Mr. Haseeb Al-Shukam
The YMN welcomes them and wishes them all success and prosperity in their works
for appointing her as the Director of Aden.
Ms. Najwa Fadil
rector of Tadhamon Microfinance
Mr. Abbas Al-Basha
for appointing him as the Acting Manag
Yemen Microfinance Network

CONGRATULATIONS & WELCOME

Yemen Microfinance Network Congratulates:
Mr. Haseeb Al-Shukam for appointing him as the Acting Managing Director of Nama’a MF Program.
Mr. Abbas Al-Basha for appointing him as the Managing Director of Tadhamon Microfinance.
Ms. Najwa Fadil for appointing her as the Director of Aden Microfinance Foundation.

The YMN welcomes them and wishes them all success and prosperity in their work.

NEW YOUTH SAVINGS PROGRAM LAUNCHED IN YEMEN

Sana’a, Yemen:
Silatech and the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH (GIZ) have signed an agreement with Al-Amal Microfinance Bank (AMB) and Al-Kuraimi Islamic Microfinance Bank (KIMB) in Yemen to provide financial access to tens of thousands of young Yemenis through an innovative new youth savings program.

The main objective of the program is to allow young Yemenis between the ages 18 and 30 to build their financial assets and encourage active saving. The initiative will enable young Yemenis aged 18-30 to build their financial assets by opening a youth-specific savings account at any AMB or KIMB branch across the country. Set to be available for youth by the end of summer 2012, these Youth Savings Accounts represent one of the largest new financial product deployments in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region.

In addition to directly serving youth in Yemen, the initiative is expected to catalyze other forward-thinking financial institutions and youth-serving organizations to think about helping young people to learn smart financial habits early on in life, as well as to make available savings schemes that will help them accumulate capital for starting a business, getting married, or help in other important life stages.

source: www.zawya.com

As YMN is keen to enhance & assess its performance, it contracted SEEP network to conduct the Network Capacity Assessment Tool (NCAT). The assessment focused on six main fields which are:
1) Governance.
2) Operations.
3) Financial validity.
4) Human Resource.
5) External Relations.
6) Service Delivery.

As a result, YMN got 2.1 out of 4. The NCAT stated that this score presents a significant achievement in a short time considering the fact that YMN is still an established network. YMN considers this as an incentive and catalyst score towards better performance.

Worth mentioning, important recommendations were determined by NCAT for YMN to improve its performance.

YMN ASSESS ITS PERFORMANCE

CONGRATULATIONS & WELCOME

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The YMN welcomes them and wishes them all success and prosperity in their work.

MEMBERS SPOTLIGHTS NEWS

Nama MF Program
• Awards 50 of its client trainees as part of the “female business owners” program Sana’a’s branches.
• Awards 30 distinguished clients with steady payments history within central Sana’a region.
• Conducted a seminar on Monday 07/05/2012 titled (the society’s role in pushing forward the development wheel, and improvement of economic and households incomes) the seminar discussed the following:
  - The role of microfinance programs and organizations in development, and its contributions toward poverty and unemployment reduction. (presented by Mr. Habis Al-Shukami - Nama’a Manager)
  - Abused women, and their role in development. Discussed by Mr. Ahmed Al-Zaizammi from GIZ
  - The role of youth in development. By Mr. Mohammed Al-Ribat – children & youth sector vice manager.

The fourth aspect of the seminar included two elements:
1) Women’s role in development and how women involved in businesses or own them are perceived by the society.
   - By Ms. Olfat Jumaan from Yemenat
2) The religious point of view on working women, and females managing their own businesses. Discussed by Mr. Mohammed Awazibi – Religion Lecturer at Sana’a University.

The seminar included a gallery of clients products including garments, fragrances, handicraft, antiques, national and Arabian cuisines prepared by clients. Also included fashion show of gowns designed and produced by clients, as well as hair styling and makeup services.

The event was attended by wide crowds from the microfinance industry, and was covered by the various media tools.

Bank Al-Amal
Held a ceremony to award its staff on the occasion of International Labor day. The ceremony was attended by Mr. Osama Al Shami, a member of the bank’s board of directors and Ms. Naja Al Muahid, Yemen Microfinance Network Acting Managing Director. The ceremony was held in May 3, 2012.

Abyan program
• Trained 100 clients in coordination with Soul Institute and Bina’a Centre. The training was supported by SMEPS. The war-affected branches were visited to train the displaced clients as well.
• President of Yemeni Women Union in Abyan and Abyan Program Manager visited Al-Mukalla and Al-Shehir Branches for evaluating their conditions and explore the ways to expand in the region.
Yemen Microfinance Network hosted a seminar on “Donors’ Role in Supporting Microfinance in Yemen” on Tuesday 29th May 2012, at YMN office. Participants included several donor organizations, and representatives of YMN member microfinance institutions in Sana’a. The session was devoted to discussing the main factors affecting the development and performance of the microfinance sector in Yemen, which included the following:

**Human Resources**

Where building the capacity of microfinance sector workforce and microfinance clients were discussed. On this particular factor, participants concluded some recommendations. Such as increasing donors’ support to strengthen the structure of training and capacity building, of MFI’s as small microfinance institutions are experiencing weakness in the training infrastructure compared to the larger ones. They also recommended the need to hold awareness raising meetings with clients prior to granting them loans and the need to prepare and provide clients with a guide book, since it is rather difficult to train all of microfinance clients. Finally, enhancing the role of the YMN and SMEPS in developing and re-habilitating qualified national trainers to train workers in the MF sector, as well as MF clients to manage their small and medium enterprises.

**Increase awareness of the Microfinance Concept**

In this challenge participants recommended the following:

- The necessity to increase awareness for all players in the sector, such as the General Investment Authority, Academic Institutions, and decision makers, not just promote to current and potential microfinance clients.
- Increasing financial awareness (Financial Inclusion), due to the strong correlation between financial inclusion and the offered microfinance services.
- Organizing an annual microfinance conference in Yemen which would lead to increased knowledge and awareness of the sector size and microfinance concept as a whole.
- Targeting government institutions and ministries which have links to microfinance and its effectiveness.

**Expansion**

Participants discussed important tools that could lead to expansion via providing mobile phone banking services. This tool provides easy expansion in the countryside, as it has been proven highly successful in Kenya, a country with similar conditions to Yemen. RGP (Responsive Governance Project, USAID funded Project) has mentioned that work is in progress within the framework of mobile banking.

**General Recommendation:**

The discussion session recommended the necessity to involve the government in the long term challenges & to include MF in the government plan. There is also a need to involve donors in the short term plans.

AL-AMAL MICROFINANCE BANK INAUGURATING A TRAINING PROGRAM “MICROFINANCE PIONEERS”

The Executive Director of Al Amal Microfinance Bank Mr. Mohammed Al-Laii officially opened the training program “Microfinance Pioneers” which is organized by the Training and Technical Assistance Management. The program was during the period 12-05-2012 – 15/06/2012. The program aims to raise awareness in Microfinance industry and building internal capacities of Microfinance practitioners. Mr. Abdo Humaid, the training manager, mentioned that the applicants for the course exceeded 800 applicants and only 56 of them were accepted to attend the course based on certain criteria.

It is worth mentioning that AMB has disbursed about 43,450 loan with a volume of 2.2 billion YER through which about 24,000 job-opportunity were created and benefiting about 177,000 beneficiary since the beginning of 2009 until April 2012.

THE YEMEN MICROFINANCE NETWORK ORGANIZED A WORKSHOP TITLED “CONSUMER PROTECTION GUIDELINES”

The Yemen Microfinance Network organized a workshop on the Consumer Protection guidelines during 12th May 2012. The workshop was attended by the MFI’s managing directors/their representative. The seven principles of the consumer protection guidelines mentioned below were presented in the workshop:

1. Appropriate product design and delivery.
2. Prevention of over-indebtedness.
3. Transparency.
4. Responsible pricing.
5. Fair and respectful treatment of clients.
6. Privacy of clients’ data.
7. Mechanisms for complaint resolution.

During the workshop, the participants discussed the importance of endorsing the smart campaign and protecting consumers in the Yemeni market. In addition to this, the participants exchanged their experiences that are related to the implementation of the consumer protection principles.

During December 2010, YMN signed an MOU with the smart campaign and the SEEP network to adopt this initiative in Yemen. Based on the MOU, YMN received a TOT training in consumer protection guidelines. The YMN conducted two training courses in “Consumer Protection Guidelines” (CPGs) in Sana'a and Taiz. 26 participants from MFI members attended the trainings. The trainees will be responsible for implementing the (CPGs) in their institutions.