



# Pivoting CVE Programming in the Face of Political Transitions in Yemen

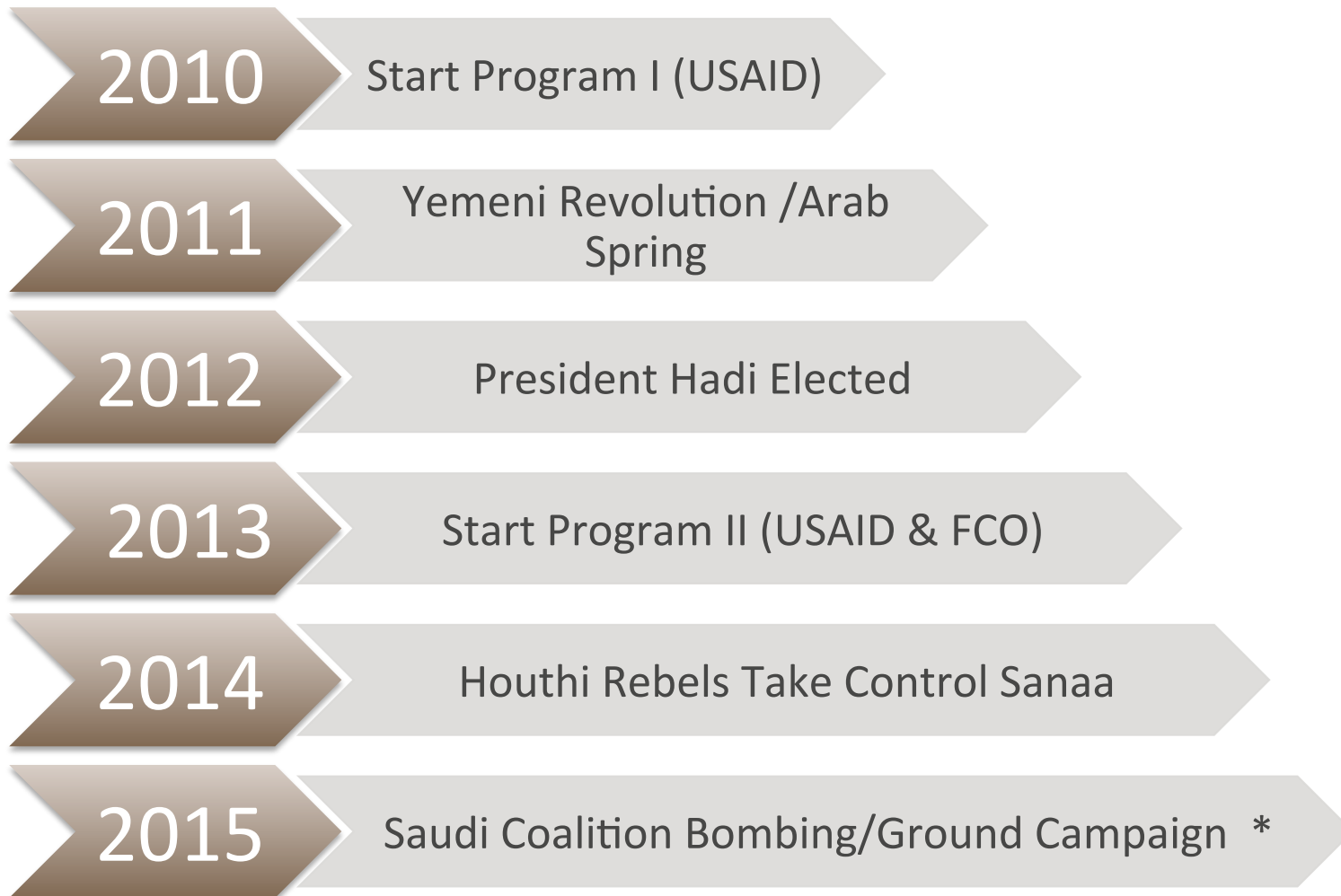
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# TIMELINE & CONTEXT

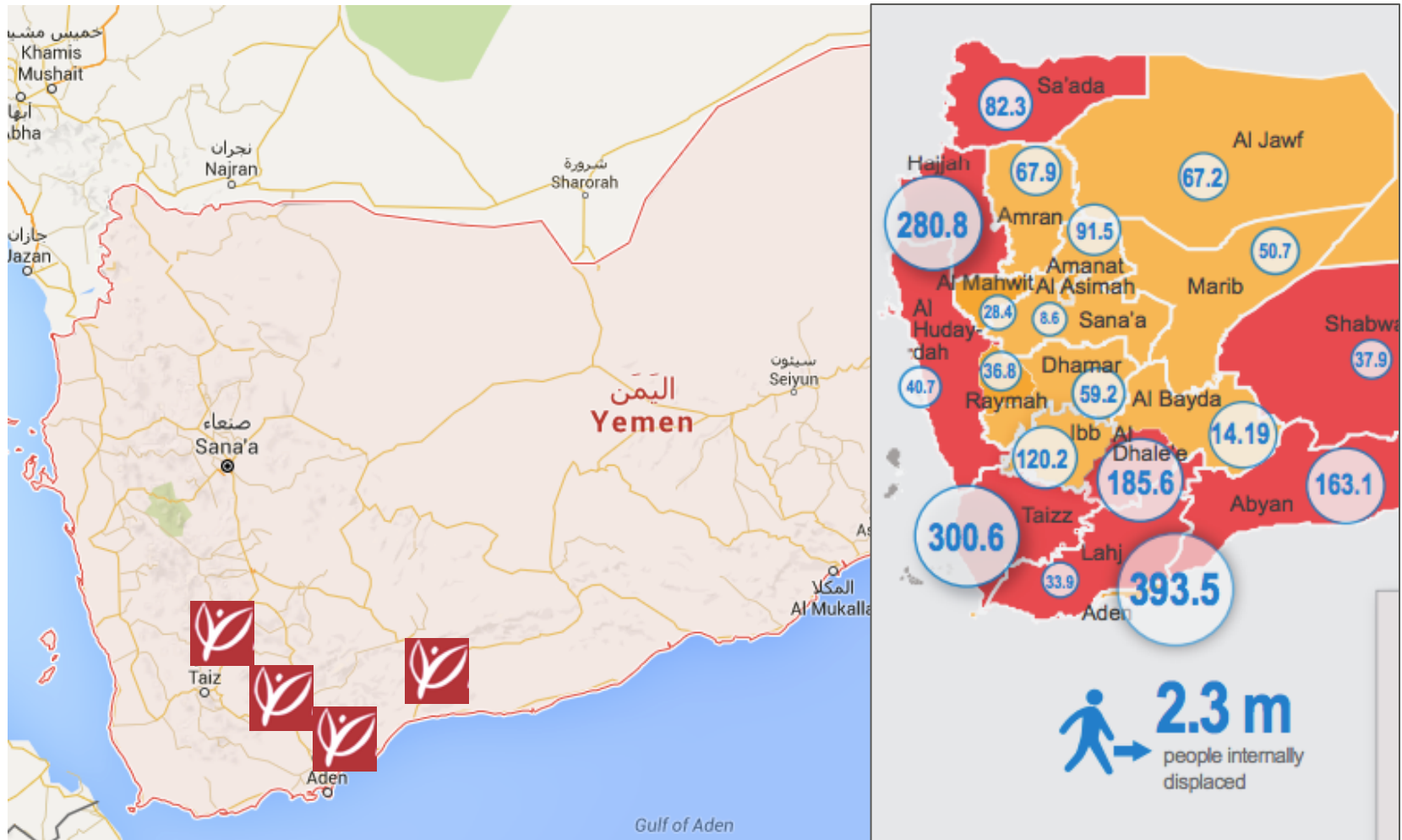
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# PROGRAM MAP & CURRENT CRISIS



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# OBJECTIVES

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- » Provide safe, non-political space for organizing through Youth Action Centers.
- » Build and apply civic engagement skills and engage in dialogues with local leaders.
- » Advocacy campaigns and community service projects.



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# BASELINE

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- » 56% youth surveyed had no trust in the government
- » 76% of youth had been avoiding areas due to security concerns
- » 50% of males reported handling justice issues themselves.
- » 61% of youth in Aden and 25% in Lahj would seek friends for advice



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# YOUTH ACTION CENTERS

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## + SOCIAL CAPITAL

- » Physical and virtual space (when security conditions required) to build social connectedness
- » Offered sports and recreational activities



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# YOUTH ACTION CENTERS

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## HUMAN CAPITAL

» Older youth led younger youth in educational tutoring

» Offered NFE including:

- » Computer courses, remedial reading and writing, English, and transitional justice.
- » (Females) Family-Based Violence and Women Rights



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# CIVIC ENGAGEMENT & DIALOGUE

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» Communication and Leadership Training

» Dialogue with local leaders



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# ADVOCACY & COMMUNITY SERVICE

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Youth are eager to be “heroes in their communities and gain recognition and respect.”



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# PROGRAM CHALLENGES & PIVOTS

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» Instability and insecurity

» Community Partner- and Youth-Led

» Constricted movement and opportunities

» Flexibility and Perseverance

» Move beyond outputs and weak endline

» Qualitative testimonials



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# ADDITIONAL RESEARCH



## POLICY BRIEF

### FROM JORDAN TO JIHAD: THE LURE OF SYRIA'S VIOLENT EXTREMIST GROUPS

#### RESEARCH AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Earlier this year, the conflict embroiling Syria hit another benchmark: the war's number of foreign fighters now tops Afghanistan in the 1980s. Syria has become the training ground of choice for today's violent jihadis.

While extremist groups in Syria have been strikingly adept at recruitment – tailoring sectarian marketing campaigns to the digital age – traditional prevention efforts are undercut by a lack of data about push and pull factors, methods of recruitment and foreign fighter motivations.

These gaps have catalyzed a reassessment of approach. The White House Summit on Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) in February catalyzed a broad-based policy discussion on appropriate strategies, and in September, at the U.N. General Assembly, national governments are expected to furnish new strategies as part of a platform to prevent violent extremism. Given past confusion about definitions for CVE, and what strategies are most effective, these efforts will hopefully offer new clarity.

This research brief attempts to contribute to this effort, by shedding light on the current challenge in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. Based on a series of interviews with foreign fighters and their families, we find that traditional approaches to stabilization and development are unlikely to address the reasons why Jordanians are joining as Daesh (also known as the Islamic State, ISIS and ISIL) or the Nusra Front (*Jabhat al-Nusra*), Syria's Al-Qaeda affiliate.

Though Jordan is one of the few countries in the region blessed with relative stability, Jordanians are actively contributing to the growth of fighters in neighboring Syria and Iraq. Conservative estimates put the number of Jordanian fighters in Syria at around 1,500, making the kingdom the third highest contributor of foreign fighters (after Saudi Arabia and Tunisia), and the highest

#### Some Key Takeaways

- » Poverty does not appear to drive foreign fighter recruitment, at least at the level of the individual. Fighters came from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds. Furthermore, we found no evidence fighters, or their families, are being compensated by armed groups in Syria.
- » The most common justification fighters offered for joining the war in Syria was to protect Sunni women and children.
- » Social networks help explain who goes, and which groups they join.
- » Within Syria, intra-Sunni fighting was a key source of foreign fighter disillusionment.



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## CONTACT

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# QUESTIONS FOR BREAKOUT

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1. How might we evaluate the respective roles played by human capital (educational attainment) vs social capital (peer, mentor support/cohesion) in preventing VE and/or urban/gang violence?
2. How can our educational programming best incorporate promising practice in the area of adaptive management to ensure our programs adjust to the changing context around it?
3. What parallels or lessons learned can be shared between the approach applied by this PVE program in Yemen and gang/urban violence programs elsewhere



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