

EVALUATION OF VE PROGRAMMING IN NON-PERMISSIVE ENVIRONMENTS

A Pakistan Case Study



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PAKISTAN



COMMUNITY RESILIENCE ACTIVITY (CRA) SOUTH

Works in Southern Punjab, Northern Sindh, and Karachi to stem the flow of ideological, financial, and groups that threaten U.S. interests.

Start Date: July 2017

End Date: December 2020

256

grants to date

132

local partners to date

\$42.8 MILLION

budget to date

\$19,498,258

FY 19 to date

PROGRAM AT
A GLANCE





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Over **183,000 direct beneficiaries** have participated in CRA-South programming to date.

SECTORS:

1. Universities
2. Safe Charity
3. Schools
4. Citizen Action
5. Acceptance
6. Civil Society
7. Government



Created over **425 peace committees** to promote **inter-sect and inter-religious harmony**, and identify and remove **hate speech**. With CRA-South support, peace committees have removed radical imams from local mosques and held joint celebrations of common religious holidays **across sects or religions**, and **resolved local conflict**.



Created or strengthened over **50 student societies** on eleven university campuses, providing new opportunities for students to **engage with different ethnicities and sects**, and identify and **address VE dynamics** on their campuses.



Trained over **2,400 youth** on CVE and implementing small-scale **social action projects** to counter VE in their communities.





8 partner multi-grant initiative:
Azm-e-Naujawan



50-hour **curriculum** that includes: CVE awareness, Project management, fundraising, peacebuilding, emotional intelligence, communication, arts and culture



6 community **centers** established in Karachi



1,942 youth including **856** female were able to engage **27,844** community members



Establishment of **14** 'youth committees' at a local government level, and **20** peace committees



306 self-initiated **SAPs** implemented by youth under one year, out of which **30%** were **CVE** in nature



Security environment precludes structured approaches for carrying out assessments / evaluations / research



Inability to conduct pre and post surveys, and therefore a baseline, for every activity



Social desirability: survey respondents answer questions in a manner they think would be viewed favorably



Limited access to areas with a prominent presence of VE groups due to security concerns



Low capacity of research firms to evaluate CVE initiatives in communities



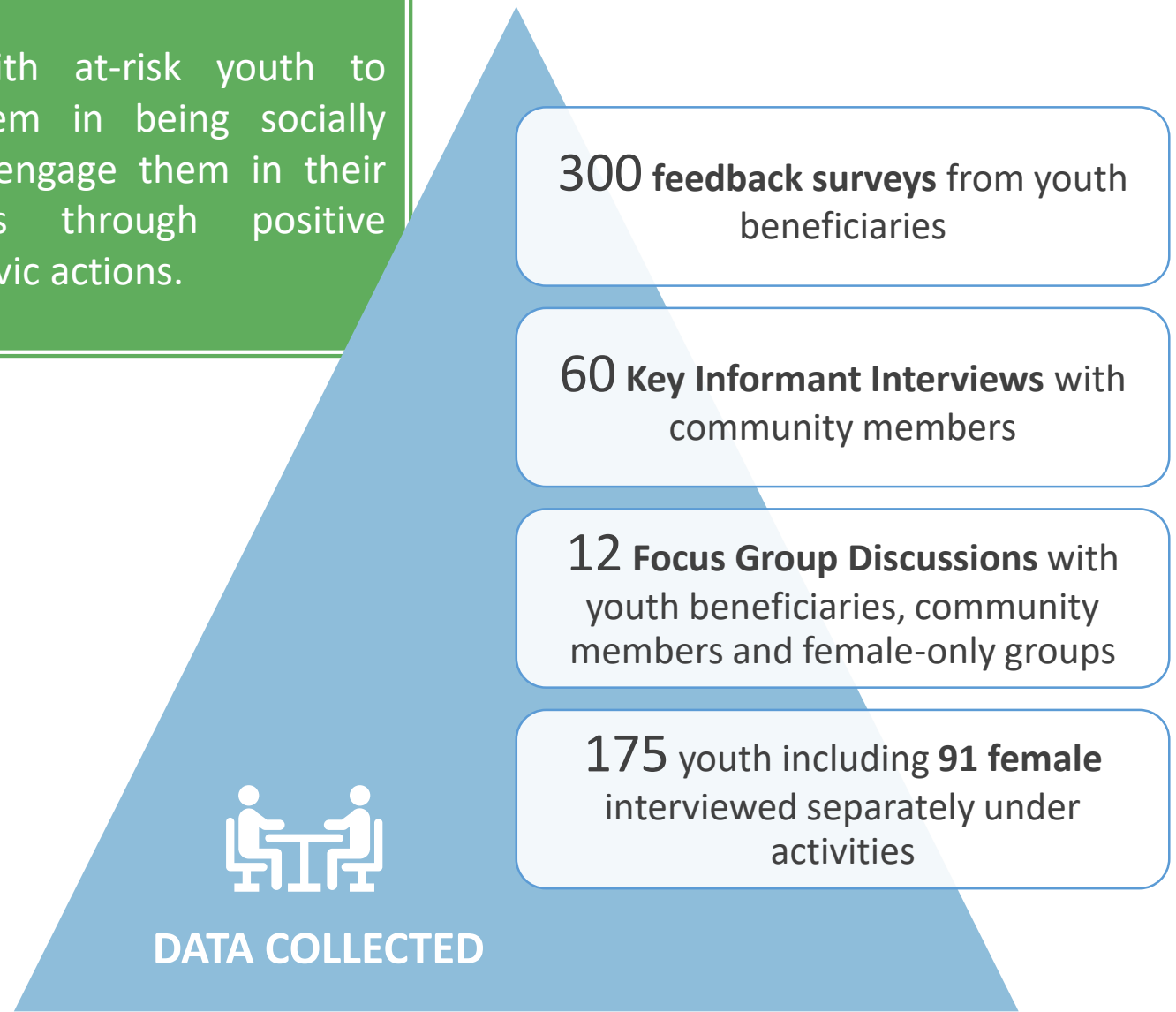


- Using hyper local organizations for data collection
- Close coordination with research firms to ensure effective assessment of CVE initiatives.
- Using multiple open-ended and close-ended tools to acquire information.
- Close coordination with law enforcement agencies to maintain transparency.
- Avoiding jargon words that directly put emphasis on the VE problem in order to avoid backlash. For e.g. using pluralism / diversity as opposed to extremism.
- Using local community leaders, influencers and partners to access targeted areas.



Working with at-risk youth to support them in being socially active and engage them in their communities through positive social and civic actions.

APPROACH





- Both community members and youth beneficiaries appreciate Azm-e-Naujawan (AeN) as a comprehensive training regime for youth.
- Most participants mention participating in training sessions, guest lectures, musical performances or theatrical performances.
- Female respondents confirm (increasing) female participation. Training sessions appear to be particularly relevant to them.
- Youth respondents (both at the youth centres and outside) show great satisfaction with the AeN initiatives, especially at the centres in West, East, and South Karachi (a bit less so at the youth centres in Malir and Central).





Out of the respondents who participated in the training sessions:

87% stated that they learn how to make positive changes in the community

81% stated that they were able to develop solutions to issues in their communities

79% stated that the trainings helped them identify issues in their community

“We have received training to do community work. So it will be easy now because before this, we had no idea how to conduct a social action project. Our confidence to engage with the community and do social work has improved because we have learnt the necessary skills through this training.”

- Female, Safoora Goth



Out of the respondents who participated in the SAPs / social campaigns:

80% stated that they learned how to make positive changes in the community



81% stated that they were able to develop solutions to issues in their communities



73% stated that the SAPs / social campaigns helped them identify issues in their community

“We can work for social change and community welfare. We waited for the government to do everything but now I have realized it is an individual’s responsibility.”

- Male, Ibrahim Hyderi



EFFECT

- All youth respondents, in both the male and female FGDs, agree that AeN actions have enhanced their ability to design and implement social or civic action.
- Many mention that their participation has increased their sense of identity and purpose and has activated them as citizens, developing them both personally and professionally.
- Many of the community members have participated in several SAPs and claim that the confidence level of youth has increased as a result of these initiatives.



All AeN SAPs are funded by the youth themselves through fundraising. Despite this, and challenges with fundraising, **30%** of SAPs have continued beyond the life of the intervention.

The youth has created **14** more community spaces in their neighborhoods as a self-initiative.

More than **80%** of respondents who participated in the trainings and SAPs stated that most of their needs were met in these activities

89% of respondents confirmed having increased access, resulting in community cohesion due to participation in activities.

84% of respondents who participated in the SAPs stated that they were likely to start their own social campaign in the future





- Indicators for change that youth respondents cite, are an increase in respect and harmony among people, a stronger sense of responsibility and more appreciation for youth.
- Although most youth respondents feel supported by their communities, two challenges stand out for them: fundraising and convincing people.
- In the implementation of SAPs, specifically, they experience challenges due to a lack of parental support; fundraising issues; community rejection because of unfamiliarity with the activities' objectives; community discouragement and interference in the SAP implementation; lack of proper mentoring and counselling and the impact of negative experiences with NGOs previously working in the area.

SUPPORT





- Engaging community members and influencers to work with youth to generate more support for participating youth.
- Bottoms up approach to encourage hyper localized programming with focus on relevant capacities to help them address their identified community issues.





- Looking into the future, most of the youth in all regions seem very optimistic about participation, except for ECI (East) where participation is reported to be decreasing.
- Youth in Malir and girls in general seem to be a little more reserved about taking social action in the future.
- For future SAPs, the community member respondents suggest repeating the activities frequently and continuously; financially supporting youth's efforts; introducing more educational activities.
- They also support sports, theatre performances and awareness raising campaigns.





“This is a great program! It taught us civic norms, social interaction, and community engagement. It also taught us how to work for the development of our communities and how to raise funds for development initiatives.”

- Female, Ibrahim Hyderi



- Be sensitive to the societal pressures from family, peers, political or religious groups against participation in the activities;
- Develop outreach to the various communities and groups to create awareness and understanding of the youth centers' objectives and activities.
- Specifically promote participation of women and girls in the youth center's activities by removing visible and hidden obstacles to their taking part;
- Engagement with local community leaders and elders, particularly local government officials to open up funding and in-kind support for youth.
- Be realistic about the financial challenge a social action plan represents for youth;
- Make use of existing knowledge in the community on social actions;
- Offer some form of recognition for volunteer work.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS