

**SYLP
Somalia Youth
Livelihood Program**

QUARTERLY REPORT
(July 1 to September 30, 2009)

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AOTR	Agreement Office Technical Representative
EDC	Education Development Center
HAVOYOCO	Horn of Africa Volunteers Youth committee
LRC	Local Resource Centre
LPSAC	Local Private Sector Advisory Council
Shaqodoon	Somali for jobseeker (Other name for SYLP)
SWOT	Strength Weakness Opportunity & Threat
SYLP	Somali Youth Livelihood Program
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VTET	Vocational Technical Education Training

EDC Somali Youth Livelihood Program (SYLP) Quarterly Report
July 2009 - September, 2009
Associate Cooperative agreement No. 623-A-00-08-00053-00

I. Executive Summary

This period marks the fourth quarter of the implementation of the Somali Youth Livelihood Program /*Shaqodoon*, a program whose goal is to add to the stability and development of all regions of Somalia by engaging Somali youth in market-driven employment opportunities.

The fourth quarter of implementation built upon the achievements and learnings of the first three quarters, completing several key tasks such as establishing three local resource centers, creating two local private business advisory councils, launch of the program in Burao and Las Anod, signing partnership agreements with 17 more NGOs and training institutions. The 17 partners target to recruit a total of 1238 youth which bring the total award targets by all 20 sub-awardees to 1600 youth. EDC did training for all partners on their roles and responsibilities, EDC policies and procedures and the technology component of the project. In addition, so far a total of 31 youth have had the opportunity for either part-time employment or internships with private clinics, local authorities, electric companies, etc., as a result of the program.

The extension and expansion proposal to expand to Puntland and South Central and extend in Somaliland was developed and submitted to USAID. EDC's work on preparing for the expansion was "fast tracked" during this reporting period to assist in a speedier launch of sub-awards awards in the new regions after October 1st. Through an Expression of Interest initiative, we completed brief capacity assessments of potential partners to deliver on the various components of the SYLP project design. We asked questions on NGO staffing, board membership, training expertise, financial management and accounting, reporting, organizational assets and resources, and past experience with international awards. EDC senior staff traveled to Mogadishu, Garowe and Bosaso to conduct in-person follow-up interviews with the high-scoring expression of interest applicants. The International Project Director with the EDC Somali Country Director also conducted meetings with USAID and others in Nairobi to assess VTET organzaions.

Among notable challenges is the continuous insecurity in Mogadishu that hampered field visits to potential partners. Sub-award monitoring reports of implementing partners in Somaliland also indicated challenges in reaching and recruiting more girls, especially in Hargeisa.

In the next quarter, Shaqodoon will open additional offices, recruit staff and launch new subawards in Puntland and Mogadishu, while in Somaliland, the project will continue implementation work with current partners, especially in trainings, certification of graduated trainees and continue to offer work placement opportunities and accompaniment for the graduates.

II. Program Achievements

Successful project implementation achievements during this reporting period included:

1. Implementing Partners selected.

- a) EDC entered into partnership with 17 more local non-governmental organizations, learning institutions and private established business entities. These new partners will recruit a total of **1238** youth to be trained and linked to market driven opportunities for the next six months. The total sub-award amount allocated to these 17 partners is US \$**224,597**. These 17 new partnerships bring the total of Shaqodoon partners to 20 with a total targeted reach of 1600 youth.

Table1. SYLP new partners [cohorts 2 & 3]

	Name	Location	Targeted no. of trainees
1	UNIVERSITY OF BURAO	Burao	120
2	SIITCO COLLEGE	Burao	60
3	CANDLELIGHT	Burao	80
4	SOLIDARITY YOUTH VOLUNTRY ORGANISATION (SOYVO)	Burao	50
5	LYVO (LINK YOUTH VOLUNTRY ORGANISATION)	Lasanood	50
6	ILAYS ACADEMY	Lasanood	120
7	UNIECO	Hargeisa	100
8	SOMALILAND YOUTH DEVELOPMENT & VOLUNTRY ORGANISATION (SOYDAVO)	Burao	50
9	UNIVERSITY OF NUGAAL	Lasanood	70
10	LYVWP (LASANOD YOUTH VOCATIONAL WORKSHOP PROJECT)	Burao	60
11	TOGDHEER YOUTH VOLUNTRY ORGANISATION (TOGYOVO)	Burao	60
12	HADHWANAAG	Hargeisa	85
13	SONYO	Hargeisa	60
14	SOOYAAL	Hargeisa	70
15	ANDP	Hargeisa	60
16	RDF	Hargeisa	63
17	COMMITTE OF CONCERNED SOMALIS (CCS)	Burao	80
	Total no. of trainees in 2 nd & 3 rd cohorts		1238

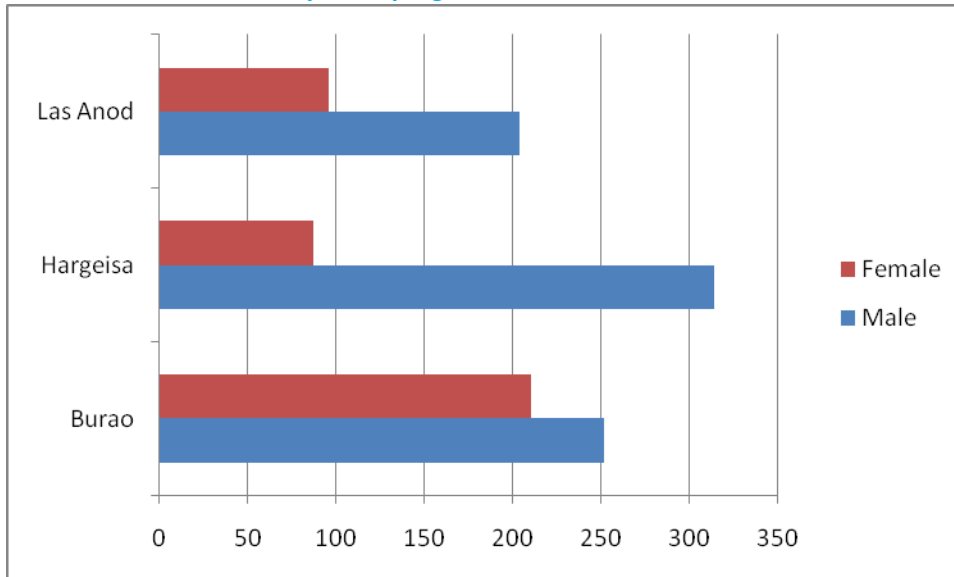
Table 2 – Awardees from prior reporting period [Cohort 1]

1	University of Hargeisa	Hargeisa	247
2	HMTU	Hargeisa	50
3	Jamuurihaaya	Hargeisa	65
	Total – 1 st cohort		362
	Total All Youth		1600

2. Youth Recruitment.

The new Shaqodoon partners began youth selection and recruitment for the second and third cohorts during the reporting period. The selection and recruitment of youth registration was done in a transparent manner through both print and electronic media by the partners. Youth were invited to apply for the trainings, tested and successful youth were shortlisted and announced through the same media. Youth recruitment is ongoing and planned to be completed by October 30, 2009. A total of **762** youth were recruited during the reporting period.

Chart 1. Data on recruited youth by regions



3. Three Local Resource Centers established.

Shaqodoon, through partnership with local non-governmental organizations, established three youth resource centers in Burao, Las Anod and Hargeisa. The Livelihood Opportunities Resource Centres are in partnership with local non governmental organizations.

In Hargeisa, Shaqodoon entered into partnership with Horn of Africa Voluntary Youth committee (HAVOYOCO) to use their multipurpose youth centre to counsel and mentor SYLP supported trainees. Through this partnership it is envisioned that youth will benefit through support, guidance and trainings to make successful transitions to employment, internships, self employment and apprenticeships. The youth will also benefit from and

enjoy the recreational, cultural and educational activities offered by HAVOYOCO. Similarly, SOYVO and ILAYS, both local sub-award partners, have provided space in Burao and Las Anod respectively to be used as resource centres as part of the terms of their sub-award agreements.

Picture1. Shaqodoon staff at Las Anod Resource centre



4. Workshops and trainings held.

To improve the effectiveness of project implementation, SYLP/Shaqodoon conducted several workshops during this period.

- a) **Partners Workshop:** A SYLP partners' workshop was conducted for the 17 new sub grantees. The objectives of the one-day workshop were to:
 - Clarify the roles and responsibilities of the partners.
 - Introduce and familiarize partners with EDC policies and procedures.
 - Introduce the reporting and monitoring systems.
 - Identify gaps, if any, in the curricula presented by partners.
 - Introduce and train partners on the technological component of the project.

- b) **Security training:** A two-day Security and Safety workshop was held for all Shaqodoon staff. The training was conducted by Louis Lepage, EDC's International Security and Safety Director. The objective of the training

workshop was to raise staff knowledge and awareness on handling themselves in risk situations and the likely security risks they may face. Key areas of training included personal security, kidnapping and hostage taking, optimum checkpoint behavior, belligerent weapons, attacks and ambushes, booby traps and assets and property security.

c) Technology Training:

- A total of 60 trainers with Shaqodoon partners in all the regions were trained during this reporting quarter on the Shaqodoon finance system and process including Souktel info Match system. Among notable areas of training were: creating new accounts, mini CVs, placing opportunity advertisements, maintaining accounts, as well as using SMS to search opportunities.
- The period was marked by a 200% increase (2219 hits) in visitors visiting the Shaqodoon website. This was partly due to the regular updating of the Shaqodoon website with fresh information. New ‘Youth at Work’ interviews and slide shows of youth trainees are among the features added to the website. Over 50 SMS messages were distributed to registered youth from the Souktel system announcing the availability of new opportunities. In addition, 60 new Shaqodoon e-mail accounts were set up for partners to use for e-mail communication and accessing the Shaqodoon workspace to upload financial documents for reimbursement purposes.
- User manuals on how to access and utilize the Souktel system were created, distributed and uploaded on the Souktel system for use by Shaqodoon partners.

5. Program launched in Burao and Las Anod.

The launching of the program to the communities in Burao and Las Anod was met with a lot of enthusiasm. Both occasions were graced by regional authorities in Somaliland, the business community, both local and international development agencies and the general population. Shaqodoon used the occasions to recruit, on a voluntary basis, influential local business and community leaders to be members of the local **Private Sector Advisory Council**. The councils, one in Burao and one in Las Anod, are informal advisory groups that are engaged in and advise Shaqodoon endeavours. The advisory council is a key player in creating and connecting businesses and will also provide an important link between the government, business and Shaqodoon. The council will provide advice on labour market needs, workforce readiness skills and feedback on the relevance and quality of the variety of training programs.

6. Opportunities created for Youth.

In its endeavor to create livelihood opportunities, Shaqodoon, in conjunction with Hargeisa Municipality, created internship opportunities for youth trained under the Shaqodoon project. The Hargeisa mayor provided one month internships for 15 Shaqodoon-supported youth who were trained on Information Technology by Hope Medical Technology University. These internship opportunities were directly secured by the Shaqodoon team. Similarly, a total of 22

internship opportunities were secured by HMTU for youth trained as junior Lab technicians. In Las Anod, two IT youth were offered work opportunities (Jobs) with the Local Court of Appeals. Similarly, the Las Anod electric company has offered 13 internship opportunities to youth electrician apprentices trained by Shaqodoon partner LYVO. During the reporting period Shaqodoon uploaded 65 different opportunities on its system that is accessed by the youth registered with Shaqodoon.

7. Pre – Expansion Design Assessment carried out.

In support of the potential Shaqodoon expansion to Puntland and South Central regions of Somalia, two senior staff travelled to the regions and carried out assessments of potential partners. The assessment intended to establish the ability of applicants to deliver on the various components of the SYLP project design. Emphasis was laid on the ability of effective program implementation strategies. Issues around staffing, financial management and accounting, reporting, organizational assets and resources, past experience and proven track records were reviewed with the applicants. Strength, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) analysis was utilized in order to stimulate the organization’s understanding of its current status and the opportunities that might be available for effective program implementation. In addition to that, Shaqodoon International Project Director and the Somali Country Director traveled to Nairobi to meet with USAID and other donors and implementers of TVET programs in all regions of Somalia. Their objective was to update their knowledge of work in the areas, learn the level of cooperation and collaboration among the partners and signal to them a willingness to share and learn from them as the program moved forward.

8. International Trips

Two international trips were undertaken by Abdi Hashi, Shaqodoon Project Director and Paul Sully the International Project Director. Abdi travelled to the US to attend the 2009 EDC Chief of Party summit, an internal annual conference which brings together COPS, other senior field staff and the US-based International Development Division staff of EDC to provide staff development, promote the sharing of best practices, organizational learning and strategic planning. Abdi also went on a study tour to Haiti, joined by Paul Sully, to visit and learn from EDC’s USAID-supported youth livelihoods program (IDEJEN) there for four days. The program conditions in Haiti are similar with the Shaqodoon youth project (low resources, low literacy, and volatile environment). The IDEJEN project has been managed very well, and the local mission has extended the program a couple of times and expanded its geographic scope by multiples of its original size.

Key Lessons Learned from Haiti Study Tour:

- The importance of having adequate staff and the M&E unit in project implementation
- The cooperation of the various ministries and other government entities is crucial for project success
- Networking is the key to internship and placements
- Project implementation strategies in volatile environment

- Discouraging of dropouts, especially girls
- Need to have specially-designed modules that do not compromise quality
- Staff development is crucial to successful project implementation

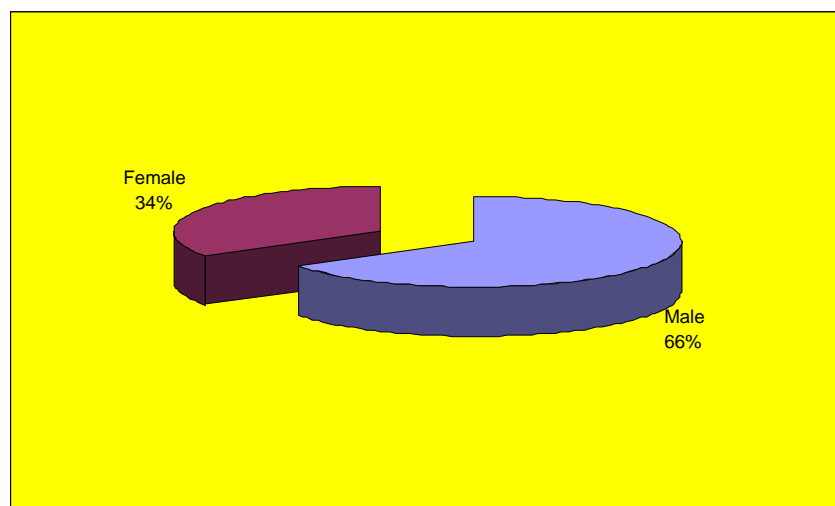
As is true with study tours, the lessons learned were accompanied by witnessing how these lessons were applied in day-to-day operations. EDC is grateful for this extra trip approval by USAID staff for this learning experience.

III. Lessons Learned and Challenges

The overall roll out of the program implementation is going well and as planned. The notable challenges faced during this implementing period include:

- 1) Monitoring reports indicate that most partners face challenges in recruiting the target number of girls for the trainings. This is because many of the courses being offered at this time are intended for intensive labor skills, the construction industry, and hotel industries which are male dominated fields. Cultural biases could also contribute to low female enrollment. Shaqodoon intends to learn from those partners who have been successful at engaging females in their trainings in order to use this information in application screening and share this knowledge with new partners. Shaqodoon will also encourage and work with partners who will explicitly attempt to recruit and train more girls.

Chart 2. Percentage of recruited youth by gender



- 2) Monitoring and evaluation is central to overall project implementation and success. The need to track the project progress, transformation developments and compliance with the project requirements more intensively are emerging. For this reason, instead of the

requirement of one current staff person to monitor, we are looking at the establishment of an M&E unit. As the project expands the challenges of measuring output and outcome indicators related to the projects objectives on a regular basis will allow both SYLP and USAID to monitor the pace of implementation against the plan, verify that key outputs are being delivered, and provide periodic measures of program benefits in a more effective way if there is dedicated staff for this effort.

- 3) The continuous insecurity in Mogadishu and other parts of South Central Somalia demand creativity and choosing acceptable options. Visiting sites of some potential partners during the assessment in Mogadishu was abandoned in favor of inviting NGO officials to a secure hotel for face to face interviews. We will continue to explore ways to implement and monitor the work of subawardees.

IV. Next Steps

SYLP will continue to draw from the Somaliland learnings as we embark on the extension and expansion of the program in Puntland and South Central Somalia. The extension to September, 2011 should result in added stability to Somalia by engaging an additional 7500 youth. Critical next steps include:

1. Advertise, interview and recruit more staff to fill the positions in Mogadishu, Puntland, Hargeisa and Nairobi offices. Among key staff to be employed are 2 Field coordinators for Puntland and Mogadishu, a Sub-Award Manager and a M & E consultant.
2. Continue with the process of sub awarding for the fourth cohort partners, which will include inviting high-scoring applicants to the Expression of Interest to apply. Submit request to Mission for sub-award approval and process approved sub-awards with EDC home office, including agreed-upon milestones for the targeted fourth cohorts in Mogadishu and Puntland.
3. Work directly with all the sub awardees by continuing to provide support through capacity building training on the Souktel system, monitor project implementation, upload trainees' info in the system, and search for and encourage partners to provide livelihood opportunities for the trainees.
4. Host workshops with approved sub-awardees to reconfirm their technical roles and identify synergies among the groups. During the training workshop, the selected partners will also be trained on the Souktel systems and financial requirements.
5. Identify and start building support for the project among the local authorities, NGOs, business community, and training institutions in Puntland and South Central.
6. Establish Shaqodoon offices in Mogadishu and Garoowe with satellite offices in Bossaso and Galkaayo.

V. Security Issues

Somaliland continues to benefit from relative calm, a factor that has facilitated the smooth implementation of the Somali Youth Livelihood Program in Hargeisa, Burao and Las Anod.

Security issues have not had a direct impact on program implementation during this quarter in Somaliland.

With the proposed expansion phase, EDC will continue to monitor the security situation, especially in the South Central zone.

VI. APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Souktel key accomplishments

July, 2009:

- Updated web/mobile systems to include new features aimed at simplifying user access: new data fields, “print CV” option, universal bilingual interface.
- Debugged and resolution of local mobile network connectivity disruptions; creation of new communication protocols to ensure quicker incident responses.
- Participated in planning and review meeting between Souktel, EDC and local-country SYLP senior staff.

August

- Updated web/mobile systems to include new features aimed at simplifying user access: additional listings options, refined matching process, and new security features.
- Activated system accounts for seven new partner organizations.
- Updated of web system interface to accommodate new user tutorial videos.

September

- Designed new system features that simplify and enhance youth users’ access to information: ability to “view all” available job/CV postings, print listings to hard copy format, and obtain email/phone contact details.
- Created system accounts for eight new project sub-grantees.
- Added new user pre-validation security feature to ensure optimal system access for registered project beneficiaries.
- Presented project technology achievements to date by Souktel staff to USAID Somalia staff in Nairobi.

Appendix 2: SYLP Success Story - Ahmed Mohamed Abdullah

Ahmed Mohamed Abdullah – 22 years old, Hargeisa Somaliland – Shaqodoon - Hope Medical and Technology University Participant

Interviewer: Mustafa Othman, SYLP/Shaqodoon ICT Manager

Ahmed is one of the first youth to have found his internship match using the Souktel JobMatch system. Ahmed has just graduated from the Shaqodoon training program at Hope Medical Technology University from the ICT for accounting course.

Ahmed lives with his family in Hargeisa; I had the opportunity to speak with him on the second day of his internship with the Local Government.

Before joining Shaqodoon program, Ahmed was an average young Somali, as he puts it, hanging around coffee shops talking endlessly about politics with his friends. One morning while taking his brothers and sisters to school Ahmed saw an advert in the *Geeska* newspaper which featured HMTU (Hope Medical and Technology University) advertising a free course in IT for accounting. Ahmed went on to tell me, "What drew me in was the after the course I would be equipped with employability skills and supported in finding a livelihood opportunity. After reading the newspaper I immediately went home and started to get my documents together. The next morning I travelled to HMTU campus and applied for the course. I was successfully selected after a selection test on IT and English."

"At HMTU I've studied various IT modules which has helped me with basic IT skills that I will build upon in the future. I am hoping to continue with education after this program, but financing the course is an issue." Ahmed then asked whether Shaqodoon funds degrees.

[More direct from Ahmed]:

"After completing the course last month we've been looking for internships and job opportunities or whatever we could find. We have been also running around visiting business/government departments to see whether internship or job opportunities could be provided. Going around to businesses was hard and laborious, it meant that we had to walk, get money from the family to catch the bus and after we reached our destinations sometimes we were denied access to the person we came to speak with. I did this in number of occasions without luck. I then started using the Souktel system. The Souktel system works well for me as most of the running around is done for me. I was trained and shown how to use it. The system is in Somali and English so we could access the system in my own language.

One evening I received an SMS text from '777' advertising ICT local government internships; I went straight in to the nearest internet café and applied for the internship opportunity. I was successfully matched with an opportunity and after a test I was asked to sign an internship contract. This is a wonderful opportunity. Every morning I look forward to dressing up and going to work either to teach or to learn. It is different from my normal routine of going to the café shop to argue about politics.

Today is my second day at work and I have identified many technical issues at the office: the mayor's office has an out of date 1998 operating system, slow when booting up and a virus which has made the computer almost impossible to use and waste of resources; there are two printers in one room,

when one is enough if all the computers are networked to share one; no one uses one of the computers – it sits there abandoned by its owner. Problems are small and resolvable, I just need some software and this computer can be brought back to life. I have asked EDC – Shaqodoon ICT department for software and they have promised to help.

Before joining the Shaqodoon program I was hopeless and only thought of the short term goals, such as my plans for tonight, listening to the news for the latest politics to talk about at the café shop with my friends, and thought little about other long term prospects. I felt demoralised about the situation in my country such as the lack of job opportunities, the political crises in our country etc. This program has given me a light and I don't want to go back to the same life after this internship, I refuse to. I will either go on to further education in IT or get together with my class mate to setup a small repair shop, but whatever happens I will not go back to the same daily routine at the café shop. If I can't do anything else I will write letters, the least paid job. Shaqodoon has given me a morale boost, skills to find a job, and confidence to look for work.