

YEN Evaluation Clinic: Beirut



9-10 December 2010

Hosted by the Arab Urban Development Institute

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IMPORTANT: To gain access to the presentations and resources that accompany this report, request to become a member of the YEN Clinic groupsite at <http://yenclinic.groupsite.com>. Links contained within this report will only be accessible to registered member of the YEN Clinic groupsite. All Clinic participants qualify as members.

A. Background and context

In continuing its pledge of providing assistance on rigorous evaluation to its partners in the Middle East and North Africa, YEN delivered its third Evaluation Clinic in Beirut on 9-10 December 2010. Previously Clinics were held in Amman, Jordan in March 2009 and in Damascus, Syria in November 2009. The Clinic was delivered as a side event following the Arab Urban Development Institute Child Protection Initiative (AUDI CPI) conference “Children & Youth in the MENA Region: Towards Unleashing their Potentials” from 6-8 December. Funding for the event came from the World Bank and the Swedish International Development Agency.

YEN and impact evaluation

In the past two years, YEN has joined a host of players in the international community dedicated to improving the evidence based of effective policies and programmes through the use of impact evaluations. Impact evaluations provide unbiased, attributable evidence that a particular programme or policy has “worked”, showing “why” and “how” an intervention has been successful by comparing programme impacts against a counterfactual.

Unfortunately, the use of impact evaluation has been largely reserved for researchers, academics and high level technical experts and their application and has not necessarily been applicable for practitioners and programme people managing interventions. The reasons for this are understandable: impact evaluations are costly, technically demanding and their application is limited to few interventions with appropriate design features. This limits the usefulness of impact evaluation methodologies for practitioners as well as the opportunity for results and lessons learned to be applied.

Based on this assessment, YEN’s intervention in impact evaluations fulfils 2 distinct needs:

- 1) **The need to build the evidence base for effective programme design and delivery focused on the specific area of youth employment.** This will be achieved by providing technical and financial support to qualified impact evaluations.
- 2) **The need to build the capacity of youth employment practitioners to conduct rigorous evaluations.** This includes advising practitioners on evaluation designs that meet the needs and resources of their projects. The designs of most small and medium sized projects will not be conducive to an impact evaluation.

YEN Clinics

Technical assistance on conducting impact evaluation is delivered through YEN Evaluation Clinics. The Clinics teach practitioners about impact evaluation through application of evaluation principles to “live case studies” – youth employment projects who are currently in the process of conducting or designing an evaluation and need advice on how to improve. “Live case studies” are screened for technical quality and motivation before being invited to the Clinics. Advice is provided by the *Evaluation Taskforce*, a group of evaluation experts coming from YEN’s partners at the World Bank, 3ie, J-PAL, Dubai School of Government, Syria Trust for Development and others.

Beirut Clinic (see “Annex 3: Agenda” for links to lecture notes)

At the Beirut Clinic, four projects in the process of designing their impact evaluations were chosen as live case studies. Advice was provided to the four projects through a series of consultative working groups. Each working group was assigned two impact evaluation experts who were responsible for moderation and ensuring the results of the work were technically sound. The following pages recount the results of the four working groups:

- 1) INJAZ Success Skills project – 11 countries
- 2) Silatech and Al Amal Bank Youth Loan Fund – Yemen
- 3) International Youth Foundation’s YOUTH:WORK project – Jordan
- 4) Education for Employment Foundation’s Ezbet Yacoub Project – Egypt

B. Results of Working Groups

INJAZ

Success Skills Programme



Country: 11 countries across Middle East and North Africa

Project team: Ghadeer Zalatimo & Dima El-Kourni

Evaluation Taskforce: Paul Dyer (Dubai School of Government) and David Newhouse (World Bank)

Project description:

Success skills is a employability and life skills training programme development by Junior Achievement, a global organization helping disadvantaged youth find employment. JA Success skills Middle East partner, INJAZ offers the programme to high school students in 11 countries: Bahrain, Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine, Qatar, Tunisia, UAE and Yemen. Over 20,000 students participate in the programme. The programme was originally launched in the Middle East in 2005.

Evaluation design:

Evaluation questions: Does the Success Skills program improve the skills and attitudes/opinions of participants? Does the improvement in skills lead to better more and better jobs? Are participants able to apply skills to real life situations? Did the course have an effect on the peers and relatives of participants?

Selection strategy: Randomized selection of participating schools with matching of classes who receive treatment

INJAZ proposes to randomly select a treatment and control group of participating schools starting in 2011. The selection will be made based on a roster of eligible schools to be provided by the government. Participating classes within treatment schools will be selected based on a set of observable characteristics. By randomizing school selection, INJAZ will ensure that on average, prior to participation in Success Skills, treatment and control groups are identical and therefore would show very similar results in the absence of the treatment. A difference in results for the two groups can be causally attributed to the Success Skills.

Sample: 1000 students - 500 treatment and 500 control

Recommendations from Taskforce:

- An impact evaluation of Success Skills should follow closely an impact evaluation of the US Success Skills programme that was conducted in spring 2008 by JBS International/Aguirre Division, a third-party consulting firm based in Washington, D.C. The sample groups consisted of 26 program and 13 comparison classrooms from six different states. Although the evaluation did not

assess participant's employment outcomes, it did measure participant's knowledge gains, satisfaction with the programme, skills development and satisfaction of the teacher volunteers.

- An impact evaluation at this point would be useful only if there were plans to significantly scale up the programme. Currently the operating budget of the programme is only \$30,000, while the proposed evaluation would cost a minimum of \$50,000. Spending more funds on an impact evaluation versus the project budget can only be justified in a pilot phase when testing the model's feasibility for scale up is the main objective.
- The programme is designed to provide 7 hours of employability training per year per student over a series of years while in high school. Given that the benefits of the programme are delivered over a long period, it will be more difficult to attribute causality to this intervention.

Silatech and Al Amal Microfinance Bank Youth Loan Fund

Country: Yemen

Project manager: Justin Sykes (Silatech)

Evaluation Taskforce: Mattias Lundberg (World Bank) and Markus Pilgrim (YEN)

Project description:

The Youth Loan Fund is delivered in partnership with Al-Amal Microfinance Bank (AMB), a leading Yemeni micro-finance institution. The goals of the program are to increase self employment opportunities for young Yemenis through a package of sustainable financial and non-financial enterprise support services for start-ups and existing businesses and to assist young enterprises with the transition from micro-enterprise to small business through the provision of holistic and targeted enterprise support services. Since December 2009, over 5,300 young micro-entrepreneurs have been provided with formal financing through the Youth Loan Fund for the first time. These micro-loans, averaging US\$250, have been dispersed as working capital for micro-enterprises run by young people and an estimated 8,600 jobs have been sustained or created as result– more than five times the rate originally anticipated. The goal by 2013 is to provide credit to 50,000 young Yemeni entrepreneurs.

Evaluation design:

Research question: What are the labour market impacts of the intervention on a youth micro-entrepreneur compared to a micro- entrepreneur who did not get support through the AMB/Silatech Youth Loan Fund?

Identification strategy: either random encouragement or discontinuity regression

The preferred option is to use a random encouragement design. In the case of the Youth Loan Fund, it is not possible to randomize loan approvals (treatment group) because there is no outside control on who will receive loans. In other words, only those youth deemed “credit worthy” will be able to access loans. Instead of randomizing which youth will receive the loans, what will be randomized is the *encouragement or incentive* to receive the loans. This design will ensure that the evaluation does not interfere with AMB’s basic lending operations and its efforts to bolster market presence.

The encouragement or incentive will be a free savings account randomly offered to those young business owners or start up entrepreneurs who apply for a loan. This incentive is deemed not to effect outcomes of interest (ie. chances of starting a business) though it will increase the likelihood that recipients apply for a loan. By randomizing encouragement and carefully tracking outcomes for all those who do and do not receive the encouragement, it is possible to obtain reliable estimates of BOTH the encouragement (a free savings account) and the intervention itself (getting a loan to start a business).

Sample: 1000 sample size. The sample frame will be developed either by a snowball approach (client referrals), through the client database of partner business development service providers or through a household survey (door to door).

Comments from Taskforce:

- The taskforce provided advice to Silatech on the projects results chain resulting in changes to indicators at the output and outcome levels. The taskforce recommends Silatech to review these changes with the wider project stakeholders.
- The loans levels can go from \$50 - \$500 per young person. The evaluation should consider applying a minimum loan level to be considered as part of the evaluation. This could increase the chances of positive attribution.
- The evaluation should explore how to verify that all participants are first time lenders are not accessing other credit mechanisms in parallel. Parallel lending activities could result in contamination of the selected sample.

International Youth Foundation

Youth : Work Programme

Country: Jordan

Project team: Jack Boyson and Nicolas Musa

YEN Evaluation Taskforce: Nader Kabbani (Syria Trust for Development) and Drew Gardiner (YEN)

Project description

Youth: Work Jordan (YWJ) is a five year, \$30 million project funded by USAID and designed and managed by the International Youth Foundation (IYF). The program is conducted in partnership with the Jordanian Ministry of Social Development (MOSD) and overseen and implemented by a network of Coordination NGOs (CNGOs) and Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) working in the 6 target communities of East Amman, Zarqa, Irbid, Russeifa, Jordan Valley, and Ma'an.

YOUTH:WORK Jordan has 4 main components (targeted number of beneficiaries in brackets):

1. Life, employability, and entrepreneurship skills training (4,400 beneficiaries)
2. Provision of youth-friendly services (TBD)
3. Youth civic engagement to support improved environment and infrastructure (3,850 beneficiaries)
4. Youth employability models, practices, and policies (TBD)

Evaluation design

Evaluation questions: Does comprehensive employability training in career planning, life skills, english, IT, technical skills & entrepreneurship enable Jordanian youth to get jobs ? Does Youth: Work Jordan need to add an additional sub-component on basic literacy?

Identification strategy: randomized control of communities with matched comparison of participants

Youth:Work Jordan will concentrate its evaluation on component 1 of the programme: life, employability and entrepreneurship skills training. Currently, the programme is working in 6 target communities with plans to scale up its intervention to 14 communities in 2012. The addition of 8 new communities provides an opportunity to evaluate a fresh sample of young participants. The government will provide Youth:Work with a list of 16 eligible communities of which 8 will be randomly chosen into a treatment and control group.

The selection of individual participants within the communities will be done through door to door surveys. Participants with at the following 4 observable characteristics will be eligible for the programme: out of school and out of work, between 15-25 years old, currently residing within target communities.

The baseline will be conducted in early 2012, then 4-6 months of training, followed by an endline survey 6 months after programme completion.

Sample size: 3000 treatment group. Control group to be determined on power calculation

Comments from taskforce:

- Ensure that the eligibility communities all come from either a rural or an urban setting which will provide more similarities between the groups
- The idea to go for community random selection versus individual random selection is a good one as there is a risk that eligible individuals within the villages are too different. Also, contamination would be difficult to stop as the communities are small and there is a risk of high levels of contact between control and treatment groups.
- Recommendation to investigate working with an external research firm who can help with survey design, data collection and analysis.



Education for Employment Foundation

Ezbet Yacoub Project

Country: Egypt

Project team: Marwa Rushdy & Riham Hilmy

Evaluation Taskforce: Nathan Fiala (Consultant) and Kevin Hempel (World Bank)

Project description

The EFE-Egypt program is a two-year pilot project. The project has two components: employability training for young men and entrepreneurship training for young women. The objective of the young women's component is to create business opportunities for 200 unemployed women residents in the village of Ezbit Yacoub (5,000 population) in the governorate of Beni Suef. Small enterprises will be created to produce handicrafts that will be sold through an online platform called <http://www.Souq.com>

The project will train young women with the skills needed to start businesses to produce and sell handicrafts. The training program will include a number of components: business skills and entrepreneurship training (120 hrs), ICT training (50 hrs), financial Literacy (30 hrs), Souq.com process (10 hrs) and handicraft production and design (60 hrs).

After the women complete the training program, they will create prototypes to be showcased on the souq.com website. Souq.com will hire a coordinator to assist the small handicraft start-ups with the internal processing of shipments and payments.

Evaluation design

Evaluation question: Does the project lead to business creation, increased incomes, increased employment, and job opportunities for other women not participating in the project? Does the project lead to increased knowledge of both participants and non-participants?

Selection method: Randomized control trial – pipeline

EFE proposes to use a randomized control evaluation, selecting at random eligible participants into a control and treatment group. A sample frame will be developed by announcing the project in the village the having interested candidates complete an application form. Candidate applications will be filtered according to identified EFE- Egypt criteria. Applicants who meet the identified criteria will be interviewed to determine eligibility for the proposed program.

The project will follow a “pipeline” design where each eligible participant will receive the training but will be divided into two cohorts and receive the training at 2 different phases. Participants in the first cohort (training Nov 2011 – Jan 2012), are selected into the treatment and control group and are given the baseline survey. Three months after the first cohort has finished the training (January 2012), the follow up survey is conducted. Based on the finding and lessons of the evaluation, improvements are

added to the programme. In the second cohort (training May – July 2012), the control group becomes the treatment group and receives the training.

Sample size: 500 applications are expected and from this, 200 treatment and 200 control will be randomly assigned.

Recommendation from taskforce

- The small size of the village (5000 residents) means there will be spillovers (effects on unintended beneficiaries). The impact of the spillover will be difficult to measure unless the randomization method used is specifically designed to measure the spillover. An alternative strategy to account for this is to randomize at the village or economy level instead of at the individual level. Are there villages in the area that could be included as a control group?
- The small size of the village presents significant risk of contamination between treatment and control groups.
- The recommendation from the taskforce is to not go for a RCT for this intervention unless there are plans for significantly scale up and randomization is done at village level instead of individual level.

C. Conclusions and follow-up

The workshop produced impact evaluation concept notes for each of the four case studies resulting from recommendations and advice of the evaluation specialists. Three of the four evaluations are at the conceptual phase and further work needs to be done to refine the evaluation plans before going to implementation. One of the evaluations, Silatech's Youth Loan Fund, has started collecting baseline data and is expected to rollout the evaluation in early 2011.

While advice was given on how a rigorous evaluation *should* be designed, YEN clearly advises projects that are not ready for an impact evaluation or who have a project design inappropriate for an impact evaluation. Projects that should not conduct impact evaluation include project with the following features:

- Small budgets (under ~US\$100,000 annual operating budgets)
- Small participation sizes
- Discouragement designs such as child labour
- Projects in advanced stages where no reliable data is available

YEN will continue providing technical support for the impact evaluations, offering the following types of support:

- Review of full evaluation plans
- Advice on where to source funding for impact evaluation
- Sharing of key evaluation material: example questionnaires and terms of reference for survey firms and principle investigators
- Membership to YEN's groupsite (<http://yenclinic.groupsite.com>) which shares resources, materials and provides access to evaluation experts
- Discussions have begun with regional partners to provide financial support for the impact evaluations starting in 2011

Annex 1: [Link to Clinic photos](#)

Annex 2: Participants' Evaluation

Participants were asked to fill out a 2-pages evaluation form to state their opinion about the workshop and to come up with improvements for future YEN Evaluation Clinics.

1- Distribution of participants by professional background

Project staff of a live case study discussed during the clinic	
External participant from an NGO	
External participant from a government agency	
External participant from a multilateral organization	
Resource person	
Total	33

2- Clinic effectiveness

	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent	NA	Total
Achievement of stated objectives	0%	3%	70%	27%	0%	100%
Quality of planning results	0%	6%	52%	39%	3%	100%
Design and organization of the Clinic	0%	3%	36%	61%	0%	100%
Methodology applied	0%	12%	42%	45%	0%	100%
Your overall rating of the Clinic	0%	3%	61%	36%	0%	100%

3- Resource People Effectiveness

	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent	NA	Total
State of preparation	0%	9%	39%	42%	9%	100%
Resource people knowledge of topics	0%	3%	39%	48%	9%	100%

Resource people ability in presenting lectures	0%	15%	52%	24%	9%	100%
Interaction within the group	0%	6%	27%	55%	12%	100%
Your overall rating of the resource people	0%	3%	45%	42%	9%	100%

4- Clinic Administration

	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent	NA	Total
Preparation of the Clinic	0%	0%	39%	58%	3%	100%
Suitability of the training venue	3%	3%	48%	42%	3%	100%
Suitability of the time schedule	0%	18%	36%	42%	3%	100%
Quality of catering	0%	3%	48%	45%	3%	100%

5- Overall comment on the Clinic

- I would have made more time for the technical discussions and would have tried to be more structured about it. I believe this would have improved the learning process.
- Useful knowledge sharing experience. I welcomed the presence of a solid body of Impact evaluation expertise.
- better to spend more time on the outcome logic model, also better to present several viable Evaluations models particularly for those organisations on a shoestring budget not just the so-called gold standards model.
- Variation among presentations + capacity of experts
- As a participatory approach Clinic it wasn't at best participatory! The workshops in group work were not discussions but lead by the "teacher". It was disappointing to not have been given the chance to share opinions + expertise. I was in the EFE group and Jack was an excellent facilitator but others took a more dictator approach and this undermined other experts in the group.
- But the Lunch time was very early. This is my first participation in such a workshop. I found it interesting. I learnt a lot. The practical work + examples are v. efficient.
- For audience with low level of experience, 2 days is not enough to go into the details of the evaluation.
- It is very interesting and useful workshop
- Planning for the Clinic was perfect among most dimensions. However, the 2 lecturers (Paul, Nathan) might be a way improved to be suitable for one hour session. (p.s. I respect them and their experience a lot :!)

- It was interesting meeting with different people from different organizations. I was very useful to have live cases to discuss.
- It is very beneficial for me in terms of knowledge sharing, it gave me more self confidence about background and knowledge I had in addition of new knowledge and practice I gained.
- Very efficient. Time was well divided. Moderators & facilitators were excellent. All staff was helpful & willing to help in a possible way.
- Well planned & organized, useful to apply (or) even think about it.
- The Clinic was good, the topics were interesting but some of the presentations were not explicit
- Pretty good. I think it is always informative and helpful for both resource people and NGO M&E people to interact.
- Very well organized. Nice mix of activities. Room for improvements in content of presentations (standardize?)
- best to organize speakers beforehand to avoid overlap in topics
- Suggest a second round (advanced one) for the same group if they like
- Excellent planning + implementation of schedule!
- I recommend for the next time Dr Nader Kabbani to be a speaker. I think he has many useful ideas about evaluations

6- Would you recommend this clinic to a colleague or peer policy maker or practitioner working on youth employment and entrepreneurship issues?

Yes	No	Maybe	N/A	Total
91%	3%	3%	3%	100%

7- Would your organization be willing to host or partner with YEN in the implementation of an evaluation clinic in 2011?

Yes	No	Maybe	N/A	Total
64%	21%	3%	12%	100%

8- What suggestions do you have for improving the clinic program?

- Perhaps more realistic/pragmatic understanding on ground realities of project delivery and how this impacts the design and relevance pf IE methodology

- See note previously, overall this Clinic was quite good and technical review of IYF evaluations was excellent.
- How many of these projects have been launched?
- Provide resources (websites, hard-copies, etc) on M&E to take home for participants.
- It needs more time for presentations
- Having more lecturer on topics
- I wish we have a longer course cause I feel that moderators & facilitators had a lot to give during the course.
- A more simple explicit presentation.
- 1. YEN could start hiring its own resource people 2. The Evaluation methods could be a bit less technical 3. Useful to have resource people with experience.
- Better utilization of tools (multimedia), hard copies of all materials.
- Keep the same experts. They are wonderful and very professional
- Maybe have shorter sessions & increase number of days. This will help in keeping people more focused.
- I suggest another day of training for more rigorous technical issues of Impact Ev.
- Ensure follow-up with participants regarding Impact Evaluations discussed. Sharing reading material beneficial for sampling and IE implementations.
- All break groups should have access to an overhead projector. Thank you.

ANNEX 3: PARTICIPANTS LIST

Prefix	First Name	Last Name	Organization	Email
Mr.	Mohammed	Abdallah	King Saud University	mabdallah@kai.org.sa
Ms.	Nadine	Abdel Khalek	Association of Lebanese Industrialists	ak.nadine@gmail.com
Mr.	Mohamed A R	Abdul Waheed	MENA Chind & Youth Initiative	awaheed@menacpi.org
Ms.	Amale	Abi Harb	Municipality of Chiyah	amaleabiharb@hotmail.com
Mr.	Mustafa	Abou Atieh	Human Call Association	humancal@gmail.com
Ms.	Hanan	Al Khatib	Human Call Association	finance.hca@gmail.com
Mrs.	Naseem	Al Maliki	Sana'a Child Protection Initiative	naseem-ahmed06@hotmail.com
Ms.	Fareah	Al Saqqal	LoYAC	f.alsaqqaf@loyac.org
Ms.	Suad Abdullatif	AL Suwaidan	Kuwaiti Organzation for childhood and motherhood	suad-888@hotmail.com
Ms.	Leen	Al Zaibah	Syria Trust	l.alzaibak.shabab@syriatrust.org
Mr.	Mohammed	Al-Halabi	Municipality of Gaza	mhalabi@mogaza.org
Mr.	Mahmood	Aljahdhami	Dorrat Alarab Althahabiah	aljahdhami.mkn@hotmail.com
Ms.	Masa	Al-kurdi	Syria Trust for Development	m.alkurdi@syriatrust.org
Mr.	Rami	Allaw	YMCA -Lebanon	rami_allaw@hotmail.com
Mr.	Waleed	Al-Mobsen	Ministry of Social Development	
Ms.	Maha	Alshaikh	Arab Gulf Programme for Development	al-shaikh@agfund.org
Mr.	Ibrahim	Al-Turki	AUDI - CPI	ialturki@menacpi.org
Ms.	Hiba	Ayad	Municipality of Chiyah	hiba1956@hotmail.com
Mr.	Laurent	Badaoui	Mouvement Social	mouvementsocial@mouvementsocial.org
Mr.	Jack	Boyson	International Youth Foundation	j.boyson@iyfnet.org
Miss	Douha	Chamma	YMCA	douha_chamma@hotmail.com
Mr.	Paul	Dyer	Dubai School of Government	paul.dyer@dsg.ac.ae
Mr.	Ihabahmad	El Hajj	Nafa Foundation	ihabhajj@yahoo.com
Mr.	Elie	El Kai	CYI	eelkai@menacpi.org
Mr.	Mr. Maeen	Elaryani	Education for employment-yemen	ceo_yemen@efefoundation.org
Miss	Annabelle	Fanj	Loyac	carolinefanj@hotmail.com
Mrs.	Lina	Farah	lebanese union for child welfare	lynnpallass@hotmail.fr
Mr.	Mohmoud	Faraq	Al-Nahdan Social Association	
Mr.	Ahmed	Fattouh	Aleppo City Council	firasmari66@gmail.com
Mr.	Nathan	Fiala	World Bank	nvfiala@worldbank.org
Mr.	Drew	Gardiner	YEN	gardiner@ilo.org
Mrs.	Roula	Ghemrawi	Ribat Association	lalou000@hotmail.com

Mrs.	Lady	Habchy	The International management & training isntitute (IMTI)	ladyhabchy@imtimed.com
Ms.	Majd	Haddad	The Syria Trust for Development	majd.haddad@gmail.com
Mrs.	Esraa	Haidar	MH Consulting	esraa.haidar@gmail.com
Mr.	Wida	Hamarawi	Arab Urban Development Institute	whamarawi@araburban.org
Mrs.	Farah Hammoud	Hammoud	Ministry of Social Affairs	fara77md@hotmail.com
Mrs.	May	Hasbini	Al moasat Association	mayhasbini@hotmail.com
Ms.	Hala	Helou	Ministry of Social Affairs	helou_hala@hotmail.com
Mr.	Kevin	Hempel	World Bank	khempel@worldbank.org
Miss	Ghadir	Houmani	YMCA	ghadirhoumani@gmail.com
Mr.	Nader	Kabbani	Syria Trust for Development	n.kabanni@syriatrust.org
Mr.	Hani	Khanafer	VINTOB	hanikhanafer@yahoo.com
Ms.	Sarah	Kouzi	Mercy Corps	skouzi@lb.mercycorps.org
Mr.	Mattias	Lundberg	World Bank	mlundberg@worldbank.org
Mr.	Elie	Maaiki	Ymca-Lebanon	station68@live.com
Miss	Mayssa	Makhlouf	LoYAC	m.makhlouf@loyac.org
Mr.	Jean	Makhoul	Lana Al Mostakbal	lanamost@hotmail.com
Miss	Rachel	Mallah	UN Habitat	rachelmallah@hotmail.com
Ms.	Rana	Massood	Syria Trust	r.masood.shabab@syriatrust.org
Mr.	Afonso	Mendonca Reis	Swisscontact	afonso.reis@swisscontact.ch
Mr.	Nicola	Musa	International Youth Foundation	n.musa@iyfnet.org
Mrs.	Janine	NAUFAL	YMCA-Lebanon	jenny-naufal@hotmail.com
Miss	Julie	Ndwiga	Progress Management Consultants	ndwigajulie@yahoo.com
Mr.	David	Newhouse	World Bank	dnewhouse@worldbank.org
Prof.	Osman	Nour	AUDI	onour@menacpi.org
Mr.	Markus	Pilgrim	YEN	pilgrim@ilo.org
Ms.	Marwa	Rushdy	EFE	mrushdy@efefoundation.org
Miss	Nadine	Saba	YMCA-Tripoli	nadinesaba@gmail.com
Mr.	Justin	Sykes	Silatech	jsykes@silatech.com
Ms.	Perihan	Tawfik	ILO	tawfik@ilo.org
Mr.	Hrayr	Wannis	UNICEF	hwannis@unicef.org
Ms.	Laetitia	Weibel	International Labour Organization	weibel@ilo.org
Ms.	Ghadeer	Zalatimo	INJAZ	ghadeer.zalatimo@injaz-arabia.org
Mrs.	Hiba	Zunji	Bader Young Entrepreneurs	hiba.zunji@yahoo.com

ANNEX 4: Agenda

Day 1: Thursday, 09 Dec 2010

<u>Time</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Presenter s</u>
8:30 – 9:00	Registration/Check-in	
9:00 – 9:30	Welcome statement with Round of Introductions Socio metric introduction: connect participants and topic	Drew Gardiner, YEN
9:30 – 9:45	Opening & Presentation of Programme Placement of event in broader field	Ibrahim Al Turki, AUDI-CPI Markus Pilgrim, YEN Mattias Lundberg, World Bank
9:45 – 10:30	<u>Why Impact Evaluation?</u> - Why evaluate? - The impact of impact evaluations - How to implement an impact evaluation? – introduction	Paul Dyer, Dubai School of Government
10:30 – 11:00	Coffee break	
11:00 – 12:00	Project Marketplace Live case studies introduce projects and evaluation plans. Participants rotate amongst project presentations.	<u>Facilitator:</u> Drew Gardiner, YEN <u>Presenters:</u> -INJAZ: Ghadeer Zalatimo -Silatech: Justin Sykes -IYF: Nic Musa -EFE: Marwa Rushdy -AUDI/YMCA: Janine Naufal
12:00 – 13:30	Lunch	
13:30 – 13:50	<u>Refresher on Results Chain and Intro to Groupwork</u> - Monitoring and evaluation: different but complementary - Building a results chain	Markus Pilgrim, YEN
13:50 – 16h00	Parallel Live Consultations (Part 1): Results Chain, indicators and research question Groups begin work on their concept notes: building the results chain	-INJAZ: Paul Dyer (DSG) and David Newhouse (World Bank) -Silatech: Mattias Lundberg (World Bank) and Markus Pilgrim (YEN) -IYF: Drew Gardiner (YEN) & Nader Kabbani (Syria)

<u>Time</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Presenter s</u>
	<u>Includes coffee break</u>	Trust) -EFE: Nathan Fiala (World Bank) & Jack Boyson (IYF)
16:00 – 16:15	Debrief and End	

Day 2: Friday, 10 December 2010

<u>Time</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Presenters</u>
9:00 – 9:10	Opening	
9:10 – 10:30	Measuring Impact Overview of different evaluation methods	Nathan Fiala, World Bank
10:30-11:00	Coffee break	
11:00 – 13:00	Parallel Live consultations (Part 2): Selection of Valid Method and data collection and draft budget Participants break into 4 working groups	-INJAZ: Paul Dyer (DSG) and David Newhouse (World Bank) -Silatech: Mattias Lundberg (World Bank) and Markus Pilgrim (YEN) -IYF: Drew Gardiner (YEN) & Nader Kabbani (Syria Trust) -EFE: Nathan Fiala (World Bank) & Jack Boyson (IYF)
13:00 – 14:30	Lunch	
14:30 – 16:00	Summary: What do the evaluation plans look like? Report on evaluation question, indicators, data collection and methodology for the 4 live case studies	-INJAZ: Ghadeer Zalatimo (link to CN) -Silatech: Justin Sykes (link to CN) -IYF: Nic Musa (link to CN) -EFE: Marwa Rushdy (link to CN)
16:00 – 16:30	Coffee	
16:30 – 16:45	Next steps - What are the next steps for the projects? - What support to expect from taskforce?	Markus Pilgrim, YEN
16:45 – 17:00	Clinic's evaluation and closing	

Annex 5: Impact evaluation resources

- [Wikipedia on impact evaluation](#)
- [Judy Baker 'Evaluating the Impact of Development Projects on Poverty: A Handbook for Practitioners'](#)
- [Howard White \(2007\) 'Evaluating Aid Impact', Research Paper No. 2007/75, UNU-WIDER](#)
- [Rebekka E. Grun, 'Monitoring and Evaluating Projects: A step-by-step Primer on Monitoring, Benchmarking, and Impact Evaluation'](#)
- [Michael Bamberger \(2006\) 'Conducting Quality Impact Evaluations Under Time and Budget Constraints', World Bank, Washington USA.](#)
- [Martin Ravallion \(1999\) 'The mystery of the vanishing benefits: Ms Speedy Analyst's introduction to evaluation', Policy Research Working Paper 2153, World Bank, Washington, USA](#)