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[**ICRD - Yemen Project: 5th Quarter Report 2016**](http://www.globalgiving.org/projects/training-peacebuilders-in-yemen/updates/?subid=57359)

[By Rebecca Cataldi - Program Manager](http://www.globalgiving.org/projects/training-peacebuilders-in-yemen/updates/?subid=57359)

ICRD is pleased to report that the training program for Yemeni peacemakers on skills for resolving conflict and addressing violent extremism (AVE) was successfully completed from April 23-29, 2016 in Amman, Jordan. Eleven participants representing five indigenous Yemeni organizations were trained on topics that included core principles of conflict resolution, methods of conflict analysis, problem-solving, mediation, negotiation, reconciliation, addressing violent extremism (including understanding drivers and warning signs, context analysis, strategies and methods of addressing violent extremism, the role of identity and religion in addressing violent extremism, and critical thinking), and training skills.

During the course of the training, participants grappled with issues such as sectarian and political divisions in society, the intersection of religion and politics, the family, economics, education, and ways that all of these can affect conflict and violent extremism.

Participants reported that they found much useful in the training that they felt they could adapt and integrate—in context-appropriate and culturally sensitive ways—in training others in Yemen and in implementing field projects to address conflict and violent extremism. In particular, participants found especially useful the concept and practice of active listening, a new model of conflict analysis, the concept of critical thinking, and the AVE frameworks and training tools introduced—including ICRD’s AVE film *Back from the Brink* which profiles case studies from the United States, Pakistan, and Lebanon. (The English version can be viewed on our website at <http://icrd.org/countering-violent-extremism/> ; the Arabic version will also be made available there shortly.)

Many participants mentioned that they would now like to add AVE concepts to the trainings they conduct in Yemen. One organization, a pioneer and leader in the field of conflict resolution and conflict resolution training in Yemen, now plans to revise its current peace training manual to include AVE concepts. A participant from the governorate of Taiz who has conducted various peace trainings now plans to include critical thinking in his training for Yemeni lawyers. A participant from Abyan, a governorate where Al-Qaeda has gained a strong foothold during the ongoing war and has gained some support by implementing its own system of ‘justice’ for addressing conflicts, now wants to include AVE in his trainings and to create new community conflict resolution committees to address local conflicts, which would hopefully create an alternative to turning to militants for justice.

The following sampling reflects participant comments and reflections and is indicative of the impact of the training:

*“We have thought that the government should be responsible for addressing violent extremism, but now through this training we also see there is so much that we can do to address it through civil society.”*

*“I learned a lot of things, especially regarding violent extremism, how to address it, warning signs, and critical thinking.”*

*“This training was very informative. We have already been applying such concepts but hadn’t had them presented to us in such a strategic way.”*

*“This training was the best thing I ever had.”*

*“I’m so glad that this training will not stop here, that we will continue by going back to train others and working in the community.”*

It was a long and often-bumpy road to reach this point, with enormous challenges from the war, airport closures, new visa restrictions, funding needs, and security issues. Inspired by the brave people of Yemen who never gave up in their courageous work for peace, we also refused to give up.

Your support has been critical to the success of this work, and we are deeply grateful. In the second and third stages of the project, participants will implement additional training in Yemen for a larger number of indigenous peacemakers, to be followed by a community project in Abyan to address an issue of conflict and/or violent extremism. As we prepare for these next stages, your continued support will enable us to expand and deepen the reach of the program. Please continue to help us implement this critical work.

