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Youth-Led Rapid Gender Assessment

Partnerships with Youth Project, West Bank

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Acknowledgements

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The USAID-funded Partnerships with Youth (PWY) project supports leadership and educational opportunities for young men and women age 14-29 through a network of nine Youth Development Resource Centers (YDRCs) in the West Bank. The PWY team identified the need for a gender assessment when M&E data revealed a steadily increasing gender imbalance in YDRC participation rates 2014-2016, specifically, the declining participation of males. IREX's Senior Gender Advisor worked with PWY staff in Ramallah and DC to design and deliver a rapid youth-led gender assessment in seven governorates in August 2017. The assessment was primarily designed to gather qualitative data on gender differences among young men and women that affect participation in community engagement activities in order to improve PWY programming. A secondary goal was to build key competencies (cognitive and social skills) of the youth researchers. A final goal was to raise the awareness of YDRC and PWY staff of nuanced gender issues affecting Palestinian youth.

GOAL 1 – GATHER QUALITATIVE DATA TO INFORM PWY PROGRAMMING

The 6 key findings related to more-gender responsive PWY programming are:

1. Differences between young men and women in terms of their needs and opportunities were **most often ascribed to gender norms**, with economic factors a distant second.
2. **Gender norms that constrain** opportunities for youth (employment, community engagement, etc.) were mentioned twice as often as gender norms that expand opportunities for youth. Additionally, gender norms that constrain were almost twice as likely to be explicitly related to roles and expectations for females as males.
3. Although **gender norms that expand** opportunities for youth were reported less often, such norms were roughly equal for males and females.
4. Perceptions of **(un)equal employment opportunities** are not based on empirical data on current unemployment rates among young men and women. Despite higher female unemployment in the West Bank, respondents were more likely to report that females enjoy more employment opportunities than males. The most common reasons cited were **female willingness to accept low wages** and **employer preferences for hiring females**, expressed in terms of physical appearance or commitment.
5. **Time** as a factor affecting youth participation in YDRC activities was cited less often in terms of current YDRC scheduling patterns and more often in terms of strongly gendered perceptions of who has available time.
6. Among the factors under YDRCs' immediate control, the **range of content** currently offered was most often reported as a factor affecting the participation of males in the 18-25 target age group, followed by the **gender appropriateness** of content, and **lack of awareness** of YDRC activities.

RECAP OF 8 AUG

الخلاصة الثمانية للنشوة

1. End of 30 years of dictatorship
2. First and only free presidential election
3. New constitution
4. End of military rule
5. End of corruption
6. End of economic stagnation
7. End of political repression
8. End of human rights violations
9. End of sectarianism
10. End of tribalism

OUR LIVES OF NOWAY

WHAT HAPPENED IN 2013

9/8/2013

GOAL 3 – BUILD AWARENESS OF GENDER ISSUES AMONG PWY AND YDRC STAFF

Female-specific norms
 norms that constrain opportunities
 المرأة التي تقيد الفرص
 employer preference for males
 تفضيل صاحب العمل للذكور
 level of content offered
 مستوى المحتوى المقدم
 educational parity
 تساوي تعليمية
 gender inequality
 عدم المساواة بين الجنسين
 need for income
 الحاجة للدخل
 male-specific norms
 معايير محددة للذكور
 nepotism
 المحسوبية
 self-improvement
 التحسين الذاتي
 gender inequality
 عدم المساواة بين الجنسين
 other institutions
 مؤسسات أخرى
 marriage
 الزواج
 limiting of offerings
 تقييد العروض
 other females
 إناث أخريات
 parents
 والدي
 Time availability
 توافر الوقت
 employers
 أصحاب العمل
 Educational factors
 عوامل تعليمية
 personal wealth
 ثروة شخصية
 education
 تعليم
 social networks
 شبكات اجتماعية
 women by females
 إناث من قبل إناث
 women by males
 إناث من قبل ذكور
 female unemployment
 بطالة نسائية
 community engagement
 مشاركة المجتمع
 female unemployment
 بطالة نسائية
 female-specific norms
 معايير محددة للإناث
 constrained mobility
 محدودية الحركة
 low awareness of YDRC offerings
 انخفاض الوعي بعروض مركز تنمية الموارد
 males willing to accept travel
 الذكور على استعداد لقبول السفر

content, translation, troubleshooting, and logistics, it must also be noted that PWY senior management emphasized the importance of the assessment, and ensured that opportunities to observe, participate and be debriefed were provided to all departments, many of whom took an active interest. Importantly, a PWY team member from the Organizational Development department became an IREX institutional Gender Focal Point prior to the final validation workshop, and will be a vital point of contact to coordinate with the YDRCs on follow up activities. The impact of the assessment on the YDRCs was not assessments are ongoing, however, all seven

participating YDRCs actively supported the youth researcher selection process, provided a venue for focus group discussion (as needed), and in some cases, their staff served as key informants.

SALIENT GENDER ISSUES AMONG PALESTINIAN YOUTH

In the West Bank, gender inequality has serious consequences for both women and men. This brief synopsis will focus on the elements most closely related to the lines of inquiry chosen for the assessment, namely, gender differences in educational and economic opportunities that affect youth community engagement. Interrelated factors often examined in gender analyses, such as political participation, health, social welfare, legal rights, and domestic violence, were reviewed during the desk research and the initial workshop data dive, but will not be presented here (see Annex 1 for additional reading).

Women in the West Bank face severe constraints to equal opportunities linked to restrictive gender norms and structural discrimination, resulting in low labor force participation (18% females vs 73% males), high unemployment rates (twice those of males, including 50% among young women age 15-24), wage disparities (20-400%) and occupational segregation, with women concentrated in professional occupations (50%) and services (18%) (PCBS 2016). Among women active in the labor force, 23% reported experiencing sexual harassment (USAID 2016). There is inadequate data on the many women who are *de facto* head of household as a result of polygamous marriages, separation, and loss of male relatives to disability or detention, as well as on women's informal and unpaid work (UN Women 2012). However, the time deficit experienced by women can be pieced together: in one recent study, 99% of women under age 18 reported that they provided routine child care daily, compared to 39% of their male peers (Promundo 2017) and in 2016 women in the West Bank were three times more likely than men to report the employment status "unpaid family member" (15% vs 5%) (PCBS 2016). To some extent, gendered job opportunities reflect educational tracking; for example, while Palestinian girls have achieved parity in STEM enrollment at the high school level, they are outnumbered 2:1 in higher education STEM courses. On the positive side, female enrollment and completion rates equal or exceed those of males at all education levels (basic, secondary, and tertiary education), with the exception of access to technical and vocational education and training (UN Women 2012).

The training available or accessible to women is limited to a few "feminine," socially acceptable, and saturated professions. The segregation of the labor market based on gender is strengthened by the distribution of work based on gender in the household and educational system. – UN Women, 2012

While less disadvantaged than women, unemployment disproportionately affects young men in the West Bank, with the highest rate (26%) among those age 15-24 (compared to the average of 15% for men of all age groups). Males who are active in the labor force are predominantly in

professional occupations, services/sales, and skilled trades (each 20%) (PCBS 2016). They report stronger ICT skills (74% use a computer vs 66% of women) and greater community activism, as measured in volunteer work (23% vs 12%) and service on student youth councils at universities (73% vs 27%) (PCBS 2014 and UN Women 2012). At the same time, boys are more likely to drop out of school (41% vs 27% girls) (PCBS 2015) and to experience corporal punishment in school (57% vs 30% girls) (Promundo 2017).

All Palestinians are deeply affected by the ongoing military occupation that, at a minimum, severely constrains economic and educational opportunities, and for many, results in forced displacement, familial separation, disenfranchisement, and high risk of exposure to violence. Young men are particularly vulnerable, as their greater mobility in public (including commuting to work outside the West Bank) brings them into conflict with security forces more often. This may contribute to the higher rate of disability among males age 15-29 (5% vs 3% for females) which constrains economic and educational opportunities (PCBS 2015).

YOUTH-LED RAPID GENDER ASSESSMENT GOALS

- 1) Improve PWY programming through more gender-responsive activities to a] increase male participation and b] ensure meaningful engagement of both sexes.
- 2) Increase youth capacity (soft/workforce skills), in particular top three skills (higher order thinking, self-control, and positive self-concept) and technical skills in data collection and gender analysis
- 3) Raise the awareness of PWY and participating YDRCs' staff in areas related to conducting assessments and awareness of gender consideration in program design.

METHODOLOGY AND STRUCTURE

The assessment began with desk research on existing gender assessments and other available data sources to create a statistical country snapshot on gender-related opportunities and constraints related to skills and employment. Prior to field work, PWY project M&E data was also reviewed to create a statistical project snapshot on gender-related patterns in participation (by YDRC, governorate, age cohorts, and type of participation). This data was shared as a reference handout at the 1st workshop, during which the youth researchers



determined that the growing gender imbalance in youth participation rates was most pronounced among the largest age cohort of 18-25 year olds, among whom only 26% were males by 2017 (see Annex 2). Youth researchers were nominated by YDRCs based on criteria provided by the PWY team, interest and availability for a two-week research assignment, including two workshops

in IREX's Ramallah office. In total, seven male and seven female youth were selected, representing Hebron, Jenin, Jericho, Nablus, Qalqiya, Tubas, and Tulkarem. Each received a background reading packet on qualitative data research best practices to establish a common understanding and serve as a reference tool.

Three workshops utilizing short conceptual lectures, small group and pairs work, short videos, and role plays were held for the youth researchers (see agendas in Annex 3). The first two-day workshop was conducted prior to data collection and introduced the youth team to gender assessment frameworks, the statistical snapshots on gender issues relevant to PWY (including detailed program data on participation rates), and narrowed the possible lines of inquiry for the assessment to two through a consensus-based, youth-led process. It also trained youth in qualitative data collection approaches (key informant interviews and focus groups discussions) and collaboratively developed the data collection instruments (see KII and FGD questionnaires in Annexes 4 and 5). The second two-day workshop was held immediately after the data collection period, and facilitated the youth team's analysis of the data that they collected. The workshop culminated with articulation and small group presentations of initial findings and accompanying recommendations to PWY and YDRCs. A third one-day workshop was held in October to validate the revised findings based on software-enabled data analysis and finalize the recommendations; eight of the 14 youth researchers were able to attend. While the final workshop had less focus on skills building, the youth researchers received a demonstration of the cloud-based qualitative software platform as well as an introduction to Edraak, an Arabic-language online education platform supported by the Queen Rania Foundation with a broad range of academic and vocational content including courses from MIT and Harvard.

LIMITATIONS

In addition to common limitations of qualitative research, such as unrepresentative and relatively small sample sizes compared to quantitative methods, it is important to note that this assessment did NOT look closely at differences in either youth participation rates or respondent trends *within* governorates. While we acknowledge how important such differences are, the data granularity was not sufficient for meaningful analysis.

In addition, it is crucially important to understand that this assessment had a very narrow focus on gender differences in *YDRC participation rates*. The data insights should be looked at in

conjunction with evidence from the baseline and endline impact assessments of PWY being conducted by Social Impact through a separate USAID contract.

Given the ongoing enclavization in the West Bank- everyday lives, social and economic possibilities and futures are now vastly different depending on whether one lives in an urban center, in “Area C,” the Jordan Valley or in a seam zone community caught between the Wall and Israel. This means not only that life chances are increasingly determined by specific geographic settings- but that these processes have led to Palestinian society as a whole becoming increasingly differentiated and unequal. – UN Women, 2012

LINES OF INQUIRY

At the first workshop, the youth researchers collaboratively narrowed the research lines of inquiry down to the following:

- 1) what factors explain the disproportionately low rates of participation of males age 18-25 in current YDRC offerings?
- 2) how can equal opportunities for young males and females age 14-29 be strengthened through YDRC offerings?

DATA COLLECTION

The 14 youth researchers collected data in male-female pairs in Hebron, Jenin, Jericho, Nablus, Qalqilya, Tubas, and Tulkarem, alternating the roles of lead facilitator and notetaker. Venues varied from YDRCs to universities to a coffee house. While the researchers did not visit refugee camps or rural villages, anecdotally they did note such diversity among the FGD participants (particularly those who were students at universities located in the governorate’s largest town). In total, 21 Key Informant Interviews and 21 Focus Group Discussions were held over a 4-day period (Aug 10-14, 2017). The key informants represented educators (7), YDRC staff (5), community activists (5), students (2), a parent (1) and an employer (1). Eight were female and 15 were male, and they ranged in age from 18 to over 50. Focus group respondents ranged in age from 18 to 29; the gender breakdown was incompletely recorded. Troubleshooting group chats on WhatsApp were held each night by IREX staff with the youth researcher pairs to resolve challenges and share effective strategies.

DATA ANALYSIS



Youth researchers presented their initial data analysis findings at the 2nd workshop

During the 2nd workshop the youth researchers were introduced to concepts of qualitative data analysis. They collectively developed a coding structure and conducted two passes of coding their KII and FGD transcripts using colored markers and post-it notes to visually tag high-frequency themes. The results were tallied, discussed, and refined collectively into a series of preliminary findings. Based on these findings, the group developed a list of 12 recommendations to PWY and YDRC staff to redress the gender imbalance in youth participation.

A secondary round of software-enabled analysis was conducted by IREX's STA for Gender (in English) and the PWY Gender Fellow (in Arabic) using the Dedoose cloud-based qualitative data research platform. An extended set of thematic codes were applied to the 42 KII and FGD transcripts, generating 598 coded excerpts for analysis. Individual excerpts were coded for demographic descriptors including age range and location (FGD and KII) and gender, age range, location, and occupation (KII only).

FINDINGS

PRELIMINARY YOUTH FINDINGS

The initial findings from the second workshop included:

- 1) Perceptions of (un)equal opportunities are not based on empirical data and are strongly gendered. Female respondents reported that males enjoy more non-formal educational (training) and employment opportunities and male respondents reported precisely the opposite, i.e., that females enjoy more such opportunities.
- 2) Non-formal educational (training) and employment opportunities for males were more often described in terms of needs or obligations than for females.
- 3) Disincentives for males to attend YDRC activities were most often linked to a) the perceived lack of return on investment for time spent; b) training content or scheduling; and c) discomfort among large numbers of female participants at YDRC activities.
- 4) Disincentives for females to attend YDRC activities were most often linked to training content or scheduling.

SECONDARY SOFTWARE-ENABLED FINDINGS

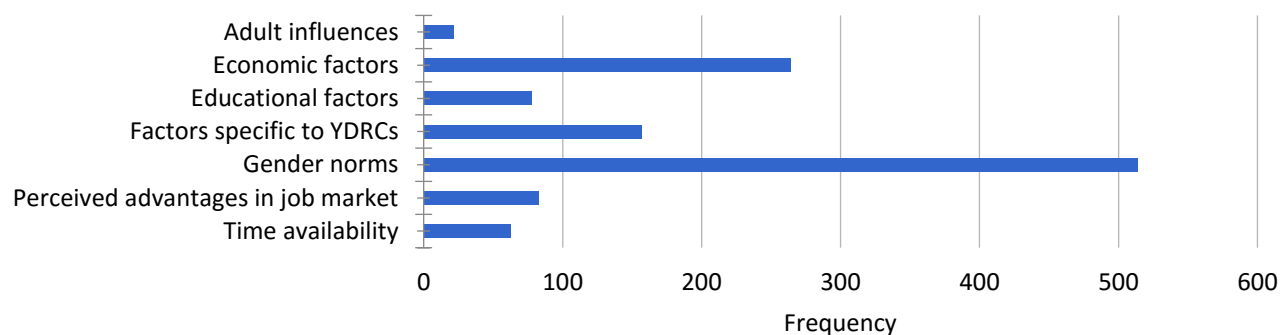
Additional software-enabled data analysis of the same 42 transcripts from Key Informant interviews and Focus Group Discussion revealed issues of both nuance and scale, and the revised findings were validated at the third workshop:

FINDING #1

Differences between young men and women in terms of their needs and opportunities were **most often ascribed to gender norms** (frequency: 514 mentions). As elaborated upon in findings #2 and #3 below, respondents grounded their descriptions in terms of male- or female-specific familial responsibilities, access to social networks, mobility patterns, marital expectations, and appropriateness of types or sectors of work or training (due to hours, ease, location or degree of intermixing with members of the opposite sex). See chart “Factors affecting equal opportunities for youth, by frequency” below.

“Young men engage more because it’s easier for them. They can attend any kind of training or voluntary work, while young women’s movement is usually restrained by social norms and traditions that might not accept mixed-sex trainings.” – Focus Group, Nablus

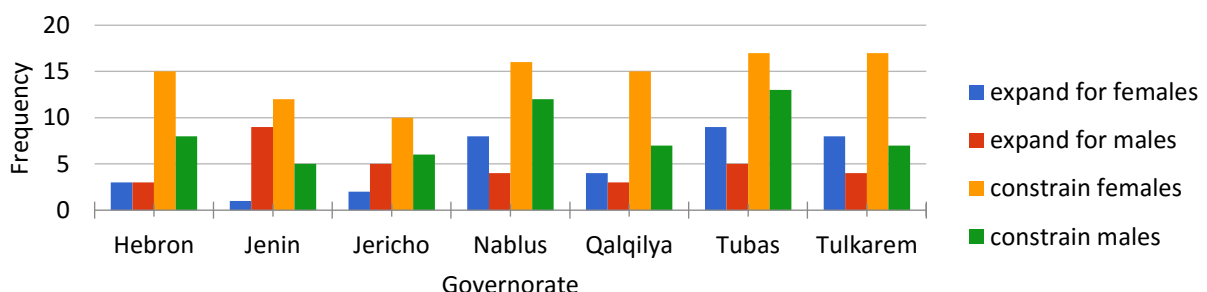
Factors affecting equal opportunities for youth, by frequency



FINDING #2

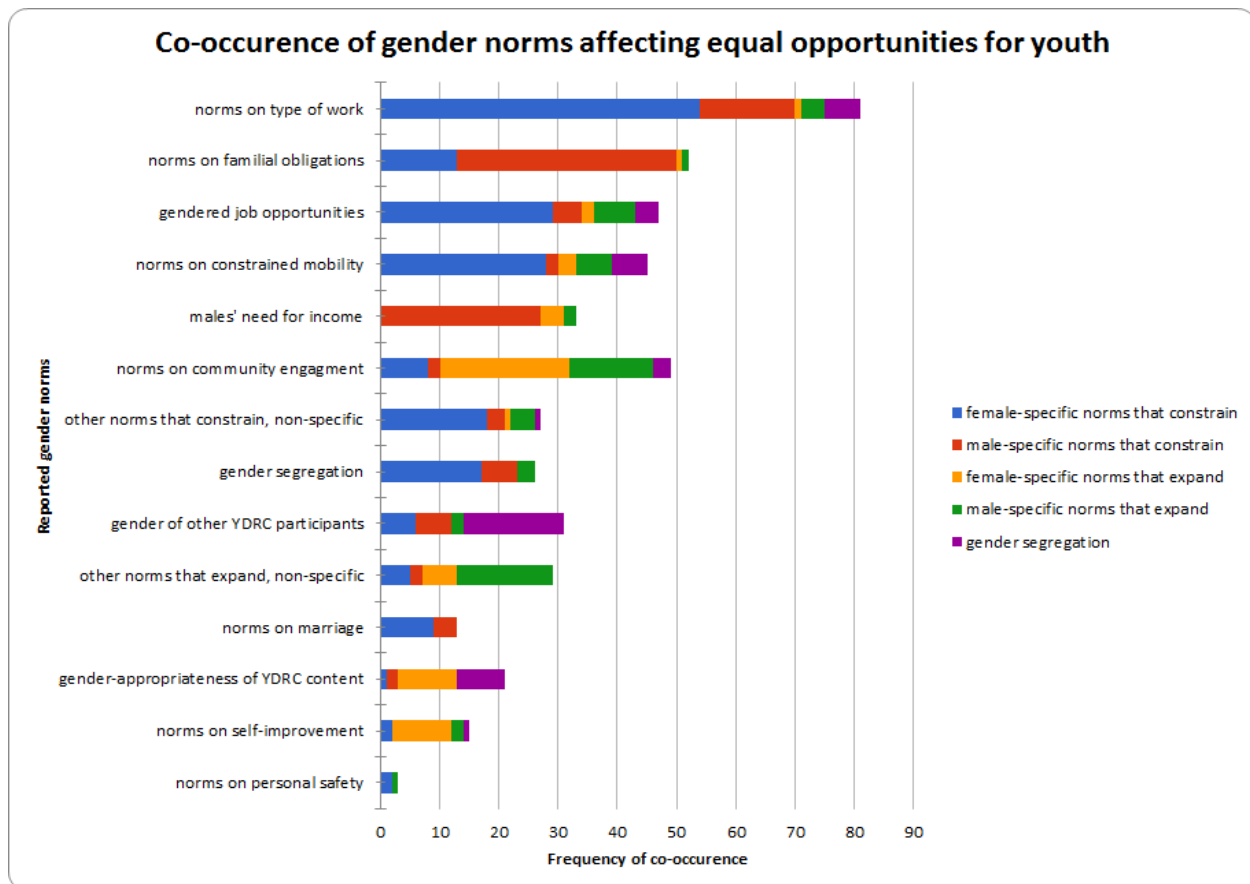
Gender norms that constrain opportunities for youth (employment, community engagement, etc.) were mentioned more often (362) than gender norms that expand opportunities for youth (148). And gender norms that constrain were almost twice as likely to be explicitly related to roles and expectations for females (102) as males (58). For regional breakdown, see chart “Gender norms reported effect on equal opportunities for youth, by governorate” below.

Gender norms reported effect on opportunities for youth, by governorate



- a) Gender norms that constrain females were most often related to **types of work** (53) considered acceptable for females, expressed using terms such as “desk/office work” or “light/not physically difficult,” followed by **gendered job opportunities** and **constrained mobility**.
- b) Gender norms that constrain males were most often related to **familial obligations** (37), primarily expressed as expectations to **provide financial support** (27), that were closely correlated with a perception that males have a greater **need for income** (90) (for a and b, see chart “Co-occurrence of gender norms affecting equal opportunities for youth” as well as Finding #3 below)

“Males are more pressured to get a job because of social norms on their role as the provider for the family.” Key Informant, Nablus



FINDING #3

Although gender norms that expand opportunities for youth were reported less often, such norms were roughly equal for males (35) and female (33).

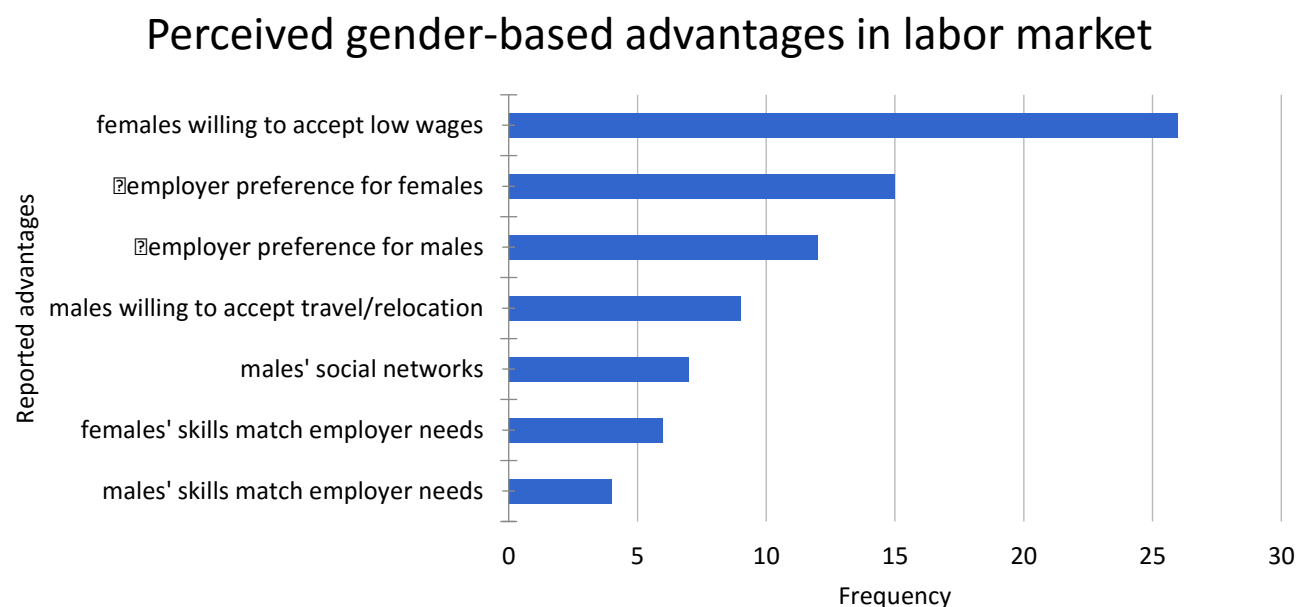
- a. Norms that expanded opportunities for males most often included support for their **community engagement** (14), **gendered job opportunities** (7 - often expressed in terms of “male” sectors like engineering or “male” positions such as management), and **mobility** (e.g., freedom to travel outside one’s home town or West Bank for work or higher education).
- b. Reported norms that expand opportunities for females most often included support for **community engagement** (22) and **self-improvement** (10).

"Females engage more in their communities to learn something new outside their family, surroundings, and routine, while young men have an enormous range of activities to entertain themselves" – Key Informant, Tulkarem

FINDING #4

Perceptions of (un)equal employment opportunities are not based on empirical data on current unemployment rates among young men and women. Despite female unemployment in the West Bank at rates twice that of males, respondents were more likely to report that females enjoy more employment opportunities than males. The most common reasons cited were female willingness to accept low wages (26 mentions) and employer preferences for hiring females (15 vs 12 for males), expressed in terms of physical characteristics or commitment. See *chart “Perceived gender-based advantages in labor market, by type” below.*

"Young women tend to have more jobs than young men. Most of the companies ask for a female worker even if there are available male workers." – Focus group, Jenin



FINDING #5

Time as a factor affecting youth participation in YDRC activities was cited less often in terms of current YDRC scheduling patterns (10) and more often in terms of strongly gendered perceptions of who has available time (63).

- a) Of the 23 comments on time availability among young females, 21 reported that free time was a factor positively affecting their participation in YDRC activities such as training or community engagement. In contrast, 29 of the 33 comments specific to males cited a lack of time as a factor negatively affecting their participation in YDRC activities. Their lack of time was expressed as a result of paid employment, need to search for employment, higher education, or personal preference. Relatively few comments did not specify gender (e.g., “university students are too busy”).
- b) Interestingly, the household division of unpaid labor as a factor affecting youth opportunities was not mentioned by respondents at all, although empirical data shows that it is both strongly gendered and creates a time deficit for females age 15-29, 41% of whom are married (PCNS 2015).

FINDING #6

Among the factors under YDRCs’ immediate control, the range of content currently offered was most often reported as a factor affecting the participation of males in the 18-25 target age group (48 mentions), followed by the gender appropriateness of content (32) and lack of awareness of YDRC activities (23).

RECOMMENDATIONS TO IMPROVE GENDER-RESPONSIVE YDRC PROGRAMMING

In response to these findings, the youth researchers collectively devised recommendations to YDRCs to strengthen equal opportunities for youth, particularly the underserved target group of males age 18-25:

DIVERSIFY TRAINING CONTENT:

- 1) Expand training content areas, bring in more outside experts and offer more advanced level options. Offer multiple levels of IT, theater, handicrafts, vocational skills, music (e.g., in cooperation with Kamandjati music schools located throughout the West Bank), foreign languages - all with a focus on applied skills training. Offer online and/or blended training courses such as those available on the Edraak platform, and match to high demand job sectors such as finance and accounting.
- 2) Create new trainings on gender and social norms for males and females, beginning with adolescents (aged 16 and above).
- 3) Add outdoor social and skills-based activities e.g., hiking, scouting, sports, ecology to attract more young men to YDRCs and then introduce to activities in #1 and #2 above.

ALIGN TRAINING SCHEDULING WITH TARGET AUDIENCES:

- 4) Improve alignment of timing of offerings to target audiences e.g., increase evening offerings to accommodate underemployed young males. Also, instead of multiple days in a row, spread trainings over more days with fewer hours per day to accommodate school and/or household responsibilities of young males and females.
- 5) Consider offering some advanced training in new venues such as camps to accommodate rural or marginalized youth especially females who live in distant villages/camps e.g., in Jericho and Qalqilya.

ENGAGE YOUTH AND STAKEHOLDERS CREATIVELY:

- 6) Engage youth in building YDRC strategic plans for training in their community, particularly to generate ideas for effective follow on support and feedback loops.
- 7) Expand networking with universities (especially those with mandatory student volunteer service hours), schools, local community centers, other youth institutions such as Sharek Youth Forum, potential employers, and institutions to foster meaningful opportunities for applied learning and work experience such as part time employment, job shadowing/mini-internships, etc.
- 8) Conduct more creative awareness raising/marketing of YDRC trainings to diverse youth, highlighting success stories in YDRCs from each type of training (e.g., videos created by youth participants of YDRC media training, products by media interns).
- 9) Ensure YDRCs themselves are models of equal job opportunities for males and females (staff, outside trainers, interns).
- 10) Add more concrete incentives like reimbursement for transportation to attend YDRC training

ASSESSMENT RESULTS

The rapid youth-led gender assessment generated distinct results related to its three goals, and each suggests potentially fruitful areas of additional investments of staff time and resources.

GOAL 1

The first goal concerned the content of the assessment, and certainly useful evidence and recommendations (see above) were generated to improve the gender-responsiveness of YDRC programming. Importantly, the youth researchers surfaced the fact that the growing gender imbalance in youth participation rates was most pronounced among the largest age cohort of 18-25, among whom only 26% were males by 2017

There were some interesting conversations during the validation workshop that revealed possible weaknesses in the data collection instruments; English to Arabic translation issues with the coding; cultural sensitivities and use of euphemisms that evade direct coding; or some combination of the three. For example, there was confusion about Finding 5b on the lack of

responses related to the gender division of labor within the household and women's unpaid work. The youth researchers discussed changes in the average age at first marriage of Palestinian women and forms of home-based income generating activities for women as explanatory factors for the invisibility of this issue in the transcripts. However, equating women's unpaid work primarily with *married* women's unpaid work overlooks the data that 41% of women age 15-29 are married and that unmarried women also carry a disproportionate burden of unpaid work (PCBS 2015). Another observation that elicited heated discussion was the complete absence of any explicit references to safety as a factor affecting gender differences in opportunities for youth. Some of the researchers felt that this was due to the sensitivity of this topic in Palestinian society, while others pointed out that YDRCs are generally perceived as safe spaces for both young men and women. The coders offer another possibility: references to norms prohibiting "gender mixing" and young women's purported preferences for (lower paid) gender-segregated workplaces may have been culturally acceptable euphemisms utilized to encompass safety issues such as sexual harassment. With the exception of one YDRC with an attached outdoor cafe which essentially forced women to walk a gauntlet past seated male customers on their way to the entrance, safety was never mentioned by respondents (whether workplace, street, or online). This contrasts with the experience of women in the labor force from around the world, suggesting the problem is invisible rather than non-existent.

Both the data gathered and staff conversations have pointed to several areas in which the PWY team could provide additional support:

- PWY has never conducted stand alone gender training, which is a recommended first step to deepen understanding among YDRC staff of the gender-based opportunities and constraints facing young men and women in the West Bank. Outreach and community engagement offerings for youth need to confront the stereotypes and misperceptions that put up barriers and reduce demand for YDRC services. With support, the YDRCs could choose to offer seminars on equal opportunities for youth and/or to integrate gender considerations explicitly into existing training streams, such as employability (e.g., seminars for non-traditional, highly paid occupations for females, or certification testing for young men studying for skilled trades) and media (e.g., complementing skills training with "applied data journalism" tasks to raise awareness of the impact of gender diversity in the newsroom on audience share and the bottom line).
- Additional training in qualitative data analysis was requested by the youth researchers, and both low data literacy among participants and inadequate time were noted as challenges during the first workshop prior to data collection. Training on data analysis, particularly looking at software-enabled tools that marketing firms employ, could dovetail nicely with PWY's increased focus on employability training as well as ongoing efforts to build the YDRCs' capacity and appetite for data-based management.
- Support the YDRCs with materials on design and delivery of effective blended learning courses to maximize the potential for online educational resources (OERs) like Edraak, Coursera and Khan Academy to supplement YDRCs offerings, particularly for advanced

level or niche topics. [Note: IREX's Education Practice has technical specialists who can help here.]

- Finally, it is crucially important to understand that this assessment had a very narrow focus on gender differences in participation rates. The data insights should be look at in conjunction with evidence from the baseline and endline impact assessments being conducted by Social Impact through a separate USAID contract.

GOAL 2

The youth-led gender assessment unquestionably improved the knowledge and skills of the researchers who made key decisions at every stage of its implementation (see Annex 6):

- The participant evaluation questionnaires administered after the second workshop indicated that 100% of the youth researchers felt that they had acquired new knowledge (agreeing or strongly agreeing). Specifically, 50% strongly agreed with the statement “I now have a deeper understanding of how gender issues affect youth in the West Bank” and 64% strongly agreed with the statement “I now have a deeper understanding of how data can be used to improve YDRC activities.”
- All participants also confirmed (either responding “yes” or “somewhat”) that participation in the assessment strengthened their skills. The most highly rated were data collection and public speaking (both 100%) and teamwork (93%). The youth researchers were least confident in their gender analysis and data analysis skills (36% and 50% of youth rating them as “somewhat” strengthened, respectively).

In addition, early indications that the youth researchers intended to apply their new knowledge and skills (e.g., % strongly agreed that “I intend to use what I learned as a researcher for this youth-led gender assessment to help my community” immediately following the second workshop in August) have borne fruit. Indeed, some of the youth



researchers showed particular initiative in pursuing solutions to the issues they surfaced during their data collection. One young woman from Qalqilya - where the YDRC has one of the strongest gender imbalances in participation - reached out to her peers from Jericho, which had the least imbalance, with a request to conduct a joint focus group discussion to explore how the Jericho YDRC has devised successful strategies for gender-responsive programming for youth. And in Tulkarem, youth researchers spoke about the assessment with the local radio station. Many committed to following up with their local YDRC Coordinator to share the final recommendations

from the third workshop, and several were enthusiastic about going a step further to share them with youth beneficiaries of the YDRCs or to explore Dedoose themselves.

GOAL 3

At least six PWY staff took an active part in the assessment, both co-facilitating and providing essential data analysis. While the PWY team hired a youth Gender Fellow with expertise in women's economic empowerment and qualitative research who provided crucial support on content, translation, troubleshooting, and logistics, it must also be noted that PWY senior management emphasized the importance of the assessment, and ensured that opportunities to observe, participate, and be debriefed were provided to all departments, many of whom took an active interest. Importantly, a PWY team member from the Organizational Development department became an IREX institutional Gender Focal Point prior to the final validation workshop, and will be a vital point of contact to coordinate with the YDRCs on follow up activities.



Following the data analysis process, youth researchers devised and presented recommendations for PWY and the YDRCs at the 2nd workshop.

The impact of the assessment on the YDRCs was not measured, as other organizational capacity assessments are ongoing (OCA and Social Impact); however, all seven participating YDRCs actively supported the youth researcher selection process, provided a venue for focus group discussion (as needed) and in some cases, their staff served as key informants. A YDRC draft institutional self-assessment questionnaire was developed, and is available should it be found useful in the future as a supplementary tool (see Annex 7).

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