants showed quite a diversity in the levels on which they focus their work, as the table below indicates.

**TABLE 3: Level of Work of Eligible Applicants**

| Level                                  | 2011 | 2012 | Total |
|--|------|------|-------|
| International                          | 10   | 4    | 14    |
| National                               | 152  | 132  | 284   |
| Int'l, National                        | 6    | 3    | 9     |
| State/Province                         | 109  | 59   | 168   |
| State/Province, Int'l                  |      | 1    | 1     |
| Nat'l, State/Province                  | 4    | 3    | 7     |
| State/Province, Nat'l, Int'l           |      | 1    | 1     |
| Local                                  | 231  | 199  | 430   |
| Local, Int'l                           | 3    | 3    | 6     |
| Local, Nat'l                           | 24   | 20   | 44    |
| Local, Nat'l, Int'l                    | 7    | 5    | 12    |
| Local, State/Province                  | 72   | 62   | 134   |
| Local, State/Province, National        | 101  | 69   | 170   |
| Local, State/Province, International   | 2    | 0    | 2     |
| Local, State/Province, National, Int'l | 35   | 30   | 65    |

In terms of the population of the city or town where the project was to take place, eligible applications were split fairly evenly among towns of 10,000

to 100,000; 100,000 to 1 million; and 1 million to 10 million. Very few were expected to take place in cities of more than 10 million.

**TABLE 4: Population of Project Location**

| Pop of city where project will take place | 2011 | 2012 | Total     |
|---|------|------|-----------|
| 10-100,000                                | 229  | 186  | 415 (31%) |
| >100,000 – 1 million                      | 257  | 216  | 473 (35%) |
| >1 million – 10 million                   | 233  | 163  | 396 (29%) |
| >10 million                               | 37   | 26   | 63 (5%)   |

Applicants were also asked to describe the estimated numbers, ages, and gender of the young people who were targeted to benefit from their proposed project. In a high proportion of the applicants, the

target groups were younger and had higher percentages of women or girls. The majority of programs planned to reach between 10 and 99 youth through the project. See the tables below.

**TABLE 5: Number of young people (15-32) who will benefit directly**

| Number of Young People who will Benefit Directly (according to applicants) | Number of Applicants Who Gave this Response | Percentage (of a total of 1347 applicants) |
|--|---|--|
| 1-9  | 167   | 12%  |
| 10-99  | 830   | 62%  |
| 100-999  | 350   | 26%  |
| 1000 or more   | 0   | 0%   |

**TABLE 6: Majority of beneficiaries belong to which age group**

| Age Group of Beneficiaries | Number of Applicants Who Gave this Response | Percentage (of a total of 1347 applicants) |
|----------------------------|---|--|
| 15-18 years                | 563   | 42%  |
| 19-24 years                | 562   | 42%  |
| 25-32 years                | 214   | 16%  |

**TABLE 7: Percentage of direct beneficiaries that are young women or girls**

| Percent of Beneficiaries that are Young Women/Girls | Number of Applicants Who Gave this Response | Percentage (of a total of 1347 applicants) |
|---|---|--|
| 0-25%   | 26  | 2%   |
| 26-50%  | 500   | 37%  |
| 51-75%  | 663   | 49%  |
| 76-100%   | 158   | 12%  |

One of the areas of focus for UN-Habitat's work is in supporting the creation of opportunities for livelihood development among young people. While job creation was not a requirement of the grant, it was one possible target area. Applicants, therefore, were asked to describe the number of jobs they ex-

pected to be created for youth aged 15-32 years as a direct result of the project. Answers ranged greatly: among 2011 applicants, answers ranged from 1 to 5000; among 2012 applicants, answers ranged from 1-35,000.

The averages were 128 for 2011 and 233 for 2012, with a median response of 40 and 50, respectively. The breakdown of responses is below.<sup>4</sup>

**TABLE 8: Job creation as target area**

|   | 2011   | 2012   | Total |
|---|--------|--|-------|
| NA  | 33     | 9  | 42    |
| # of applicants who said no jobs would be created             | 60     | 33   | 93    |
| # of applicants who entered an estimate of jobs to be created | 663    | 549  | 1212  |
| Range of the estimated number of jobs                         | 1-5000 | 1-35,000   |       |
| Average of the estimated number of jobs                       | 128    | 233<br>Note: when high outlier is eliminated, average drops to 173 |       |
| Median of the estimated number of jobs                        | 40     | 50   |       |
| Mode of the estimated number of jobs                          | 100    | 100  |       |

## Applicant Areas of Focus

As part of the application process, applicants were asked to answer a number of qualitative questions about their project goals and areas of focus, as well as the specific ways that their project and/or organization involved young people in its governance and management (remember that this was a requirement for eligibility). An analysis was conducted of the eligible applications to understand better what kinds of work they focused on, and the variety of ways in which youth were leading those efforts.

Among the areas of focus, several themes emerged. One of the most common themes was livelihood development, often in conjunction with another area of focus. Some applicants were directly working to help youth access jobs (including vocational

or entrepreneurship training with a job placement component); others linked their work to job skills in general, poverty reduction, or improved economic conditions for certain groups, but may not have explicitly discussed creating jobs. Many of these focused on “employability” rather than “employment.” Still, the economic environment and the need to expand opportunities for work was a common focus.



### Example 1:

“This project is targeting highly disadvantaged young women aged 18-30 living in the misery of slum life and elite school leavers, train them in entrepreneurship and ICT for month , then help them register and set up their business , provide micro loans of USD1000 per participant, supported by ongoing advisory services.”



<sup>4</sup> A note about how the responses were tabulated: For those who entered NA (meaning that they did not include job creation in their plan), the response was changed to 0. For those that entered “more than...” or “at least...”, the number entered was used (i.e., the response, “at least 100”, became 100). For those that entered a range (e.g., 50-100), the midpoint was used (e.g., 75). In a few cases, there were nonsensical answers (i.e., dates, or words without numbers, or percentages of youth reached, but without target number of youth); in these cases, “NA” was entered to exclude them from statistical analysis.

“

**Example 2:**

“Our project aims to secure the orphanage children with hopeful and sustainable future. We will provide them with basic and advanced computer skills which will help them to work while studying, thus providing them with the means to pay their expenses. We will also teach them how to market their acquired basic and advanced computer skills using an electronic portfolio. For their overall development we plan to organize interesting group meetings on gender issues, communication skills, and resume writing.”

”

Livelihood projects are often connected to other social issues; most commonly, poverty and slum conditions. They are also frequently connected to specific groups who may have difficulty finding work because of the personal or social challenges they are facing: for example, youth with drug problems, women who have had unequal access to work opportunities and/or economic resources, girls who have been sex workers, those who are dealing with HIV/AIDS, or those with physical disabilities.

“

**Example 3:**

“Our focus is a on the school drop-out and homeless female youth as a result of poverty. This category of people needs urgent attention to engage them on something meaningful that would give them economic power to minimize prostitution, early marriage human trafficking, victims of HIV/AIDS and violence against women in Nigeria. The vocational training development program will help to keep the drop-out and homeless female youth out of the street and stay out of the street.”

”

“

**Example 4:**

“The long-term goal of the project is to empower orphans and vulnerable youth with employability skills to enable them become self-dependent, reduce their vulnerability to HIV infection and engagement into social evils.”

”

A second common theme was governance, and many groups discussed their work in terms of accessing political processes, and building capacity of youth to get involved in policy or advocacy. Others described their work in ways that were more loosely connected to policy or advocacy, for example, training youth to be change agents but without an explicit connection to, or involvement in, political structures.

“

**Example 1:**

“This initiative seeks to foster effective urban governance by promoting youth participation in urban governance through establishment of legal frameworks to allow for participation of youth in municipal, district/local council’s election by repealing the Presidential and Local Councils Elections Act.”

”

“

**Example 2:**

“Based on the need analyses conducted by the government of Georgia and international organizations, young IDPs represent one of the most disadvantaged groups living in Georgia. Young people from IDP communities face social, economical, educational, health and unemployment problems. Therefore the main goal is to empower young people from IDP communities to take an active role and influence local youth policy-making in overcoming challenges, which they face on a daily basis, and in long term perspective”.

”

Among applicants, other popular areas of focus (sometimes described in conjunction with either livelihood or governance efforts) included: improving the environment; improving citizens’ health; leadership development among youth; community development (focused on infrastructure, sanitation, housing, and other living conditions); and gender issues and/or the empowerment of women and girls.

Many of the issues described by applicants had multiple areas of focus (as some of the examples given above illustrate).



**Example 3:**

“The project aims to support youth inclusion in town and to foster democratic reforms and youth civic engagement. The project will build the capacities of urban youth, as well as schools. Via an inclusive approach, young women and men will gain competencies necessary for their pro-active involvement in social and decision-making processes. Volunteerism will be promoted and practiced as a tool for achieving local development goals, particularly those identified by youth.”



## The Role of Youth in Applicant Organizations

Among applicant organizations, the role of youth was both defined in both informal and formal terms. For example, in cases where an organization was youth-founded, it may have evolved into a completely youth-led organization, simply by the circumstances of those who were attracted to or recruited by the organization. In other words, being youth-led “just happens”.

One common model was the organization being youth-led, with special “adult” advisory councils, to give advice as needed, or to provide specialized information or expertise (financial, medical, etc.). In some cases, there was an explicit intent to show respect for and involve tribal elders or other community leaders; often this was described as a way of increasing the organization’s effectiveness.

There was a range of other models described for how youth’s leadership roles were determined. Some of these models included the following:

- There may be target goals for a certain percent-

age of youth in governance and/or management roles;

- The organizational constitution may define who is eligible for certain roles according to age criteria;
- Youth of different ages may have differently prescribed roles (for example, certain roles for teens, and different roles for those 20-30 years old).

In a few (rare) cases, quotas had been established and the role of youth in leadership had been defined by organizational policy. For example, in one organization, policy dictates that one of the top two leadership positions must be held by a young person, and that 75% of the board must be youth. In this case, adult’s roles were clearly defined as partners, rather than supervisors or mentors.

Throughout these different models, applicants described a range of strategies for ensuring that youth played an authentic role in the organization’s governance and in program decision-making. In a few cases, organizations set not only youth quotas, but also specific quotas for female youth or for youth with disabilities (depending on the mission or purpose of the organization). These strategies for youth decision-making included:

- Quotas for youth in leadership roles;
- Organizational policies focused on youth representation and/or youth decision-making;
- Consensus decision making (so all voices are heard);
- Membership restrictions (for example, members must be a university student or of a certain age);
- Using youth to recruit other youth into leadership roles; and
- Clear restrictions on the roles of adults.

In order to meet the eligibility requirements for

the grant application, youth had to play significant roles in organizational decision-making and governance. However, the range of these roles varied greatly. They included:

#### Programming Roles:

- Program leadership (implementing programs, conducting trainings, leading activities);
- Defining programs and projects;
- Youth volunteers who run the program or organization;
- Youth founders;
- Evaluation;
- Training new volunteers;
- Developing and implementing projects.

#### Management and Governance Roles:

- Management of the organization;
- Serving on decision-making boards (governance, advisory), either in partnership with adults, or on their own;
- Development of organizational policies;
- Day-to-day functioning;
- Financial management and/or fundraising;
- Performance evaluations for staff or volunteers;

#### Networking, Visibility (External Relations) Roles:

- Public relations;
- Contracting with external auditors, evaluators, or other specialized services;
- Supervising volunteers;
- Recruitment of new members or volunteers;
- Serving as spokespersons for the organization or for the issue that the organization is working on; and
- Lobbying government officials.

A further analysis of these youth roles and the strategies for ensuring that the organization was youth-led revealed two distinct paradigms for thinking about the role of youth. In one paradigm, organizations tended to focus on the risks and challenges faced by youth. In response, they developed programs and projects to help youth face those challenges and constructively mediate the risks they faced.



“We train youth 15 to 22 years old to provide a better direction in life and to promote a code of conduct that will eradicate the drug problem, lack of schooling, crime, violence, alcohol, theft and prostitution in the region. The goal is to make these young people discover the life out of their neighborhoods and inspire to bring new life to their lives and their futures. The goal is to help youth develop leadership skills.”



In a second paradigm, the organizations focused more on the potential of youth to be change agents. They addressed the risks and social issues faced by youth through the empowerment and engagement of young people (who would then, according to this model, make the needed changes themselves).



“[We] strengthen youth participation and influence by training nearly 100 young leaders in human rights, organizational practices, networking, and active participation in planning and management of local development as a step on the long road so they can make a difference in public life in the city and [make] effective improvement of living conditions in their community.”



The reasons for engaging youth in development, and for creating or ensuring these leadership roles of youth, varied, from the practical to the philosophical:

- From a practical standpoint, youth engagement meant better decision making about youth issues and/or youth programs; it also meant that by providing these leadership opportunities for youth now, they could learn skills that would positively impact them for the rest of their lives.
- From a philosophical standpoint, issues impacting youth require the representation of youth (that is, it isn't right to develop programs for youth without youth voice and input); additionally, for many, inclusion of youth was a simple matter of social justice.

Some of these perspectives are shared below:

*The youth can bring a different perspective and a fresh approach. Involving youth into the decision making process is a fundamental way of gaining legitimacy. Opening up space to the civil society in this manner is bound to bring in fresh perspectives, technical expertise and ground support. By channeling youth voices, we can increase the sense of responsibility and civic duties. This will also increase accountability and set precedents for public participation and engagement. (Nepal)*

*The organization is composed of youths aged between 21 and 34. By recognizing their own realities, identifying themselves to their community and believing in alternatives, [they] will help transform their surroundings; through a dialogue process in which young people are the central subjects in local development, these young people show the example and their actions will have multiplier effect on socio-political policy. (Columbia)*

*One of the main goals of the organization is to bring about a generational change. As such, it is of great importance to the partners that youth lead the governance and management processes in order to ensure the future sustainability of the organization. Currently it is young people who have formulated, implemented and managed projects, and who are currently responsible for steering the organization. (Columbia)*

*The project has been identified created and will be managed and implemented by young people aged 15-32 years. These are youth leaving in very precarious conditions; crowded houses and lack basic services. The involvement of the youth in the project design and its subsequent implementation shall give them valuable skills such as project management and teamwork, thus increasing their employability and participation in urban development activities. (Cameroon)*



## SECTION 2: ANALYSIS ON THE FUNDED APPLICATIONS

### Part I: Who are the funded organizations?

As stated earlier, we learned through the survey of youth-led initiatives that there are many strengths and assets that young people bring to these initiatives, and that they experience many successes against sometimes great odds. However, the success of these initiatives could be greatly enhanced through additional support. And financial support, according to the survey respondents, is only one type of institutional support needed to create the conditions for success of youth-led initiatives. Other supports, like staffing, space, and training were equally important.

The organizational context, as the intermediary between external funding and the work on the ground, is an important factor in the level of success (and the types of successes) that these organizations experience. Thus, this analysis of the granted applications for focused on the organizational structures, assets, partnerships, and other facets of organizational functioning, in order to continue developing a deeper understanding of what these youth-led organizations do, what they need most, where they are strong or weak, and where strategic support (whether financial or some other type of support) might create new levels of success. *What are the most important inputs to these organizations to help create enabling environments for their work?*

This section provides a portrait of the organizations that received grants in 2011-2012 period, and

a deeper inquiry into the structures, processes, assets and needs that they present through targeted questions on the application form. It is important to note that these grantees were selected based on assessments of their applications, according to pre-established criteria. At the outset, the criteria that were deemed to indicate the best chances of success included the following:

- A clear and logical program design;
- A realistic budget;
- An understanding of the risks and plans to address them;
- The use of innovative approaches;
- Plans for sustainability;
- The involvement of partners, including the government; and
- Sufficient organizational capacity to implement the proposed project.

Thus, the analysis of grantees that follows is a deeper analysis of organizations that were doing important work in their communities, and whose applications indicated better chances of success. Further, it is the first phase of a process that will more clearly identify what these features of “successful” youth-led initiatives are, and then test those assumptions through a later analysis of their mid-term and final project evaluations (to be conducted in 2013 and 2014).

## Type of Organizations

The grantee organizations came from three regions (Africa; Asia, Pacific, and Oceania; and Latin America), with Africa having the highest representation:

**TABLE 9: Region of Grantees**

| Region                          | Number of Grantees |
|---------------------------------|--------------------|
| Africa                          | 34 (49%)           |
| Asia, Pacific, and Oceania      | 20 (29%)           |
| Latin America and the Caribbean | 16 (23%)           |

For a list of the grantees' countries, see *Appendix 2*.

Among grantees, most were classified as Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO's). See Table 10, below:

**TABLE 10: Type of Organization**

| Type  | 2011 |
|---|------|
| Non-governmental organization (NGO)   | 51   |
| CBO   | 16   |
| Entrepreneurship Company  | 1    |
| Network   | 1    |
| <b>Association à but non lucrative/</b> nonprofit organization or corporation | 1    |

Although there was less diversity of organization type, there was still a wide range of levels (local, state, national, or international) on which these organizations worked, from local only, to work on multiple levels (for example, state and national). See Table 11 for the complete breakdown of levels of work among the grantee organizations. Most of the organizations (83%) were already registered on some level with the government, with 17% in process or not registered (instead using a facilitating organization).

The size of town where the project was to take place was fairly evenly distributed among size ranges (with the exception of cities of more than 10 million, for which a very small number of projects were planned). To qualify for the grant, organizations needed to be working in towns or cities with a population of at least 10,000 inhabitants or more.

**TABLE 11: Level of Organization's Work**

| Level                  | 2011 |
|------------------------|------|
| International          | 2    |
| National               | 14   |
| State/Province         | 10   |
| Local                  | 18   |
| National, Int'l        | 1    |
| State/Province, Nat'l  | 15   |
| Local, State/Province  | 6    |
| Local, Nat'l           | 3    |
| Local, National, Int'l | 1    |

**TABLE 12: Population of Project Location**

| Pop of town where project will take place | 2011 | Percent |
|---|------|---------|
| 10-100,000                                | 26   | (37%)   |
| >100,000 – 1 million                      | 23   | (33%)   |
| >1 million – 10 million                   | 18   | (26%)   |
| >10 million                               | 3    | (4%)    |

As previously described, all applicants were asked to describe the estimated numbers, ages, and gender of the young people who were targeted to benefit from their proposed project. Among grantees, as

in the overall applicant pool, a high proportion of the projects involved younger participants and had higher percentages of women or girls. See the tables below.

**TABLE 13: Number of young people (15-32) who will benefit directly**

| Number of Young People who will Benefit Directly (according to applicants) | Number of Applicants Who Gave this Response | Percentage (of a total of 1347 applicants) |
|--|---|--|
| 1-9  | 9   | 13%  |
| 10-99  | 48  | 69%  |
| 100-999  | 13  | 19%  |
| 1000 or more   | 0   | 0%   |

**TABLE 14: Majority of beneficiaries belong to which age group**

| Age Group of Beneficiaries | Number of Applicants Who Gave this Response | Percentage (of a total of 1347 applicants) |
|----------------------------|---|--|
| 15-18 years                | 43  | 61%  |
| 19-24 years                | 18  | 26%  |
| 25-32 years                | 7   | 10%  |
| No Answer                  | 2   | 3%   |

**TABLE 15 : Percentage of direct beneficiaries that are young women or girls**

| Percent of Beneficiaries that are Young Women/Girls | Number of Applicants Who Gave this Response | Percentage (of a total of 1347 applicants) |
|---|---|--|
| 0-25%   | 0   | 0%   |
| 26-50%  | 24  | 34%  |
| 51-75%  | 36  | 51%  |
| 76-100%   | 10  | 14%  |

Among these projects, 56 out of 70 (80%) grantees had a job creation component of their project. On average, grantees expected to create approximately 63 new jobs (responses ranged from 1-750, with a median number of new jobs of 25).

## Part II: Analysis of the Funded Organizations

In this section, we examine in greater detail the organizations that were selected to receive funding through UN-Habitat's Youth Fund 2011. In particular, this analysis focuses less on what the organizations do, or intend to do, and more on how they operate. Based on earlier research (see "The Challenge and Promise of Youth-Led Development", available from UN-Habitat), we saw that organizations served as the intermediary between a group of passionate, involved, skilled youth and the cultural and contextual realities of managing an ongoing project or organization. While *content* was strong (that is, what

these initiatives do, and how they conceptualize and approach a broad range of social issues), often *process* was weak (that is, how they operate, what resources they have available, how they manage the ongoing operations). This analysis was undertaken to better understand where the organizational supports are in place, and where they are not, and to explore the types of institutional supports that might have the greatest positive impact on the outcomes of their important (and often ambitious) projects.

Specifically, this analysis focuses on five main aspects of organizational functioning:

- Organizational capacity;
- Partnerships;
- Program risks;
- Plans for sustainability; and
- Additional financing.

Analysis was conducted through both quantitative measures and through a qualitative analysis and coding of open-text responses. Each question was analyzed individually, and then later an analysis across questions was conducted to test emerging patterns and themes. Through the analysis, we found some cross-cutting issues and opportunities, which will be discussed below.

### Organizational Capacity

Applicants were asked to discuss several aspects of organizational capacity, and describe the capacities or abilities that enabled their organization to successfully implement the proposed project. Specifically, they were asked to comment on their ability to coordinate staff and volunteers, manage and account for money, evaluate and report on the project. Not only did this give us information about the particular project, it also gave us insight into the larger structural assets and challenges within the organizations. Analysis of the qualitative responses to this question revealed several themes.

First, the most frequent factor used to illustrate organizational capacity related to the **people** involved. These descriptions of people-focused capacity related to the experience, dedication, or skills and knowledge of the key people involved in implementing the project. The contributions of project staff or board members were most frequently highlighted. Additionally, grantees described the specific experience of the organization and its people related to the issue being addressed and/or related to experience in implementing programs similar to that of their project proposal.

Second, related to this idea of the people being the greatest strength, grantees shared the variety and strength of **partnerships** that the organization had built, either with this specific project in mind, or over the course of many projects. Partnerships included partner organizations, the public or private

sector, and members of the community (including volunteers with the organization).

Third, grantees frequently presented aspects of their **organizational procedures** as evidence of organizational capacity, including the existence of a variety of organizational processes or standard operating procedures. These related to financial processes, decision-making processes, program implementation processes, among others. Financial audits were frequently mentioned as evidence of solid financial management practices.

Interestingly (and importantly), **monitoring and evaluation** (M&E) was less frequently included in the descriptions of organizational capacity, with only 15 of the 70 applicants/grantees (21%) presenting M&E as part of their strategy for strengthening the success of the project. In addition, of those 15 grantees, nearly half (7) described the M&E as “planned” (but not yet implemented), or they indicated that they would be partnering with another organization for help in developing or implementing an M&E process. Thus, only 11% of the grantees—that is, those whose program proposals were deemed the strongest—had experience in, or a plan for, conducting evaluation of their projects. Ongoing program monitoring and evaluation was not frequently built into program design, even though it was a requirement of the grant application. This indicates an area of weakness among organizations, one that will be revisited in the conclusion to this chapter.

### Organizational or Program Partnerships

Applicants were asked to describe how they planned to involve a range of potential partners, including local government, private enterprise, or non-governmental organizations (NGO’s), and how those partners would add value to their project. The table below summarizes the types of partners grantees intended to involve.

**TABLE 16: Types of Partner Organizations**

| Type of Partner Organization        | Number of Grantees (out of 70) who Planned to Involve this Type of Partner |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| Government                          | 52 (74%)   |
| Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) | 38 (54%)   |
| Private Sector                      | 30 (43%)   |
| Multiple types listed               | 45 (64%)   |
| No Response                         | 4 (6%)   |

While applicants were evaluated on the quality of their partnerships, they were not expected to have developed any single type of partnership. Thus, the fact that these grantees had well-developed partnerships was a given, since this was part of the selection criteria; however, the types and combinations of partnerships, and the role that these partnerships played, was quite variable.

As the results show, government involvement was a key factor for approximately three-fourths of the grantees. Additionally, among those who listed multiple types of partnerships, almost all included some government entity in their plans. These partnerships with government covered a wide range of entities, such as the ministry of education or youth; some type of regulatory agency; the police; elected officials; or others. While the earlier question about organizational capacity suggested that all kinds of partnerships were an important strategy for success, answers to this question highlighted the role of various government partnerships in particular.

Why are these partnerships so important? When describing how these partnerships would add value to their project, several themes emerged:

- **Expertise:** Through partnerships, grantees expected to increase the level of expertise available to the projects or project participants (for example, through trainings, advice, or consulting

from partners, or through the partner's ability to help the grantee access particular kinds of information).

- **Support:** Partners could help provide financial or material support (one frequent example of material support was space to run programs).
- **Project Implementation:** In a number of cases, grantees suggested that partners would be closely involved in the actual implementation of the program, through things like program design, assistance with monitoring, or by linking two groups involved with the same target audience.
- **Increased Awareness:** Grantees suggested that partnerships would influence public policy; increase visibility for the project and/or the focus issue; provide advocacy for certain marginalized groups; and create opportunities for information sharing.
- **People:** These partnerships were often seen as a way of increasing the numbers of staff, volunteers, or program participants involved in the project.

Many grantees listed one or more of these themes regarding the value added through partnerships. The table below summarizes the numbers of grantees who presented each type of value that they felt would be added to their project through their partnerships:

TABLE 17: Value Added through Partnerships

| Type of Value Added through Partnerships | Number of Grantees (out of 70) Who Suggested this Value |
|--|---|
| Expertise                                | 38 (54%)  |
| Support                                  | 32 (46%)  |
| Project Implementation                   | 29 (41%)  |
| Increased Awareness                      | 27 (39%)  |
| People                                   | 15 (21%)  |

Interestingly, while the question asked applicants to address how these partners would add value to their project, many grantees also described how their project would, in some way, add value to the partner's work or interest, even though they were not specifically asked this question. Twenty-five applicants (36%) described some kind of benefit for the partner because of the partner's participation in the project. Most often, this benefit had to do with a sense of shared program goals (that is, another organization or group that was working with the same population—girls, for example—on the same issue—entrepreneurship, for example). In some cases, the benefit to the partner had to do with the learning and experience that would come out of the project, and that could add value to the work of that partner (for example, learning about agricultural techniques). In a few cases, the benefit to partners was more abstract or philosophical: for example, supporting youth to be involved in community development would benefit partners and the community in general by contributing to a more socially just society.

### Program Risks

Applicants were asked to think about and describe the different kinds of problems or risks that might cause the project to be less successful than they'd envisioned. As part of the question, they were also asked to share their plans for overcoming those risks.

**Risks.** The 70 grantees identified approximately 220 risks, an average of just over 3 risks per grantee. They also identified approximately 150 specific plans for overcoming the risks, an average of 2 plans per grantee. However, seventeen grantees (24%) did not list any plans for addressing the risks, even though most of these had foreseen and described specific risks to their project. Four grantees (6%) either did not answer the question, or suggested that there were no risks. These numbers suggest that the organizations have a fairly realistic sense of the challenges they face in accomplishing their work, and yet a significant number were not able to envision any plans for addressing those risks.

Among the grantees that were able to envision specific risks to their projects, a wide range of risks were described, both internal and external to the organization. Seventy percent of the applicants (49 organizations) specified internal risks; a comparable number (45 organizations, or 64%) specified external risks.

Internal risks—those having to do with structures, processes, or issues under the control of the organization—most often related to one of the following five themes:

- Program design (for example, training that might be too long or too short, or not having enough follow up opportunities for participants)

- Staffing numbers or qualifications (for example, not enough staff or staff who lack the needed skills or experience)
- Recruitment and retention of program participants (for example, not being able to attract their target audience, or having youth lose interest in the program)
- Resources (not having enough funding, space, or other types of material resources, or not being able to maintain project equipment)
- Safety (for example, working in areas with high levels of violence, or concerns about the project being targeted by opposition groups)

Applicants also described a wide range of risks that were external to the organization—contexts or conditions that were outside of the organization's control—which were commonly linked to one of the six themes below:

- Cultural/historical traditions (for example, public misunderstanding of youth, traditional beliefs about women's roles, or religious beliefs that conflicted with the program's work)
- Political instability or corruption (for example, changes in government, war, or challenges dealing with government bureaucracy)
- Economic climate (for example, inflation, poverty, or an unfavorable business environment)
- Environmental conditions (for example, drought or weather concerns)
- Infrastructure issues (for example, poor roads, inadequate facilities, or lack of power)
- Community resistance to the project (for example, not seeing the value in youth-led initiatives, or unwillingness to participate in assessment processes)



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Among the more common risks described—one that could be characterized as both internal and external—applicants shared their concerns about the groups they intended to reach, the specific challenges that those groups faced, and the enormity of the task ahead of them. Doing entrepreneurship with group members that had low (or no) literacy or numeracy skills created a number of obstacles in program design or delivery. Conducting educational programs for girls in communities where girls' education was not valued meant greater difficulty in both recruitment and retention. Developing peace-building work with groups that were literally at war with each other created safety concerns for participants and staff alike. Grantees evidenced a high level of understanding (and realistic expectations) of the challenges and inherent difficulties of their intended projects.

Grantees' Plans for Addressing the Risks. In the question about risks, grantees were also asked to describe their plans for addressing those risks. These responses were considerably weaker than the responses about the risks themselves. In many cases, the plans to address the risks were simplistic, and not reflec-

tive of the same kind of thought and care that had gone into the program design or the analysis of risk. For example, in response to the risk of not having enough funds to implement the project, several applicants suggested that they would simply go get additional funding to address the problem. (In contrast, a few grantees had thought through multiple strategies to deal with the same challenge: creative “in kind” resources they could seek; development of partnerships with other organizations; or a variety of self-financing schemes to address any shortfall).

Additionally, nearly one-fifth of applicants (19%, or 13 applicants) described risks, but failed to articulate any plans at all for addressing those risks. It is difficult to say with any degree of certainty whether this was a result of misreading the question, or whether it truly reflected an inability to conceptualize a plan for addressing or preventing the risk. Because it was an application for funding, however, it might be assumed that questions were read with a high level of attention to detail, and it is possible that some of the risks the grantees identified were “too big” to address in a plan (for example, drought or war).

However, among those who did present specific plans for addressing risks, one predominant theme in the plans presented by grantees was the theme of partnerships. In response to a wide range of risks, grantees suggested that their best tool for proactively preventing risks was the inclusion of a range of stakeholders, including possible partner organizations, collaborators in different sectors (the private sector or media, for example), tribal elders, parents or other family members. In some cases, the partnerships extended to those who might oppose or create difficulties for the project (for example, government or rival groups), with the idea that involving the potential opposition from the start might prevent that opposition from working against the group.

In response to risks related to program design or implementation, grantees shared a wide range of strategies they had developed (some of which they had used successfully in other programs). These strategies could provide the grantees with short-term “course corrections” where they could identify and address problems as they arose in the program’s life cycle. For example, applicants suggested they might: change the type or frequency of meetings; involve peers in program implementation; change the language of program delivery; or find new ways to follow up with program participants to keep them involved. Many of these programmatic strategies—as contrasted with the simplistic or even nonexistent structural strategies—were well thought out and held great potential for resolving the anticipated challenges.

### Project Sustainability

Applicants were asked to give a description of how the project would continue to operate when the Urban Youth Fund grant was completed, with a focus on alternative sources of funding. Most grantees (60 out of 70, or 86%) did provide information about alternative sources of funding, with approximately 140 specific sources listed (or an average of 2 sources per grantee).

What was interesting was that many of the grantees also described resources related to human or material resources, even though they were not asked to describe these types of resources. Forty-two out of 70 grantees (60%) listed some type of human resources, and 10 out of 70 (14%) listed specific material resources that they would be able to utilize after the grant funds ended.

When grantees shared the kinds of human resources they would be able to draw on to sustain the work and results of their program, many talked about the trickle effect of their program or program design: they envisioned that the participants in the program would go on to train or mentor additional groups, or in some cases, volunteer in running the organization or program. Another theme was the increased skill and experience of the staff and volunteers leading the program, and their anticipated increase in ability to lead additional projects after completion of the grant-funded project.

In terms of material supports, many of the grantees described how they would be able to continue using the equipment or supplies that would be purchased as part of the grant, and the reduction in costs as a result of already having the start up costs taken care of. Plans for the care and maintenance of this equipment were not typically addressed, but it was clear that for applicants, the initial outlay of equipment costs was the bigger concern, and they expected to be able to use those supplies for many years to come.

The sources of financial support varied, both among and even within organizations. The most common source of ongoing financial support was a variety of self-financing plans, most frequently including the sale of products; revolving loans or micro-credit; and fees for services. A second type of financial support was anticipated through seeking financial support (especially grants) from the government, foundations, or other donors. Some grantees expected that the successful completion of their project would facilitate additional funding, through increased visibility, positive outcomes, or increased community support (and ownership) for the project. These additional sources of funding were described in more detail in a different question, and are explored below.

## Additional Financing

Applicants were asked to share information about whether they expected to receive any additional funding for the projects and if so, to document the donors and amounts. Among the grantees, the group was split down the middle among those who expected (or hoped) to receive additional support and those who didn't. Thirty-eight grantees (54%) had either already received, expected to receive, or hoped to receive additional financial support; about one-fourth of these shared that they were seeking additional support, but did not provide any information about the type, source, or amount of that support. Thirty-two grantees (46%) did not expect to receive support, and in most cases, were not seeking support beyond that of the Youth Fund grant. A small portion of those indicated that while they were not seeking support, they would do additional fundraising later if it was deemed necessary for the program's success.

Among the 38 grantees that said they were seeking or had received additional support for their proposed project, three principal types of financial support were described: grants or gifts; in-kind donations; and self-financing strategies. Twenty-three grantees (61% of these 38 grantees) said they were looking to find other grants or gifts, including those from foundations, corporations, government, or individual donations from community members or "benefactors." Eleven grantees (29% of the 38 grantees) said they were seeking in-kind donations, with land and space being the most common types of in-kind donations sought. Staff time was also mentioned as an in-kind donation. Ten grantees (26% of the 38 grantees) described a range of self-financing plans that they intended to implement right away to support project implementation (as described above, many more planned to implement self-financing strategies after the Youth Fund grant ended, as a strategy for sustainability).



## SECTION 3: **A YOUTH-LED SNAPSHOT: AN ANALYSIS OF URBAN YOUTH FUND BENEFICIARIES**

The questions about funding—from both questions—suggest that for many of these applicant organizations, a small (but significant) grant can launch a project from the ground up. The initial start up funding is critical, and these organizations envision creative ways to leverage the funds effectively, beyond the duration of the project. Using start up funding to equip their group means reduced costs for future projects; using funds to provide training means increased capacity (skills/knowledge) to reach additional audiences. The ripple effects of these projects are not only envisioned, but intentionally created.

### **Basis for the analysis**

In this section we seek to give a snapshot of what is happening in regards to youth-led development and agencies through presenting the self-reported data from the 1<sup>st</sup> call of the Urban Youth Fund. The recipients of the Fund are required to undertake a mid-term and final report in which they have to respond to a range of questions testing the success and challenges of their program. The report questions test against the goals, objectives and activities which each group prepares and submits with their application.

All the project leaders from the granted projects go through an intensive training in project management, financial management, and monitoring and evaluation skills before they start the project.

In these training sessions, we bring all the project leaders from one region together for this training. This capacity building is both positive for the youth groups as this answers partially to the needs described in earlier, and for the Youth Fund since this increased the quality in the monitoring and the participatory evaluation reports they send in.

The projects that inform the analysis in this section are from the first tranche of Youth Fund projects, so there is no comparison to similar type of funding mechanism. Still, it was projected that 70% and above would be an adequate number of successful projects for the first tranche. Yet another question is, what is a successful youth-led project in this context? Throughout this section we try to answer that question, but one tentative approach has been to assess the projects according to their plans and their accomplishments.

Originally, 67 projects were selected to receive funding in the first call for application that took place late 2009. This meant that the youth groups did not start their projects before mid-2010 due to the processes of screening applicants and transferring the funds. Of the 67 projects, four did not receive any funding as they were not able to provide the necessary documentation in order to receive the money, leaving 63 youth-led projects for the first tranche to be included in this analysis.

In the initial analysis of the funded projects two distinct features emerged from the data; most projects analyzed had both a social and an economic side. This formulation follows traditional social entrepreneurship frameworks developed by practitioners such as Mohammed Yunus.

Over half of the projects analyzed were involved delivering training to youth in areas ranging from specific skill training to more general entrepreneurship training. These projects sought to train youth both in “hard” skills which relate to a specific job i.e. ICT and vocational skills, which could gain them employment in specific sectors, combined with “soft” skills such as interpersonal skills, teamwork, and what is termed more broadly as “empowerment”. We have found that it is the soft skills that are most often referenced by the youth as equally important to the vocational skills. They often state and demonstrate that the sense of belonging to a group, and being seen, through the affiliation with that group, as undertaking positive actions within their communities as something that is of great benefit to them in their daily lives.

“

“We are now making very good money. I have even managed to buy a small plot to build my own small house”, stated Jeremiah. “Life has greatly changed for us ... the skills training gave us a new beginning in life.”

”

A good example of the intersection of the social and entrepreneurial is the Community Youth Empowerment project based in Lusaka, Zambia. CYE provides training in vocational skills such as carpentry and combines this with business and entrepreneurship training. Jeremiah Chirwa and Michael Chisanga were able to join a group of 20 youth and

be trained by CYE in basic carpentry skills. After completing their training, both young men found that they couldn't find enough work doing just one-off small carpentry jobs, so they joined forces and started their own company to take advantage of the booming construction industry in Zambia.

Jeremish and Michael are now not only doing roofing, but plan as well to start their own skills training programme for other youth living in vulnerable communities.

What the CYE programme demonstrates is how youth can gain vocational skills from which they can use to make a living, but it is the networks that they plug into of those who are of like mind that can substantively make their lives better. They also gain a sense of community which gives them the knowledge and desire to give back to that community.

Another example of the focus on social entrepreneurship is the Fisherwomen Livelihood Project (FALP) in the coastal slums of Karachi, Pakistan. The fisher community in this area have been impacted by the destruction of the coral reefs which have caused a major decline in fishing. This project seeks to empower local fisherwomen economically and socially by improving their lives and giving them the ability to generate income. In an example of intergenerational capacity building, the FALP has engaged older women in training the younger women in traditional embroidery skills.

“

“I know I am no longer a young girl,” state Harja, 32, a mother of 4, “but I was a young girl once and have wanted to do so much in life but never got the opportunity to do it. That's what I want for the girls now, to provide them with what I could not have. I would do anything that can help make their lives better”.

”

FALP has established an Embroidery and Literacy centre through which community members such as Harja can train these young women, while as well provide them with access to loans for small businesses.



“When was it we last heard that women income generating programs are starting? If there is one now, it going to bring a lot of change, and I want to be part of that change”, states Harja.



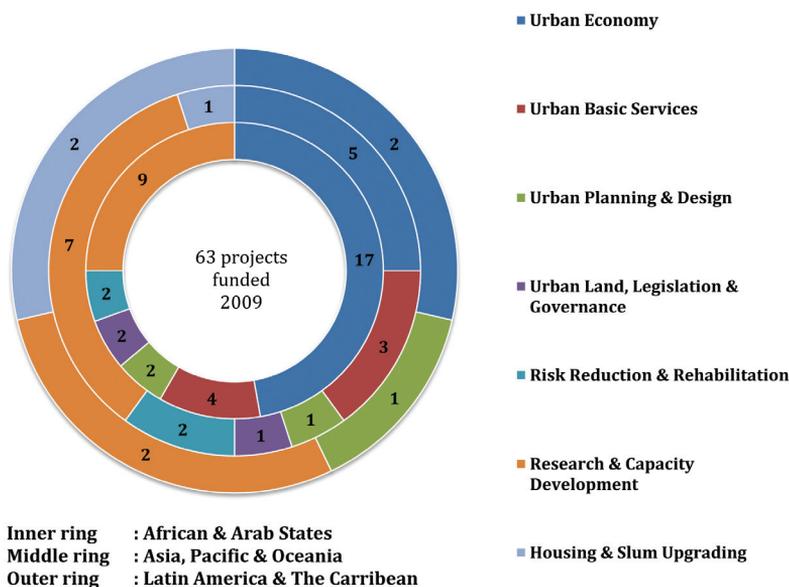
The is project again demonstrates that skill training is important, but combined with the building of social capital and networks such as between the young and the old in these fisher communities, assure that the projects have greater success.

The success of these youth fund projects can be measured in many ways; both through the more qualitative research which demonstrates the links between the building of economic and social capital, through to the more quantitative data that can be gathered on the direct outputs of the youth fund projects. The following section explores success as determined by the ability of the groups to effectively and efficiently plan and implement their projects.

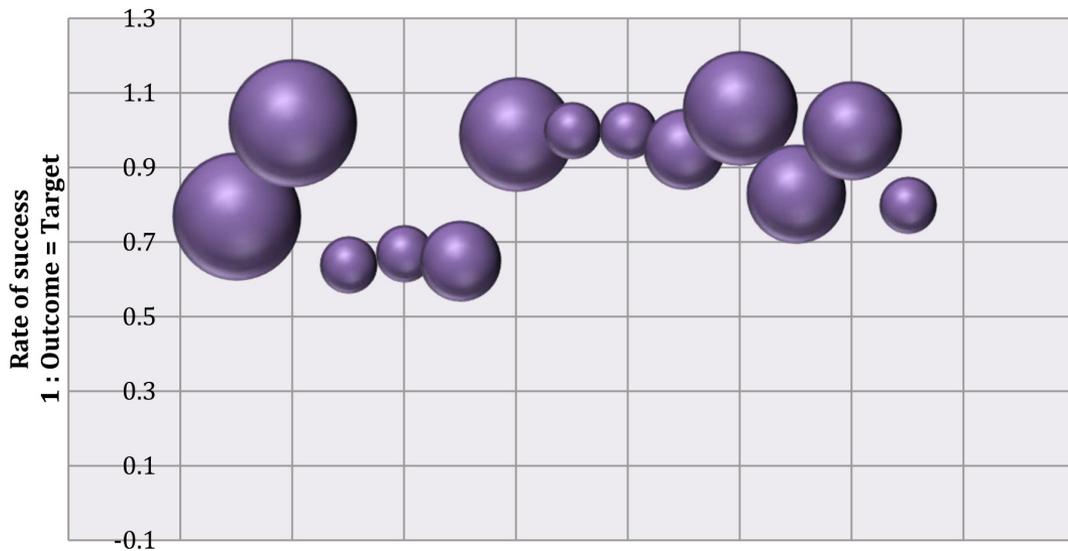
### Thematic focus of the projects

As shown in Figure 2 below, 63 projects where funded and the thematic focus in the respective regions varies between the seven thematic focus areas of UN-Habitat. The lion share of projects has some kind of livelihood component, whereas the next largest group of projects has their core focus on capacity development. The lines between the different thematic areas are sometimes a bit blurry, and as shown in “The Promise and Challenge of Youth-Led Development” report, youth-led project are rarely focused in solely one area.

FIGURE 2: Distribution of projects by thematic focus



**FIGURE 3: Level of accomplishment of projects**



What is very visible from the diagram above is there is strong representation from African and Arab states have towards urban economy and job creation projects. With the high percentage of youth in urban areas in the region, this is no surprise but yet highly visible throughout the data material.

In the initial analysis of the funded projects two distinct features emerged from the data; most projects analyzed had both a social and an economic side. This formulation follows traditional social entrepreneurship frameworks developed by practitioners such as Mohammed Yunnus.

Over half of the projects analyzed were involved delivering training to youth in areas ranging from specific skill training to more general entrepreneurship training. These projects sought to train youth both in hardskills which could gain them gainful employment, but as well gave youth interpersonal skills, literacy and numeracy, and

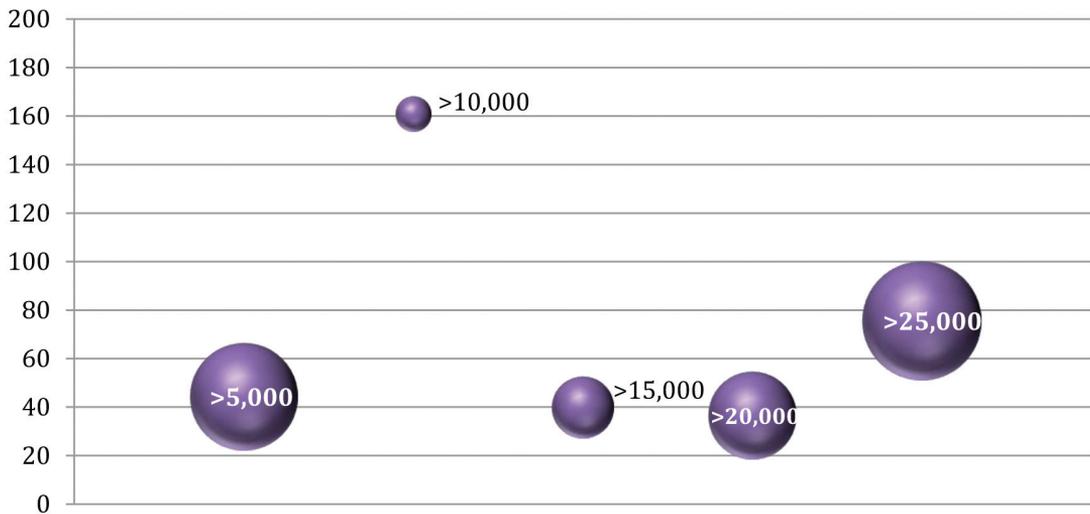
In analyzing the data we felt that it would be important to analyze the efficiency of the training

### Level of success

One key question we felt needed to be asked is how successful these groups were in delivering their project as planned. One often cited claim is that one cannot give money to youth-led groups to deliver training as they don't have the capacity to plan or stick to the plan or budget. The preliminary data from the Urban Youth Fund shows that this claim needs to be rethought. Taking into account the caveat about making statistical claims derived from this small data set, we still find some interesting preliminary results.

In figure 3 above, the Y-axis is the Rate / Level of success where 1 = Outcome meets target (number of people expected to be trained have effectively been trained). So, in a case where a given project has said

FIGURE 4: Average cost of people trained



it will train 100 people, and the project actually delivers training to 100 people, the project will score 1. Further, the bubbles are graduated according to the number of projects funded in each grant size. The smallest bubble is 1 and the largest is 5. The X-axis is the amount of money which has been granted, starting from \$ 4,000 USD up to \$ 25,000 USD. (Grant size is per 1000, i.e. from \$4,000 - \$4,999).

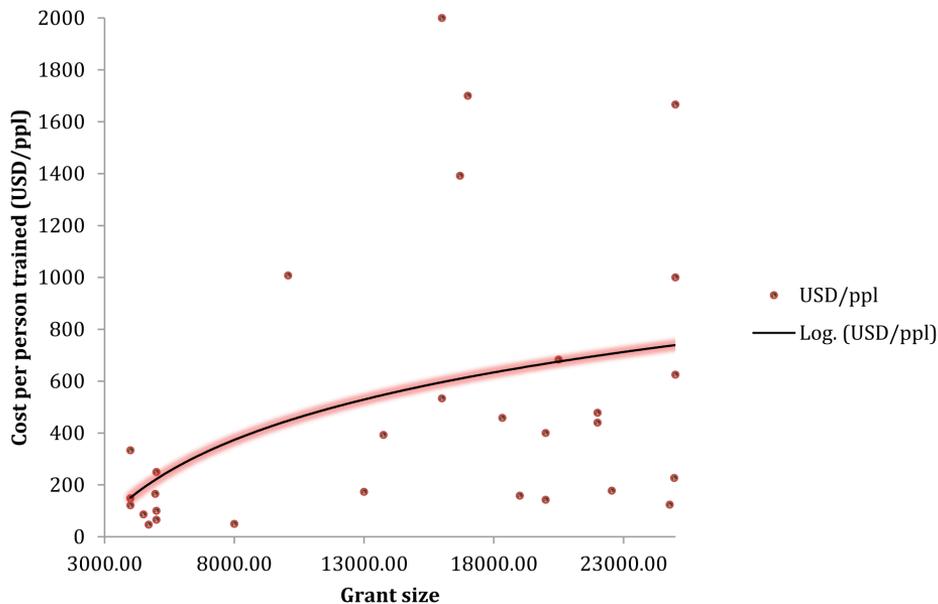
What the data indicates here is that there is no significant difference between projects given small grants and projects given large grants in respect to the level of success, as measured in this report. In terms of achieving the stated goals in the project document, small grant receivers and large grant receiver have an equal rate of success.

## Efficiency

The figure below shows the average number of people the projects have trained when we cluster all projects in the interval USD 0-5,000; 5,001-10,000; 10,001-15,000; 15,001-20,000; and 20,001-25,000. As we can see, except for the one project that trained 161 people and received 8,000 USD, the other clusters average 40 people trained, while the average for the group of projects from \$20,000 – \$25,000 USD were 76.

Bearing in mind the rather big difference in funding, these numbers are indicating a trend of negative efficiency; meaning as the project grant increases, the cost per participant as well increases.

**FIGURE 5: Cost efficiency of training**



The trend indicated by the average number of people trained in the different interval of funding, is also present when we look at the USD per person trained together with the grant size. In the trend diagram below, we have a proxy indicator showing cost efficiency where the X axis is showing the grant size, while the Y axis is showing the cost per person trained (grant size/number of people trained).

In the application process for the first call for applications, youth groups could apply for either small grant up to 5,000USD or large grant, up to 25,000USD. The logarithmic trendline in the diagram is showing the relation between the cost per person trained and the actual grant size of the project. Even though the tendency in the data is not unambiguous, this proxy indicator is giving an indication of an efficiency-loss as the grant size increases, just as the previous diagrams.

What we see when the grant size increases from around 5,000USD per project to 13,000USD and upward, is two things. First, the internal coherence of cost per person we see in the small grant projects cluster disappear. While the small grant projects have an average cost per person trained of 146 USD, the large grants (from 8,000USD upwards) have an average cost per person trained of 658 USD. So, the small grant projects have more internal coherence in terms of costs than internally among the large grant projects.

Second, and perhaps more interesting, is the indication in the data that we see an efficiency-loss as defined by cost per person trained. This is a rather clear indication in the data, but the data set is of course too small to make any strong conclusions. Still, the trendline above is telling a story of decreasing efficiency with an increase in grant. With an increase in grant size (X axis) we see also an increase in the cost per person trained (Y axis).

It is important to recognize that this proxy indicator is very crude, and what has not been analyzed here is such as the types of training received and the input cost into that training. For example, some of the larger projects have costs for the purchase of computers, in the case of ICT, or plastic shredders, in the case of recycling projects. Though this increases the cost of the project, and thus the per person training cost, it also can lead to longer term sustainability as the machines can be used beyond the life of the Urban Youth Fund project itself.

It could also be argued; say in the case of ICT based projects, that the input cost into buying infrastructure is necessary for the best outputs. Yet, we do not have any clear indication in the data to say that the small grant projects have delivered a lower quality training either. This important point will be re-visited when we have a larger data set to analyze as more tranches of projects reports on their finished projects.

The data for the first tranche of projects analyzed here gives us a snapshot of what is happening, and poses more questions for research when looking at other more recent completed projects as they become available. With the insights from “The Promise and Challenge of Youth-Led Development” report and the analysis from the first section in this report based on the 2011 and 2012 application data, we can draw hypothesis which will be tested against the increasing dataset of completed projects.

This analysis should also be read together with the third report in the Global Youth-Led Development series where we find case studies of 15 youth fund granted projects. That report shows a more in-depth picture of a few granted projects, while we have tried to show some more general trends and results in the analysis in this report.



## SECTION 4: CONCLUSION

As part of a larger, engaged research initiative of UN-Habitat, this study sought to develop a better understanding of how youth-led organizations and initiatives operate, and the strengths, assets and capacities they bring to youth-led development. It also sought to identify the areas where these youth-led organizations need more support, financial and otherwise, and to uncover potential leverage points where outside funding or other types of support (training, space, equipment, technical assistance, etc.) could make the most difference.

What this research has shown is a tremendous clarity and understanding about the issues facing youth and communities among youth-led organizations and initiatives. This understanding is fueled by a passion for the work, coupled with a willingness to address these issues in all their complexity, rather than over-simplifying or isolating issues from their cultural, historical, or socio-economic contexts. Programs tend to be complex but well designed and well thought out. The analysis in section three, also showed that even though programs tend to be complex the youth groups, in general, deliver as promised. Both small grants and large grant funded projects have generally a high level of success, as measured by delivering the planned activities.

Within these organizations and projects, youth are playing significant leadership, management and governance roles. Having youth in leadership roles was a requirement of the grant, so the fact that

young people were leading these initiatives was not surprising. What was enlightening, however, was the tremendous range of roles that youth play (from programming to policy to marketing and more), and the variety of ways that organizations create and ensure these roles for youth (from formal policy to “it just happens”). Also revealing were the range of benefits that organizations shared regarding this youth leadership. For some, the benefits were practical (skills building for youth; better organizational decisions; training for the future); for others, the benefits were more philosophical or abstract (inclusion of marginalized voices; building a more socially just community). Regardless, not only the grantees, but the larger pool of applicants, showed that youth-led initiatives make sense, for both the program integrity and for the larger social benefits.

What this research also showed was that, while program content is typically strong and well conceptualized, and while youth are often playing instrumental roles in the implementation of these programs, the organizations are often lacking in some aspect of structure or operations. Many of these organizations would benefit from small investments of capacity building focused on one or more aspects of organizational structure or operations: financial management; strategic and operational planning; visibility; or working with public and private partners.

In addition, monitoring and evaluation was one specific area in which many organizations need assistance in capacity building. While outside funding requires accountability of program outputs and outcomes (and rightfully so), many of these organizations or initiatives did not have the in-house experience or expertise to develop and implement an M&E plan. It is not uncommon for these organizations to start from scratch with each new project; learning to integrate M&E would not only help them with their program design and implementation by learning from their own experiences, but would also help them tell their success stories more effectively, thereby strengthening their capacity to successfully seek new funding, and to build new partnerships.

It is also important to mention here that the data that informed this part of the analysis was collected before the groups started their project. What has not been captured here is the benefit of the training these organisations received after they were selected but before they started their project. All the project leaders received training in the skills identified above, i.e. project management, financial management, monitoring and evaluation. One can see some indication from the analysis in section three that there is a positive return on investment in the training part of the Youth Fund's operations as most projects deliver on schedule.

This research also revealed that the greatest strength of these organizations or initiatives is the people within them, and the people they are able to network and partner with.

The human resources (i.e., the people) within these organizations are the resources that are often in the greatest abundance, and are the resources that are valued and utilized most. People within the organization bring passion, knowledge and skills (often including some personal experience with the issue), and programming experience. People outside

of the organization become part of a larger network of community members focused on the issue or particular population, and bring new ideas or experience or different kinds of resources. These networks and partnerships provide multiple benefits to the organization, to the program participants, and as we learned, often to the partners as well. There is more to be learned about how these networks develop, how (or under what conditions) they are sustained, and what causes them to break down. As we learn how better to support this kind of partnership and network development, the reach of the program grows, and the impact of the programs—and a donor's return on investment—increases. Supporting networks, in addition to supporting organizations, might turn out to be a strategy that allows greater reach and visibility for the important work of youth-led development.

The analysis of the first tranche of projects gave us some important clues about further research as well. One key finding was that the general level of efficiency in terms of delivering the planned project is overall very high for the youth groups that get funding from the Youth Fund. As we saw, there was no significant difference between the receivers of small and large grants. One could expect that receivers of large grant have a more developed structure than the receivers of small grant but this does not show in the data. The second observation from the data was the indication of a decreasing efficiency as the grant size increases. Still, this has to be seen in conjunction with the type of training, i.e. infrastructure costs, but it gives a clear guidance to further research on efficiency in terms of cost of training.

These conclusions are, of course, tentative and exploratory, as they are based on a relatively small subset of applicant organizations. However, the themes and trends that revealed by this analysis suggest that there are key aspects of organizational functioning that deserve more attention and, likely, more (and

perhaps different kinds of) support. There are also strengths and assets within these organizations and initiatives that could perhaps be amplified with small investments of training, material or financial support. As we continue to study the actual outcomes of grantee organizations in more depth, we will be able to track some of the structural and procedural assets identified here, and the impact of those structures on program success. This, we hope, will tell us more about the most important types (and amounts) of support for youth-led development initiatives, and will inform future efforts to support the important work of young people in community.

“

“Investing in a youth project here and there probably does not contribute much to sustainable development. However, by systemizing the learning from many small projects you build knowledge structures that are built indispensable for developing pro-youth macroeconomic policies and strategies to be acted upon. Youth implies action”

***Erik Berg, Senior Advisor, Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Norway)***

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## APPENDIX I: 2011 AND 2012 ELIGIBLE APPLICATIONS BY REGION AND COUNTRY

| Region        | Countries                        | 2011 Applications | 2012 Applications | Total Applications |
|---------------|----------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Africa</b> |                                  |                   |                   |                    |
|               | Algeria                          | 1                 |                   | 1                  |
|               | Angola                           |                   | 1                 | 1                  |
|               | Benin                            | 10                | 6                 | 16                 |
|               | Burkina Faso                     | 5                 | 4                 | 9                  |
|               | Burundi                          | 1                 | 5                 | 6                  |
|               | Cameroon                         | 24                | 17                | 41                 |
|               | Cape Verde                       |                   | 1                 | 1                  |
|               | Chad                             |                   | 2                 | 2                  |
|               | Congo                            | 1                 | 1                 | 2                  |
|               | Cote d'Ivoire                    | 1                 | 1                 | 2                  |
|               | Democratic Republic of the Congo | 4                 | 8                 | 12                 |
|               | Egypt                            | 3                 | 3                 | 3                  |
|               | Ethiopia                         | 10                | 6                 | 16                 |
|               | Gambia                           | 2                 | 2                 | 2                  |
|               | Ghana                            | 22                | 16                | 38                 |
|               | Guinea                           | 4                 | 1                 | 5                  |
|               | Kenya                            | 83                | 93                | 176                |
|               | Lesotho                          | 1                 |                   | 1                  |
|               | Liberia                          | 2                 | 4                 | 6                  |
|               | Madagascar                       |                   | 3                 | 3                  |
|               | Malawi                           | 13                | 9                 | 22                 |

| Region                               | Countries                   | 2011 Applications | 2012 Applications | Total Applications |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Africa</b>                        |                             |                   |                   |                    |
|                                      | Mali                        | 1                 | 1                 | 2                  |
|                                      | Mauritania                  |                   | 2                 | 2                  |
|                                      | Mauritius                   |                   | 3                 | 3                  |
|                                      | Morocco                     | 2                 | 1                 | 3                  |
|                                      | Mozambique                  |                   | 2                 | 2                  |
|                                      | Namibia                     |                   | 1                 | 1                  |
|                                      | Nigeria                     | 35                | 23                | 58                 |
|                                      | Rwanda                      | 3                 | 7                 | 10                 |
|                                      | Senegal                     | 3                 | 2                 | 5                  |
|                                      | Sierra Leone                | 4                 | 4                 | 8                  |
|                                      | Somalia                     | 11                | 5                 | 16                 |
|                                      | South Africa                | 8                 | 11                | 19                 |
|                                      | South Sudan                 |                   | 2                 | 2                  |
|                                      | Sudan                       | 3                 |                   | 3                  |
|                                      | Togo                        | 7                 | 7                 | 14                 |
|                                      | Uganda                      | 52                | 49                | 101                |
|                                      | United Republic of Tanzania | 78                | 45                | 123                |
|                                      | Zambia                      | 6                 | 5                 | 11                 |
|                                      | Zimbabwe                    | 18                | 13                | 31                 |
| <b>Asia, the Pacific and Oceania</b> |                             |                   |                   |                    |
|                                      | Afghanistan                 |                   | 1                 | 1                  |
|                                      | Armenia                     | 2                 | 1                 | 3                  |
|                                      | Azerbaijan                  | 4                 | 4                 | 8                  |
|                                      | Bangladesh                  | 7                 | 12                | 19                 |
|                                      | Bhutan                      |                   | 1                 | 1                  |
|                                      | Cambodia                    | 2                 |                   | 2                  |
|                                      | China                       | 2                 | 1                 | 3                  |
|                                      | Fiji                        | 1                 | 1                 | 2                  |

| Region                                 | Countries                      | 2011 Applications | 2012 Applications | Total Applications |
|--|--------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Asia, the Pacific and Oceania</b>   |                                |                   |                   |                    |
|  | Georgia                        | 2                 | 3                 | 5                  |
|  | India                          | 120               | 48                | 168                |
|  | Indonesia                      | 12                | 7                 | 19                 |
|  | Iraq                           | 1                 | 1                 | 2                  |
|  | Jordan                         | 1                 | 2                 | 3                  |
|  | Kazakhstan                     |                   | 1                 | 1                  |
|  | Kyrgyzstan                     | 9                 | 4                 | 13                 |
|  | Malaysia                       | 1                 |                   | 1                  |
|  | Mongolia                       | 1                 | 3                 | 4                  |
|  | Myanmar                        |                   | 1                 | 1                  |
|  | Nepal                          | 21                | 7                 | 28                 |
|  | Occupied Palestinian Territory | 8                 | 4                 | 12                 |
|  | Pakistan                       | 48                | 38                | 86                 |
|  | Philippines                    | 17                | 2                 | 19                 |
|  | Samoa                          |                   | 1                 | 1                  |
|  | Sri Lanka                      | 5                 | 2                 | 7                  |
|  | Tajikistan                     | 1                 | 1                 | 2                  |
|  | Thailand                       | 1                 | 1                 | 2                  |
|  | Viet Nam                       | 2                 | 3                 | 5                  |
|  | Yemen                          | 1                 | 1                 | 2                  |
| <b>Latin America and the Caribbean</b> |                                |                   |                   |                    |
|  | Argentina                      | 9                 | 5                 | 14                 |
|  | Bolivia                        | 5                 | 2                 | 7                  |
|  | Brazil                         | 11                | 8                 | 19                 |
|  | Chile                          | 1                 | 1                 | 2                  |
|  | Colombia                       | 18                | 16                | 34                 |
|  | Costa Rica                     | 1                 | 2                 | 3                  |
|  | Dominican Republic             |                   | 1                 | 1                  |

| Region                                 | Countries             | 2011 Applications | 2012 Applications | Total Applications |
|--|-----------------------|-------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Latin America and the Caribbean</b> |                       |                   |                   |                    |
|  | Ecuador               | 7                 | 4                 | 11                 |
|  | El Salvador           | 2                 |                   | 2                  |
|  | Guatemala             | 1                 |                   | 1                  |
|  | Haiti                 | 1                 | 5                 | 6                  |
|  | Honduras              |                   | 1                 | 1                  |
|  | Jamaica               |                   | 1                 | 1                  |
|  | Mexico                | 7                 | 13                | 20                 |
|  | Nicaragua             | 2                 | 2                 | 4                  |
|  | Panama                |                   | 1                 | 1                  |
|  | Paraguay              |                   | 2                 | 2                  |
|  | Peru                  | 3                 | 7                 | 10                 |
|  | Saint Kitts and Nevis |                   | 1                 | 1                  |
|  | Uruguay               |                   | 1                 | 1                  |
|  | Venezuela             |                   | 1                 | 1                  |

## APPENDIX II: THE INCLUDED GRANTEES BY COUNTRY

| Country                          | Number |
|----------------------------------|--------|
| Argentina                        | 3      |
| Armenia                          | 2      |
| Bolivia                          | 2      |
| Brazil                           | 2      |
| Burkina Faso                     | 1      |
| Cambodia                         | 1      |
| Cameroon                         | 2      |
| China                            | 1      |
| Columbia                         | 2      |
| Democratic Republic of the Congo | 2      |
| Ecuador                          | 1      |
| El Salvador                      | 1      |
| Ethiopia                         | 1      |
| Fiji                             | 1      |
| Gambia                           | 1      |
| Ghana                            | 1      |
| India                            | 3      |
| Indonesia                        | 2      |
| Kenya                            | 2      |
| Kyrgyzstan                       | 1      |
| Liberia                          | 1      |
| Malawi                           | 1      |
| Mexico                           | 2      |
| Morocco                          | 1      |
| Nepal                            | 1      |
| Nicaragua                        | 1      |
| Nigeria                          | 1      |
| Occupied Palestinian Territory   | 1      |

| <b>Country</b>              | <b>Number</b> |
|-----------------------------|---------------|
| Pakistan                    | 3             |
| Peru                        | 2             |
| Phillippines                | 1             |
| Senegal                     | 1             |
| Sierra Leone                | 1             |
| Somalia                     | 1             |
| South Africa                | 1             |
| Sri Lanka                   | 1             |
| Sudan                       | 1             |
| Togo                        | 1             |
| Uganda                      | 5             |
| United Republic of Tanzania | 6             |
| Viet Nam                    | 1             |
| Yemen                       | 1             |
| Zambia                      | 2             |
| Zimbabwe                    | 1             |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                | <b>70</b>     |