

Fragile and Conflict-affected Areas

Stories of Impact

This series provides examples of our impact, expertise and lessons learned working with clients and partners.



RESULTS & IMPACT

- YEFE has engaged nine sponsoring companies willing to hire qualified graduates of IFC's Business Edge management training.
- In partnership with the Al-Khair Foundation for Social Development, YEFE has trained more than 300 youth from rural areas in Business Edge and other subjects, including English and computers.
- More than 760 recent college graduates trained in Business Edge. Of those, 440—including 190 women—found employment with sponsoring companies in oil, tourism, construction, and other industries in Yemen.
- More than 2,000 women trained in Business Edge, many of whom have already started their own enterprises in small craftwork, dentistry, or pharmaceuticals, or have expanded an existing business in these niche markets.

Partnering with a Jobs Placement NGO Boosts Employment in Yemen

IFC is working with the Yemen Education for Employment Foundation (YEFE) to increase employment among the country's women and college-educated youth, two segments of society with higher than average unemployment rates. Using IFC's Business Edge management training, YEFE prepares participants to start their own enterprises or get jobs that were pre-committed by sponsor companies. Thousands of women and young people have completed the training, and hundreds have found employment in oil, construction, tourism, and other industries in Yemen.

"I advise all boys and girls to get (IFC's) Business Edge training. It helps them a lot to improve their thinking and it helps them get jobs."

— Abeer, a college graduate hired in the human resources department of an oil and gas company in Yemen after completing Business Edge training.

The Opportunity

Yemen suffers from high unemployment, too few women-owned enterprises, and a business environment that is still adjusting to the idea of business management training. College students often graduate with few prospects for employment.

Women often face additional obstacles to employment as a result of Yemen's conservative Islamic values. Some 47 percent of urban women in Yemen are illiterate and very few women work outside the home. Of those who do, most struggle to feed their families from the low-wage jobs traditionally held by women.

YEFE is part of EFE, a network of locally-run non-profit organizations that creates economic opportunity for youth in the Middle East and North Africa. YEFE has been working to break down the social barriers that keep women out of the workforce and to provide business opportunities for recent college graduates through an innovative program that enlists large companies to pre-commit to hire employees from these segments of society after they complete management training.



Our Approach

IFC partnered with YEFE in 2009 to increase employment among women and youth in Yemen's capital, Sana'a, as well as outlying areas. The strategy was to offer IFC's Business Edge management training, language training, and IT skills to women and youth so that they could qualify for jobs offered by sponsoring companies. So far, hundreds of women and recent college graduates have found jobs in oil and construction, among other industries. Companies sponsoring the program have asked to hire additional graduates and the program is continuing.

The goal of IFC's Business Edge project in Yemen is to provide training to 16,000 individuals including Yemeni women and youth in order to boost their employment rates. IFC seeks to raise female employment rates in particular by focusing on areas of business where women have traditionally thrived — such as small craftwork, dentistry, and pharmaceuticals.

IFC is committed to working with clients such as YEFE to help traditionally underemployed segments of society find work. By providing Business Edge training to women and recent college graduates and partnering with an institution that works with large companies looking to hire qualified employees, IFC helps Yemen increase its employment rate and contributes to its economic growth, which is a key IFC development goal. The partnership with YEFE showcases IFC's ability to work with key clients in developing countries to provide the training necessary to help people find good jobs.

Since 2002, IFC has used Business Edge workshops in more than 30 developing countries to help more than 170,000 individuals — including farmers, entrepreneurs, and owners and staff of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) — to strengthen their management skills, grow their businesses, and stay competitive. The workshops, offered in 18 languages, cover five management topics: marketing, human resources, quality and operations management, finance and accounting, and personal productivity skills.

IFC, a member of the World Bank Group, is the largest global development institution focused exclusively on the private sector in developing countries.

REGION: MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA | **COUNTRY:** YEMEN | **STRATEGIC PRIORITY:** SMEs | **THEME:** FRAGILE AND CONFLICT AFFECTED AREAS | **BUSINESS LINE:** SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS ADVISORY | **CLIENT:** YEMEN EDUCATION FOR EMPLOYMENT FOUNDATION (YEFE)

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