



Evaluation Title: MIDTERM Independent Evaluation OF THE YEN/Sida PROJECT (2010-2012)

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Executive Summary

Background and Context

The Youth Employment Network is a partnership of United Nations, International Labour Organisation, and World Bank, created in 2001 as a global platform to prioritise youth employment on the development agendas and to exchange on policies and programmes to improve employment opportunities for youth. The mandate of YEN derives from the Millennium Summit Meeting at the UN in September 2000, where heads of state committed “to develop and implement strategies that give young people everywhere a real chance to find decent and productive work”.

The Network includes development agencies, governments, the private sector, youth groups and other NGOs and is managed by a permanent Secretariat hosted by ILO in Geneva. Additionally, the Secretariat has a regional office for West Africa based in Dakar, Senegal¹. The Secretariat presently comprises six staff members and is supervised by a steering committee consisting of the three senior management representatives of YEN’s core agency partners (WB, ILO and UNDESA).

In its first seven years, YEN focused on awareness rising, advocacy and capacity building for youth organisations. It laid the groundwork for increased inter-governmental recognition that youth employment is essential for reaching the Millennium Development Goals. Since 2008, partners have increasingly asking for technical guidance on how to monitor and evaluate their youth employment initiatives, leading to a revised network focus.

Present Situation of Project

At present, YEN’s key areas of focus are: policy advice; evaluation; innovation; and partnerships, implemented through the following services:

- Advising governments and other relevant stakeholders on designing, implementing and monitoring youth employment policies and programmes.
- Implementing pilot projects on youth employment and sharing lessons learned with the network.
- Facilitating cooperation among partners from the network and sharing good practices among countries.
- Sharing knowledge on youth employment issues.
- Building capacity of youth organisations as advocates and implementing agencies.
- Mobilising resources for youth employment activities.

YEN’s present deliverables include **The Lead Country Network and Benchmarking Exercise** (a 19 country network supporting data collection on youth employment for policy advice); **YEN Evaluation Clinics** (eight held since 2008 building M&E capacity in youth-serving organisations); Laboratory for Innovation and Youth Participation, also called the **Youth to Youth Fund** (currently funding seven youth-led projects in Sierra Leone and sixteen in Guinea); and the **YEN Marketplace** website (targeting youth employment practitioners and young entrepreneurs).

Sida have supported YEN since 2002, with two four-year funding phases (2002-2006; 2006-2010) followed by a third and final phase which began in April 2010 and will end in December 2012. In addition to supporting the activities of the Secretariat, this funding has been crucial in both positioning youth employment high on the development agenda and offering best practices and support to governments and youth. It has also sparked interest from public and private donors, facilitating the outreach and continuation of some activities of the Network. Other current donors include the Danish-led Africa Commission, the World Bank, UNIDO, the Jacobs Foundation, Silatech, BASF, and the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ).

¹ Although the closure of this office is presently under consideration.

Purpose, Scope and Clients of the Evaluation

The purpose of this midterm evaluation is to establish the progress that the Sida/YEN project has made in the first half of its third phase, to identify what has worked well and where there is scope for improvement, and to derive success factors and lessons learned that can be applied looking forward.

The evaluation covers the period from April 2010 to December 2011 and is limited to the Sida supported YEN project in this phase only. The primary audience for this report is the YEN Secretariat, the core partners and Sida, although the wider audience includes other donors providing support to YEN in other areas, such as DANIDA.

The evaluation focuses on activities on youth employment undertaken by a wide-range of partners that are funded by Sida/YEN, as follows:

- The **Lead Country Network** and the work under the **Benchmarking Exercise**, including review of YEN's support to three Lead Countries (Syria, Jamaica and Ghana).
- The work of YEN under the **Youth to Youth Fund** in Guinea and Sierra Leone, including the YEN West Africa Office.
- The YEN **Evaluation Clinics** from the perspective of selected participants and resource people.
- Review of the YEN **Marketplace** website focused on partners and potential users.

In addition, this evaluation also focused on YEN's resource mobilisation efforts and assessed the performance of the Secretariat itself.

Methodology of Evaluation

To effectively inform future strategy, particularly with the assessment regarding YEN's future, the evaluation team sought to be systematic and objective. To assess progress and results of the Sida/YEN project, pinpoint its strengths and identify areas for further improvement, the evaluation addressed the following criteria: relevance and strategic fit; project design; project progress; efficiency of resource use; project management; impact and sustainability.

The criteria informed the development of an analytical evaluation framework and additional questions, which guided the evaluation process. As a forward-looking evaluation, the team sought to evaluate not just the performance of the Secretariat but identify recommendations for the future of YEN.

This desk-based evaluation was conducted using the following methods:

- **Stakeholder Interviews:** 11 face to face interviews were undertaken with the YEN Secretariat and ILO Geneva staff during the initial briefing visit, followed by a total of 35 telephone/Skype interviews with YEN field staff, YEN core partners, selected direct beneficiaries and donors.
- **Document Review:** The evaluation team reviewed a total of 34 documents, these included: YEN project documents submitted and approved by Sida; deliverable-specific documents and publications; quarterly and annual reports to the YEN Steering Committee.
- **Review of Beneficiary Tracer Survey Analysis:** The team reviewed the summarised findings of the Beneficiary Tracer Survey², distributed to and completed by 420 selected beneficiaries of YEN's Lead Country Network, Youth to Youth Fund and Evaluation Clinics (28% response rate).

Without the benefit of field visits to triangulate findings, the evaluation was dependent upon the availability of key documents and access to key stakeholders who were also willing and available to take part.

² To note: the survey covered both activities and timeframes beyond the scope of this evaluation.

Main Findings and Conclusions

Relevance and Strategic Fit: YEN's primary contribution to the global crisis of youth unemployment has been towards a knowledge base on what works, and more importantly what does not. By scaling back on their original range of activities, the Secretariat has in recent years identified well-defined, tangible products which feed the knowledge base. YEN has successfully brought together relevant actors, and directly involved youth in their activities. Since the conception of the partnership in 2001, interest and investment in youth employment has increased exponentially. Due to issues of scale the Secretariat's catalytic effect on the YE agenda may have diminished. However YEN is still distinctive in combining a YE focus and practitioner-led approach and the coordinating role of the Secretariat is valued given the abundance of actors working on the issue.

Project Progress: The **Lead Country Network (LCN)** is YEN's most long-standing output, with a streamlined process and recommitment by member countries in 2009. The LCN appears to have decreased in relevance since its inception and needs to evolve in order to increase its impact. The network is somewhat stagnant and motivation wanes after events, with sporadic participation in both the Benchmarking Exercise and the meetings.

The **YEN Evaluation Clinics** have had some 300 participants from MENA and Sub-Saharan Africa regions, and receive positive feedback. The web-based tool that complements the Clinics is useful; a competitive seed funding component incentivises organisations and drives results. The Clinics product has fine-tuned its services over time and is the product that Core Partners consider most significant.

The evaluation period of April 2010 to December 2011 corresponds with the outreach, selection and initial implementation of the **Youth to Youth Fund (Y2YF)** rounds in Guinea and Sierra Leone. As early as the midterm evaluation of the Guinea Projects (July 2011), many projects were showing excellent progress and generating concrete improvements to the lives of the beneficiaries. A robust M&E system is one of the Y2YF's most celebrated achievements; however this is also linked to questions as to the feasibility of scaling up the Y2YF.

The **YEN Marketplace** represents a good effort to respond to demand³ and create a gateway between different organisations, experts and youth. With design complete, next steps will include driving traffic to the site in substantial numbers, moderating into a lively, engaging resource and trouble-shooting of inevitable teething problems. The YEN logframe gives an indicator for this output of "four new partnerships per year"⁴ but this is unlikely to be achieved within the remaining months of Sida support.

Resource Mobilisation: For a decade YEN was fortunate to secure core funding for the Secretariat from Sida, despite Sida's reservations that fixed costs should be covered by the Core Partners themselves. To date no external donor has been identified to replace Sida and a lack of donor interest has limited the progression of some products such as the LCN. In contrast a strong pool of donors has been established to support the Y2YF and the Evaluation Clinics. The Secretariat has submitted proposals or held informal talks with 21 potential donors during the evaluation period with a good success rate (one third of submissions).

Project Management: The Secretariat is commended for having shrunk alongside their funding constraints in order to devote more resources to outputs, rather than maintenance of staff costs. The performance of the manager is critical to the success of YEN; both the current and former manager – whilst offering different management styles and abilities – are considered to be of high quality. The Secretariat's shift uniting them behind four key marketable products, with an emphasis on delivering results to clients, enabling it to operate like a non-profit consultancy company. Some respondents found

³ From organisations, young entrepreneurs and other actors for access to information, funding and support.

⁴ Between donors, NGOs, private companies and youth organisations.

this a smart strategy for sustainability, enabling the Secretariat to be flexible and responsive. Others found the Secretariat's status as an autonomous 'NGO' residing within a UN agency problematic.

Partnership is central to the existence and delivery channels of YEN. Whilst Core Partner views on performance are overwhelmingly positive, there is some concern on the *relevance* of the Secretariat going forward. YEN is said to have shifted course in a way that fits well with Bank priorities, and as a grantee of its Global Partnership for Youth Employment (GPYE) it is seen as a good catalyst. ILO has perhaps the closest but most complex relationship with YEN, whilst UNDESA works less closely with the YEN Secretariat than the other partners, and describes its contribution as 'minimal'. Widening of the core tri-partite partnership could revitalise the agency partnership function of YEN.

In terms of **Sustainability** the pressing issue raised by respondents was the future of the Secretariat itself. The 2010 Sida proposal stated that the YEN Secretariat is a temporary structure that will work as long as it 1) has a mandate from its core agency partners; 2) there is demand for its services; and 3) external funding is available. There are therefore two issues to be addressed: Financial Sustainability of the YEN Secretariat and Strategic Relevance of YEN/the YEN Secretariat.

Recommendations

1. **The LCN should be strengthened, evolved or wound down – in its current form it is not fulfilling its capacity as a vibrant network and peer learning mechanism.** In the case of many countries, ownership over the Benchmarking Exercise needs to be established; an annual meeting of Lead Countries is not sufficient to fulfil a networking function. Piloting a regional spin-off of the Benchmarking Exercise could be one way forward⁵.
2. The Evaluation Clinic product is a flagship product for YEN and its partners. **The YEN Secretariat should continue to promote the Clinics, enhance the service and adapt them to regional needs.** The Secretariat could develop the Clinic methodology in regional languages or pilot a handover of the Clinic methodology to local or regional partners.
3. The YEN's Marketplace has been carefully designed and rigorously tested but **intensive maintenance and moderation by assigned staff is still needed.** Given the considerable time and resources devoted, **dedicated funding/donor support needs to be identified to secure the site's continuity.** The Secretariat should carry out analysis on their existing groupsites, to learn from what has worked well/less well to date⁶ and consider how these will be harmonised with the Marketplace.
4. **Regarding the Y2YF, nine months is considered too short a time period for implementation.** Given the quality of proposals submitted, the Y2YF might consider introduction of training on proposal writing for grant applicants as well as extending the implementation period.
5. **In the remaining project period the YEN Secretariat should continue its efforts to replace the Sida funding** through: securing replacement funds from an external source (i.e. a bi-lateral donor); obtaining buy-in from the Core Partners to cover staff costs⁷; recruiting a new Core Partner willing to fund Secretariat core costs; Winning two or more large projects with management time built in.
6. The financial survival of YEN Secretariat – a tiny team working extremely hard to deliver on existing commitments – would be enhanced by **greater engagement by the Core Partners in fundraising approaches by the Secretariat**⁸.
7. In addition to the questions of financial viability, the YEN Steering Committee will need to **evaluate the strategic relevance of the partnership and renew the YEN Secretariat mandate for a further time period**⁹. **A Retreat should be held to set the vision for the way forward from**

⁵ The Secretariat has submitted several proposals to support such an activity.

⁶ The Clinic groupsite is considered a successful resource whereas the LCN groupsite has closed due to lack of interest.

⁷ At a figure of approximately US\$500,000 per annum.

⁸ Specifically the less formal networking type approach rather than proposals submitted through formal channels.

⁹ Or request the Secretariat to embark on an exit/transition plan to wind down the partnership and/or the Secretariat.

2012 in order to refine the YEN (Secretariat's) 'theory of change' and streamline the YEN logical framework for a new project period.

8. **The niche of the YEN Secretariat is to continue to pilot, incubate and graduate YEN products with an emphasis on testing and documenting what works in youth employment.** This model – which is appropriate for the size of the Secretariat – calls for the flexible, creative promotion of activities that can be replicated by other organisations.

Best Practices

- **By scaling back on their original range of activities and becoming more market-driven since 2009, the YEN Secretariat has identified well-defined, tangible products which feed the global knowledge base on Youth Employment.** YEN is a significant example of a multi-agency partnership and in terms of value for money the YEN Secretariat is considered to be delivering excellent results.
- **YEN's Evaluation Clinics are considered an excellent product and an important contribution by YEN,** perceived to be an alliance of expertise and collaboration, where the YEN Secretariat added great value as coordinator. The model of training¹⁰, web-based follow-up (with an impressive 545 membership) and seed funding for evaluation activity is innovative. Clinics have effectively mobilised human resources through the Core Agencies¹¹, and proved attractive to external donors.
- YEN is successfully involving youth in its programming; the Y2YF and Marketplace products target young people directly. **YEN's Y2YF stimulates business ideas coming from youth to youth, empowering both youth-serving organisations and young people through contextualised projects which do not focus solely on fostering employability but on generating employment.** The Y2YF is already being used as a model of best practice, with UN-HABITAT currently implementing a global youth fund using the Y2YF programme design as a blueprint. **The Y2YF has a significant role to play for large populations of un(der)employed and frustrated young people in a dearth of youth funding¹².**
- **The Y2YF has a clear and robust project design based on a rigorous, four-step process of Outreach, Selection, Implementation and Sharing.** The selection committees of local stakeholders and the showcasing event for finalists ensure the programme is both locally owned and builds in a unique networking opportunity to showcase projects. The Fund is commended for its front-loaded capacity building for grantees.

Lessons Learnt

- **The concept of the YEN's LCN is a powerful one, however, the current engagement of the Lead Countries and interaction between them needs to be galvanised.** Activity is sporadic, there is limited ownership in many countries and the mechanisms for peer review and South-South learning need to evolve, in order to achieve LCN's full potential. Whilst secure funding would revitalise the network there is also scope to revisit, clarify and develop the activities and communication channels.
- **A lesson which has been successfully learnt by the YEN Secretariat from early Evaluation Clinics was that few participant organisations had capacity to implement an Impact Evaluation.** In order to better meet participant needs and be more results-oriented, the Clinic modality has thus evolved from a strict focus on IE, to encompassing broader, more fundamental aspects of monitoring and evaluation.
- **YEN's Y2YF projects demonstrating best results were those that met real demand, adapted to local context and had easy access** to both the raw materials and appropriate technology – those that 'added value' to certain existing processes (particular in agribusiness). **Wholly innovative projects focusing on brand new products/processes often faced more difficulties and unexpected costs.**

¹⁰ Through the Clinics YEN have developed a clear niche and implement an adult learning pedagogy, whereby 'live cases' are selected prior to the Clinic through a competitive process.

¹¹ YEN draws on World Bank and other organisations such as IPA, J-PAL, DIW, BRAC, Syria Trust for Development, Middle East Youth Initiative, Swiss Academy for Development and Nokia.

¹² Early results from Guinea indicate that 480 jobs have been created and 36 cooperatives formed, with 200 jobs estimated to be created in Sierra Leone.

- **The reliance of the Secretariat on external funds to support core costs continues as a threat to sustainability.** The Secretariat has responded well to the challenge, establishing an impressive bidding record, diverse funding streams and partnerships.

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List of Acronyms

BASF	Baden Aniline and Soda Factory
BMZ	Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development
BRAC	Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee
CGIAR	Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CIDT	Centre for International Development and Training
ComSec	Commonwealth Secretariat
DANIDA	Danish Cooperation Assistance
DGF	Development Grant Facility (World Bank)
DIW	German Institute for Economic Research
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
EC	Evaluation Clinics
FPs	Focal Points
GPYE	Global Partnership for Youth Employment
IE	Impact Evaluation
ILO	International Labour Organisation
ILO/ITC	International Labour Organisation/International Training Centre
INN	ImagineNations Network
IOC	International Olympic Committee
IPA	Innovation for Poverty Action
J-PAL	Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab
LC	Lead Country
LCN	Lead Country Network
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MP	Marketplace
MENA	Mid-east and North Africa
NAP	National Action Plans
OECD/DAC	Organisation for Economic Development/ Development Cooperation Directorate
RP s	Resource Persons
SIDA	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
TOR	Terms of Reference
TOT	Training of Trainers
UN	United Nations
UNDESA	United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UN-HABITAT	UN Agency For Human Settlements Providing Adequate Shelter For All
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
WB	The World Bank
YE	Youth Employment
YEF	Youth Employment Fund
YEN	Youth Employment Network
YENWA	Youth Employment Network West Africa
YEP	Youth Employment Programme
YLOs	Youth-Led Organisations
Y2YF	Youth to Youth Fund

1. Project Background

Achieving full, productive employment and decent work for all is a target of the first Millennium Development Goal. Of the world's estimated 211 million unemployed people (2009), nearly 40% are between 15 and 24 years of age. A further 152 million young people are employed but live in households that earn less than US\$1.25 per day¹³; millions more are trapped in casual work offering few benefits and limited prospects. The issue of youth employment has gained prominence on the global agenda, accelerated by the Arab Spring, which brought into sharp relief the real and urgent importance of youth employment and increased policy and political attention paid to the youth employment (YE) issue.

YEN was established in 2001 as "a global platform to prioritise youth employment on the development agendas and to exchange on policies and programmes to improve employment opportunities for youth."¹⁴ In this sense YEN's mandate derives from the Millennium Summit Meeting at the UN in 2000, where heads of state committed "to develop and implement strategies that give young people everywhere a real chance to find decent and productive work."¹⁵

YEN's mission today has evolved to engage, educate and motivate actors to provide improved employment opportunities for youth. It is a platform and service provider focusing on policy advice, innovative pilot projects, knowledge-sharing and brokering partnerships.

YEN's core partners are the ILO (which hosts the YEN Secretariat in its Geneva HQ and the two field offices in Dakar, Senegal and Dar es Salaam, Tanzania), UN and the World Bank, with additional donors supporting its various activities and outputs. Among these is Sida, who have supported the work of the Secretariat since 2002, most recently through a three year grant of US\$1.5 million grant for 2010-2012. Under this third and final Sida funding phase, YEN have worked towards four tangible products as follows:

The Youth to Youth Fund: This initiative aims "to provide youth led organisations with both funding and capacity building, thereby enabling them to move from being passive recipients and become active participants in the promotion and creation of youth employment."¹⁶

The Lead Country Network: A 19-country network aimed at supporting informed policy decisions on youth employment through solid data on the conditions of youth in the labour market and the initiatives undertaken to promote youth employment at national level. Lead Countries report annually on key experiences and share ideas to counteract youth unemployment.

Evaluation Clinics: An initiative to build capacity in monitoring and evaluation among organisations engaged in youth employment programmes, and help them gather and share evidence on the effectiveness of such programmes.

YEN Marketplace: An internet-based tool that targets practitioners working on youth employment and young entrepreneurs. It is expected that once operational it will "establish an online space where stakeholders can come to share knowledge, form new partnerships, and exchange ideas, resources and advice."¹⁷

2. Evaluation Background

The purpose of this midterm evaluation is to establish the progress that the Sida/YEN project has made in the first half of its third phase (due to end in December 2012), to identify what has worked well and

¹³ ILO, Global Employment Trends for Youth, August 2010.

¹⁴ YEN Proposal to Sida: Creating Employment Opportunities for Young People.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ YEN website.

¹⁷ Marketplace website.

where there is scope for improvement, and to derive success factors and lessons learned that can be applied looking forward. The Terms of Reference (TOR) can be found in Annex A.

The evaluation covers the period from April 2010 to December 2011 and is limited to the Sida supported YEN project in this phase only. The primary audience for this report is the YEN Secretariat, the core partners and Sida, although the wider audience includes other donors providing support to YEN in other areas, such as DANIDA.

The evaluation focuses on activities on youth employment undertaken by a wide-range of partners that are funded by Sida/YEN, as follows:

- The **Lead Country Network** (LCN) and the work under the **Benchmarking Exercise**, including review of the YEN's support to three Lead Countries (Syria, Jamaica and Ghana).
- The work of YEN under the **Youth to Youth Fund** (Y2YF) in Guinea and Sierra Leone, including review of the YEN West Africa Office.
- The YEN **Evaluation Clinics** from the perspective of selected participants and resource people.
- Review of the YEN **Marketplace** website focused on partners and potential users.

In addition, this evaluation also assesses the performance of the Secretariat itself, as its core operations are supported by the project¹⁸.

This evaluation was undertaken between 1st February 2012 and 30th April 2012, by a team of three consultants from the Centre for International Development and Training (CIDT), University of Wolverhampton, UK¹⁹. To 'kick off' the evaluation, an initial briefing visit to the YEN Secretariat in Geneva, Switzerland was conducted by the evaluation team leader, Ella Haruna, on February 8-9 2012. The evaluation team reported to Evaluation Manager Laura Brewer, of the Employment Sector, ILO.

2.1 Methodology

To effectively inform future strategy, particularly with the assessment regarding YEN's future, the evaluation team sought to be systematic and objective. The philosophy of the evaluation was to 'hold a mirror' up to the project in order to reflect new understandings of progress and achievement, rather than to represent an uncomfortable external 'inspection'.

To assess progress and results of the Sida/YEN project, pinpoint its strengths and identify areas for further improvement, the evaluation addressed the following criteria:

- relevance and strategic fit
- project design
- project progress
- efficiency of resource use
- project management
- impact sustainability

As a forward-looking evaluation, the team sought to evaluate not just the performance of the Secretariat but the broader value of YEN. In light of this, the report identifies recommendations for the future of YEN. These criteria informed the development of an analytical evaluation framework and additional questions, which guided the evaluation process (see Annex B).

This desk-based evaluation was conducted using the following methods, guided by the evaluation framework:

¹⁸ Other YEN projects that are not funded by Sida (e.g. the Youth to Youth Fund in East Africa, funded by DANIDA; the Youth Employment Inventory funded by the World Bank's DGF) do not fall within the scope of this evaluation.

¹⁹ Ella Haruna; Ellie Curtain and Carlos Gonzalez.

Stakeholder Interviews

Eleven face to face interviews were undertaken with the YEN Secretariat and ILO Geneva staff during the initial briefing visit, followed by a total of thirty-five telephone/Skype interviews with YEN field staff, YEN core partners, selected direct beneficiaries and donors. Initially, the team were provided with a list of key interview respondents by YEN Management. Over the course of the evaluation, this list was expanded as other respondents were identified during the interviews. A full list of interview respondents can be found in Annex C.

Document Review

The evaluation team reviewed a total of 34 documents as listed in Annex D. Broadly speaking, these included: YEN project documents submitted and approved by Sida; deliverable-specific documents and publications; quarterly and annual reports to the YEN Steering Committee.

Beneficiary Tracer Survey Analysis

The team reviewed the summarised findings of the Beneficiary Tracer Survey, distributed to and completed by selected beneficiaries of YEN's Lead Country Network, Youth to Youth Fund and Evaluation Clinics. The survey focused upon levels of satisfaction with YEN services and the impact on beneficiaries. 118 respondents completed the survey out of 420 invited to respond (a response rate of approximately 28%). Headline findings of this survey have been used to supplement the findings of the stakeholder interviews and document review, allowing for evidence-based conclusions to be drawn based on both quantitative and qualitative data where possible. However, it should be noted that the survey covers both activities and timeframes beyond the scope of this evaluation.

Evaluation norms, standards and ethics have been followed throughout the evaluation process, guided throughout by the OEDC/DAC Evaluation Ethics and Quality Standards of utility, accuracy, independence, credibility and propriety. The evaluation was subject to periodical internal review and quality assurance from within the evaluation team and senior management of CIDT, in line with the requirements of the University of Wolverhampton's Quality and Academic Standards Division, supported by regular communication with the ILO Evaluation Manager and YEN Manager.

2.2 Limitations

Without the benefit of field visits to triangulate findings, which in itself can be considered a limitation of this process, the evaluation was dependent upon the availability of key documents and access to key stakeholders who were also willing to take part. Other limitations include the following:

- The evaluation team encountered significant difficulty in reaching many of the key respondents, due to connection issues in some cases and busy work schedules in others²⁰.
- The team had particular difficulty in reaching LCN respondents; only three of the six contacted were willing and able to participate in the evaluation.
- As the Marketplace website has not been fully launched, it was not possible to carry out a comprehensive assessment of its use.
- Given that this is a mid-term evaluation of the funding phase, the team felt it would not be possible or indeed appropriate to evaluate impact at this stage.
- The narrow evaluation period has had implications for which activities can and can't be reviewed, and in some instances does not allow for a full and up to date picture of progress to be painted.

3. Relevance and Strategic Fit

3.1 Significance in the global Youth Employment challenge

YEN's primary contribution to the global crisis of youth unemployment has been towards a knowledge base on what works, and more importantly what does not. YEN considers there to be a large lack of

²⁰ There was also a communication barrier with some grantees in Guinea due to French proficiency of the evaluator.

evidence which documents successful design and implementation of youth employment policies and programmes – YEN’s strategy is to reduce this gap. By scaling back on their original range of activities, the Secretariat has in recent years identified well-defined, tangible products which feed the knowledge base. YEN has successfully brought together relevant actors, and critically has reached out to young people directly and involved youth in their activities. YEN focuses on sharing information, building partnerships, lobbying and networking on YE issues, building capacity of government and civil society and ultimately aims to enhance synergies and influence policy on YE issues. YEN’s strategy has been to design products that fill “niche” areas of youth employment where other actors are not able to work or where there is lack of action on the issue. YEN’s strategy is defined and approved by its steering committee (three senior managers in the core partner agencies of the ILO, UN and World Bank) through annual meetings and periodic strategy retreats.

3.2 Stakeholders needs

The views of stakeholders (countries, donors, partners and beneficiaries) are discussed in regard to specific YEN products in Section 5 of the report. However, in general, beneficiaries stated that YEN was fulfilling an important function and responding to a clear need.

3.3 YEN as Unique?

YEN was originally conceived in 2001. At that time there were very few, if any, initiatives focussing exclusively on the youth employment topic and YEN was a forerunner of what was considered a ‘niche’ issue. At that time, YEN was the only such programme Sida was supporting. Eleven years later, youth employment is high on development agendas and it now: “comes up on the top ten list for everyone”. This is particularly true in the light of the Arab Spring, which forced governments and agencies to invest in their own capacity to reform and act on youth employment issues.

In the early days, YEN had more catalytic value in moving the YE agenda forward, and some respondents – in particular Core Partners - argue that YEN has become almost a victim of its own success, and that the voice of the small Secretariat is liable to become drowned given the scale of the issue. However, increased interest and investment in youth employment does not necessarily translate into better outcomes for youth; there is still a strong need for actors like YEN to bring evidence on what works.

YEN is an excellent example of a multi-agency partnership that brings results. Respondents shared the view that YEN was distinctive in combining a YE focus and practitioner approach and the coordinating role of the YEN Secretariat is increasingly important given the abundance of actors working on the issue.

4. Project Design

YEN has a solid logical framework which clearly describes its four tangible outputs and gives a good understanding of the Secretariat’s terms of reference. There is a shared understanding on the project’s aim “to engage, educate and motivate actors to provide improved employment opportunities for youth”. A slight criticism is that – perhaps due to the nature of YEN’s evolution – the current outcome/purpose statement of “innovative and value added services on YE” is somewhat inward looking and vague. A succinct statement of YEN’s purpose would capture the essence of YEN’s mandate and help differentiate from ILO’s core programmes – an example could be “to bring to the forefront and generate lessons on what works in YE.” The logframe also lacks any explicit reference to YEN’s partnership function – in future phases it would be beneficial to articulate the extent of the Secretariat’s brokering and coordinating mandate between the Core Partners.

The logframe design is retrospective, in that it tries to balance the interests of all stakeholders and justify a set of activities that stakeholders have asked it to do. Despite the strong consolidation process since 2008, questions are still raised by respondents concerning YEN’s focus and functions. For example, although the value and quality of the Y2YF output is unquestioned, some Core Partners find it fits less well with YEN’s strategic and their own Agency mandates. Yet conversely, the Y2YF is the YEN output which receives the most external donor support and interest. Core partners commend the Secretariat for being opportunistic – this is considered necessary for their survival – and yet they simultaneously

note some ‘mission creep’ or dilution of YEN’s focus. It may be timely for the YEN Manager to hold a retreat to clarify YEN results as primarily strategic or linked to funding.

The lack of an explicit gender focus in the logical framework is a missed opportunity and could be considered in future logframe revision – particularly given the extensive focus on young women in some of the YEN products.

5. Project Progress

5.1 Benchmarking Exercise of Youth Employment Policies in YEN Lead Countries

The LCN output focuses on promoting a culture of results measurement amongst senior government officials in developing countries, in analysing youth labour markets and setting national benchmarks. The LCN seeks to respond to policymakers’ need for understanding labour market conditions and constraints young people are facing, to identify pockets of vulnerability and trends in key indicators. With this aim, the YEN Secretariat introduced the Benchmarking Exercise in 2009. Lead Countries (LC) were invited to renew their membership and participate in the Exercise. The commitment from the countries implies annual reporting on standardised youth employment indicators and information on youth employment policies and programmes that would contextualise the indicators. Lead Countries, in return receive training on labour market information, monitoring and evaluation, and participate in Lead Country Meetings. In the words of one of its Focal Points (a person working in a government agency), the LCN is defined as “Bringing together institutions/countries who are trying to solve the YE problem, to exchange ideas, learn from each other and learn from best practices”.

The LCN consists of 19 developing countries as shown in Figure 1 below. Within the evaluation period, LCN activity included the first Benchmarking Exercise and Report, 2010; the Fifth Lead Country Meeting in London, May 2011; and the second Benchmarking Exercise for 2011²¹.

Figure 1: Geographical spread of LCN

Sub-Saharan Africa	DRC, Ghana, Liberia, Mali, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Togo, Tanzania, Zambia
Asia & Pacific	Bangladesh, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Vanuatu
Latin America, Caribbean	Ecuador, Jamaica
MENA	Egypt, Syria, Turkey

5.1.1 Relevance and Efficiency of the LCN

The LCN is YEN’s most long-standing output, the process of which was streamlined and to which member countries recommitted in 2009. Whilst the LCN model has great potential to support youth employment policymaking, the LCN has decreased in relevance since its inception. Whilst on paper it appears to be a powerful concept, the insufficient resources to keep it alive have minimised its potential²². Both the Secretariat and YEN Focal Points in the LCs admit that the network is somewhat stagnant and that motivation wanes after events. It is described as “a YEN legacy that countries are not very committed to” and participation in both the Benchmarking Exercise and the LC meetings appear sporadic, as exemplified in the table in Annex E (a breakdown of country commitment and performance as members of the LCN).²³ In the words of one member of the Steering Committee: “As a process momentum is dead. Transforming it would require a real political push”. Accordingly, it is unfortunately considered by many respondents to be YEN’s least successful product.

²¹ The deadline for submission of the report was August 2011. Analysis and feedback occurred between September 2011 and February 2012 and therefore fall partially outside the timeframe of this evaluation.

²² The LCN received financial support from the Government of the UK between 2002 and 2008. Thereafter the YEN Secretariat has tried unsuccessfully to find a new donor. In the absence of financial support, the Secretariat has reduced the resources it dedicates to the LCN, limiting its outreach and expected efficiency.

Some respondents felt that the ‘Lead’ of the LCN is a misnomer, in that other non-member countries have a stronger performance in the youth employment field. The YEN Secretariat agree that LCs may not be leaders in this sense but rather in the sense of making a public commitment to invest in youth, and ‘lead’ in the use of a range of YE-focused indicators that are not usually reflected in national policy.

As regards to the participation of YEN’s core partners, all three agencies attended or served as facilitators in the 2011 Lead Country Meeting. The ILO brought its expertise in labour market information, whilst the World Bank shared ideas and good practices on monitoring and evaluation of programmes. In addition to their role in the meetings, the ILO has provided significant support in the design of the Benchmarking Exercise and has contributed greatly in reviewing the corresponding synthesis reports and country specific inputs. Despite the collaboration, there are calls for more active participation of the Core partners. Indeed 71% of LCN survey respondents said that ‘increased collaboration with local ILO offices would be most useful in improving YEN’s level of support’²⁴. One channel for complementarity would be to coordinate the Benchmarking Exercise with ILO target countries for the Biennium. The Steering Committee has also recently discussed the possibility of UNDESA becoming more involved in the Benchmarking Exercise through the production of country-specific reports.

Despite lacking a core donor, the LCN has attracted some limited financial support for specific activities. During the last LC Meeting the Commonwealth Secretariat (ComSec) provided funding to bring YEN Focal Points in LCs of the Commonwealth to the Fifth LC Meeting in London. The Meeting was organised to follow the ComSec’s *Investing in Youth Conference*, giving the YEN Focal Points in the LCs the opportunity to engage and influence High Commissioners of 54 Commonwealth countries. ComSec report that they have no doubts about further collaboration with YEN, valuing their technical expertise especially on benchmarking, in addition to the credibility conferred by the three core agencies.

5.1.2 Effectiveness of the LCN

The Benchmarking Exercise

The LCN output is well-defined in the logframe. Its results are measured through the number of countries reporting and LC meetings held. In addition, a valid results-oriented indicator for this output would measure the impact of the exercise on national policy – although attribution could be challenging.

Lead countries annually report on the status of eight selected youth labour market indicators and progress made in terms of policy and institutional arrangement²⁵. The reporting period is very labour-intensive for the YEN Secretariat with a lot of capacity building advice, discussion and feedback: a staff member was dedicated for two months to analyse and provide feedback on all LCN benchmarking data as it was submitted²⁶. However, the exercise relies on existing surveys, with the assumption that countries will have the data in hand – which is not always borne out in reality, for example Tanzania and Bangladesh collate fresh data only every three years. LCs indicate that the process of reporting takes about two months, however some countries like Syria have reduced reporting time by updating their indicators on a regular basis.

Evidence from the Beneficiary tracer Survey²⁷ indicates that:

²⁴ Beneficiary Tracer Survey 2012.

²⁵ The benchmarking tools include an integrated excel sheet to capture progress against indicators (quantitative) and a questionnaire on YE policies and programmes (qualitative.) These tools were launched at the 4th LC meeting in Zambia, December 2009.

²⁶ Whilst a standard template is in use, the quality of data submitted depends on access and motivation, and some data submitted is meaningless so lots of checks and balances are needed. The qualitative reporting also varies in both quality and quantity of explanation. The YEN Secretariat check the accuracy of the data by comparing to ILO data and previous LCN submissions – whilst LCN data is more subtle and detailed, the ILO-held country data gives an opportunity to triangulate the figures submitted.

²⁷ 15 respondents including 7 Focal Points.

- 67% and 75% found the benchmarking tools easy to use – the biggest difficulty faced was in finding the relevant data;
- In future, respondents would like to have more time given to complete the exercise (50%) and better explanations of the use of the tools (50%);
- Over 87% of respondents received feedback from YEN Secretariat on their country report, all rated this as ‘useful’ or ‘very useful’.

There is a lot of diversity in the quality of data reported by LCN members. Whilst the quality of data and responsiveness of countries like Syria and Turkey is high²⁸, only Tanzania reported from Sub-Saharan Africa this year – although the region accounts for over half the LCN countries. Success stories among the Lead Countries include Egypt, which has seldom published labour market information on youth but for whom the LCN created an avenue for information sharing and dissemination of such indicators that are now available to the ILO and other agencies and donors. There are other cases where a country engages in dialogue on the process but cannot assemble quality data to meet the deadline, for example Nigeria in 2011²⁹. There has not been any communication whatsoever from some LCs (e.g. Zambia since 2009) and many do not respond to requests for benchmarking reporting.

The conduit for LCN activities is nationally nominated individual Focal Points (FPs). In some countries this has led to limited ownership; it is reported that in some cases information may be generated by individuals, but not sufficiently shared within the institution. Some FPs may lack seniority, or be located in the wrong Ministry, unit or department. After the 2009 revision, sanctions detailing the implications of non-compliance were clearly laid out – countries which did not report annually would be given three opportunities to do so and then would lose their LC status. These sanctions are not currently being implemented, but if they were then it appears that half the current network would lose its status as Lead Countries³⁰.

The Network Function of the LCN

The networking function of the LCN is fulfilled mainly through the annual LCN Meeting, most recently held in London in 2011 where countries discussed results of the Benchmarking Exercise, drew conclusions for policy making and shared lessons. For example, Indonesia presented its national YEN project, Turkey its National YEP and Vanuatu its National Youth Empowerment Strategy. In retrospect, the Secretariat considered that London was a poor location choice as many participants could not get visas (only eight participated), and a lesson learnt was that it is easier to hold such events in a developing country. Of 13 LCN respondents, 46% were ‘very satisfied’ with the events organised by YEN under LCN, with the main suggestion being more sharing of best practices and increased regularity of LCN Meetings (both 69%)³¹.

YEN events, such as Evaluation Clinics are promoted to FPs, as are international conferences organised by other partners. FPs from Sri Lanka and Ghana participated in Evaluation Clinics in Turin and Kampala, respectively. However, given that the networking and sharing of learning is mostly limited to the LCN Meeting, it would seem that there is still greater potential for a peer review mechanism and South-South learning. Indeed this is confirmed by comments from one of the three LC FPs interviewed:

An annual meeting is not enough – we need to meet every quarter to action plan for YEN members. The essence of a network is to be contacting each other as often as possible, for

²⁸ As an incentive to report, the best quality submission is awarded the prize of attendance on a training course of their choice – in 2010 won by Egypt and in 2011 by Syria.

²⁹ This was an example of YEN capacity building as through a very intensive process of hand-holding, the Focal Point’s enthusiasm and confidence was increased, yet no other results were achieved.

³⁰ The YEN Secretariat concedes that whilst no country has been forced to leave the network, those countries that did not report for the Benchmarking Exercise were denied sponsorship to the Fifth LC Meeting.

³¹ Beneficiary Tracer Survey 2012.

example seminars in member countries organised by FPs. The network should be more vibrant than this.

For the LCN to continue it should be active, with regular channels of communication and interactions between members which are not conducted solely through the YEN Secretariat. The only other potential means of communication was the LCN groupsite, which since 2011 is no longer active; of the four respondents who formerly used the online LCN groupsite monthly³², three said they would like more discussion on benchmarks and benchmarking tools, and three wanted more supplementary literature on YE policies and programmes. There is potential for the Marketplace output to function as a forum to bring the FPs together.

5.1.3 The Impact and Sustainability of the LCN

In the YEN Beneficiary Tracer Survey 2012, 12 of 13 respondents rated the information provided through LCN as affecting the development of YE in their country to a great or to some extent (i.e. used in key policy documents on YE (71%), to design new YE programmes (57%) or to revise existing programmes (64%). This was in contrast to two of three LCN FPs interviewed who did not feel that conversations with policy makers on the importance of YE policy were happening systematically. In addition some core partner respondents considered the clustering of the LCN product under 'policy advice' as a misnomer.

The principle of networking at the national level is a very important part of the LCN concept – two contrasting examples of active members illustrate the challenges and successes of the LC experience in this regard:

In **Jamaica** the designated FP is an Employers Association rather than government - not only are they not statisticians but they have difficulties in accessing the relevant information from government. Moreover LCN activity is described as “stymied by HR”, and with the recent resignation of the FP, LCN institutional memory has been lost. Although Jamaica can be considered one of the more successful LCs having consistently fulfilled their reporting requirements, the FP institution requires further support to engage in national-level feedback and share information from the results of the Benchmarking Exercise in the country.

In **Syria** the FP leads a four-person team from the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour to prepare the benchmarking report. The draft report is circulated to the Syria Trust, the Syrian Association of Youth Entrepreneurs and the National Observatory for Labour Markets, who review the data and give opinions. After report submission the data is disseminated across Ministries, to the Statistics Bureau, the State Planning Commission and employment agencies and progress is followed up by the First Lady.

Whilst Syria offers an excellent example of how the process should work, other network members questioned the incentives of the data collection exercise, suggesting a lack of country ownership.

The LCN output does not currently fit the “pilot and graduate” model which YEN is pursuing with other outputs in terms of sustainability. LCs currently perceive that the YEN Secretariat capacity to support LCN activities is limited, the only information currently received is the YEN newsletter and to date there has been no communication on whether there will be a LCN programme for 2012.

There is no doubt that in 2009 YEN worked well to enhance the meaning of the network and that the concept of a group of policy makers sharing experience in this specific field is a good one. However there are calls to strengthen, change or wind down the network from evaluation respondents. As noted in the logframe, an interesting way forward would be to establish a regional spin-off of Benchmarking Exercise. Whilst the Secretariat has submitted proposals to this effect, to date the idea has not been taken up by donors.

³² YEN Beneficiary Tracer Survey 2012.

5.2 YEN Evaluation Clinics

The YEN Clinics represent a "model of technical assistance plus financial support to programmes that want to carry out an impact evaluation." The model was developed in response to the growing need for rigorous evidence in youth programmes that was demonstrated during the construction of the Youth Employment Inventory, an initiative where YEN has played a key role³³. The Clinics are of 3-4 days duration, staffed by a cadre of expert resource persons from various institutions including World Bank, JPAL and IPA. Resource persons are selectively invited to provide lectures and intense direct consultation to projects attending the Clinics.

Since 2009, YEN has organised eight clinics each with different donors, those falling within the evaluation period include:

- Nairobi 2010; Kampala 2011: Funded by Sida, DANIDA, and the Jacobs Foundation.
- Geneva 2011; Doha 2011: Funded by Sida, the Jacobs Foundation, and Silatech
- Beirut 2010: Funded by Sida and the World Bank's Development Grant Facility (DFG)
- Turin 2010: Funded by Sida and ITC

The participants (average of 60 per clinic) have varied backgrounds but most work in the youth employment or entrepreneurship communities. They include policymakers, practitioners, researchers, and donors. The Clinic model includes a competitive selection process, selection of live-case studies, a hands-on approach and interactive curriculum, and support of at least one resource person per live-case.

As part of the Clinics and to complement follow-up activities, YEN established a web-based tool: the groupsite for Impact Evaluation (IE).³⁴ This is a site that accepts members by invitation only and is designed for participants, organisations and experts to receive real time information, exchange and learn about IE, connect youth employment stakeholders and share results, conclusions and lessons learned.

Further to the Clinics some of the participating organisations receive seed funding and technical assistance to carry out IE or implement/improve monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems, typically using a selective, competitive process.

The **Taqeem Fund** is a regional 'spin-off' of the Clinic product that benefits MENA countries or organisations belonging to the 22 Arab league states. In addition to Sida, the Fund is sponsored by the Jacobs Foundation and Silatech. Its objective is "to capture the knowledge and lessons learned generated through the anticipated increased focus on youth employment/enterprise programming" by public and private stakeholders. The first call was made during 2011 and 11 organisations were selected to form a Community of Practice and receive M&E and IE assistance through the Fund.

5.2.1 The Relevance of the Evaluation Clinics

Resource Persons³⁵ and donors considered the Clinics as an excellent product and an important contribution by YEN. The product is perceived to be an important alliance of expertise and collaboration, where YEN added great value through playing the coordinating role. The Clinics provide a venue for the three core partners to collaborate. The partners have participated as facilitators or experts in all Clinics resulting in an increased knowledge base and further concentration on the issue in the UN, World Bank and ILO. The follow-up with the web based tools is seen as innovative with the potential to build networks of youth employment organisations but also to facilitate sharing of best practices, data and results. The YEN Secretariat is also thought to be targeting a niche not addressed by others that also meets unfulfilled needs.

³³ <http://www.youth-employment-inventory.org/>

³⁴ www.yenclinic.groupsite.com

³⁵ From various institutions including World Bank, JPAL and IPA.

There have been some 300 participants in the Clinics from MENA and Sub-Saharan Africa regions. Whilst the target audience is drawn from YE practitioners, the methodology of the Clinic is not tailored specifically to the YE sector, and is therefore transferable to other sectors.

During earlier Clinics there was a realisation that only a few organisations that participated had the capacity to implement an IE, which can be quite expensive and require built-in capacity from the project outset. The Clinics have thus evolved from a strict focus on IE to encompassing broader, more fundamental aspects of M&E. While IE remains a unique and important feature of the Clinics, a shift towards building M&E capacities where they do not exist is now an important and necessary component.

In its 2011 report to SIDA, YEN acknowledges that "[t]he large majority of the organisations, while recognising the importance of doing rigorous evaluation, still struggle with implementing the basic building blocks of monitoring and evaluation... with this in mind [...] YEN has opened up the thematic scope of the Evaluation Clinics and financial support to projects aiming to build or improve their monitoring system."

The Clinic product appears to be the YEN output that core partners would most like to see taken forward. For the World Bank, IE is a core strength, but YEN adds value by reaching out to a new and specific audience in YE practitioners. Most ILO stakeholders feel that the Clinics have been highly successful and even challenged ILO teams to think about evaluation with a new level of rigor.

5.2.2 Effectiveness of the Evaluation Clinics

The Capacity Building Component

In general, YEN's IE Clinics received high ratings and respondents perceive a high demand for this kind of training. Comments by survey respondents³⁶ indicated that the Clinics resonated with organisations with both greater and lesser experience in evaluation. The Clinics follow an adult learning pedagogy, whereby 'live cases' are selected prior to the Clinic (through a competitive process) and RPs lead working groups, to apply theory to the case.

For those with a better understanding and experience of the project cycle and M&E, the Clinics were a useful learning process which many believed would enable them to implement an IE in the future. For organisations with little or no experience in broader aspects of M&E, the topic of IE was considered too complex, but served to spark an interest in applying more rigorous assessment tools in their projects.

All participants rated highly the level of expertise of RPs and methodology to deliver the Clinics.³⁷ "I was impressed by the complexity of IE [...] now I know it can be more reliable than other forms of assessment" said one participant. "I did not think of IE as a scientific process, the steps to follow and the resources that need to be devoted" pointed out another respondent. One participant noted that he had brought back materials and shared them with colleagues who were now preparing to initiate M&E of their projects based on what had been learnt.

Criticisms were mostly constructive and revolved around the appropriateness of IE for participating organisations. Both participants and other stakeholders acknowledge that IE is far too complex for most organisations and that most of those who attended the courses needed to build project management capacities before they could benefit from an IE clinic. In the words of one RP: "Most were ill prepared and we had to start from basics before we could move to Impact Evaluation." Sometimes participants were more interested in learning about qualitative methods than IE since many were unfamiliar with M&E. In one Clinic only 50% of participants were said to be advanced enough to benefit from the programme.

³⁶ YEN Beneficiary Tracer Survey 2012.

³⁷ Participants from Geneva, Beirut, Turin and MENA.

One donor noted that more needs to be done when choosing participants, such as learning how mature these organisations are, what are their M&E needs and how will they benefit from the IE Clinic.

Other concerns related to lack of translation and adaptation to local conditions, and the Clinic groupsite. The lack of materials in French and Arab (predominant languages among the Taqueem Fund members) was raised, but also the lack of knowledge of local circumstances amongst clinic experts.

The Clinic groupsite

The groupsite has seen an increasing demand over the last years. Membership quickly increased to 500 people since its inception in 2010. The web-based tool that complemented the Clinics was praised³⁸ as useful and an important platform for different activities. "I keep in touch and informed with other participants through the website and the mail messages we receive. It is an important way of knowing what others are doing in our field of work." To another participant it was especially important because it offered the opportunity to seek and find financial support.

The Clinic groupsite was referred to as overwhelming, "too busy" or hard to navigate³⁹. While it does offer many things to many people, the focus could be further narrowed to prioritise users' needs. One donor also suggested that it could offer a more interactive and dynamic user interface, such as options for uploading and managing data, building IE models and actually produce results that would be available to other members. Facilitating materials in French or Arabic could also increase the benefit the site yields to its members.

The I.E. Seed Funding Component

This output includes a competitive incentive-related element said to drive results. In 2010, YEN started offering seed funding to facilitate the execution of IEs, providing financial support to three youth employment projects through a competitive call for proposals. This funding covered partial costs, specifically data collection and analysis. In 2011, under the Taqueem Fund, interested participants from the MENA region submitted applications and through a selective process were invited to attend two workshops in Geneva and Doha. Finally, eleven were selected to receive assistance of US\$40,000 in-kind services for IE and M&E throughout 2012.

The YEN logframe assesses the Clinic product not on the number of workshops or participants, but rather on the more results-oriented indicator of number of impact assessments of YE programmes that YEN helps to design or initiate. So far, seed funding and the Taqueem Fund have financed a total of seven impact evaluations from the MENA and Sub-Saharan regions (against a target of six by the end of the project period), ranging from US\$30,000-100,000, and currently sponsor six M&E systems for up to US\$40,000 (See Annex F).

Indeed the Clinic product has subtly evolved and gradually fine-tuned the services, introducing first seed funding and later the idea of complementary in-kind assistance, with the realisation that organisations needed both financial and human resources and advice.

5.2.3 Sustainability of the Evaluation Clinics

It is apparent that core partners, donors and beneficiaries appreciate the Clinics as one of the best products YEN has delivered. This product has also proved to be attractive to other donors such as Silatech and the Jacobs Foundation who backed the Taqueem Fund.

One indicator of sustainability is participation in the groupsite following the Clinic. Web-stats published on the main page show an impressive 545 members are registered, 136 files are available and 69

³⁸ A total of 11 people were interviewed regarding the clinics - 6 were registered with the groupsite, 5 were active users, and all had a positive view of the site: 'the site was useful or very useful.'

³⁹ Of five regular users interviewed, one said it could be confusing and they needed to visit several times to know the layout.

discussions are active. It is important that YEN carries out analysis, to understand what these numbers mean, and use it to seek backing from potential financial and technical partners. Another element built into the clinics to promote sustainability is the request to participating organisations to make a commitment to report on their results, share data and register on the groupsite.

An important observation, specifically by donors and YEN Secretariat is that Clinics are a public good that can be transferred and replicated regionally by local institutions, such as universities and research centres. Options for the way forward could include:

- Continuing to promote/organise/run the Clinics, and enhance the service and adapt them to regional needs.
- Transferring the Clinic methodology to local or regional partners who can in turn continue to run them.

Either of these scenarios would require close coordination by YEN Secretariat and partners to ensure the Clinics continue to respond to the growing demand for M&E and IE of youth employment policies, programmes and projects.

5.3 Laboratory for Innovation and Youth Participation, the Youth to Youth Fund

From 2003-2007, YEN housed the Youth Consultative Group (YCG), a consortium of 13 global youth employment organisations whose goal was to support youth participation in the development, implementation and review of national policy on youth employment. YEN and the YCG produced the publication “Joining Forces for Young People: A Practical Guide to Collaboration with Youth People” in 2008.

Taking the recommendations stemming from the YCG to provide pragmatic assistance to national youth employment projects, YEN introduced the Youth to Youth Fund (Y2YF) in 2008. The Fund is a competitive grant and capacity building scheme for youth-led organisations (YLO) with innovative project ideas to promote and develop employment and entrepreneurship among their peers. It addresses the goal of boosting youth participation but now, instead of focusing only on participation in the political arena, it opens up a role for youth to participate in development through the promotion and creation of youth employment. The fund was intended to be YEN’s major tool for the promotion of innovative business ideas coming *from youth to youth*, driven by the following three principles: i) to build the capacity of YLOs to enable youth to move from being passive recipients to become active participants in the promotion and creation of youth employment; ii) to facilitate the testing of new innovative ideas and approaches that enable young people to gain experience and decent employment as start-up entrepreneurs; and iii) to learn from lessons and significantly expand on approaches and innovative business ideas that work.

After a successful pilot round in the four countries of the Mano River Union which began in 2008, subsequent rounds were established in Guinea and Sierra Leone, with calls for proposals in July and December 2010 respectively⁴⁰. It is these two rounds which fall under the scope of this midterm evaluation. Some key lessons learned from the pilot and subsequently applied to Guinea and Sierra Leone include the need for a capacity building component, stronger monitoring, guidance and coaching to the YLOs from nominated Focal Points⁴¹ for the duration of the grantees’ projects.

5.3.1 Relevance and Design of the Y2YF

The Y2YF can be considered relevant to the challenge of youth employment in West Africa, particularly in post-conflict areas such as Guinea and Sierra Leone where there is little funding available for such initiatives, but a disproportionately large youth population battling with high levels of unemployment.

⁴⁰ Based on the pilot experience, the YEN Secretariat started a five year project to implement the Y2YF model in Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania, with support from the Danish-led Africa Commission.

⁴¹ Locally recruited by UNIDO to monitor a small number of projects in a given area, provide technical assistance and support to reporting and financial management. In Sierra Leone, the alternative term ‘local assistants’ was used, but focal point will be used throughout this report for the sake of consistency.

Furthermore, the approach of the initiative fits well with the needs and views articulated by local youths and YLOs themselves, when consulted by YEN on the design of the fund. Respondents highlighted the need to empower both youth-serving organisations and young people through contextualised projects/businesses which did not look to focus solely on *fostering employability* but on *generating employment*.

The Y2YF has a clearly defined four step process: Outreach (in which the call for proposals is opened and advertised); Selection (three rounds, including two selection committees and a finalists' capacity building week long programme involving a showcasing event and applicant interviews); Implementation (over nine months); and Sharing (lessons learned and successes).

Beneficiaries

Y2YF targets beneficiaries at two levels: the grant-receiving YLOs and the young people (end beneficiaries) they then employ through the projects they implement (which are handed over to the young people at the end of the implementation phase). In its first round selection criteria, YEN included 'Promoting Gender Equity' as one of six considerations (weighted at 12.5% in line with four of the other criteria) and outlined a preference for projects led by or targeting young women – although logframe targets are not gender disaggregated⁴². 14% and 19% of Project Coordinators⁴³ in Guinea and Sierra Leone are women, respectively.

In terms of young beneficiaries, YLOs select these themselves; some through consultation with communities, others through open calls for applications. The latter has seen incredibly high numbers of applicants, demonstrating the level of interest in schemes of this sort. Early results from the final evaluation in Guinea and midterm evaluation in Sierra Leone indicate that more than half are young women. Although it is not a specific objective of the Y2YF, most of the beneficiaries are considered to be disadvantaged, given the high levels of poverty and lack of opportunity in both countries.

Supporting Innovation

The Y2YF is headlined as a YEN product supporting innovation. It is intended to be a "*laboratory of ideas*", with the most heavily weighted criteria in the proposal assessment stage "projects which introduce a new approach, process, or technology... in new areas and niche markets." There are very good examples of innovation in both Guinea and Sierra Leone, nevertheless, it is important to highlight that some of the most innovative projects have faced significant challenges during implementation, particularly due to the difficulty in accessing specific equipment or bespoke technical skills – especially during the early stages (as covered by this evaluation). Projects which focused on '**adding value**' to certain existing processes (e.g. agribusinesses) and were innovative in this sense show most promise, whilst wholly innovative projects focusing on brand new products and processes often faced more difficulties and unexpected costs. Such difficulties reflect the inherent cost of innovating in developing and post-conflict economies.

5.3.2 Progress of the Y2YF

The evaluation period stated in the TORs (April 2010 to December 2011) corresponds with the outreach, selection and implementation of the Y2YF rounds in Guinea and Sierra Leone, as detailed in Figure 2 below:

⁴² In the overall YEN logframe. Country specific Y2YF logframes were only shared with the evaluation team on the morning of the draft report deadline.

⁴³ Project Coordinators are appointed by the YLO to run the project submitted to the Y2YF competition.

Figure 2: Breakdown of Y2YF in Guinea and Sierra Leone

Country	No. of proposals received ⁴⁴	No. of grants awarded	Call for Proposals	Project implementation start/end dates	Size of grant
Guinea	274	16	Aug 2010	Apr 2011 – Jan 2012	US\$5,000-US\$20,000 per grant Total: ~ US\$250,000
Sierra Leone	150	7	Dec 2010	June 2011 – Mar 2012	US\$10,000-US\$20,000 per grant Total: ~ US\$115,200

Outreach and Selection

After the pilot phase, the YEN West Africa Office recruited an additional team member to broaden outreach activities beyond mass media (among other duties). In the second round of the Fund in Guinea 274 proposals were submitted; a significant increase vis-a-vis the 30 proposal received from the country in the pilot phase. A similar process was followed in Sierra Leone, resulting in 150 proposal submissions. The Beneficiary Tracer Survey⁴⁵ indicates that applicants learnt about the Y2YF call from a variety of sources: including the internet (35.3%); print media (23.5%), word of mouth (23.5%), directly from YEN Secretariat/ILO/UNIDO through targeted emails (17.6%) and through membership of youth ‘umbrella’ organisations (17.6%).

The YEN team report that the quality of proposals received was fairly low, particularly from Guinea. YEN’s robust criteria saw nearly two thirds of Guinean proposals rejected in the first round of selection, by committees comprising local and national stakeholder representatives (including government), focusing on the criteria of viability, profitability, basic capacity and business planning.

Whilst the remaining applicants receive feedback on their proposals and the opportunity to submit further information and revised proposals (including a budget) in the second round, only finalists are invited to attend the capacity building seminar to work on their proposals in depth in the third and final round (18 in Guinea; 9 in Sierra Leone). With so few YLOs benefitting from this final round capacity building component and given the poor quality of proposals across both calls, the Y2YF in the future might look to hold open workshop style sessions, to brief potential grant applicants on the basics of proposal writing and what is expected. 75% of Survey respondents saw the feedback on their proposals in the second selection round as ‘very important’ (21.4% as ‘important’) suggesting that YLOs would welcome this opportunity.

Capacity Building

The formal training/capacity building component of the Y2YF is essentially front-loaded, taking the form of a week-long training seminar split between proposal and budget writing, project management tools (including logframes, developing indicators, M&E, financial and organisational management) and basic entrepreneurial and business skills. The programme is intensive but also intended to be interactive, and is attended by both prospective Project Coordinators as well as Focal Points. At the end of seminar, there is a showcase and awards ceremony, providing the grantees with a unique networking opportunity to showcase their projects and meet with potential suppliers, customers and donors, as well as local media.

The consensus among Project Coordinators interviewed is that this training seminar was extremely useful – indeed of the 30 Survey respondents, 80% considered it to be very important. All felt that the skills learnt could be transferred to other funding application processes and would benefit their YLO’s beyond Y2YF, although it should be noted that only the proposed Project Coordinator can attend the training so to some extent the skills and knowledge acquired rest with him/her and do not necessarily become institutionalised⁴⁶. The initial training could be opened up to enable other staff to attend. Peer

⁴⁴ This figure varies from source to source.

⁴⁵ It should be noted that of the 34 respondents to this question of the Beneficiary Tracer Survey, only 11 took part in the Y2YF in Guinea or Sierra Leone, but this disaggregation does not extend to the individual optional answers.

⁴⁶ In addition, many felt that the training seminar could have been longer, and that given for many this was a first introduction into financial management, some topics could have been revisited systematically over time (all survey respondents ranked this part of the capacity building component as ‘very important or ‘important’).

Review Meetings were also considered important to share concerns and challenges, serving as informal capacity building opportunities, but were not considered by those interviewed to be an appropriate forum for more formal training and capacity building activities.

It has also been suggested that Focal Points would benefit from additional and separate capacity building, which may focus on topics including human resource management, conflict resolution and procurement – skills required to undertake the role of supporting YLOs during implementation.

Key Findings from Implementation

As indicated in Figure 2, 16 Guinea and 7 Sierra Leone YLOs received funding. These figures reflect both the level of funding available and the lack of quality proposal reaching the final stages. The funded projects represent a range of sectors, including agriculture; crafts; water and sanitation; catering; solar energy; snail farming; palm oil production and construction. Given the period covered by this evaluation, only broader, key findings are highlighted below:

- As early as the midterm evaluation of the Guinea Projects (July 2011), **many projects were showing excellent progress** and generating concrete improvements to the lives of the beneficiaries. Whilst taking into account the later start date, the Sierra Leone projects were perhaps showing slightly less progress at this stage.
- **Delays to the disbursement of funding** in Guinea set back project implementation by one to two months. This caused knock on effects for some projects that were either seasonal or waiting to purchase equipment or machinery. In some cases, these projects had not recovered by the end of the first phase of implementation (four months; July 2011). Some, smaller delays were also experienced in Sierra Leone.
- The projects showing most success, even in the early stages, were the ones that met **real demand**, adapted to **local context** and had easy access to both the **raw materials** and **appropriate technology**. There is still scope to demonstrate significant innovation within this context.
- Some YLOs in Sierra Leone were initially slow to provide **business, technical and soft skills training** to their beneficiaries, as required by the grant. This is because of a shortage of local trainers able to conduct the work, with one trainer finally sourced and providing services to all seven YLOs. Similar delays were experienced in Guinea; in addition, the training on **Employability through Sport** component was slow to be delivered to beneficiaries.
- **Financial management** appears to have been a common difficulty faced by most projects, given that for many Coordinators (and some of the smaller YLOs) this represents their first experience of managing a significant grant with stringent reporting requirements attached.
- Beneficiaries have been **enthusiastic and committed** in both countries overall; many have moved or sacrificed informal employment to take part in the projects, spurred on by the prospect of taking over at the end of the implementation phase. However, in some cases (and given the lack of experience of most of the beneficiaries) some Project Coordinators felt that beneficiaries hadn't truly grasped at the start of the projects that they would take on full responsibility for the business after nine months, and what this would entail.
- Nine months is **too short a time period for implementation**, particularly where there are regular delays falling beyond the control of the Project Coordinator and YLO.
- The **personality, motivation and commitment** of the Project Coordinator is key to the success of the project.
- Ongoing, regular **communication** between **Focal Points** and **Project Coordinators** is also essential for the smooth running of the project.

5.3.3 Y2YF Project Management

The YEN West Africa Office (YENWA) in Dakar, Senegal was run by a team of three staff members during the height of activity in 2010/2011, with additional support provided by UNIDO staff and National

Coordinators⁴⁷ in both countries and permanent support from the YEN Manager in Geneva. The dedication and commitment of the core Y2YF team is undoubted, and recognised by all stakeholders. The quality of the staff has without question had a significant impact on the success of the Y2YF to date.

The Y2YF team have adopted a 'hands on' approach to managing the fund, regularly interacting with Project Coordinators themselves and dealing with challenges and issues at field level on a daily basis, working closely with National Coordinators and Focal Points. Where challenges have arisen (e.g. there were some miscommunications between one project in Sierra Leone and the National Coordinator) these have been dealt with quickly and in an open, participatory manner. The YENWA team have endeavoured to work closely with local and national stakeholders; both national and local government representatives have been actively involved in supporting the Fund, including the Ministries of Youth in both nations. The Secretariat has overseen Y2YF activities in West Africa and is provided with feedback on progress on a weekly basis.

The working relationship between the YEN Secretariat, Y2YF staff and UNIDO has been excellent (described by one UNIDO respondent as "exemplary"), with all parties reporting clear division of roles and responsibilities and regular, open channels of communication. There are now discussions regarding the potential to work together on a similar Y2YF fund in Togo, for which YEN has mobilised funding.

The one point of contention has been the UNIDO precarious contractual arrangements for Focal Points. This is in part an issue with the broader UN bureaucratic system, but essentially only short term contracts of three to six months have been available to Focal Points, resulting in gaps in contract renewal and in some cases a delay in wages. This has caused significant disruption during the implementation phase, interrupting M&E processes and the support provided to Project Coordinators and resulting in the loss of strong Focal Points who seek better job security elsewhere⁴⁸.

At project level, several Project Coordinators reported that their responsibilities and duties exceeded the capacity of one person – particularly for those managing additional, non-Y2YF projects⁴⁹ on behalf of their YLOs.

Monitoring and Evaluation

A robust M&E system is one of the Y2YF's most celebrated achievements, with the importance of rigorous monitoring of projects instilled into Project Coordinators from the outset. The system includes:

- Regular phone contact between Focal Points and Project Coordinators, as well as a minimum of one project site visit a month forming the basis of a monthly report submitted to National Coordinator or YEN.
- Weekly and Monthly Project reports to Focal Points, who in turn report to the National Coordinator who compiles data for YEN and produces a country brief highlighting progress and challenges.
- Bi-weekly virtual meetings/teleconferences between Focal Points and National Coordinator/YEN.
- Mid Term (between funding tranches) and Final Evaluations undertaken by YEN and National Coordinators to most if not all projects (including meeting and interviewing beneficiaries).

Ultimately the M&E system in place relies heavily upon the regional Focal Points, of which there were five in Sierra Leone (now three) and seven in Guinea (now four). Focal Points are employed on a part time basis by UNIDO, and although tasked to primarily provide support to financial management, some have also provided significant technical assistance and access to networks and contacts.

⁴⁷ National Coordinators are often hired by UNIDO in some countries. They supervise the work of Focal Points.

⁴⁸ Furthermore, UNIDO are responsible for the recruitment of Focal Points, whilst it is the YEN team that must work with the individuals selected. This has been problematic where YEN staff have felt that Focal Points were under-performing but have been powerless to move them on.

⁴⁹ With only the Project Coordinators salary covered by the grant, only the more affluent YLOs could afford to fund an assistant, although some perhaps did not take full advantage of the administration costs budget line available to them.

The flipside to this is that the capacity and availability of the Focal Point has a significant bearing on the smooth running of the project; where Focal Points are weak, projects have tended to veer off course. In one case, a Focal Point in Guinea failed to notice and/or report that an YLO implementing a highly profitable project in Guinea was deliberately misusing funds and misleading beneficiaries. The YEN Secretariat took immediate corrective measures to address the issue⁵⁰.

The extent of M&E required to keep projects on course raises significant concerns for the scalability of the Y2YF. There is also a risk that this approach may create a dependency on Focal Points and the YENWA team; after the project ends the sudden absence of regular contact and visits (and technical assistance where provided) from Focal Points may jeopardise the sustainability of the projects that will only just have been handed over to the young beneficiaries. Whilst the follow up report to the Mano River Union Pilot suggests that 75% of jobs created still existed two years after handover, those projects that have faced particular delays to funding or implementation in these recent rounds may still be at risk if neither the beneficiaries nor the business is 'ready' to be handed over.

5.3.4 Efficiency of the Y2YF

Y2YF's approach towards creating tangible, concrete results with the limited funding available has encouraged a culture of efficient financial resource use, with little wastage. The use of UNIDO offices, transport, etc. in both countries has been a significant cost-cutting measure. Similarly, working through and building the capacity of YLO's, with far greater understanding of local contexts, costs and an enduring presence on the ground has been cost-effective. Y2YF's stringent M&E system has looked to ensure efficient and effective resource use at project level, as outlined above. Overall, donors consulted for this evaluation were satisfied with the way in which funds have been spent and are encouraged by the quantitative data generated by Y2YF in terms of numbers of jobs created, business growth forecasts etc. However, IOC feel that early changes to the project design has rendered the Y2YF as it now exists as less relevant to their own objectives. IOC concerns were fully documented by the evaluators and this is now being followed up by the Secretariat.

YENWA estimate the cost of the project per beneficiary to be US\$500-700, which it considers to be an appropriate whilst not insignificant investment into creating sustainable jobs – particularly when compared to some much larger youth employment initiatives that spend far more overall, but do not create the same tangible employment opportunities with long term prospects. The results of the final evaluations of the two rounds, plus impact evaluations further down the line will establish the extent to which this is the case.

It is clear that the YENWA team have operated with extreme commitment and motivation to implement two nationwide projects and build the capacity of twenty-three YLOs; there is no doubt that YEN (supported by UNIDO) staff have operated to maximum capacity. However, the extent of the YENWA support network, the use of Focal Points and intense involvement of staff in the day to day running of the projects does raise some questions around the cost factor for what is relatively small initiative.

Although front-loaded to a degree, the amount of time, administration and communication required of the Y2YF staff at all levels is extensive and has been a significant drain on all staff, with implications for availability to network and mobilise funds for potential future rounds⁵¹, as well as the dissemination of impact the Y2YF is undoubtedly having at a local level. This poses questions as to the feasibility of scaling up the Y2YF as it currently exists; either human resources will need to be increased or the intensity of support reduced.

⁵⁰ This situation came to light during the Mid Term Review in Guinea and the contract with the YLO was immediately terminated before the second tranche of funding was released.

⁵¹ The need to mobilise funds is also complicated by the fact that the remaining UNWA staff member is contracted as a Project Assistant, despite functioning as Assistant West Africa Coordinator, and does not feel he has the mandate or the network in place to assist in this strategic process.

5.3.5 Impact and Sustainability of the Y2YF

Given the period covered by this evaluation and the progress of the two rounds, it is too early to discuss impact in relation to the Y2YF. However, it is clear that the projects have the potential for significant impacts on the lives of young people. Early results from Guinea indicate that 480 jobs have been created and 36 cooperatives formed, with 200 jobs estimated to be created in Sierra Leone. Donors are calling for a similar impact assessment to be undertaken in another two years for the most recent Y2YF rounds. Several organisations and governments have expressed interest in running their own Y2YF. Accordingly, the YEN Secretariat, with support from the World Bank, will develop a Y2YF toolkit in 2012 to support local implementation and anchorage of the initiative.

In terms of sustainability, there are a number of key issues to be highlighted:

- Donor reluctance to support 're-granting' has been raised by some critics of this and similar schemes in the past. However, UNIDO, for instance, cannot itself provide funds directly to organisations, so must work through intermediary bodies such as YEN. For others, supporting the Y2YF on a small scale enabled them to trial a new idea that would otherwise not have received support, to offer an alternative to bilateral funding and to utilise the skills and experience accumulated through the pilot Y2YF. YEN's 'added value' here is its network of support on the ground and the focus on building capacity of YLOs to implement projects rather than directly implementing themselves.
- The Y2YF's rigorous M&E system and the support structure developed by Y2YF staff for grantees is both its greatest strength and one of its greatest weaknesses in terms of the 'scalability' of the fund. It is agreed by all that scaling up or scaling out the Fund will require significant investment, in terms of both human and financial resources to maintain these key components. The Y2YF is already being replicated, however; UN-HABITAT is currently implementing a global youth fund using the Y2YF programme design as a blueprint.
- Interviews with Project Coordinators indicate that the capacity building component of the programme plus the 'on the job' skills development have been invaluable to these individuals. However, some (particularly in Sierra Leone) were employed specifically to manage Y2YF projects (on behalf of longstanding YLOs) and three of those interviewed state they'll look to move on at the end of the implementation phase. This raises questions as to the extent to which the capacity building is institutionalised in YLOs, without opening up training to the wider organisation or incorporating a Training of Trainers component.
- The handover of projects to beneficiaries has three stages: a preparatory step to ensure the conditions will be appropriate for a handover; an official handover, which entails a graduation ceremony; and post-handover guidance, of visits and follow-up to ensure things are on track. In addition, the YEN Secretariat has provided no-cost extensions to grantees in the past when conditions are not appropriate for handover or there are unintended delays in project implementation. In addition, more flexibility might be built into implementation start and end dates, to fit with requirements of the project (e.g. seasons for agribusinesses), as well as an increased 'duty of care' responsibility for YLOs.
- The Y2YF has a significant role to play in supporting disadvantaged youth; interest has been expressed in countries including Togo, Zimbabwe and Africa. Perhaps its niche is in post-conflict zones such as Sierra Leone and Guinea, where there is a need to focus on "*quick impact; real results*" and large populations of un(der)employed and frustrated young people and a dearth of youth funding. In this instance, there is also scope to explore the MENA region.
- More engagement with the private sector to tap into the field of CSR may be a significant way forward for the Y2YF in West Africa. This has already happened with support from BASF to the Y2YF in East Africa. Conversations are taking place in Guinea with a large international mining company looking to invest in youth employment. This may open up a new avenue for sourcing technical assistance and business skills development.

5.4 YEN Marketplace

The YEN Marketplace (MP)⁵² is an internet-based tool that "targets practitioners on youth employment and young entrepreneurs" and is designed to become a space for sharing knowledge, forming new partnerships, providing information on funding and hosting webinars. The concept was borne out of feedback and demand for certain services from beneficiaries and other stakeholders to YEN. There are a total of 11 stalls as summarised in Figure 3 below⁵³:

Figure 3: Breakdown of MP stalls

<i>The Trading Centre</i>	Organisations and individuals post offers or requests for proposals, partnerships or other type of service
<i>E-Coaching</i>	Brokers mentoring services where experienced mentors are matched with young entrepreneurs to provide advice and guidance
<i>Workgroups</i>	Forum to create/join groups on different topics or projects, featuring tools such as Task Manager, Blog and Calendar
<i>Idea Lab</i>	Presents innovative ideas and offers organisations the opportunity to access training, funding and support for replication
<i>What's Working</i>	Highlights successful projects and runs a competition that awards monetary prizes to winning projects
<i>Experts Corner</i>	Webinars led by a panel of experts
<i>Resources</i>	Virtual library (bibliography and other material revised by YEN to assure quality and relevance)

Other sections of the website include *forums, events, peer review* and *member section* that serve more generic purposes.

As is common with websites under development, the site status is highly dynamic and at the time of initial review by the evaluation team, the site was found to have some limitations in terms of functionality and speed⁵⁴. However at the time of writing, these limitations had been addressed and it was clear the site had been rigorously tested. Establishing the effectiveness and impact of the MP would require end-user feedback and since it is not fully operational the output cannot be fully evaluated at this point in its development.

5.4.1 The Relevance of MP

The concept of the MP represents a good effort to respond to the demands from organisations, young entrepreneurs and other actors for access to information, funding and support and to create a gateway between different organisations, experts and youth. A cross comparison with similar websites evidences a growing demand for these type of services including mentorship, tools for business development, resources and funding on what works in youth employment.

What sets apart the MP from other youth oriented employment/entrepreneurial sites is the focus on servicing young people in developing countries. Two specific sites are offering very similar services: Imagine Nations Network (INN) and Enablis.⁵⁵ INN, founded by the Global Partnership for Youth Investment has developed a similar structure as the MP with financing, resources and mentoring sections. Enablis is run by a Canadian non-profit organisation that supports entrepreneurs in the developing world, but especially in Africa. It offers several services including Business Support and Peer Mentoring, Funding Opportunities and an International Mentorship Programme.

⁵² www.yenmarketplace.org.

⁵³ This varies slightly from YEN's description in YEN (2011) *Promoting Decent and Productive Work for Young Women and Men*, Annual Report 2011 to Swedish International Development Agency.

⁵⁴ As of March 1-20, pages and objects loaded slowly, there were some dead-end links, much content was test material and active users appeared to be restricted to the beta-testers.

⁵⁵ www.imagine-network.org, www.enablis.org

Both INN and Enablis are up and running but appear hard to navigate with some duplication of services within each site. It seems likely that these types of services are new to the Internet and will take time and commitment to refine. This is also true for the MP website, which is at an earlier stage of development.

5.4.2 Effectiveness and Efficiency of MP

The YEN logframe states as a results-based indicator for this output “Four new partnerships per year between donors, NGOs, private companies and youth organisations mobilising US\$0.5 million in cash and in kind contributions.” In terms of effectiveness, meeting this success criterion is likely to fall far beyond the remainder of the Sida-supported period. There are several interim milestones - unstated in the logframe - such as driving traffic to the site in substantial numbers, actively moderating the site so that it becomes a lively, engaging resource that creates members rather than visitors, and trouble-shooting the inevitable teething problems that will arise once the site becomes active. Longer term plans detailed in the *YEN Marketplace Outreach and Engagement Strategy* (undated) to make the site available in Arabic and French will undoubtedly increase the potential traffic flow to the site and broaden its global appeal, but the timeframe for this is unclear.

A budget of US\$94,000 has been dedicated to developing the site and according to the DGF Annual Activities Report FY11, the official launch of the Marketplace website is scheduled for mid-March/early April 2012. Whilst 200 members are registered, activity on the stalls is somewhat restricted – for example there is only one request on the Trading Centre (likely to be of key interest to users as it relates to finance). There are however some 30 Offers – such as calls for proposals – on this particular stall⁵⁶.

The budget attributed to marketing and launching the site in the MP strategy is limited to just US\$3,044 (with no reference made to associated staff costs). Regrettably the delivery of this output has been compromised within the project period, and delay in implementation is attributed to an inadequate performance from the initial company responsible for design, who were working on a pro bono basis.

5.4.3 Sustainability of MP

The Secretariat has formulated a strategy of selective targeting of MP users and rightly recognises that outreach and engagement will be an on-going and iterative process⁵⁷. Promotion strategies to the defined target group include online marketing and search engine optimisation as well as offline promotion through plugging into YEN’s existing network. For example YEN has a captive audience of 500 in their existing Evaluation Clinic groupsite, as well as a newsletter readership of 2000 and these have yet to be exploited. A careful screening process of resource people has been implemented to ensure quality of mentors who will support young people online⁵⁸.

The *YEN Marketplace Outreach and Engagement Strategy* tackles some issues of sustainability, but it needs to be updated and further specificity is required, particularly as existing MP champions are already moving on from YEN. The extent of moderation and maintenance demanded by the MP at this stage in its infancy make it likely that the site will need dedicated support staff⁵⁹, which entails secure funding post-2012. Whilst some members of the Secretariat feel that this output could represent a legacy for YEN, the evaluation process revealed mixed feelings amongst stakeholders⁶⁰ on the value and likely sustainability of this output. The MP needs dedicated financial and human resources for the future in order to assure the site's continuity and without this it cannot be sustainable in its present form.

⁵⁶ As of April 12 2012.

⁵⁷ Initial campaign objectives have been set for five weeks after the site’s official launch which falls outside this evaluation period, however these include: a membership base of 150, 100 unique visitors a day, 350 new content items created and partnership with at least one donor.

⁵⁸ Including individual screening, interview and taking up of references for the E-Mentors.

⁵⁹ For example the strategy calls for stall ‘managers’ to actively monitor content of each of the eight stalls to keep it up to date and relevant and to search for interesting opportunities to promote or improve their stall.

⁶⁰ External respondents were not aware of this output whatsoever due to the early stage in its development.

6. Resource Mobilisation

Resource mobilisation is undoubtedly a key factor in determining the future of the YEN Secretariat. Outside of regular financial support from the World Bank through its Development Grant Facility, YEN has not received direct financial support from the Core Partners. For a decade YEN has been fortunate in securing core funding for the running of the Secretariat from Sida. Moreover Sida has long felt uneasy regarding the Secretariat's reliance on Sida's funding to support fixed and other costs that perhaps should be covered by the Core Partners themselves.

Within the evaluation period, mobilisation of financial resources relates to two areas: 1) replacement of core funding provided to date by Sida and 2) use of Sida funds as leverage to mobilise additional resources for the implementation of specific deliverables. The YEN Secretariat has had mixed success – to date no external donor has been identified to replace Sida's core funding (ending December 2012) and some products such as the LCN are not able to progress due to lack of donor interest. However a pool of donors has been established to support the Y2YF and the Evaluation Clinics. Figure 4 summarises donors associated with each of the YEN outputs and the comparative attractiveness of the outputs to external donors.

Figure 4: Summary of Donors Associated with YEN Outputs (excluding Sida)

YEN product	Associated donors	Approx. % of leveraged funding
Lead Country Network	Commonwealth Secretariat (support for one Lead Country Meeting during the evaluation period ⁶¹)	1.5%
Evaluation Clinics / Fund for Evaluation	Jacobs Foundation, Silatech, World Bank Development Grant Facility	49%
Marketplace	World Bank Development Grant Facility	5%
Youth to Youth Fund	UNIDO Guinea, International Olympic Committee, BMZ, World Bank Development Grant Facility	44.5%
Involving the Private Sector	No donor identified – project never initiated	0%

6.1 Progress in Resource Mobilisation

Within the evaluation period, the YEN Secretariat has made sustained attempts at resource mobilisation, having submitted proposals (average one proposal/month) or held informal talks with 21 potential donors. There has been a good track record in resource mobilisation, with one third of submissions being successful. Most recently, YEN received approval on two new joint YEN/ILO projects, one in the DRC sponsored by the Belgium government and one in Morocco sponsored by CIDA and a renewal of support from BMZ to the Y2YF in West Africa: a grant of 650,000 euros for replication in Togo. The YEF project in Uganda, Tanzania and Kenya sponsored by DANIDA recently received a three year extension. See Annex G for full details of the Secretariat's bidding record.

Figure 5 (below) shows funds generated by the YEN Secretariat, which were leveraged on the back of Sida funding. With a total funding pot of \$9,303,393 for the evaluation period, the return on investment for Sida's seed capital was 6:1.

6.2 Potential of Core Partner Funding

Existing Core Partners are facing certain constraints on the provision of core funding for a future project period:

UNDESA is being asked themselves to do less with more, and is not in a position to offer funding to YEN. However this lack of contribution is reported to reflect an asymmetry in the partnership.

⁶¹ In fact, the Commonwealth Secretariat provided support in the implementation of the Fourth Lead Country Meeting, held in Zambia, in December 2009 (outside the evaluation period of this review).

The World Bank's interface with YEN has been through GPYE and the DGF, although these monies funded products and not core costs of the Secretariat. This five-year WB funding pot is now coming to an end and the Bank does not have the instruments to deliver financing of the nature YEN requires.

ILO houses and provided administrative support to the Secretariat⁶², however in recent years there has been increasingly protracted negotiation about the access to this support⁶³. There has been some collaboration with ILO on resource mobilisation however YEN are also perceived by some in-house as competing with ILO's Youth Employment Programme (YEP) for funding and recognition.

Figure 5: Summary of YEN Donor Funding

Donor	Project Name	Budget in US\$	Duration
SIDA	Creating Employment Opportunities for Young People	1,524,179	04/10 - 12/12
DANIDA	Youth Entrepreneurship Facility (YEF)	7,000,107	01/10 - 12/14
BASF	YEF	142,450	06/11 - 07/12
Jacobs	Evaluation clinics and fund	493,855	06/10 - 06/13
Silatech	Evaluation clinics and fund	250,000	06/10 - 06/13
WB	Evaluation clinics, Youth to Youth Fund, Impact Evaluation & M&E Guide	250,000	09/09 - 10/11
WB	Youth Employment Inventory (YEI), Marketplace, Evaluation clinics & programme support	300,000	04/21 - 10/12
WB	YEI, Taqem fund, Youth to Youth toolkit, GPYE event & programme support	275,000	12/11 - 12/12
UNIDO	Youth to Youth Fund (Y2YF), Guinea	350,000	06/10 - 01/12
BMZ	Y2YF, Sierra Leone	272,080	01/11 - 03/12
IOC	Y2YF, Guinea	100,000	01/10 - 01/12

6.3 Capacity of YEN Secretariat in Resource Mobilisation

Where YEN currently lacks capacity is in the more informal, networking side of resource mobilisation which tends to rely on personal connections. The Manager in post is widely commended for her outstanding technical ability, and has realistically concentrated on a more formal route to access funding through competitive tendering (as discussed above). It is also argued that the survival of YEN should not be the sole responsibility of the YEN Secretariat, which is working extremely hard to deliver on existing commitments through a tiny team. Suggestions to enhance fund-raising capacity include greater ILO commitment to support fund-raising for YEN at a higher level or employment of a short-term senior and well-connected fund-raising expert. At the very least, YEN needs to dedicate greater time in resources over the final year of Sida support, making this a priority in YEN staff work plans.

A related area that may also have implications for resource mobilisation is YEN Secretariat's capacity for marketing and self-promotion. YEN's communication and self-presentation has improved since the

⁶² Although a 7% project charge is paid to the department to cover support with procurement, donor relationships etc.

⁶³ ILO finds it difficult to service YEN, there is an expectation that as an external programme it should come with funds for administrative support.

previous evaluation in 2008 (for instance, tools such as Prezi are being used to good effect), but there is scope for YEN's results and products to be better known.

6.4 Mobilising Human and In-kind Resources

YEN has been able to effectively mobilise human resources through the partners, most notably in order to service its Evaluation Clinic output, where YEN draws on World Bank and other organisations such as IPA, J-PAL, DIW, BRAC, Syria Trust for Development, Middle East Youth Initiative, Swiss Academy for Development and Nokia. ILO has provided a Resource Person to support LCN conferences with capacity building inputs and also collaborated with YEN on provision of Evaluation Clinics. To date UNDESA has not actively engaged with YEN in this way and the Secretariat could usefully explore a future direct collaboration with them on the LCN.

ILO covers 50% of YEN administrative support time⁶⁴. However YEN has also mobilised in-kind resources from the following sources:

- The Commonwealth Secretariat covered travel, accommodation and logistics for the LCN's Fifth Meeting (approximately US\$30,000 contribution);
- Placement of CIDA Associates to support the work of Lead countries and the Youth to Youth Fund⁶⁵;
- Microsoft offered discounted software and licences to shortlisted Youth to Youth fund organisations and some associated training (approximately US\$5,000 contribution);
- Accenture worked pro-bono on the development of the Marketplace (approximately US\$20,000 contribution).

6.5 The Private Sector Project

The Sida/YEN project identified six major deliverables, one of which centred on the potential of private sector partnerships in youth employment programmes. Prior to the evaluation period the YENWA office was supported by UK Ministry of Work and Pensions to document good practices amongst a small network of youth employment projects cooperating with the private sector in the region. However when this funding ceased in 2009, the Secretariat were unable to replace it. Thus there has been no activity on this deliverable within the project period, nor was YEN able to find any donor from the private sector or to facilitate any partnerships between YE programmes and the private sector.

7. Efficiency of Resource Use

There is a general view that the efficiency of YEN has greatly improved since the 2008 revision of focus. The provision of specific advice and concrete interventions through a diversified donor structure has enhanced cost-effectiveness. Steering Committee, Core Partner Focal Points and Sida are unanimous in their view that the YEN Secretariat is dedicated, professional and efficient. In terms of value for money, as a small team they are considered to be delivering excellent results.

The Secretariat is commended for having shrunk alongside their funding constraints in order to devote more resources to outputs, rather than maintenance of staff costs. YEN's already lean structure has been further streamlined with the reduction in Secretariat staff numbers from six in 2009 to three in 2012 (excluding three YEF project staff based in East Africa). In this sense the Secretariat is much more market-driven, however with the various budget lines feeding individual YEN outputs it can be a challenge to merge different sources of funding, and in terms of efficiency this can absorb time. In future YEN should strive for multi-donor funding pots (where possible).

⁶⁴ Being part of EMP/POL department YEN have access to stationary, printers, and other materials. The Secretariat is invited to participate in some departmental meetings and retreats.

⁶⁵ CIDA Associates in 2011 were placed to support national Focal Points in Indonesia and Ghana and to support the Youth to Youth Fund in Senegal, Kenya and Tanzania.

Within the project period the Secretariat was supported by five interns or short-term consultants who worked for an average six month period. Whilst this can be seen as a cost-effective way for the Secretariat to 'stop-gap' on specific deliverables, it also has implications for the continuity of work of YEN. See Annex H, showing past and current YEN Secretariat staff.

In terms of reporting there is a request from one donor for more clear and summarised reporting so that donors do not need to 'dig in detail' to find the information they are looking for. A one- page summary with highlights followed by further detailed information is requested.

8. Project Management

YEN is administered as an ILO programme but through different management modalities, which includes increased autonomy and responsibility to assure quality and deliver results. The performance of the manager is critical to the success of YEN; both the current and former manager – whilst offering different management styles and abilities – are universally considered to be of high quality technically and it is notable the extent to which the Secretariat is praised by respondents for its commitment and strong work ethic.

The Secretariat's shift uniting them behind four key marketable products, with an emphasis on delivering results to clients, enabled it to operate like a non-profit consultancy company. Some respondents found this a smart strategy for sustainability, enabling the Secretariat to be flexible and responsive. Others found the Secretariat's status as an autonomous 'NGO' residing within a UN agency problematic. However, for the agency partners, YEN's civil society beneficiaries act as a "consultative group" and a chance to touch base at the grassroots beyond the policy level.

Closure of YENWA

Under the 2008 evaluation of YEN capacity, the YENWA office in Dakar, Senegal, was found to be under-utilised, but with the advent of the Y2YF the office took on a fresh mandate. YENWA was treated as a satellite project by the ILO regional office, which managed staff contracts and channelled resources from Geneva. The former YEN Manager had a 'gentleman's agreement' with ILO to share office space without contribution to costs, however this was more recently withdrawn and costs of US\$300 per month imposed on YEN. The YENWA Coordinator resigned in October 2011 and there remains one national staff in post. The YEN Manager has considered the option of closing down the YENWA Office in case there are insufficient funds to maintain it. Some stakeholders perceive there is no reputational risk in this option, whilst others are disappointed and feel this reflects a lack of strategic thinking. Overall this move is not perceived as hugely significant by most external stakeholders.

9. Partnership

Partnerships are central to the existence and delivery channels of YEN. It is through the focus on partnerships that YEN has been able to achieve exponential impact. YEN's three Core Partners have different areas of technical focus which are complementary and add their own value to specific YEN deliverables. In addition, YEN's open and responsive structure allows it to partner with others, including those that core partners do not necessarily have a mandate to support such as CSOs. External partners have joined the network as donors or supporters, often relating to specific products. For example UNIDO and IOC have collaborated on Y2YF, Silatech and the Jacobs Foundation on YEN Clinics and the Commonwealth Secretariat on the LCN. These partnerships are primarily discussed under Section 5.

9.1 Core Partners

As YEN reaches the end of another phase of its work, the Core partners believe it is a good moment to rethink YEN's future strategic direction. The Steering Committee are highly satisfied with the progress of the YEN Secretariat in their knowledge generating and sharing role, their focus on learning and evaluation of YE programmes and their linking up of practitioners on YE – in this arena they are felt to be "making a difference". Whilst views on performance are overwhelmingly positive, there is some concern on the *relevance* of YEN going forward. Part of the interest in reconsidering YEN's future activities stems the ILO and WB interest in increasing emphasis on the coordination of activities of their two institutions.

9.1.1 The World Bank

YEN's current relationship with the World Bank is considered very positively. The Bank displays a stronger sense of ownership and satisfaction with YEN than in the past. The mainstreaming of the Children and Youth Unit into the Labour Group of the Bank in July 2011 reflects the broadening of what was once perceived as a niche agenda at the Bank. YEN is said to have shifted course in a way that fits well with Bank priorities, and as a grantee of its GPYE they are seen as a good catalyst. YEN is said to be doing things that the Bank would not think of doing or that are of interest but not core business, and in this sense are seen to add value.

YEN's work with the World Bank led to the production of an acclaimed publication "Measuring Success in Youth Livelihood Interventions: A practical guide to monitoring and evaluation", a direct output and compliment to YEN's existing work on M&E and the Clinics.

9.1.2 ILO

ILO has perhaps the closest but most complex relationship with YEN. The YEN manager has regular meetings with the ILO's Executive Director, the ILO hosts two YEN "antenna offices" in the field and the two organisations cooperate currently on one large project in East Africa and will cooperate on two other projects, one in DRC and one in Morocco, starting this year.

ILO is, however, participating in high-level YE focused events in which YEN is not involved, such as the G20 Task Force on Youth Unemployment. In the words of one respondent: "*ILO is on a huge Youth Employment curve that is accelerating exponentially – visibility and clarity on youth is increasing.*" In pursuit of this ambition, ILO's YEP is gaining increased prominence. There has long been confusion inside ILO on YEN's function as a parallel unit in relation to YEP; YEN has potential to be seen as the 'jewel in ILO's YE crown' and yet in-house it appears to suffer from a lack of visibility or ownership.

External respondents described the YEN relationship with ILO as "very curious", "not institutional" and questioned the remits, synergies, links and interaction between YEN and ILO. YEN's approach to date has been to proceed on the basis of clear areas of work which do not overlap with ILO's core business⁶⁶; and is indeed perceived by some at ILO as being able to complement ILO through specific work without the constraints of ILO's tri-partite structure.

Whilst there remains a desire to maintain the YEN partnership for inter-agency cooperation, working conditions for the YEN Secretariat are said to be getting more challenging at ILO. However, the YEN Secretariat is keenly aware of these challenges and the need to lobby internally for more ILO support.

9.1.3 UNDESA

The UN part of the YEN partnership works less closely with the YEN Secretariat compared to the other partners, and describes its own contribution as 'minimal'. This is partly due to UNDESA political and advocacy function at the inter-government level – the level at which it is intended to support YEN – whilst the ILO and WB are looking at operational and technical solutions. YEN's shift away from networking and high-level advocacy and towards technical service delivery may mean that the objectives of UNDESA for the partnership are not served as well. The ILO and World Bank have stated that they would be working closely with each other even without the vehicle of YEN, but a deep partnership with UNDESA may not continue without YEN. Indeed there is stronger partnership potential for these agencies with other parts of UN, such as UNICEF and UNDP.

9.1.4 The Partnership post-2012

After the revision of YEN's mission in 2008 (approved by the Steering Committee), the focus was placed around the four areas of work (policy advice, evaluation, youth participation, and brokering partnerships) and how to increase the impact youth employment actors have on young people's employment

⁶⁶ Where there is a correlation the Secretariat try to create a bridge but not compete, for instance on the joint delivery of a workshop in Turin.

prospects. Since then, synergies among core partners have been a bi-product rather than a key deliverable of the Secretariat. Yet ILO and World Bank steering committee members are at present considering to what extent YEN “forms a glue between our organisations”, as opposed to working together bi-laterally.

There is also an argument that it would be inappropriate for YEN to be the clearing house for everything that the Core Partners are doing together, rather that the Secretariat fulfils the role of a “flexible arm” to the Agencies, with the ability to be comparatively proactive, innovative, and agile.

Several respondents noted the historical lack of financial support for the Secretariat from the Core Partners. A key donor stated that:

The partnership was a missed opportunity, as the three partners didn’t have real interest from the beginning... A lesson learnt would be around capitalising on the potential of partnership – if the three agencies had been interested to work more closely together and finance the partnership it would have worked.

In preparation for the work of the Secretariat post-2012, a Retreat is suggested to consider the way forward for the YEN partnership. The agenda could include discussion of Core Partners distinct roles, definition of Core Partner responsibilities or formal obligations to the Secretariat, review and refinement of the TORs of the Secretariat and consideration of the extent to which the Secretariat should broker synergies between the partners.

In addition there is a possibility that the core tri-partite partnership itself could be widened, which could revitalise the agency partnership function of YEN. To date there had been one expression of interest in joining the YEN Partnership by UN-HABITAT but this has not been taken up by the existing Core Partners. The broadening of the partnership is a strategic question for the future of YEN given the calls for stronger inter-agency partnership across a range of sectors.

10. Impact and Sustainability

Both impact and sustainability have been discussed, where relevant, at the level of each of the YEN products reviewed above. However, given the scope of this mid-term evaluation and the stage in the Sida funding phase, an in-depth analysis of YEN’s impact was not considered to be appropriate.

10.1 Impact

YEN’s primary contribution to the global crisis of youth unemployment has been towards a knowledge base on what works, and more importantly what does not. By scaling back on their original range of activities, the Secretariat has in recent years identified well-defined, tangible products which feed this knowledge base. YEN Secretariat has successfully brought together relevant actors, and critically has reached out to young people directly and involved youth in their activities. YEN focus on sharing information, building partnerships, lobbying and networking on YE issues, building capacity of government and civil society and ultimately aim to enhance synergies and influence YE policy.

To summarise, most respondents agreed that without the presence of YEN something valuable would be lost – whether that be institutional memory, objectives or demand.

10.2 Sustainability

The issue of sustainability is discussed at the level of each of the YEN products within Section 5. However, the pressing issue raised by most respondents regarding sustainability was in relation to the Secretariat itself. With the loss of its Sida core funding, the Secretariat was seen to be vulnerable for the future.

YEN core agencies have made it clear that both agency partnership and the YE issue are of greater importance than ever. The main stakeholders see value in the continuation of the YEN partnership but

with a revised strategic focus. One steering committee member summarised YEN's mandate as follows: in addition to delivery of its technical outputs, in order to support the partnership between the agencies effectively, YEN should either strengthen the force of the Agencies' YE focus (inward-facing) and/or it should create synergies that would not otherwise happen (outward-facing). Each core partner has a sense that 'something is missing' from the existing arrangement, but they have yet to hold a deep conversation on the long-term future of YEN and the Secretariat⁶⁷.

The 2010 Sida proposal stated that the YEN Secretariat is a *temporary* structure that will work as long as it 1) has a mandate from its core agency partners; 2) there is demand for its services; and 3) external funding is available.

There are therefore two immediate issues to be addressed: Financial Sustainability of the YEN Secretariat and Strategic Relevance of YEN/the YEN Secretariat. Without new funding, the Secretariat could continue for no more than six months beyond December 2012. If the YEN Secretariat can secure external funding, a series of strategic questions will still need to be addressed by the Steering Committee: Is this the right form for the partnership? Are these the right partners? Does the YEN Secretariat add sufficient value to each of the Core Partners (in addition to its distinct identity/products)?

11. Conclusions

11.1 Best Practice

- **By scaling back on their original range of activities and becoming more market-driven, since 2009 the YEN Secretariat has identified well-defined, tangible products which feed the global knowledge base on Youth Employment.** YEN is a significant example of a multi-agency partnership that brings results. The YEN Secretariat punches above its weight considering the precarious funding and in terms of value for money; as a small team they are considered to be delivering excellent results.
- **YEN's Evaluation Clinics are considered an excellent product and an important contribution by YEN.** The product is perceived to be an alliance of expertise and collaboration, where the YEN Secretariat added great value through playing the coordinating role. The model of training, web-based follow-up (with an impressive 545 membership) and seed funding for evaluation activity is innovative. Through the Clinics YEN have developed a clear niche and implement an adult learning pedagogy, whereby 'live cases' are selected prior to the Clinic through a competitive process. This YEN product has effectively mobilised human resources through the Core Agencies⁶⁸, and also proved attractive to external donors.
- YEN is successfully involving youth in its programming, with the Y2YF and Marketplace products target young people directly. **YEN's Y2YF, which stimulates business ideas coming from youth to youth, empowers both youth-serving organisations and young people through contextualised projects which do not focus solely on fostering employability but on generating employment.** The Y2YF is already being used as a model of best practice, with UN-HABITAT currently implementing a global youth fund using the Y2YF programme design as a blueprint. **The Y2YF has a significant role to play for large populations of un(der)employed and frustrated young people in a dearth of youth funding.** Early results from Guinea indicate that 480 jobs have been created and 36 cooperatives formed, with 200 jobs estimated to be created in Sierra Leone. A recent revisit to the Mano River Pilot Projects indicated that 75% of the 724 beneficiaries were still in employment two years after the pilot had ended.
- **The Y2YF has a clear and robust project design based on a rigorous four-step process of Outreach, Selection, Implementation and Sharing.** The selection committees of local stakeholders and the showcasing event for finalists ensure the programme is both locally owned and builds in a unique networking opportunity to showcase projects. The Fund is commended for its front-loaded capacity

⁶⁷ A meeting is currently scheduled for August-September 2012 to discuss the way forward.

⁶⁸ YEN draws on World Bank and other organisations such as IPA, J-PAL, DIW, BRAC, Syria Trust for Development, Middle East Youth Initiative, Swiss Academy for Development and Nokia.

building of grantees in proposal and budget writing, project management tools and basic entrepreneurial and business skills.

11.2 Lessons Learnt

- **The concept of the YEN's Lead Country Network is a powerful one, however the current engagement of the Lead Countries and interaction between them, needs to be galvanised.** Activity is sporadic, there is limited ownership in many countries and the mechanisms for peer review and South-South learning need to evolve, in order to achieve LCN's full potential. Whilst secure funding would revitalise the network there is also scope to revisit, clarify and develop the activities and communication channels.
- **A lesson which has been successfully learnt by the YEN Secretariat, from YEN's early Evaluation Clinics was that few participant organisations had capacity to implement an Impact Evaluation.** In order to better meet participant needs and be more results-oriented, the Clinic modality has thus evolved from a strict focus on IE, to encompassing broader, more fundamental aspects of monitoring and evaluation.
- **YEN's Y2YF projects demonstrating best results were those that met real demand, adapted to local context and had easy access** to both the raw materials and appropriate technology – those that 'added value' to certain existing processes (particular in agribusiness). **Wholly innovative projects focusing on brand new products/processes often faced more difficulties and unexpected costs.**
- The reliance of the Secretariat of the YEN inter-agency partnership on external funds to support core costs has been a threat to sustainability from the outset. The Secretariat has responded well to the challenge, establishing an impressive bidding record, diverse funding streams and partnerships. However there is still a perception that to an extent, the YEN Secretariat is juggling the wants and needs of its external financiers with those of its non-funding Core Partners.

11.3 Recommendations

- The LCN should be strengthened, evolved or wound down – in its current form it is not fulfilling its capacity as a vibrant network and peer learning mechanism. **In the case of many countries, ownership over the Benchmarking Exercise needs to be established and an annual meeting of Lead Countries is not sufficient to fulfil a networking function. Piloting a regional spin-off of the Benchmarking Exercise could be one way forward⁶⁹. A further channel of communication which does not rely on the Secretariat must be established, for example seminars hosted in member countries organised by FPs or a virtual learning environment.** There is potential for YEN's Marketplace to function as a forum to bring the FPs together in future.
- The Evaluation Clinic product is a flagship product for YEN and its partners. The YEN Secretariat should continue to promote the Clinics, enhance the service and adapt them to regional needs. **The Secretariat could also look to developing the Clinic methodology in regional languages or to pilot a handover of the Clinic methodology to local or regional partners who would host the Clinics.**
- **The YEN's Marketplace has been carefully designed and rigorously tested but poor performance from initial external partners in technical development of the site has substantially delayed implementation. At this stage in its infancy the site will not 'stand-alone',** intensive maintenance and moderation by assigned staff is still needed. **Given that the Secretariat has devoted considerable time and resources in Marketplace development,** a realistic forward-looking strategy and dedicated funding/donor support needs to be developed to guarantee the site's continuity. The Secretariat should carry out analysis on their existing group sites, to learn from what has worked well/less well to date⁷⁰ and also consider how these will be harmonized with the Marketplace.
- Regarding the Y2YF, it is considered that nine months is too short a time period for implementation. In addition, given the success of the capacity building component and the poor quality of proposals

⁶⁹ The Secretariat has submitted several proposals to support such an activity.

⁷⁰ The Clinic Groupsite is considered a successful resource whereas the LCN site has closed due to lack of interest.

submitted, the Y2YF might consider in the future training sessions on proposal writing, which are open to a wider audience of potential grant applicants.

- Without identifying core funding for the next three to five years the future of YEN Secretariat looks insecure. In the remaining project period the YEN Secretariat should continue its efforts to replace the Sida funding through one or more of the following ways:
 - Securing replacement funds from an external source such as a bi-lateral donor;
 - Obtaining buy-in from the three Core Partners to cover staff costs (at a figure of approximately US\$500,000 per annum);
 - Recruiting a new Core Partner willing to fund the Secretariat core costs;
 - Winning two or more large projects with management time built in⁷¹.
- The financial survival of YEN Secretariat – as a tiny team working extremely hard to deliver on existing commitments – would be enhanced by **greater engagement by the Core Partners in fundraising approaches by the Secretariat**⁷². Where possible YEN should strive for flexible multi-donor funding pots, to facilitate the management and flow of funds in the future.
- In addition to the questions of financial viability, the YEN Steering Committee will need to **evaluate the strategic relevance of the partnership and either give the YEN Secretariat a clear mandate for a three-year extension period** or request the Secretariat to embark on an exit/transition plan in order to wind down the partnership and/or the Secretariat.
- Following the current phase of YEN's work, **a Retreat should be held to set the vision for the way forward from 2012**. The agenda could include definition of Core Partners' distinct roles and responsibilities, review and refinement of the TORs of the Secretariat and consideration of the extent to which the Secretariat should play a brokering and networking role between the partners. The retreat could be used to define the YEN (Secretariat's) 'theory of change' and streamline the YEN logical framework for a new project period⁷³.
- Specifically in the scenario where the Secretariat is unable to secure financial stability and/or does not have its mandate reconfirmed by the Steering Committee post-2012, both the World Bank and the ILO have expressed interest in absorbing various of the YEN products and taking these forward.
- The niche of the YEN Secretariat is to continue to pilot, incubate and graduate YEN products with an emphasis on testing and documenting what works in youth employment. This model – which is appropriate for the size of the Secretariat – calls for the flexible, creative, promotion of activities that can be replicated by other organisations.

⁷¹ The World Bank will continue to try and fund the DGF partnership for at least another year and YEN may have money if this proposal is approved. Following that, discussions will be held on an exit strategy for GPYE, which may involve rolling out the DGF-funded partnership into something more independent (along the lines of the CGIAR model). This may contain some possibilities for YEN.

⁷² Specifically the less formal networking type approach rather than proposals submitted through formal channels.

⁷³ For example the lack of an explicit gender focus in the YEN logical framework is a missed opportunity and could be articulated in future.

ANNEX (A) TORs

CONSULTING SERVICES

TERMS OF REFERENCE



MIDTERM Independent Evaluation OF THE YEN/Sida PROJECT (2010-2012)

1. Introduction and Rationale of the Evaluation

The Youth Employment Network (YEN) is a partnership of the United Nations, the International Labour Organization, and the World Bank. YEN was created in 2001 as a global platform to prioritize youth employment on the development agendas and to exchange on policies and programs to improve employment opportunities for youth.

YEN is managed by a permanent Secretariat hosted by International Labour Office in Geneva. Additionally, the Secretariat has offices in Dakar, Senegal, and Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. YEN's work is framed in four areas: policy advice, evaluation, innovation, and partnerships.

The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) provided a three-year grant supporting the work of the YEN Secretariat from 2010 to 2012 under the title "Support to the Youth Employment Network Secretariat". It is the third and last phase of funding provided by Sida to YEN. The previous phase had covered the period 2006-2009. Within the context of this funding agreement, the YEN Secretariat and Sida agreed to conduct a midterm evaluation to assess progress and results. The evaluation will help to pinpoint strengths of the network and of this particular project as well as areas for further improvement.

Adhering to internationally established good practices in evaluations, the evaluation will be done independently by an external evaluator.

2. Brief background on YEN and the project

Background on YEN

YEN was created in 2001 to mobilize action on the commitment of the Millennium Summit for decent and productive work for young people. [The Network](#) includes development agencies, governments, the private sector, youth groups, NGOs, and the academia.

After its inception, YEN engaged with a High Level Panel⁷⁴ that developed policy recommendations on youth employment. These recommendations steered the focus of YEN and its Secretariat towards providing technical assistance to countries to facilitate the development of national action plans on Youth Employment. In late 2008, YEN revisited its products and initiated a new brand of activities focusing on four major areas, namely, policy advice, evaluation, innovation, and partnerships. This revision was supported and confirmed by an external independent evaluation of the 2006-2009 Sida-funded project.

The above-mentioned areas of work are implemented through the following tasks:

- Advising governments and other stakeholders on designing, implementing and monitoring youth employment policies and programs,
- Generating and sharing knowledge on youth employment issues with a particular focus on promoting impact assessments,
- Conducting pilot projects on youth employment and sharing lessons learned with the network, and
- Facilitating cooperation among partners from the network and sharing good practices among countries.

The YEN Secretariat is currently hosted by the Employment Sector of the ILO and its operations are supported by two United Nations General Assembly resolutions.⁷⁵

Background on the project

Project title	Creating employment opportunities for young people
Project code	GLO/10/02/SID
IRIS number	102092

⁷⁴ In 2001, the UN Secretary-General appointed a High-Level Panel (HLP) of twelve experts and practitioners on youth employment whose role was to advise the heads of the UN, World Bank and ILO on youth employment policy as well as to mobilize opinion and action in favor of youth employment worldwide. The mandate of the HLP was completed in December 2006.

⁷⁵ December 2002 resolution on promoting youth employment (A/RES/57/165); and the resolution concerning policies and programmes involving youth (A/RES/58/133) of January 2004.

Project duration	01/04/2010 – 31/12/2012
Geographical coverage	Global
Donor	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
Budget	SEK 11 Million (US\$ 1.5 Million)

The objective of the Sida/YEN project is to provide innovative and value added services on youth employment with a regional focus on West Africa. Six major deliverables identify the project, namely:

- 1) **Benchmarking Exercise of youth employment policies in YEN Lead Countries:** the exercise aims to support informed policy decisions on youth employment through solid data on the conditions of youth in the labor market and the initiatives undertaken to promote youth employment at the national level. YEN Lead Countries annually report on key indicators and share experiences and ideas to counteract youth unemployment.
- 2) **YEN Evaluation Clinics:** the Clinics aim at promoting evidence base on what works to improve labor market outcomes of youth. They provide technical assistance and seed funding for the implementation of evaluations and raise awareness on the need for results-based management and measurement.
- 3) **Laboratory for Innovation and Youth Participation, also called the Youth-to-Youth Fund:** The Fund is a competitive grant scheme for youth organizations that implement youth employment projects in their own localities/regions. The Fund is YEN's major tool for the promotion of innovative ideas – ideas that come from youth to youth – and ensure the participation and involvement of youth in development.
- 4) **YEN Marketplace:** the Sida project supports the development of the marketplace website whose main goal is to create synergies, stimulate productive partnerships, and ultimately help increase the impact of stakeholders' efforts to tackle youth unemployment.
- 5) **Involving the private sector:** The potential of the private sector as a partner in youth employment programs, either as a potential employer or as sponsor, is not yet fully realized. Accordingly, YEN seeks to identify and disseminate successful models of private sector partnerships on youth employment
- 6) **Mobilization of additional resources to complement Sida's funding:** YEN has proposed to use Sida funding as leverage and support to raise additional resources for the implementation of the above-listed deliverables.

In addition to the above activities, the project provides direct support to the operations of the Secretariat in Geneva and Dakar.

3. Purpose, Scope and Clients of the Evaluation

The purpose of the midterm evaluation is to evaluate what progress the project has made so far, to identify what has worked well and where there is scope for improvement, and to derive success factors and lessons learned that can be applied looking forward.

The evaluation covers the Sida/YEN project from April 2010 to December 2011. The present phase is scheduled to end in December 2012. The evaluation does not cover previous project phases of Sida support nor other YEN projects.

As the project supports the core operations of the Secretariat, as well as the direct funding of activities on youth employment undertaken by a wide-range of partners, the evaluation will have to assess the performance of the Secretariat itself and the results of the activities. The evaluation can access previous external evaluations of the Sida/YEN project as well as reviews of other YEN projects and the recent YEN Satisfaction Surveys of 2010 and 2011.

Key clients of the review are the YEN Secretariat, the YEN core partners, and Sida. A list of stakeholders and contact details will be provided to the evaluation team, upon selection.

4. Analytical Framework of Evaluation

The key evaluation questions to be addressed are:

1. Relevance and Strategic Fit

- a. To what extent is the project in line with beneficiary requirements, country needs, global priorities and donor policies?
- b. How significant is the project with regard to the global youth employment challenge?
- c. How well does this project complement and link to activities of other YEN donors?

2. Project Design

- a. Is the project design logical and coherent?
- b. Are intended outputs, outcomes and impact relevant, realistic, and clearly identified? Are there systems put in place to ensure adequate results measurement?
- c. Are direct and indirect beneficiaries defined?
- d. Have risks, assumptions and possible mitigation strategies been defined?

3. Project Progress

- a. What progress has the project made so far in achieving its outputs and outcomes? Will the project be likely to achieve its planned objectives upon completion?
- b. Is the project likely to have a sustainable impact?

- c. Which types of interventions or products have yielded the best results? In which areas does the project have the least achievements?
- d. Are the results of the project recognized by core partners and direct beneficiaries (governments, practitioners, youth organizations)?
- e. How well does YEN share its knowledge and information?

4. Efficiency of resource use

- a. How efficient/effective is the YEN Secretariat's use of financial resources?
- b. How effectively has the Secretariat used the human resources available through the key partners?
- c. Is the distribution of the resources between staff funding and activities optimal?

5. Project Management

- a. To what extent are the roles and responsibilities of the YEN Secretariat clearly defined?
- b. To what extent are the roles and responsibilities of the core partners defined?
- c. How have direct beneficiaries been selected and why?
- d. How does the YEN Secretariat as the key coordinator perform to achieve the intended results?
- e. Are the current structure of YEN and the staff mix of the Secretariat the most optimal to deliver?

6. Impact and sustainability

- a. How is YEN helping to develop scalable and replicable projects?
- b. How reasonable are the costs in relation to the results under the prevailing circumstances and given possible alternatives?
- c. How successful was YEN in mobilizing other resources – financial, human, political?
- d. To what extent is YEN playing a unique role in the youth employment arena?

7. Recommendations

- a. What are strengths of the project to build on?
- b. What actions should be taken for the remaining project duration to improve impact and sustainability?
- c. How could synergies among core partners be enhanced?
- d. Should the project be extended? What should be the framework for a potential extension?

5. Methodology

The requested services would include and depend on:

- Desk reviews of the project document submitted and approved by Sida, all project documentation, and any other relevant data sources,
- On-site interviews with YEN Secretariat in Geneva,
- On-site (ILO Geneva), online, phone or written interviews with YEN field staff, YEN core partners, selected direct beneficiaries, and Sida,
- A "Beneficiary Tracer Survey" distributed and completed by selected beneficiaries of YEN's three core programs: Lead Country Network, Youth-to-Youth Fund, and Evaluation Clinics. The objective of the survey is (1) collect suggestions and advice from beneficiaries on how to improve, (2) determine short term impact of YEN's work on beneficiaries. The survey would be sent out using a free web based survey tool. A first draft of the survey has already been completed by the YEN Secretariat.

- Review of YEN's support provided to three selected lead countries in order to make an assessment of the Lead Country Network and the work under the Benchmarking Exercise. No field visits are foreseen. The evaluator will select the three countries for the review from the following list and in consultation with the Evaluation Manager: Bangladesh, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ecuador, Egypt, Ghana, Indonesia, Jamaica, Liberia, Mali, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Sri Lanka, Syria, Tanzania, Togo, Turkey, Vanuatu, and Zambia,
- Review of the YEN Regional Office for West Africa, in particular, an assessment of the work of YEN under the Youth to Youth Fund in the Mano River Union. This assessment will include interviews with selected grantees. No field visits are foreseen,
- Review of YEN Evaluation Clinics with interviews with selected projects and resource people. No field visits are foreseen,
- Review of the YEN Marketplace with interviews with selected partners and potential users of the site.

It is expected that all conclusions by the external evaluator would be based on solid evidence that could include a combination of quantitative and qualitative approaches. The consultant will work closely with the evaluation manager at the ILO throughout the evaluation in order to agree on the approach before and during the assessment.

6. Management Arrangements, Deliverables and Timeline

The evaluator will report to Laura Brewer, Employment Sector, ILO, who will be the evaluation manager. The main deliverable of the evaluation will be a report (max. 25 pages excluding annexes) which complies with evaluation report quality standards of the ILO. The report will articulate lessons learned, good practices and recommendations. Further guidelines will be provided upon selection of the evaluator. A debriefing meeting will be organized after submission of the final report.

The preliminary timetable for the evaluation is:

- December 15, 2011: Selection of consultant
- December 19, 2011: Brief the selected consultant on the task
- January 4, 2012: Start of the assignment with briefing at YEN Secretariat in Geneva
- January 20, 2012: Submission of outline on the approach and work plan,
- February 15, 2012: submission of draft report
- March 20, 2012: submission of final report

7. Required Skills and Selection Process

The evaluator should have:

- Professional experience in conducting external evaluations for bi- or multilateral donors in technical cooperation,
- Working experience in employment/youth employment in developing countries,
- Fluency in English and French.

The selection of the consultant follows the criteria below:

	Percentage
Technical Evaluation	
Specific experience of the consultants related to the assignment	30
Adequacy of the proposed work plan and methodology in responding to the Terms of Reference	30
Qualifications and competence of the key staff for the assignment	20
Technical Evaluation Sub Total	80
Financial Evaluation Sub Total	20
TOTAL	100

8. Confidentiality

All data and information received from YEN and its core partners for the purpose of this assignment are to be treated confidentially and are only to be used in connection with the execution of these Terms of Reference. All intellectual property rights arising from the execution of these Terms of Reference are assigned to YEN. The contents of written materials obtained and used in this assignment may not be disclosed to any third parties without the expressed advance written authorization of YEN.

ANNEX (B) Evaluation Framework and Additional Questions

<p>Relevance and Strategic Fit</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent is the project in line with beneficiary requirements, country needs, global priorities and donor policies? • How significant is the project with regard to the global youth employment challenge? • How well does this project complement and link to activities of other YEN donors?
<p>Project Design</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the project design logical and coherent? • Are intended outputs, outcomes and impact relevant, realistic, and clearly identified? Are there systems put in place to ensure adequate results measurement? • Are direct and indirect beneficiaries defined? • Have risks, assumptions and possible mitigation strategies been defined?
<p>Project Progress</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What progress has the project made so far in achieving its outputs and outcomes? Will the project be likely to achieve its planned objectives upon completion? • Is the project likely to have a sustainable impact? • Which types of interventions or products have yielded the best results? In which areas does the project have the least achievements? • Are the results of the project recognized by core partners and direct beneficiaries (governments, practitioners, youth organizations)? • How well does YEN share its knowledge and information?
<p>Efficiency of Resource Use</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How efficient/effective is the YEN Secretariat use of financial resources? • How effectively has the Secretariat used the human resources available through the key partners? • Is the distribution of the resources between staff funding and activities optimal?
<p>Project Management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent are the roles and responsibilities of the YEN Secretariat clearly defined? • To what extent are the roles and responsibilities of the core partners defined? • How have direct beneficiaries been selected and why? • How does the YEN Secretariat as the key coordinator perform to achieve the intended results? • Are the current structure of YEN and the staff mix of the Secretariat the most optimal to deliver?
<p>Impact and sustainability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How is YEN helping to develop scalable and replicable projects? • How reasonable are the costs in relation to the results under the prevailing circumstances and given possible alternatives? • How successful was YEN in mobilizing other resources – financial, human, political? To what extent is YEN playing a unique role in the youth employment arena?
<p>Recommendations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are strengths of the project to build on? • What actions should be taken for the remaining project duration to improve impact and sustainability? • How could synergies among core partners be enhanced? • Should the project be extended? What should be the framework for a potential extension?

These questions were made to the list of respondents provided by YEN to CIDT, according to the numbered categories

I. LCN Questions

1. What do you see as the main purpose of the Lead Country Network?
2. What does your role as Focal Point involve?
3. To what extent has your country been an active participant in the LCN – what prevents more active participation?
4. What are the strengths of the LCN?
5. What are the weaknesses? What could be improved or added?
6. How useful/valuable do you find the benchmarking exercise for your country? (*why/why not*) How useful was YEN's Bench-marking tool (questionnaire) in preparing the report?
7. How useful/valuable do you find the LCN Meetings for your country? (*why/why not*)
8. How often do you use the LCN Groupsite? How useful/valuable do you find it?
9. How do you evaluate the quality of communication and support from the YEN Secretariat? (*Including feedback on country reports*)
10. To what extent does the information provided/collected through the Lead Country Network impact on youth employment in your country? (*policy/ lobbying/ revision of programmes etc*)

II. Questions for Y2YF Project Managers and Grantees⁷⁶

1. How did you hear about the YEN Youth to Youth Fund?
2. What did you see as the purpose of the fund? How did you feel your organisation/idea fitted with this?
3. Describe the process and stages your organisation went through in applying for/receiving the grant.

⁷⁶ Translated into French for Guinean respondents

4. How was your grant used/distributed? any delays (maybe this should come before) ?
5. What support did your organisation receive through the various stages of your project? From whom and what kind (sports)?
6. Communication/relationship with YEN
7. What has been the impact of your project on beneficiaries? How has it been monitored?
8. What has been the impact of the grant and capacity building on your organisation? Main successes?
9. How could your experience have been improved? Any weaknesses or major challenges?
10. What have been the lessons learnt through your experience?
11. Have there been opportunities to exchange learning or best practices with other projects supported through the Youth to Youth Fund?
12. Without this grant, would your organisation be where it is today? Would the project have been possible?
13. Has your involvement with YEN made it easier for you to raise funds from other organisations or donors?
14. What next for your organisation and this project?

II.1 Additional Questions for Y2YF Donors

1. What attracted you to support the YEN project and specifically Y2YF?
2. Were you happy with the level of feedback and reporting received?
3. What is the value added of working with and through YEN? (Related to 're-granting' issue)
4. Would you look to continue this working/funding relationship?

III. Questions on the Market Place

1. What are YEN's expectations of the MP?

2. What are the specific deliverables?
3. How can a user benefit directly from the MP?
4. Is the MP sustainable?

III.1 Questions for Evaluation Clinic Participants

1. How would you describe your experience in the EC? (satisfaction level)
2. Can you name specific benefits from the EC for you or organisation?
3. Are you a user/member of the Fund for Evaluation in Youth Employment (website)?
 - 3.1 If so, do you find the resources useful?
 - 3.2 Do you have any suggestions for improving the website?

III.2 Questions for Taqueem Fund EC (addition to EC Questions)

4. How do you define the Taqueem fund?
5. How would you describe the application process in MENA Clinics?

ANNEX (C) Evaluation Respondents

YEN staff

#	Respondent	Role	Interview conducted	Face to face / Telephone / Skype
1	Susana Puerto	YEN Manager	08.02.12	F2F
2	Drew Gardiner	Technical Officer	08.02.12	F2F
3	Zach Isdhal	Technical Officer	09.02.12	F2F
4	Yamila Simonovsky	Technical Officer	09.02.12	F2F
5	Tendai Pasipanodya	Consultant/Formal regional coordinator for YEN WA	24.02.12	S
6	Boubacar Diallo	YEN Officer for West Africa	27.02.12	Tel
7	Markus Pilgrim	Manager, SEED/Formal YEN Manager	09.02.12	F2F
8	Minna Matero	YEN regional coordinator for East Africa, Manager of the Youth to Youth Fund in East Africa	01.03.12	Tel
9	Sharon Kennedy	Consultant/Formal YEN CIDA Associate	01.03.12	S
10	Stefanie Weck	Former intern	28.02.12	S

Core Partner staff / SIDA

#	Respondent	Role	Interview conducted	Face to face / Telephone / Skype
1	Laura Brewer	Evaluation Manager / ILO	08.02.12	F2F
2	Jose Manuel Salazar	Director, Employment Sector/ILO Member of the YEN Steering Committee	08.02.12	F2F
3	Gianni Rosas	Coordinator, Youth Employment Program/ILO focal point for YEN	09.02.12	F2F
4	Mariela Buonomo	Youth Employment Specialist, ILO	09.02.12	F2F
5	Azita Berar	Director, Policy Department, ILO	09.02.12	F2F
6	Carla Henry	Sr Evaluation Officer / ILO	08.02.12	F2F
7	Margaretha Sungren	SIDA	27.02.12	Tel
8	Arup Banerji	World Bank Member of the YEN Steering Committee	2.03.12	Tel
9	Mattias Lundberg	World Bank focal point for YEN	13.03.12	Tel
10	Daniela Bas	UNDESA Member of the YEN Steering Committee	<i>Request denied</i>	
11	Sarangerel	UNDESA focal point for YEN	28.02.12	Tel

	Erdembileg			
12	Wendy Cunningham	World Bank, former Children and Youth Unit coordinator	13.03.12	Tel
13	Jens Christensen	ILO, former YEF Manager	15.03.12	Skype

Lead Country Network

#	Respondent	Role	Interview conducted	Face to face / Telephone / Skype
1	Mr Gamal Sorour	Undersecretary of Foreign Relations Department/YEN Focal Point Egypt	<i>Unobtainable</i>	
2	Mr Nuru Hamidan	Deputy National Coordinator/YEN Focal Point Ghana	1.03.12	Tel
3	Mrs Rahma Iryanti	Director of Manpower and Job Opportunities / YEN Focal Point Indonesia	<i>Unobtainable</i>	
4	Mrs Nilanthi Sugathadasa	Additional Secretary (Development) / YEN Focal Point Sri Lanka	<i>Unobtainable</i>	
5	Dr Issa Maldaoun	Deputy Minister of Social Affairs and Labour / YEN Focal Point Syria	24.02.12	Tel
6	Mrs Brenda Cuthbert	CEO Jamaica Employer's Federation / YEN Focal point Jamaica	29.02.12	Tel
7	Nicki Ferland	Former YEN CIDA Associate	27.02.12	Tel
8	Saskia Knight	Former YEN CIDA Associate	29.02.12	Tel
9	Raj Bidlar	Youth Affairs Division, Commonwealth Secretariat	28.02.12	Tel
10	Sarah Elder	ILO Technical Specialist / LCN Resource Person 2009 & 2011	13.03.12	Tel

Evaluation Clinics

#	Respondent	Role	Interview conducted	Face to face / Telephone / Skype
1	Inke Wiese	Clinic Participant /Geneva	22.02.12	Skype
2	Nathan Fiala	Clinic Resource Person/Beirut	24.02.12	Skype
3	Diaw Cheik	Clinic Participant /Turin	25.02.12	Skype
4	Osman Nour	Clinic Participant /Beirut	29.02.12	Skype
5	Jack Boyson	Clinic Participant /Beirut	<i>Unobtainable</i>	
6	Sarah Kouzi	Clinic Participant /Beirut	07.03.12	Skype

7	Perihan Tawfik	Clinic Participant /Beirut	<i>Request denied</i>	
8	Ghassan Baliki	Clinic Participant /Geneva	<i>Unobtainable</i>	
9	Charu Bist	Clinic Participant / Turin	<i>Unobtainable</i>	
10	Ozan Cakmak	Clinic Participant /Turin	29.02.12	Skype
11	Ramy Amin	Member of Taqueem's Community of Practice and Clinic Participant / Geneva	<i>Unobtainable</i>	
12	Willy Mathew	Member of Taqueem's Community of Practice and Clinic Participant / Geneva	<i>Request denied</i>	
13	Nick Van Der Jagt	Clinic Participant /Beirut	<i>Email address incorrect</i>	
14	Majd Haddad	Clinic Participant /Beirut	<i>Unobtainable</i>	
15	Kevin Hempel	Clinic Donor/World Bank	06.03.12	Skype
16	Justin Sykes	Focal point/Silatech	14.03.12	Skype
17	Alexander Kolev	Clinic Participant /Turin	01.03.12	Skype

Youth to Youth Fund

#	Respondent	Role	Interview conducted	Face to face / Telephone / Skype
1	Ms Sigrid Shenk-Dornbusch	Donor. Focal point in BMZ	06.03.12	Tel
2	Ms Julia Rohe	Donor Focal point in UNIDO	14.03.12	Tel
3	Ms Doris Hribernigg	Donor Focal point in UNIDO	<i>Unobtainable</i>	
4	Mr Toma Sithole	Donor. Focal point in IOC	<i>Request denied</i>	
5	Katia Mascagni	Department of International Cooperation & Development, IOC	15.03.12	Tel
6	Ms Ornella Lardaruccio	Project Officer, Department of International Cooperation & Development, IOC	15.03.12	Tel
7	Abdourahamane Sagnane	Y2YF National Coordinator – Guinea	<i>Unobtainable</i>	
8	Sitan Keita	Ex Y2YF National Coordinator – Guinea	06.03.12	Tel
9	Manuel Mattiat	Ex Field Officer UNIDO, Guinea	02.03.12	Tel
10	Kabba Papa Sesay	Y2YF National Coordinator – Sierra Leone	09.03.12	Tel
11	Alfred Jusu	Ex Project Assistant – Sierra Leone		Tel
Sierra Leone Grantees				
1	Kindi Bah	The Messeh Partnership Trust	12.03.12	Tel
2	Messeh Kamara	The Messeh Partnership Trust	27.02.12	Tel
3	Bockarie Senessie	Advocates for Human Empowerment and Development (AHEAD)	05.03.12	Tel

4	Oren T. James	Creative & Productive Youth Organisation	12.03.12	Tel
5	Kemoh Lansana	Baoma Chiefdom United Developmetn Association (BaCUDA)	06.03.12	Tel
6	Umaru Aruna	Artisan Blacksmithing Association	<i>Unobtainable</i>	
7	Ibrahim S. Moiguah	Artisan Blacksmithing Association	<i>Unobtainable</i>	
8	Dominic Andrew Boima	Polio Persons Development Association	08.03.12	Tel
9	Solomon S. Ngaojia	Yawbeko Civil Society Tegloma Association (TCSTA)	08.03.12	Tel
Guinea Grantees (Francophone)				
1	Mamadou Keita	Bouyan Bouyan Style	14.03.12	Responded to questionnaire
2	Faya Moïse Kamano	REC	10.03.12	Tel
3	Moussa Souare	Association pour le Développement Intégré en Guinée	Unobtainable	
4	Adolphe Monan Niéba	GENDAHI	8.03.12	Tel
5	Alain Kote Mbedouno	ANCG	8.03.12	Tel
6	Abdoulaye Salimatou Sylla	AJAKUS	15.03.12	Tel

ANNEX (D) List of Documents Reviewed

Output-related Documents

Lead Country Networks

1. Benchmarks on Youth Employment: An Initiative of YEN, Project Proposal August 2010
2. Guidelines on the Revised Lead Country Process (YEN April 2009)
3. 3rd YEN Lead Country Meeting: Establishing Benchmarks for successful Youth Employment Policies/ Programmes, Geneva, Switzerland, June 10 2008
4. 4th Lead Country Meeting: Benchmarking Tools and Best Practices in Youth Employment, Lusaka, Zambia, December 7-8 2009
5. 5th YEN Lead Country Meeting: Benchmarks and Good Practices in Youth Employment, London, UK, May 11-12 2011
6. Training Workshop on YEN Reporting Tools for Lead Countries: Report of Pilot Training Workshop, Jakarta, Indonesia, July 31 2009
7. Presentation of YEN Lead Country Reporting Tools: Youth Labour Market Indicators, Jakarta, Indonesia July 31st 2009

Youth to Youth Fund

8. Youth to Youth Fund in West Africa: A review of the Pilot Round (UNIDO and YEN, October 2011)
9. Selection Criteria for Youth to Youth Fund Grantees
10. Mid Term Evaluation of Youth to Youth Fund Projects, Guinea (July 2011)
11. Y2YF Guinea: Technical Cooperation Sprout (2010-2011)
12. Y2YF Sierra Leone: Technical Cooperation Sprout - BMZ (2011)
13. Sierra Leone Project Updates (October 2011)
14. Peer Review Meeting Recommendations for Sierra Leone Projects (October 2011)
15. The Youth to Youth Fund: Sierra Leone 2011
16. Improving Youth Employability through Sport: Progress Report (December 2011)

Evaluation Clinics

17. Beirut Evaluation Clinic: Final Report (YEN December 2010)
18. Nairobi Evaluation Clinic: Final Report (YEN November 2010)
19. Damascus Evaluation Clinic: Final Report (YEN July 2009)
20. Taqem Community of Practice: Monitoring, Evaluation and Impact Evaluation for the Youth Employment Community (2011)

YEN Quarterly and Annual Reports

21. Quarterly Reports to YEN Steering Committee 2010 (1st, 2nd and 3rd quarters)
22. Report to YEN Steering Committee: January-June 2011
23. Report to YEN Steering Committee: October 2011
24. Steering Committee Meeting Minutes: 24th January 2011
25. YEN Annual Report to Sida (2010)
26. YEN Annual Report to Sida (2011)
27. Development Grant Facility on 'Promoting Youth Employment and Employability': YEN Annual Activities Report to the World Bank (FY 2011)

YEN Project Documents

28. YEN Proposal to SIDA: Creating Employment Opportunities for Young People 2010-2012
29. Budget Overview: Sida Phase 3
30. Job Description: YEN Manager
31. YEN Portfolio (Funding Breakdown)
32. Mid Term Evaluation: Unleashing African Entrepreneurship Initiative - Youth Entrepreneurship Facility (July 2011)
33. YEN Beneficiary Tracer Survey Summary Report (March 2012)
34. YEN Marketplace Outreach Strategy

Websites

www.micromentor.org

www.imagine-network.org

www.skillsforlifework.com

www.yefa.nl

ANNEX (E) Participation and Performance

Lead Country Network members	Bench-marking exercise						Lead Country Meetings	
	4 years of consistent data available	Engaged in good dialogue over data submission (2011)	Report & data was complete & of good quality (2011)	Data submitted did not change from 2010 - 2011	Did not report 2011	Did not report 2010 or 2011	Participated Lead Country Meeting 2011 London	Participated Lead Country Meeting 2010 Zambia
DRC					X			X
Ghana				X	X		X	X
Liberia					X	X		X
Mali					X	X		X
Nigeria		X						X
Rwanda					X	X		
Senegal					X			X
Togo					X			
Tanzania		X		X				X
Zambia					X			X
Bangladesh		X		X			X	
Indonesia	X	X	X				X	X
Sri Lanka	X		X				X	X
Vanuatu					X		X	
Ecuador		X	X					X
Jamaica	X	X	X				X	X
Egypt	X	X	X				X	X
Syria	X	X	X					
Turkey	X	X	X				X	

of Lead Countries within the Evaluation Period

Annex (F) Organisations in receipt of I.E. Seed Funding

Sponsored Impact Evaluations

Country	Details	Value/Funding Body
Liberia	Evaluation designed and implemented by YEN of the Centre for Women's Development, a grantee of the pilot Y2YF in the Mano River Union.	US\$50,000 (World Bank)
Tanzania	BRAC received seed funding to finalize the evaluation of the Adolescent girls initiative. BRAC was a live case study of the Nairobi 2010 Clinic.	US\$48,416 (YEN)
Malawi	The World Bank and TEVETA received funding for the evaluation of the apprenticeship programme. The project was a live case study of the Nairobi 2010 Clinic.	US\$97,000 (YEN)
Uganda	YEN are giving a grant of to Educate! to participate in the large impact evaluation (designed by YEN and partners) of the revised entrepreneurship education curriculum in Uganda. Educate! was a live case study of the Kampala Evaluation Clinic in 2011.	US\$65,015 (YEN)
Morocco	Through Taqueem, YEN have passed a proposal to 3ie for an impact evaluation of MEDA Maroc's training programme.	US\$140,000 (US\$40,000 YEN; US\$100,000 3ie)
Jordan	INJAZ are designing an impact evaluation, to which Taqueem will provide technical assistance in addition to funding.	US\$40,000 (YEN through Taqueem)
Jordan	IYF are also considering an impact evaluation, to which Taqueem have committed funds.	US\$30,000 (YEN through Taqueem)

Sponsored M&E Systems

Ethiopia: Street Kids International received a YEN grant for US\$36,000 (previously a live case study for the Nairobi 2010 Clinic).

7 other organisation members of the Taqueem community of practice will receive financial assistance valued in the region of US\$30,000-40,000.

ANNEX (G) Record of Proposals Submitted

Resource Mobilisation by YEN Secretariat /PROPOSALS SUBMITTED 2010-11				
	Donor	Project title/focus	Result	Feedback (if any)on unsuccessful proposals
1	Finland	Replication of YEF in MENA region, in collaboration with ILO SEED	Unsuccessful	For the MENA region, Finland had a specific focus on women (not necessarily young). The ILO suggested alternate gender projects for funding.
2	Canadian CIDA	Youth to Youth Fund with emphasis on Morocco	Very promising - awaiting final approval from the Minister.	
3	Ford Foundation	Regional spring-off of LCN in West Africa	Unsuccessful	No feedback
4	Belgium	Promoting YE in Katanga Province, Congo – part of wider ILO proposal	Pending – some confidence it will go through	
5	European Commission via governments of Denmark & Sweden	To support the YEN Secretariat in general or the Youth-to-Youth Fund in Africa.		First response not encouraging
6	German Aid Ministry BMZ 2011	Support for Youth-to-Youth Fund in West Africa	Successful	
7	Jacobs Foundation	Supporting impact of YE programmes	Successful	
8	USAID	Impact assessment of entrepreneurship education programme, Uganda	Unsuccessful	No feedback
9	DFID/ESCR	Impact assessment of entrepreneurship education programme, Uganda	Unsuccessful	Feedback on the technical design of the impact evaluation. Relevance was highlighted but not enough to pass
10	Hewlett Foundation	Impact assessment of entrepreneurship education programme,	No proposal sent - informal talks	

Resource Mobilisation by YEN Secretariat /PROPOSALS SUBMITTED 2010-11				
	Donor	Project title/focus	Result	Feedback (if any)on unsuccessful proposals
		Uganda		
11	WB Development Grant Facility 2011	YEI; Marketplace & Fund for evaluation	Successful	
12	3ie	Promoting impact assessments	One application sent in 2010 unsuccessful. Two expressions of interest were accepted in 2012 and of them YEN submitted only one formal application - outcomes still pending.	
13	USAID	Promoting impact assessments	Pending results. Two proposals were sent for two different impact evaluations.	
14	Kauffman Foundation	Global promotion of youth entrepreneurship	Informal talks. No formal application because the Foundation only serves projects within the US.	
15	SEVEN Fund	Evaluation work East Africa	Unsuccessful	No feedback
16	John Templeton Foundation	Evaluation work East Africa	Unsuccessful	No feedback
17	Jacobs Foundation	Baseline survey for impact evaluation in Uganda	Successful	
18	Mastercard Foundation		Unsuccessful	Mastercard is looking for bigger organizations whose outputs are quickly visible to the world (PR motivated.) Mastercard suggested YEN partner with another organization describing ILO

Resource Mobilisation by YEN Secretariat /PROPOSALS SUBMITTED 2010-11				
	Donor	Project title/focus	Result	Feedback (if any)on unsuccessful proposals
				agreement process as too long. Mastercard encouraged YEN to submit new ideas - the Evaluation Clinics and Fund are very appealing, but MasterCard will be soon investing on impact evaluations through the World Bank.
19	Silatech	The Taqueem Fund	Successful	
20	Sida	In 2011, YEN approached Sida for continuation of their support to the YEN Secretariat – no official proposal submitted	Unsuccessful	Sida are happy with YEN's results and products but not keen on funding an initiative that does not receive support from its core partners. Funding will be transferred to ILO, who can decide to use such funding to support the YEN Secretariat if they wish.
21	BASF	Support to the Youth-to-Youth Fund in East Africa	Successful	
22	WB Development Grant Facility 2012	YEI; Fund for evaluation; Youth-to-Youth Fund; and Conference of the Partnership (www.gpye.org)	Successful	
23	Canadian CIDA – rounds 2011 and 2012	CIDA YEN Associates in partnership with the University of Winnipeg	Successful (both rounds)	
24	German Aid Ministry BMZ 2012	Support for Youth-to-Youth Fund in West Africa	To be submitted in mid March	
25	Danida	Replication of YEF in MENA region, in collaboration with ILO SEED	Pending	
26	Microsoft	In-kind contribution to the Youth-to-Youth Fund in East Africa	Successful	

ANNEX (H) List of current and past staff of YEN Secretariat

Staff	Title	2010	2011	2012
Marcus Pilgrim	YEN Manager			
Susana Gonzalez	YEN Manager/ Technical Officer			
Drew Gardiner	Technical Officer			
Stefanie Weck	Technical Officer		<i>Dec - Aug</i>	
David Rosello	Technical Officer	<i>6 months</i>		
Zach Isdhal	Technical Officer		<i>Sept - Mar</i>	
Yamilla Simonovsky	Technical Officer		<i>Oct - Feb</i>	
Tendai Pasipanodya	Sub-regional coordinator		<i>End Oct</i>	
Boubacar Diallo	YEN Officer for West Africa			
Minna Mattero	Regional Y2Y Fund Coordinator, YEF			
Fred Baseke	National Y2Y Fund Coordinator, YEF			
Noreen Toroka	National Y2Y Fund Coordinator, YEF			
CIDA Associates x 5			<i>6 months</i>	