



وكالة تنمية المنشآت
الصغيرة و الأصغر
Small & Micro Enterprise
Promotion Service

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Places

Annual
Report 2021

Small & Micro Enterprise Promotion Serveries

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This year, we visited places, we have not been to before.
Driven by the passion to connect with the souls everywhere we reach.
To learn and share knowledge.
To support and witness the impact.
We continue to walk further, to sail or even to fly ..

We continue to
#GoPlaces



Consultants In The Field



The Start

From the very beginning, and by witnessing the sustainable impact our projects leave everywhere we go, we have always found reasons to continue the hard work.

We move because we trust in the goodness of the earth, the vitality of youth, and the power of actions. We seek the spirit of every location we visit, and as a result, we meet souls that inhabit those places and live to build them.

But whenever we are asked, “What makes your work in SMEPS unique?”

We share our belief that every soul on the field contains the key.

Every consultant, field worker, who instructs and teaches is a life changer. A change maker. Each female consultant facilitates the means to a respectable living by transferring skills, advising, enabling, empowering, and inventing solutions.

With each experience that is shared, and every bit of knowledge that changes and corrects practical behaviors in the fields of work, our faith in SMEPS’s vision is reinforced, along with everyone’s who learns about the organization and its mission in creating a better life for

all Yemenis.

In our annual report this year, we follow SMEPS’s consultants on their journeys toward development and tell some stories of success which the technical support teams influenced in different implemented projects within all development-related sectors.



Who is the consultant at SMEPS?

In SMEPS, we refer to anyone with professional or managerial experience in any area of development work as a consultant. In order to carry out its projects in a higher-quality and more sustainable way, SMEPS hires such office or field specialists.

As for here and in the coming papers, we will focus on talking about field consultants. In all projects, these consultants have a direct contact with the beneficiaries and play a major role in making development initiatives a reality that promotes economy growth and improves livelihoods.

The consultant's journey with SMEPS starts before any tasks are requested on the ground, regardless of the project or sector. Before conducting surveys and identifying beneficiaries who meet the project support criteria, all consultants attend introductory workshops on the project approach, in addition to refresher courses based on their area of expertise, the nature of their work, and the project's implementation mechanism.

So, what awaits us on such a journey? And what makes the impact genuine and sustainable that is worthy of replicating the projects? That is what you will find out throughout this report and within the many different areas of SMEPS's work.

But before we get started, let's check what SMEPSer consultants are equipped with to be ready for the journey!

996

temporary job opportunities thru consultancy contracts.



457

male and female consultants have been trained.



217

were female consultants.



4051

male and female consultants are registered in SMEPS database, with various practical experiences.



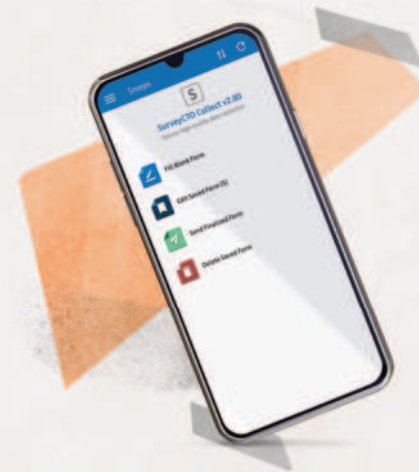
Consultants Equipment:

Advisory Bag

It is, in a nutshell, the tool that a field consultant uses while working on any project under our Improving Livelihoods Program. It had begun as a set of paper documents, then transformed into electronic files that are given to the consultant to fill out data throughout the project cycle. Today, we are proud to have it developed into a software application that every field consultant has installed in their mobile phones allowing them to track data easily, with real time data, within each field visit.

Continuous and direct data collection from beneficiaries is carried out weekly in most projects to track proj-

ect main indicators like productivity, costs, employment, time consumption, etc. This contributes to the accuracy of monitoring information and facilitates the work of the monitoring and evaluation team for various projects, which later helps in measuring sustainable impact, preparing research and studies, and drawing conclusions from lessons learned to enhance and develop plans for future projects.



CRM System:

SMEPS set up the Client Relationship Management System in 2018 as part of the BRAVE project in order to make it easier to follow the procedures of transferring financial grants to the supported enterprises while maintaining full transparency for the donor. The system is now being adopted by SMEPS projects as it facilitates the follow-up of every project phase and ensures the efficient and effective exchange of data between enterprise owners, the project team, and business advisors.

For most private sector projects, the system functions as an integrated database where enterprises register their

commercial data and consultants submit proposed business development plans to enterprises for review and discussion by project teams and specialists. It also allows tracking the process of each enterprise throughout the project phases from applying for support to supervising the procurement progress, quotation collecting, and purchasing the assets.

This all happens with full transparency to the M&E team and donors, professionally and simultaneously.

4 0 5 4

The Total Number of Enterprises Listed in the Database for The Private Sector Projects until the end of 2021, of which 1235 enterprise were supported.





Field Consultants in Various Development Sectors





In The Field

SMEPS believes that diversity and teamwork are the main reason for success, so it is keen, within its agricultural projects, to seek the assistance of agricultural engineers with different specializations such as irrigation networks, fertilization, insect pests, crops, etc. Diversity also includes the selection of engineers from different age groups, whether they are fresh graduates, academic experts, or market workers. Thus, the opportunity to share the experiences of SMEPS work on the ground is expanded to vast numbers of students in universities and participants in the local market.

After the agricultural consultant has obtained advance training courses in specialized agricultural fields as well as workshops on project mechanisms and environmental and occupational health and safeguarding, the consultants begin working on the ground in targeted project areas. They work as an integrated and mutual team of agricultural experts within each area, as each of them specializes in following up with a group of supported farmers under the supervision of a field team leader.

A consultant starts off by holding awareness sessions on the farms, where he instructs farmers about incorrect field practices and how to fix them. He also introduces them to modern agricultural techniques, their concepts, and their efficiency by showcasing older success stories and outcomes. They then mentor them in preparing suit-

able plans for their farms and determining their needs for agricultural inputs and assets. This is followed by a series of field visits by the consultant to follow up and supervise farmers collecting quotations and purchasing suitable assets for each crop. These usually include buying drip irrigation networks, and different agricultural techniques, such as mulch, appropriate fertilizers, and pesticides in measured quantity and quality.

During their field visits, consultants then show each farmer the proper methods of cultivation, such as how to stack the seeds, how to use irrigation, how to rationally use the right fertilizers, and how to prevent pests. And they continue their field follow-up for months prior to the harvest season, supervising the harvesting techniques to maintain the quality of the harvests and minimize losses.

After measuring production and consumption indicators during the season, the consultant coordinates with the farmers and community committees for a field day in the region, during which the season's harvest is presented and the farmers share their experiences in using modern techniques and changing some farming behaviors and how that affected their production. The quality and abundance of produce, along with low costs, often encourage many farmers to replicate and adapt to sustainable techniques.

The agricultural consultant's experience working with

farmers continues even after the intervention time is over. Trust is built with these agronomists that we frequently hear of farmers communicating with their field consultants post the project for consultancy. Fostering the idea of the significance of consulting services is one of our main objectives. Many consultants are motivated by this, the project experience gives them a clear image of the agricultural needs of the local market in their region. This gives them an opportunity to take the initiative in filling these gaps by entering the market as suppliers or by buying agricultural lands to reclaim and cultivate by themselves.

As for the farmers, measuring the impact of the project is reflected in their adoption of modern techniques, after realizing their importance and effectiveness in increasing productivity and reducing costs (water, oil derivatives, fertilizers, time, and effort). Many farmers take the initiative to expand the cultivated areas and buy the necessary agricultural inputs, using the knowledge they have acquired through technical support. Creating successful and live field experiments and presenting the concepts of suitable sustainable techniques for each region or crop, prompted many Yemeni farmers to replicate, and even try planting new crops. Buying the seeds, fertilizers, and tools required to adopt to these techniques have significantly contributed to the revitalization of agricultural markets in some Yemeni regions.



Coastal Area

In Yemen, where the coastline stretches for more than 1,906 km, many fishers encounter numerous challenges while out on their boats. The risks of their daily journey rise with the lack of knowledge of safety procedures, which could put the fisherman in real danger. In addition to traveling far distances in search of fish without a specific destination and getting lost at sea. All this increases fuel consumption and costs and decreases the likelihood that fish will be sold in the market on time, and causes a detrimental impact on the fisherman's income and standard of living. It also affects his ability to maintain the assets that secure his source of income, as his boat engine can be damaged too. He might sell these assets to cover expenses, then turn to paid work with others, worsening his family's living situation.

Thus, the fish consultant's knowledge and expertise are very valuable to the local fishermen. By instructing the fishermen in the proper model of a safe and productive fishing trip. The consultant on the coast offers various sorts of training, beginning with safety procedures at sea, checking and maintaining the engine and boat on a regular basis, using fish detector techniques and GPS, and adhering to the standards of the International Labor Organization Convention on Fishing Work, which protects the environmental diversity in Yemeni seas. Enabling the fishermen also includes teaching them correct methods of handling and transporting fish. Also, how



to deal with the market to sell their fish product and ensure the continuity of making profits. Several weeks after the grants are received in the form of assets, the consultant continues to visit the fisherman and accompany him on trips where the fisherman actually puts everything he has learned to use, in order to track positive change in fishing behaviors and income growth. After the completion of the intervention with the fishermen, the fisherman gains greater flexibility to handle the difficulties of working at sea, he is outfitted with a boat or engine that is more efficient and can maintain them.

He professionally manages resources to ensure high and sustained productivity. In many cases, he may need to employ other workers from his hometown to help him fish and sell. The development intervention also contributes, through networking workshops, to linking fishermen with fish associations in their areas which provides them with additional services to make them even more resilient.



In The Valley

The livestock breeder grows accustomed to caring for her livestock, and because she views them as her main source of income and her only means of maintaining a reasonable standard of living, she speaks highly of them and treats them with love as one of her own children. This affection and care, however, is insufficient because animals frequently suffer from diseases or atrophy and weakness because of malnutrition or excessive heat and sun exposure, which may result in the loss of their animals or the sale of them at low prices.

Therefore, after the animal breeder obtains the technical support courses and is introduced to the field consultant. Normally, confidence is built between them as she witnesses the impact of his efforts and advice in changing the course of her livestock care. Not only does the animal breeder acquire animal assets and tools, but she also has her barn constructed or renovated to be a healthy environment for the care of sheep or cows, which will benefit their weight and milk production.

The consultant educates the animal breeder on the correct behaviors in feeding, watering, fattening, breeding, and treating animals, which may be simple but achieve a rapid effect on the growth and reproduction of livestock. Hence, the animal breeders clearly notice the health and energy of the sheep. The consultants receive refresher training on how to make molasses, use feed, and care for the animal before heading out into the field. They also attend workshops on how to deal with livestock breeders,

build their confidence, and guide them towards protecting assets and accessing the market to improve and sustain income through planning, good management of livestock, and the ability to calculate their value.

The field consultant also plays a significant role in the vital and productive sectors by comprehending and analyzing the local conditions and needs, explaining how there are opportunities to connect small producers to the market, enhance value chains, and strengthen the roles of various market participants like supply chains, business associations and cooperatives.

For instance, the Al-Kashouba Association, which plays a crucial role in the area as a center for collecting milk and

selling it to significant producers in the market, has partnered with livestock breeders and milk producers in the Al-Maraw'ah area of Al-Hodeidah. For livestock breeders, this lowers the expense of transporting and selling milk. Additionally, it encourages animal breeders to produce more, meeting the requirements of the local market and providing an additional, long-term source of income.

The livestock breeder transforms into a small business-woman who can run her barn and better meet the needs of her home and family through financial empowerment, practical training, and access to the market to purchase needs and awareness of valuation and selling methods. In fact, many of the supported breeders now offer the locals livestock development and feeding advice, as well as sharing veterinary knowledge.





In The Market

The private sector projects at SMEPS are primarily founded on the idea of offering consulting services, which enable the owners of enterprises, whether micro, small, or medium-sized, to identify the possibilities of expanding their businesses and moving them from daily basis tasks to securing an income to invest in projects so they are capable of expansion and serve the community and local economy in a better way.

Within these projects, SMEPS is looking for business advisors with academic qualifications in the fields of accounting and business administration who are linked to the labor market and who have work experience in administrative and structural systems. Their journey with SMEPS begins with business continuity training. The business advisors are then at the forefront of promoting SMEPS's projects supporting the MSMEs in the private sector and facilitating access to the owners of enterprises in need of technical support.

The business advisors play a significant role in the field by visiting the enterprises and speaking with the business owners to discuss and modify continuity plans after conducting introductory workshops for any project, choosing and training the beneficiaries. The plan becomes clear and specific about the type of assets that the business needs to be able to continue, and then it gets submitted to SMEPS, to compete for receiving the financial grants. The key to success is the business advisors' continuous presence next to the businesswoman or businessman for

a full year. The business advisors intervene directly with their reach experience in dealing with the private sector and with the MSMEs to guide them and assist them into creating better plan for the enterprise to make a positive shift for its future. The business advisors, start by analyzing the status of the enterprise according to the region's needs; then investment opportunities are analyzed; then their advices are given during the preparation of the business continuity plan and then the selection of the needed assets are set; and it continues during the processes of going to the market and collecting quotations to avoid the occurrence of any kind of fraud. The business advisors continue their consultancy services during the project period monitoring the operation and effectiveness of the assets and measuring indicators of production improvement and expansion.

SMEPS has promoted the concept of advisory services and technical support through years of subsequent projects in the private sector, which at the beginning, was restricted to some consultancy advices over the phone or informal meetings. Now, these business advisors and private sector experts are considered to be an important addition to any business even beyond the project completion in order to continue creating business growth strategies.

As for the business's owners, providing them with technical and financial support has helped numerous businesses that had been struggled due to the conflict's de-

teriorating economic situation. The provision of advisory services also supported in the growth of some of these enterprises into market leaders, which increased job opportunities and provided the local market with a better goods and services in terms of quality and variety.

In The Craft and Profession

Before starting with the vocational training projects, consultants receive extensive training in business development plans. They then travel to different governorates to get ready for the project's implementation.

The beneficiaries of these projects receive the training of (My First Business), which teaches them management and marketing skills for their start-ups. Depending on their skill level, they then progress to more specialized vocational courses in their chosen field of work, which include sewing, knitting, food processing, carpentry, mechanics, electricity, and mobile maintenance.

Under the supervision of an entrepreneurship consultant, startup owners (trainees) present their business plans.

Once approved, the process of collecting and analyzing asset quotes begins. Each beneficiary is then empowered to choose the best quality and price for their assets before making a purchase.

When an entrepreneurship consultant with administrative and planning experience supervises startup owners during this stage, they gain market knowledge. The consultants' exposure to the professional market has helped them refine their expertise in the types of materials used, manufacturing processes, and work in these fields. As a result, the consultants complete the project with a greater knowledge base, which allows them to gain new practical experience and greater market opportunities.





In Institutional Capacity Building Support

Within its cultural sector projects and supporting youth, SMEPS supports institutions and enhances their capabilities to implement their cultural activities and projects. These institutions receive training in institutional building to qualify their staff in financial management, communication, monitoring, and evaluation. They also develop their skills in writing reports and project proposals. SMEPS also works to develop institutional skills to help them access opportunities to ensure the sustainability of cultural activities and to help young artists secure sources of income by working in the creative industries.

The giving these experiences to 13 cultural enterprises in Sana'a, Aden, Zabid, and Hadramout during the training stages and then following up throughout the project

implementation period, technical assistance for cultural projects is demonstrated. These organizations serve their respective cultural and creative professions and provide young people interested in sculpting, cinematography, music, traditional chanting, architecture, and other fields with specific technical, managerial, and marketing training.

In the cultural sector, the support of these enterprises and the continuity of their projects contributed to the creation of a cultural environment that has been almost nonexistent since the start of the war. More than 471 young men and women from various artistic disciplines were given a place to develop their abilities and exchange experiences in various creative fields. It also facilitated the way for the documentation of more than 500 intangible heritage items, such as inherited legends, architectural and literary styles, and traditional songs, in addition to the actual documentation of the Qur'anic manuscripts in Zabid.





**2021 was the Year of
Making an Impact!**



Research and Development Unit

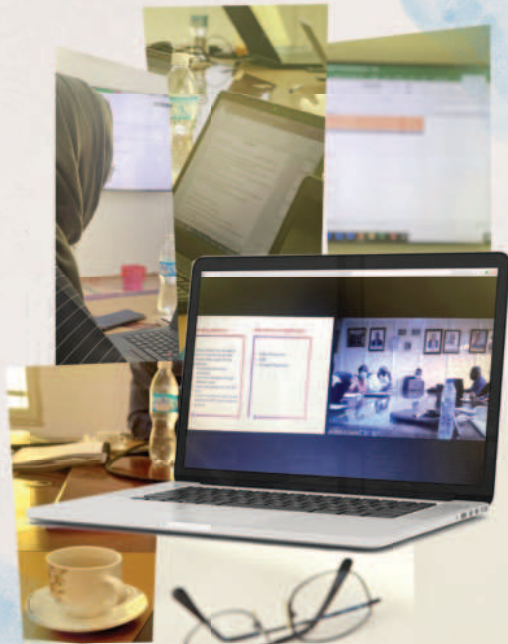
SMEPS uses monitoring and evaluation mechanisms in each of its projects to assess the effectiveness of the intervention and identify any flaws. The enhancement of the intervention mechanisms in later projects is based on the lessons learned from the intervention mechanisms in each project, which are included in this output. This year, based on SMEPS' belief in the importance of continuous project development, SMEPS took an important step in this path by establishing a research and development unit.

In order to assure greater efficiency in SMEPS's future initiatives, the unit completed significant groundwork in 2021, including developing the enterprise's assessment guide, the research and development guide, and work in-

dicators and directions. The unit also started activating an internal dashboard and an integrated digital archiving system (the Dash Board) for all SMEPS interventions since 2005. This is considered a first step in the project to provide an information bank for the development sectors in Yemen. This project contributes to providing development partners with indicators that help design development interventions and projects that are suitable for the recovery and reconstruction phase and achieve the required transparency in front of the local and international community.

The unit team is preparing for feasibility studies and value chain studies as part of its operations, including the creation of value chain studies for the following crops: wheat, coffee, honey, and henna.





Knowledge Sharing Program

Similarly, to Yemen, Nigerian businesswomen faces significant obstacles that restrict their ability to contribute to economic growth and entrepreneurship. By empowering them, we can improve the resilience of businesses in the private sector, make it easier for them to connect with markets, and provide those markets with the goods and services they demand.

After the success of the two phases of the BRAVE Women program, which was implemented by SMEPS through 2018 and 2021 in Sana'a, Taiz, Aden, Hadramout, and Ibb and during which more than one businesswoman who owns private sector projects was empowered and supported financially and technically, the project team at SMEPS established an experience exchange program

with the Nigerian Industry Bank as a first step to implement similar projects in Africa under the Global WiFi initiative.

In order to help development partners in the area have more effective project experiences, the program helped transfer the lessons learned that the project team in Yemen worked on.



Al-Qanbous Presence of the Authentic Yemeni Tone:

Al-Qanbous, also known as Al-Tarbi, is a traditional Yemeni musical instrument. It was found in Yemen and then it was also famous around the Arabian Peninsula. It stands out because it is constructed of a single piece of wood, has four strings, and has an original shape with a green natural piece of leather which is similar in color to the Yemeni famous jambiya. The inclusion of a little mirror component at its front, which discloses the object's purpose, further distinguishes it.

The absence of its players and the craftsmen who makes it led to Al-Qanbus being almost completely lost, along with other aspects of Yemeni culture. Before the Return to the Surface project, which was implemented by a cultural organization as part of a larger project, the project

worked to teach young musicians how to play this instrument and understand its tone, in addition to training craftsmen in its manufacture and they produced 15 Qanbous instruments to republish its culture and include it in future artworks.



2021 Partners

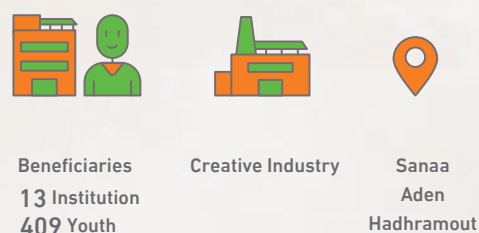
The numbers indicate each project progress up until the end of 2021, and not the final outcomes of the projects.



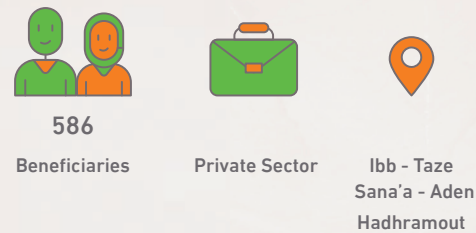
Vocational and Business Skills Training Support Project





Cash for Work: Promoting livelihood opportunities for Urban Youth in Yemen




BRAVE WOMEN Business Resilience Assistance for value adding Enterprises for Women




Livelihood Support for Damaged Communities

Emergency Resilience Grants Project (FCDO)



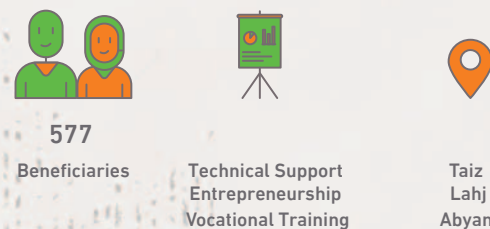


Livelihood Support Project for small holder producers




Emergency Social Protection Enhancement and COVID-19 Response Project – ESPECRP



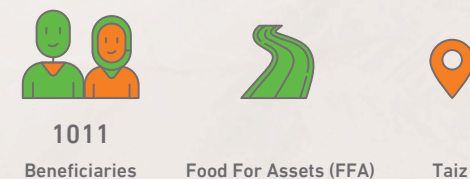

Supporting Resilient Livelihoods and Food Security in Yemen

Sustainable Business Livelihood Project – Mercy Crops




Emergency Livelihood Support Project





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