

Phase I

MOTIVATION & SEGMENTATION PROFILE (MSP)

A. INTRODUCTION

Project Titania is a research and analysis study undertaken by Strategic Communication Laboratories (SCL) on behalf of Archimedes. The Target Country is the Republic of Yemen. Two Target Locations have been specified within Yemen:

1. The Governorate of Ma'rib (Ma'rib City).
2. The Governorate of Hadramout (Hadramout City).

Project Titania consists of four phases, which also equate to the four deliverables due for submission:

Phase I: MSP (Motivation and Segmentation Profile). The MSP summarizes the research done to date and is based on a number of Expert Interviews (EIs) and public domain Desk Based Research (DBR). The MSP details project progress and should not be taken as a final deliverable - for example, DBR continues throughout the project lifetime.

Phase II: RP (Research Plan). The RP provides logistical clarification on proposed field research, along with confirmation and justification of Target Locations. A Risk Register is also provided to help define how operational risks are mitigated to the greatest degree possible.

Phase III: Field. The field phase encapsulates all field research and preliminary analysis conducted on the various stages of fieldwork.

Phase IV: Analysis & Report. The final phase involves secondary data analysis and its conversion into a final product.

This report consists of the deliverables due for Phase I: the MSP, and Phase II: the Research Plan.

B. MSP OBJECTIVES

The aims of the MSP section are:

1. To confirm the objectives of Project Titania.
2. To identify the Non-Desired Behavior(s) (NDBs) underpinning the objectives of Project Titania.
3. To identify, through application of a unique behavioral methodology,¹ which aspect of the NDB(s) can be best challenged by Project Titania.
4. To identify factors which contribute to the existence and/or growth of the NDB(s), and provide initial explanations for such factors.
5. To identify factors which contribute to the removal and/or challenging of the NDB(s), and provide initial explanations for these.

By addressing these objectives, it is possible for Project Titania to enter Phase II of its lifetime: the production of a research plan (also included within this report).

C. METHODOLOGY

The initial objective of any Strategic Communication Campaign is to develop a thorough understanding of the problem space and the behavior that the Strategic Communication Campaign should aim to change. This will subsequently guide the selection of Campaign Target Groups (CTGs), Target Audiences (TAs) and Measures of Effectiveness (MOEs).

I. Behavioral Status Quo (BSQ)

The BSQ is the first stage of the methodology and involves moving from the broader, unconstrained themes specified in the Project Objectives, to more targeted and accomplishable Campaign Objectives. The successful outcome of the BSQ depends on addressing two main criteria:

1. The establishment of a working definition of the Non-Desired Behaviors (NDBs) - An NDB is a behavior closely

1. The methodology implemented throughout this project has been created and refined by the Behavioral Dynamics Institute (BDi). The BDi is a body of behavioral scientists whose work on behavioral methodologies is provided only to Strategic Communication Laboratories (SCL).

related to the Project Objectives, which can be targeted for change and, if changed, will have the highest likelihood of measurably contributing to the Project Objectives.

2. The identification of more specific factors and behaviors that comprise the NDB, which can realistically be targeted via a Strategic Communication Campaign.

2. Method

Determining the BSQ involves a divergent thinking process that is underpinned by knowledge gathered from Desk Based Research (DBR) and Expert Interviews (EIs). This information is analyzed using Behavioral Mapping Techniques (BMTs) and clustered into concepts and behaviors that make up the problem space surrounding the Project Objectives.

Desk Based Research: Desk Based Research (DBR) refers to the systematic research and review of information from existing open (and also often closed) sources that is relevant to the Project Objectives and NDB(s). DBR seeks to identify, clarify and provide a theoretical understanding of the different factors that together make up the problem space (i.e. factors, behaviors, groups, etc.) surrounding the NDB(s).

Priority is given to official statistical sources such as National Censuses and Government Statistics. Where primary sources are unavailable, secondary sources are used. In these instances, efforts are made to cross-validate such sources of information and critically examine the content before inclusion into the DBR. The DBR is an ongoing process of refinement and informs all stages of the project.

Expert Interviews: Expert Interviews (EIs) are conducted with local experts on indigenous culture, tradition, history and the current socio-political environment. The interviews are semi-structured and follow a loosely prescribed format with open-ended questions around relevant topics. To date, a total of eight interviews have been conducted.

3. Research Process and Results

The information gathered from DBR and Expert Interviews is summarized and converted into National and Regional MSPs (as included within this section of the report). Behavioral Mapping Techniques are used to analyze the findings in relation to the Project Objectives and to assist in the definition of the NDB(s).

D. DEFINITION & EVALUATION OF NDB(s)

After having considered the problem space surrounding the Project Objectives, one NDB was defined for Yemen: The support for, and engagement in, violent Jihadism.

The NDB, together its constituent behavioral factors and concepts, are displayed in Figure 1. Any Strategic Communication Campaign should aim to target the most relevant of these factors in order to achieve the Project Objectives.

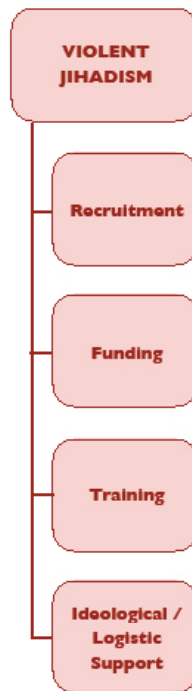


Figure 1. The Figure shows the basic Behavioral Mapping of the problem space, including the NDB, and key contributing factors.

The most realistic, relevant and measurable factors that contribute to the NDB were identified through the application of a constrained set of research parameters. Each factor was analyzed against the following five research parameters:

1. Accessibility: Accessibility refers to degree to which access can be gained to the groups implicated in the factor considered. For example, Yemeni Government policy-makers involved in funding violent Jihadism are substantially more difficult to access than broad base community supporters who provide funding. Policy-making takes place behind closed doors whereas the process of community support is more transparent.

2. Salience of Impact: Salience of Impact is the magnitude of effect that a Strategic Communication Campaign is likely to have on the NDB. For example, attacking the logistical support provided to violent Jihadists might have a greater impact on the NDB than changing people's opinion on the street.

3. Problem Relevance: Problem Relevance is a measure of the degree to which the factor under consideration is relevant to the Client's overall objectives. High impact or accessibility is of little importance if such levels are not consistent with the prescribed aims and objectives.

4. Measurability: Measurability is the degree to which the factor, and any change in it, can be measured. For example, measuring the number of people attending a particular extremist mosque would be easier than measuring the amount of funds donated from foreign charities in support of violent Jihadism.

5. Influenceability: Influenceability refers to the degree to which a Strategic Communication Campaign is likely to have a persuasive effect on the Target Audience's behavior. This takes into account a number of factors, such as the strength of belief and emotional involvement. For example, an Imam is likely to be less influenceable than a teenager when it comes to religious matters.

Each factor was rated in terms of its relative strength and weakness on a 5-point scale based on the information available. The scale used reflects an assessment of the relative strengths and weaknesses of each research parameter. It should not be regarded as an interval scale with equal intervals in between the points of the scale. The ratings are based on the DBR and Expert Interviews, and take into account:

- The relationship of the concepts to the NDB;
- The groups that are currently supportive of the NDB;
- Existing sentiments of opposition and the groups to which they belong;

- Barriers to opposition.

I. Community Support for, and Recruitment into violent Jihadism.

	Recruitment	Funding	Training	Ideological/Logistical Support
Accessibility	3.5	1.5	2	3
Salience of Impact	4	4	3.5	4
Problem Relevance	4	4	4	3.5
Measurability	3.5	1	3	3
Influenceability	4	1.5	3	3
Total	19	12	15.5	16.5
Rank	1	4	3	2

Table 1. This table shows the ratings and aggregate ranks for each of the factors related to the NDB.

The analysis indicates that the most pragmatic, relevant and measureable factor underpinning the NDB (and so the optimal factor on which a Strategic Communication Campaign should be focused) is Recruitment into violent Jihadist groups. A second highly relevant factor in the case of Yemen is ideological/logistical support for violent Jihadism, as the research indicates that in many cases groups within the relevant regions provide safe havens for violent Jihadist operations.

Potential Campaign Target Groups

Whilst there are indications of sympathy for violent Jihadism within the tribal community, very little information is publicly available about the psychosocial characteristics of these groups. It is anticipated that this will become clearer during the Field Research. A number of relevant factors were identified within the population that were directly, or indirectly, related to recruitment into violent Jihadism and the provision of logistical/ideological support.

Specific attention was also given to factors that prevent recruitment into violent Jihadism. These factors and barriers are outlined in the National and Regional MSPs found later in this document. These factors will be researched further in the next phase of the research methodology in order to determine the most suitable Campaign Target Group(s) (i.e. the groups whose behavior the Strategic Communication Campaign aims to change).

NATIONAL MSP: Yemen

Yemen faces a host of domestic political and security challenges including Islamist militancy, separatist conflict, civil, and tribal unrest, uncertainty surrounding leadership succession, and potential instability resulting from economic and social deprivation and a decline in the availability of natural resources.

Many analysts view the decline of the Yemeni economy as the key issue underpinning the country's present and potential future security problems. Yemen is the poorest state in the Arab World with inflation approaching 30% and unemployment around 40%. The country is heavily dependent on food imports, making it particularly vulnerable to sudden global rises in the price of foodstuffs.

The sharp fall in oil revenues has placed enormous pressure on the Yemeni economy, restricting the ability of the Government to control the country's powerful tribal forces through traditional patronage systems - President's Saleh's means of maintaining a fragile stability in many of Yemen's provinces.

While the risk of state collapse is currently slim, central Government control over the country's rural provinces is often minimal. Viewed through the lens of the ongoing global war against Al-Qa'ida and its affiliates, this is creating regional and international concern that lawless territories provide militant groups from the Gulf States with an ideal operational base and sanctuary.

Since 2006 Yemen has seen the re-emergence of an Al-Qa'ida-aligned terrorist network capable of carrying out a sustained and wide-ranging campaign against Yemeni security forces, energy sector targets, and foreign nationals. In January, an amalgam of Salafi Jihadist networks coalesced with fugitive Saudi militants to form a new group with regional pretensions, Al-Qa'ida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP). The group appears resilient and is able to recruit from a younger generation of would-be Jihadists raised in the shadow of brutal terrorist tactics seen in theatres such as Iraq and Saudi Arabia.

Meanwhile, the Yemeni Government has been faced with growing dissent in the South. Demonstrations in 2007 by former South Yemen Army officers demanding higher pension payments were met by a heavy security force crackdown that served only to inflame latent separatist tendencies among many Yemenis who have felt disenfranchised following the unification of the country after the end of the civil war in 1994. Separatist sentiment has continued to rise this year with civil unrest and some politicians have made open calls for independence for South Yemen.

In the Governorate of Sa'dah, a simmering four-year-old rebellion by members of the al-Houthi clan continues to drain precious military resources. Although a cessation of hostilities is currently in place, the underlying grievances for the violence, namely economic marginalization, a lack of infrastructure, and religious persecution (the al-Houthi's are followers of the Zaidi sect of Shia Islam), remain unresolved. This makes a return to open hostilities a strong possibility.

The development of fully-fledged democratic structures in Yemen has been curtailed by central Government meddling, nepotism, and corruption. President Ali Abdullah Saleh has consolidated his hold on power with the help of northern tribal connections and an informal patronage system, using oil revenues to win and placate powerful tribal leaders, radical Islamist Sheikhs, businessmen, and politicians. While this system has helped to ensure the regime's survival, it has left many Yemenis feeling politically disempowered. President Saleh is due to step down in 2011, at which time elections are scheduled. However, the regime's clever manipulation of party politics has so far succeeded in preventing any potential strong successors from emerging.

GEOGRAPHY



Area: 527,970 sq. km.

Yemen lies in the south of the Arabian Peninsula and borders the Arabian Sea, the Gulf of Aden, and the Red Sea. Yemen lies between Oman and Saudi Arabia and is on the Bab el Mandeb strait (one of world's most active shipping lanes).

ADMINISTRATION

Capital City: Sana'a, the largest city in Yemen with the largest population (1,972,011).

Head of State: President Ali Abdullah Saleh of the General Peoples Congress party (GPC) since May 1990 (former President of North Yemen).

Vice President: Maj. Gen. Abd al-Rab Mansur al-Hadi.

Head of Government: Prime Minister Ali Muhammed Mujawwar.

Administration Overview

The President, with input from the Prime Minister, chooses a Cabinet. All key Government post-holders are chosen by the President. There are two legislative houses: the Shura Council, appointed by the President; and the House of Representatives, chosen by popular vote.

There are a total of 19 Governorates in Yemen. For electoral and administrative purposes, Sana'a is treated as an additional Governorate.

Electoral Overview

Parliamentary elections scheduled for 2009 have been rescheduled for 2011. The official reasoning is that the country needs time to reform its electoral system. The decision to postpone was made following an agreement between the General People's Congress (the ruling party) and the Joint Meeting Parties (one of the three major coalitions), and was a result of threats to boycott the elections by the main opposition parties due to perceptions that the preparations for voting were leading toward an unfair election process.

Following the 2011 elections, President Saleh is constitutionally obliged to step down. However, at present, no clear successor has emerged. It is possible that power will pass to President Saleh's son Ahmed. Unconfirmed regional media reports have claimed that the President may seek a change in the constitution permitting him to serve another two five-year terms.

DEMOGRAPHY

Population Overview:

Yemen's Central Statistics Office (CSO) estimated that the country's total population would be 22,880,000 by 2009 (the figure is based on the 2004 population census when the population was 19,685,000).

Half the population of Yemen is estimated by the CSO to be 16 years or under, with at least seven million people living below the poverty line. At least 5,726,081 people live in urban areas.

Population Statistics

- Annual Average Population Growth Rate (%): 3.5.

- Population Density (Persons per sq. km.): 39.73.

- Total Number of Households: 2,983,000 (2005), rising to an estimated 3,593,000 by 2010.

- Average Household Size: 6.85 persons (2005), falling to an estimated 6.39 by 2010.

- Gender ratio (No. males for every 100 females): 103.2.

- Population doubling time (yrs): 23.

Life expectancy at birth (yrs):

- Male: 62.
- Female: 63.8.
- Both: 62.9.

Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births:

- Newborn (less than 1 month): 37.3.
- Infants (up to 1yr): 74.8.
- Children (1-4 yrs): 29.3.
- Children (up to 5 yrs): 101.9.

Emigration

The most important contemporary demographic trend in Yemen has been the emigration of males between 15 and 45 years looking for work abroad. Pre-1990, Saudi Arabia was the most popular destination for the male workforce, but as a result of Yemen's lack of support for the US-led coalition in Iraq, Saudi Arabia blocked Yemenis' right to work in the country and most of this immigration now occurs illegally.

COMMUNICATIONS

The Yemeni Ministry of Information administers all broadcasting through the Public Corporation for Radio and Television. It controls most of the written press and printing presses.

It is estimated that 5% of Yemenis read newspapers. Preliminary research demonstrates that Yemenis regard newspapers as non-credible sources.

Television and radio are potentially more important conduits especially since the literacy rate is so low, but further research is required in order to determine whether these are regarded by Yemenis as credible sources.

Anecdotal media reports suggest internet and blog sites are becoming more popular among educated Yemenis, but less than 1% of Yemen's population uses the Internet. Computer ownership equates to 1.5 computers per 100 citizens. Content is censored by the Government. Interestingly, many websites promoting violent Jihad are not among the websites subject to a Government ban.

The telephone network is outdated and the cost of running a landline or mobile is prohibitive for the majority of Yemen's poor population.

Example Points of Note

- The best-selling independent national newspaper in Yemen is al-Ayyam, whose offices are located in Aden. Best-selling state-controlled newspapers include Al-Jamhuriyah and 14 October.
- There are a multitude of low-circulation official and semi-official newspapers, including at least 13 weekly publications by political and social groups.
- The largest proportion of annual broadcast hours on Yemeni satellite TV concerns artistic and educational programming (25%), followed by drama (22%), politics and news (14.6%) (2004 data), and religious programming (9.9%) (2003).

ECONOMY

Economy Overview

Yemen faces an impending economic crisis resulting from declining oil reserves. The economy is likely to be a driving force for future instability as the state budget is heavily reliant on revenue from oil supplies. The World Bank predicts that oil revenue will fall sharply within the next year and down to zero in 2017.

Agriculture

Agriculture: 33.59% agricultural land (2.9% arable). Key products include: fruit and vegetables, cereals and pulses, qat, coffee, cotton, dairy, live stock.

Trade and Industry

Trade has declined in Yemen since 2007. Export performance is one of the poorest in recent years - down by 4.3% in 2007 and 5% in 2006. This is a direct consequence of declining oil production since 2000.

Key industries include: Crude oil production and petroleum refining. Other smaller scale industries include: Textiles, jewellery, building materials and glass making, handicrafts, commercial ship repair and small aluminum factories. Tea suppliers also occupy a significant portion of the market.

Key export commodities include: Crude oil, coffee, dried and salted fish, ores and minerals, and textiles and clothing. The exports of goods and services amount to 28% of the GDP and merchandise trade equates to 51% of the GDP. Important export destinations include East Asia, India and other Arab countries. Service exports amount to 7.3% of total exports.

Employment

Reports indicate that there were 188,000 graduates in 2006 and only 16,000 employment opportunities.

- In 2005-06, 62.7% of the Yemeni workforce (citizens 15 yrs and over) were unemployed.
- The unemployment ratio for males was 11.9% and 46.4% for females.

RELIGION AND ETHNICITY

Religious Overview

There is a deep Muslim tradition in Yemen. The majority of Yemenis are Sunni Muslims from the Shafi school of Islamic Jurisprudence. There is a large Zaydi Shia group in the north of the country.

- Muslim (Sunni): 55%.
- Muslim (Shia): 42%.
- Christian: 3%.

Yemen also contains a very small number of Jews and Hindus.

Yemen is predominantly Arab but small populations of Afro-Arab, South Asians and Europeans are present.

Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)

It is estimated that at any one time there are between 20,000 and 23,000 thousand displaced people in Yemen. This number recently peaked in 2008 when it was estimated that 180,000 persons had been internally displaced.

Factors cited as causing these high numbers include: Clashes between Government forces and Shia followers of the late Sheikh Badr Eddin al-Houth led to displacement in north Yemen at regular intervals from 2004. An escalation of the fighting in 2007 along with the floods of 2008 added to the large increase in IDPs in 2008.

LANGUAGES AND LITERACY

Most Yemenis speak a dialect of Arabic as their first language. Modern Standard Arabic - the literary and cultural language of the Arab world is taught in schools. There are several main dialects, but small differences often occur depending on geographic areas. These include Hadrami Arabic, Sanaani Arabic, Ta'izzi-Adeni, Mehri and Soqoth, etc.

Literacy and Education

The official Yemeni Government illiteracy rate for 2003 was 47%. (67.1% female). In 2007, male illiteracy was given as 23.7%.

There is a direct correlation between high rates of illiteracy and the lack of basic education. Although Yemen's laws provide for universal, compulsory, free education for children aged 6 to 15 years, the US Department of State reports that compulsory attendance is not enforced. One estimate places the cost of attendance as approximately US\$10 per student per year - this equates to a significant proportion of a local man's annual salary. The high price can act as an additional deterrent.

School facilities and educational materials are of poor quality, classrooms are too few in number, and the teaching faculty is inadequate. The World Bank has approved a series of education grants, including on rural education and girl schooling.

Yemen's government has in recent years increased spending on education—from 4.5% of GDP in 1995 to 9.6% of GDP in 2005.

Yemen has seven Government-funded universities, where the majority of students in higher education are enrolled. There are also 20 privately-funded universities, including the Al-Iman University in Sana'a, founded by Salafist Cleric Abdul Majid Al-Zindani, who is classified by the US Treasury as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist as a result of his alleged support for Osama bin Laden.

A total of 188,343 students enrolled at Government universities in 2006-2007. A further 45,000 people enrolled at privately-funded universities over the same period.

FACTORS GENERATING SUPPORT FOR, AND RECRUITMENT INTO, VIOLENT JIHADISM

Part of the initial Desk-Based Research (DBR) and Expert interview (EI) phase of this Project was aimed at identifying potential drivers and barriers to individuals' engagement in violent Jihad in Yemen. The following are regarded as potential factors affecting radicalization and recruitment into violent Jihadist activities and may be subject to change depending on further research findings:

State policy of support for violent Jihadism

Yemen has had a difficult relationship with its domestic violent Jihadist constituency since large numbers of Yemenis volunteered to travel to Afghanistan to join the Afghan Mujahideen fighting Soviet occupation forces between 1979-1989. At this time (and at several junctures since) the Government has actively encouraged its citizens, through both rhetoric and practical assistance, to participate in violent Jihadism in foreign conflict zones. To promote this policy, the state has at times adopted a more relaxed approach to radical Islamist spiritual leaders in Yemen, providing clerical sanction for violent Jihadism abroad and publicly announcing such activities as a religious duty. A broad working hypothesis, therefore, is that over many years these state policies have conditioned some Yemenis to accept more readily the conceptual notion that Jihad can be associated with theologically-sanctioned religious war.

There is a practical, as well as an ideological, legacy of such policies which might now serve as a continued driver of radicalization and support for violent Jihadism in a domestic setting. Anecdotal information suggests that contemporary centers of recruitment for violent Jihadism in Yemen are closely linked to those previously associated with recruitment of volunteers for conflict in theatres such as Iraq and Afghanistan (e.g. certain mosques and religious schools which were associated with certain radical Islamist spiritual leaders).

Emergence of credible Jihadist leadership

The current leadership of Al-Qa'ida in the Arabian Peninsula revolves around a small cadre of experienced violent Jihadists, many of them Political Security Organization prison escapees, former Guantanamo Bay inmates, or fugitive Saudi militants. In some cases these individuals are widely recognized and respected among the violent Jihadist fraternity, thus boosting the credibility of the organization and its attractiveness to potential recruits.

Presence of Jihadist conflict veterans

The presence in Yemen of significant numbers of experienced veterans of violent Jihadism in theatres such as Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, and Afghanistan provides young Yemenis with credible role models as well as individuals with whom they can establish direct contact to further their developing extremist interests.

Government policy of rewarding use of coercive force

Both tribal groups and violent Jihadists in Yemen have a history of coercive use of force against the Government in order to secure non-aggression pacts, prisoner releases, or largesse, among other concessions. Such beneficial outcomes of the use of tribal violence and protests reinforce the use of violence in the rural communities in general.

Increase of youth population

Research conducted by international aid and conflict resolution organizations has warned of the rapidly growing youth population in Yemen, specifically the large number of poorly-educated, socially excluded young men who might fall prey to violent Jihadist groups. Issues of concern cited by researchers have included: General social exclusion, a lack of understanding by parents and authorities of the needs of the youth, the increasing propensity of older generations to devalue and disrespect young people, a serious disconnect between the education system and the delivery of skills which might help youth to find jobs, and wider issues of falling living standards, power disparities, and oppressive treatment by the state security apparatus. Such disenfranchised youth may be easy recruits for violent Jihadism.

Links between government and the United States

Some Yemenis are suspicious about the nature of the Government's relationship with the United States. Al-Qa'ida propagandists recently tried to play on this mistrust in statements alleging that the US was collaborating with the Government in a plan to occupy the country. The movement hopes that playing on such deeply entrenched opinions might help it to secure local support and persuade more people to join their organization.

Tolerance for violence

Yemen is one of the most heavily armed societies in the world, with most adult males having ready access to firearms. It is not uncommon for tribal disputes to escalate to the use of armed force. The presence of weapons and the tolerance

of armed conflicts as a means to settle disputes make the violent aspect of violent Jihadism more acceptable.

Social Injustice in south Yemen

Demonstrations in 2007 by former south Yemen Army officers demanding higher pension payments were met by a heavy security force crackdown which served only to inflame separatism amongst Yemenis who had felt disenfranchised ever since the unification of the country in 1990. Protests and public rallies have variously featured calls for equal rights for south Yemenis, to outright calls for independence for the south. Many south Yemenis are aggrieved that northern patronage networks are receiving an unreasonably large share of oil revenues and business deals from the regime. The growing discontent is being directly exploited by Islamist extremist groups for recruitment and radicalization purposes.

Animosity toward official Government

Many Yemenis in rural provinces demonstrate a much greater sense of local or tribal, rather than national, identity, and see little connection between their national identity and the State, which proclaims itself to be a representative of that identity. For many Yemenis the state is frequently viewed as another name for the political elite in Sana'a (who hold the power in Yemen). Consequently, central Government activities in the country's more remote provinces are often viewed with mistrust and suspicion, and are sensitive to suggestions that central Government may be attempting to play a more active role in their affairs.

The traditional system of state control through largesse has left many people feeling disempowered and distrustful of central Government. Many ordinary Yemenis regard central Government as weak and corrupt and of little relevance to everyday life, whilst others resent the selective patronage dealt out by the regime. Such unequal wealth distribution has been a significant driver of violent disorder in the south of the country in recent months. Growing southern separatist sentiment is being exploited by Al-Qa'ida in recent propaganda statements in which the group's leaders express their support for the growing southern separatist movement.

Large, poorly-governed territories

Yemeni central Government lacks a strong reach into many of the country's more remote tribal areas. Viewed through the lens of counterterrorism, this has raised concerns by regional and international powers that some Yemeni tribal areas might offer safe havens for Al-Qa'ida, where the movement might pursue radicalization and recruitment activities relatively free of serious interference from security forces.

Cultural Factors

Anecdotal information suggests that tribal custom in Yemen places considerable emphasis on the importance of hospitality; if a person approaches a tribesman seeking shelter, the tribesman is duty bound to offer it even if the person has committed a wrongdoing. Failure to do so is considered shameful. Several unnamed tribal leaders interviewed by regional media in recent weeks have been quoted as saying that they did not support an Al-Qa'ida presence in the country and would not actively support them, but that it would be a dishonorable act to actively notify the authorities of their whereabouts.

Tribal opportunism

Outside the capital, Sana'a, tribalism is one of the dominant forces in everyday life, providing a much stronger informal power structure than that provided by officialdom. There is strong evidence that many tribes have long viewed their relations with central Government primarily in terms of economic benefit. In some cases, tribal leaders have shown little allegiance to central Government even though they may previously have been recipients of Government largesse, considering it their right to broker deals which are first and foremost in the best interests of the tribe, even if this places them at odds with the wishes of central Government.

Worsening economy

Yemen is the poorest state in the Arab world, yet uncertainty over the country's future prevents sustained integrated investment on a scale that would salvage its economy. Yemen relies heavily on oil and the sharp decrease in oil prices has greatly damaged the Yemeni economy. Poverty in Yemen is extremely high, with four out of every ten people living on less than \$2 per day and at least seven million citizens living below the poverty line. This situation is aggravated by the country's reliance on food imports, and so acute vulnerability to global price shocks. In the longer term, poverty is predicted to worsen as Yemen's oil reserves run dry. According to studies by the United Nations and USAID, growing poverty is contributing to an increase in social tension and instability.

BARRIERS TO RECRUITMENT INTO VIOLENT JIHADISM

Theological opposition to engagement in Jihad on home soil

Counter-intuitive though it may initially seem, the beliefs of even some of the country's most conservative Sunni Islamist constituencies may act as barriers to violent radicalization in Yemen. The country's Islamic theological landscape is multi-faceted, with strong Sufi and Salafi currents being particularly prominent. However, it would be simplistic to suggest that the presence of a large Salafi community would by its nature offer a potentially larger pool of would-be violent Jihadists, much less act as a driver of radicalization. Many Sunni Muslims in Yemen follow branches of Salafism which, though they may share many of the fundamental theological underpinnings of the Salafi-Jihadist movement, are at odds with many Jihadists on exactly how this should be practiced. For example, while many Salafists in Yemen regard the present Government as un-Islamic, they are fundamentally opposed on theological grounds to raising arms against it.

The daily struggle of survival detracts from the urge to fight against a far enemy

Surveys of public opinion conducted by USAID and Yemen polling have demonstrated that issues such as terrorism and engagement in violent Jihadism are generally not high on the list of concerns of most Yemenis, who are typically more focused on the day-to-day challenges of improving their living conditions, finding a job, and raising their income. Such overriding 'real-world' concerns may act as a barrier to engagement of large numbers of Yemenis in violent Jihadism.

Power of Government largesse

A practice often resented by ordinary Yemenis, financial inducements have nevertheless proven an effective mechanism for central Government to exercise at least some measure of influence over the more remote tribal regions of the country. Financial inducements or the promise of increased capital expenditure on local communities is one way in which the state has attempted to influence tribal leaders to encourage their communities to distance themselves from the activities of extremists.

Increased state control over school curricula

In recent years the state has attempted to exercise a level of control over the curricula of the country's more prominent Islamic schools and institutions. How far into the state religious education system this Government control extends, is not known.

Anti-radicalization initiatives

The Government has attempted to dissuade the Yemeni public from involvement in extremism through public information broadcasts and even television dramas; a recent example was the 2008 film 'The Losing Bet', which focused on the radicalization and recruitment of a jobless Yemeni man into a violent Jihadist group and his ultimate participation in a suicide bombing. The success of such anti-radicalization initiatives is difficult to determine, though as a drama production the film proved popular.

POTENTIAL CAMPAIGN TARGET GROUPS (Potential CTGs)

The Potential Campaign Target Groups (Potential CTGs), also known as the Potential Target Audience List (PTAL) are a number of groups whose members may be selected as targets of a Strategic Communication Campaign in order to change a specific behavior. The targeted behavior must be clearly linked to the overarching project Non-Desired Behaviors (NDBs), and in many cases the behavior may be the same. Furthermore, Potential CTGs may be the same or similar across a target country or region. For example, if the NDB was recruitment into violent Jihadist organizations in the FATA region of Pakistan, potential CTGs across all Tribal Agencies would feature the inclusion of young males.

Examples of Potential CTGs are listed below. However, it should be noted that the SCL behavioral methodology allows for constant updating as data arrives. Consequently, a definitive Campaign Target Group can only be identified and confirmed once the first phase of Field Research has been completed.

Target Locations	Potential CTG	Explanation
Ma'rib & Hadramout	Young local tribesmen	Reports that the two attackers in the March suicide bombings were 18 and 20 years old suggest that violent Jihadist organizations have the ability to engage in at least some recruitment from local communities. Authorities are seeking 12 men in connection with the attacks whose ages range from 18-29, with all but one being between 18 and 25.
	Migrants	Ma'rib is a transit route for illegal immigration to Saudi Arabia from the Horn of Africa. Although the propensity of Yemen's immigrant populations to involve themselves in violent Jihadism is not known at present, their social disenfranchisement could make them susceptible to recruitment by violent Jihadist groups.
	Religious leaders/ Religious students	Initial Desk-Based Research indicates that personal contact with radical Islamist spiritual leaders, in some cases through Islamic schools and study groups, is a particularly important element in the radicalization process in Yemen. Anecdotal reporting suggests that centers of potential violent Jihadist recruitment map closely to those already known to have a recent history of recruiting Yemenis for conflict abroad, such as Afghanistan.
	Influential tribal figures	Given the importance of tribal affiliation to many Yemenis' personal identity, as well as the prominent role often played by tribes in Yemeni society (particularly outside the capital), specific tribal authority figures should be considered a potential Campaign Target Group. Care must be taken when selecting potential candidates from among this group, however, as the seniority of a tribal figure does not necessarily always correlate directly with his degree of influence over fellow tribesmen, and the credibility of tribal figures of a given stratum will vary significantly between tribes.

Ma'rib Governate

MA'RIB CITY

*"The many levels of conflict operating in Ma'rib are complex, interlinked and multi-layered, and rooted in political, social and economic issues, internal and local, as well as external, regional and international."*¹



Ma'rib Governate has a reputation for lawlessness, inter and intra-tribal violence and tribal resistance to central Government², and Islamic militancy. Yemeni authorities describe Ma'rib as one of the three provinces which make up the so called 'Triangle of Evil' (the other provinces being Shabwa and al-Jawf) - named because of the heavy militant presence³, whilst the murky world of tribal loyalties and militant Islamism has led some commentators to label Ma'rib as 'Maribistan'. Ma'rib has the most heavily armed population in Yemen.

National and regional efforts aimed at political consolidation, social cohesion and economic development in Ma'rib have been undermined by a fragile security environment, characterized by weak governance (including corruption, general lawlessness, kidnappings, smuggling, people trafficking, etc.), continual tribal feuding and governmental opposition, civil unrest (including demonstrations by farmers, unemployed youth and tribes seeking economic development assistance and a fair share in oil revenues etc.), and sporadic attacks by local and foreign Islamist militants, loosely affiliated under the banner of Al-Qa'ida in Yemen. The combination of geographic remoteness, the lack of effective state authority, lawlessness, inter-tribal conflict and grievances between tribe and state, and the presence of multiple oil and tourism targets, have made the Governate an ideal operating base for Al-Qa'ida.

GEOGRAPHY



Area: 7,450 sq.km

Ma'rib Governate is situated in the center of Yemen and shares borders with the Governates of Al Jawf (to the north), Sana'a (to the west), Al Bayda (to the south) and Shabwah and Hadramout (to the east).

Al-Qa'ida is reported to use Ma'rib as an indoctrination, recruitment and training center, staging post for attacks in other Governates (e.g. Sana'a), logistical hub (Ma'rib is known for the availability of arms and smuggling across the Yemen-Saudi Arabia border), and safe haven for both local and international Islamic militants (e.g. militants from Saudi Arabia).

Corruption and injustice are often cited as major driving factors behind recourse to extremism and radicalization. Politically motivated tribal violence is often used as a means to extract central Government concessions. Political parties also use religion as a means to gain support and strengthen their campaigns.

Since the latter half of 2008, Ma'rib has witnessed a lull in Al-Qa'ida attacks, (although Al-Qa'ida cells have been notably active in neighboring Hadramout Governorate), which has been attributed to Government efforts to arrest Al-Qa'ida cells, tribal mediation, and the deployment of extra security forces throughout the Governate instigated in the wake of the

1. Conflict, Development and Community Participation in Education: Pakistan and Yemen, Internationales Asienforum, Vol. 36 (2005), No. 3-4, pp. 289-310.

2. Report on tribal conflict in Ma'rib identified 38 ongoing tribal conflicts across Ma'rib. Source: Yemen: Tribal Conflict Management Program Report, March 2007, The National Democratic Institute for International Affairs.

3 Source: Fort Mill Times, May 3, 2009 (<http://www.fortmilltimes.com/106/story/551538.html>).

ADMINISTRATION	DEMOGRAPHY	COMMUNICATIONS
<p>The Provincial Capital of Ma'rib Governate is Ma'rib City. Other important urban centers include: Al-Hosoun.</p> <p>Overview: Ma'rib Governate is subdivided into 14 Districts and 15 Local Councils. The 14 Districts are: Al Abdiyah; Al Jubah; Bidbadah; Harib; Harib Al Qaramsh; Jabal Murad; Mahliyah; Majzar; Ma'rib; Mar'ib City; Medghal; Raghwan; Rahabah; Sirwah.</p> <p>Ma'rib is run by 288 Councillors (288 Male).</p> <p>Governor of Ma'rib: Najji al-Zaidi.</p> <p>Secretary-General of the Local Council of Ma'rib: Aber Ali Al-Shabwani.</p> <p>Number of Societies, Unions, Syndicates (HQs) 2007: 9 (1 Cultural Association, 3 Social Associations and 5 Charity Organizations).</p> <p>Traditional Informal Power Structures: Power in Ma'rib has traditionally been concentrated in the hands of the various tribal groupings. Tribal Sheikhs are of paramount importance. Many Sheikhs wield significant influence, whether independently or as part of the governmental structure (many Sheikhs also belong to the governmental structure, such as local councils).</p>	<p>Ma'rib Governate Total Population: 259,356, (Urban: 34,640, Rural: 224,716) (Male: 138,515, Female: 120,841).</p> <p>Total No. Households: 30,476 (Urban: 4,227, Rural: 26,250).</p> <p>The population of Ma'rib is overwhelmingly rural and resides in densely populated settlements which are centered on traditional water sources (e.g. Wadi Dahr; Wadi Sadd and Wadi Saba'). The population of Ma'rib is predominantly young.</p> <p>Sex Ratio: (No. of Males per 100 Females) 114.6.</p> <p>Migration Ma'rib Governate is situated close to Saudi Arabia and straddles traditional migration routes (e.g. Al-Hosoun is well known as a staging post for people trafficking of African migrants into Saudi Arabia). Ma'rib is believed to contain many illegal foreigners, such as Ethiopians.</p> <p>Reports indicate that a significant number of locals from Ma'rib have temporarily traveled abroad to partake in violent Jihadism and/or radicalization efforts in countries such as Afghanistan, Iraq, Lebanon and Saudi Arabia. Some violent Jihadists are believed to have resettled and/or sought safe haven in Ma'rib.</p>	<p>All forms of broadcasting (including audio-visual and print media) are controlled by the Ministry of Information through the Public Corporation for Radio and Television. All forms of independent broadcasting are restricted and censorship is common.</p> <p>Languages: Arabic (official). A variety of foreign languages are spoken by locals engaged in the tourist industry.</p> <p>Literacy: Literacy rates in Ma'rib are extremely low compared to other Governates. Approximately 30-40% of the population is illiterate.</p> <p>Television: State-run Republic of Yemen Television operates two national channels (Channel One from Sana'a and Channel Two from Aden). Access to Television is limited and where available, often watched in communal settings.</p> <p>Radio: State-run Republic of Yemen Radio operates two national stations (General Programme from Sana'a, and Second Programme from Aden).</p> <p>Newsprint: Newsprint is heavily influenced by the Government (e.g. through the control of printing presses, newspaper subsidies, licensing requirements etc.). In addition to state-run publications a number of political party-affiliated and independent newspapers are also available. Given that Ma'rib is predominantly rural and illiteracy rates are high, access to print media is particularly limited.</p> <p>Internet: Internet penetration in Ma'rib Governate is virtually non-existent, particularly in rural areas (although it is available in Ma'rib city).</p> <p>No. of Households who use a computer at home: 55 (Urban: 28, Rural: 27, outside home: 146).</p> <p>64 Telecommunication Centers, 0 Internet Cafes.</p> <p>Word of Mouth (WOM): Given that Ma'rib is very poor, predominantly remote and rural, has high illiteracy rates, and limited access to all forms of media, WOM remains the principle form of communication.</p>

ECONOMY

Poverty is widespread across Ma'rib. Although poverty rates have declined in recent years (mostly due to oil-based growth), the poor, especially those in rural areas have not benefitted. 45.88% (Urban: 17.95%, Rural: 50.05%) of people in Ma'rib fall below the poverty line.

Agriculture

People in Ma'rib are heavily dependent on (subsistence) irrigated agriculture (Ma'rib is one of Yemen's largest potato and tomato producing regions). The agricultural sector accounts for more than 50% of employment. Agricultural production was mildly affected by the 2008 floods.

Oil and Gas

The oil and gas sector is an important source of local revenue and employment. The Ma'rib-Jawf block oil field is Yemen's second most productive oil field after Masila in the Hadramout Governorate. The bulk of Yemen's gas reserves are concentrated in the Ma'rib-Jawf fields. Ma'rib is crossed by a number of key pipelines (e.g. Ma'rib - Ra's Isa pipeline). Ma'rib's first gas power plant (341 MW capacity) is expected to begin functioning by July 2009, with 2 more planned (totaling 800 MW). A new pipeline between Ma'rib and Ma'abar, Dhamar Governorate is also planned.

Tourism

The tourism sector is a very important source of local revenue and employment. Ma'rib has a wealth of popular archaeological sites, including Mahram Bilqis, the Ma'rib Dams, and Old Ma'rib City. However, tourism has been greatly affected by tribal kidnappings and Al-Qa'ida attacks.

Remittances from workers abroad (e.g. Saudi Arabia) play a significant role in the local economy.

Youth and adult unemployment and underemployment are high.

Number of Beneficiaries of the Social Welfare Fund (2003-2007): 17,734.

RELIGION AND ETHNICITY

The population of Ma'rib Governorate is predominantly Arab, with small minorities of immigrant African Arabs. The vast majority follow the Shafii school of Sunni Islam (fiqh).

Tribal Structures

The social, economic and political structure in Ma'rib is dominated by a highly stratified and segmented tribal system. Tribes are classified according to nobility, which is underpinned by genealogy, religious and educational status, knowledge, power and responsibilities. Social stratification affects all aspects of social, political, economic, religious, and kinship relationships. Each tribe is headed by a Sheikh. Tribal structures in Ma'rib pre-date Islam. Most tribes are rurally-based and engaged in (subsistence and commercial) agriculture having moved from nomadic to settled communities.

There are 4 powerful tribes in Ma'rib with over 70 different branches. The main two are the Abeideh and Al-Jalal.

POLITICAL LANDSCAPE

The political climate in Ma'rib is underpinned by a fragile and distorted democracy, which is characterized by tension between local tribes and the central Government, dominated by the ruling General People's Congress (GPC), headed by President Ali Abdullah Saleh. Traditional tribal power structures remain strong in Ma'rib, and consequently central Government control remains weak in all areas. Tribal leaders, many of whom operate de facto semi-autonomous control over their respective tribal regions, routinely resist and/or fail to cooperate with central Government dictums.

The tribes of Ma'rib and the central Government have traditionally had a strained relationship. Tribal elements have often resorted to militancy, kidnappings, extortion etc. in order to solve political disputes. Tribes routinely kidnap both Yemenis and foreigners in order to extract Government concessions, and more recently have resorted to attacking oil installations (e.g. Tribal elements have attacked the oil pipeline near Safer).

Local Sheiks are often members of the local councils. Distinctions between traditional power elites and Government bureaucracy are often weak at local levels.

Political corruption and injustice is often cited as a major driving factor behind recourse to extremism and radicalization. Politically-motivated violence is often used as a means to extract central Government concessions. Political parties also use religion as a means to gain support and strengthen their campaigns.

FACTORS GENERATING SUPPORT FOR, AND RECRUITMENT INTO, VIOLENT JIHADISM

Tribal identity / conflict

Many tribes in Ma'rib often complain that the Government operates 'a divide and rule' policy with regard to Ma'rib. Tribal elements assert that the Government tends to favor certain tribes who are 'pro-Government' and that many central Government officials often react negatively to the traditional tribal and social hierarchy and power structures in Ma'rib. This has been a cause of much resentment among tribesmen.

Violence is widely acknowledged as a common recourse to settling inter-tribal disputes and as a means of voicing dissatisfaction with the state. It also hampers the development of proper democratic process, further isolating communities from central Government, increasing feelings of disenfranchisement, and creating an environment in which extremist ideologies can take root.

Disenfranchisement with the central Government

Tribal conflict is highly politicized in Ma'rib, as illustrated by local and parliamentary election results. Local leaders in Ma'rib have often expressed concern over central Government efforts to block the functioning of locally elected officials - thereby preventing them from acting as agents of development and change in their communities. Such grievances have fuelled local feelings of social exclusion, resentment, frustration and anger towards the Government, and in turn more conflict. Al-Qa'ida has been known to capitalize on this disenfranchisement with the central Government to secure support from disaffected Tribesmen.⁴

Youth unemployment, alienation and social exclusion

Islamist extremism in Ma'rib, as elsewhere in Yemen, flourishes among alienated, disaffected, and disenfranchised youth. The lack of access to, and poor quality of, state education facilities has meant that many children are enrolled in alternative forms of education, including religious institutes, some of which preach radical ideologies and act as breeding grounds for radical Islamic terrorism.

Unemployment in Ma'rib, particularly amongst the youth, is a significant contributing factor to youth alienation. Reports claim that this has provided fertile ground for Islamic radicalization and militant recruitment (e.g. In September 2007 demonstrations demanding employment for at least half of the Ma'rib's unemployed youth took place in a number of places in Ma'rib).⁵ Vulnerable youth lacking in life skills, education and self-esteem, are the primary target for Islamic radicalization and militant recruitment efforts. Many members of the youth face social exclusion and isolation both within their own families, tribes, and local communities and often feel a sense of hopelessness. Factors such as the lack of education, unemployment, poverty, lack of security and injustice, peer pressure etc. all contribute to the path to extremism, radicalization and militancy.

Presence of foreign violent Jihadist militants

Ma'rib has a reputation for harboring foreign Islamist militants. Ma'rib (along with the Governates of Hadramout and Al-Jawf) is a transshipment point in people smuggling routes that operate across the porous Yemen-Saudi Arabia border.⁶ Some Islamist militants from Saudi Arabia have reportedly crossed the border in order to escape authorities or join local terrorist networks in Ma'rib. According to the Combating Terrorism Centre at West Point, the latest Saudi Government list of 85 wanted terrorist suspects includes 26 of whom have reportedly fled to Yemen following completion of Saudi rehabilitation programmes. 11 of the 26 are former Saudi detainees of Guantanamo Bay

Immigrants

Ma'rib is a transit route for illegal immigration to Saudi Arabia from the Horn of Africa. Although their propensity for involvement in violent Jihadism is not known at present, their social disenfranchisement could make them susceptible to recruitment by violent Jihadist groups.

Availability of arms

Ma'rib is the most heavily armed Governate in Yemen with an average of three weapons per male. The open carrying of weapons is standard practice in many areas. The availability of weapons has made it easier for tribal elements and radicals to translate their extremist views into militant activity. Yemen is also reportedly a major supplier of weapons to militant Jihadist groups operating throughout the region, including Israel, Sudan and Egypt.⁷

BARRIERS TO RECRUITMENT INTO VIOLENT JIHADISM

Domestic living concerns

A survey conducted by the Yemen Polling Centre in seven Governorates (including Ma'rib) in 2008 found that respondents considered the cost of living as the top problem facing Yemen, followed by poverty, the economy, unemployment, security/terrorism, corruption and the spread of weapons. Most citizens remain preoccupied with local concerns such as employment, the economy, and harsh living conditions – these more immediate concerns, whilst they may breed dissatisfaction and act as drivers for radicalization, might equally distract many ordinary Yemenis from involvement in Islamist militancy.⁸

Community reconciliation programmes

The inability of the Government to effectively address tribal conflict has led to local initiatives at tribal reconciliation. For example, in 2003, a group of tribal leaders and influential social figures from the Governorates of Ma'rib, Al-Jawf and Shabwah, established the Yemen Organization for Development and Social Peace (YODSP), in an independently-led effort to end revenge killings and promote development in their respective Governorates. Such programmes suggest a strong element of grassroots support for local conflict resolution.

Views on Terrorism

Most citizens of Ma'rib hold strong negative views concerning the notion of terrorist attacks carried out on Yemeni soil. In 2008, a survey conducted by the Yemen Polling Centre in seven Governorates (including Ma'rib) found that respondents overwhelmingly associated terrorism with murder/subversion/targeting of innocent/explosions/assassination/violence.⁹

NGO Activity

Ma'rib appears a relatively permissive operating environment for NGO's. There are a number of international and local organizations operating across Ma'rib, including those focused on working with Yemeni youth and other segments of the population potentially vulnerable to radicalization. Examples of local civil society organizations operating in the Ma'rib Governorate include:



International organizations such as the UNDP and the US National Democratic Institution have also operated extensively in Ma'rib.

MILITANT GROUPS

*"The (Al-Qa'ida) attacks...illustrate some of the problems the Yemeni government must navigate as it attempts to dismember Al-Qa'ida. This is not simply a two-sided battle between the government and Al-Qa'ida in Yemen, but rather one of multiple and shifting alliances among a variety of different actors."*¹⁰

Local and foreign Islamic militants affiliated in varying degrees to the resurgent Al-Qa'ida network are believed to operate across Ma'rib Governorate. In recent years, Al-Qa'ida has attacked both Yemeni and Western targets in Ma'rib, most notably foreign tourists, local security forces, and oil infrastructure (including oil pipelines, refineries and power stations). Al-Qa'ida has utilized a variety of planned attack methodologies in Ma'rib, including armed gun attacks, suicide bombs, and Vehicle Borne Improvised Explosive Device (VBIEDs), which indicate an increasing level of training, coordination, sophistication and leadership. The attack on the Spanish tourists in July 2007, for example, was symbolic not just of the resurgence of Al-Qa'ida in Yemen, but also of the new power of younger, more assertive militants.

*"The new generation is not the generation of Osama Bin Laden, it is the generation of Abu Musaeb al-Zarqawi, which is different from Al-Qa'ida, although the word Al-Qa'ida is used by some groups...It is the Iraq generation; they are young people who went there for Jihad. They are inexperienced, misguided and wrongly mobilized. They think that the old generation has become unable to confront, and they (the old generation) are cowards and just agents or eyes against them."*¹¹

Al-Qa'ida is believed to use Ma'rib as a recruitment and training ground, as well as a 'transit point' and a 'safe haven' for militants operating across the region. For example, it has been reported by authorities that Abdeh Ruhaiqa from

Makal village, Raima, who was responsible for the killing of the Spanish tourists, was recruited by Hamza Ali Saleh al-Dhayani and trained in the Wadi Abida area in Ma'rib. Other cell members included Nasser al-Wahishi, Qassim Al-Raimi, Hamza Al-Qaeti, Ali Bin Ali Nasser Douha, Imad Al-Waeli, and Saudi national Naif Mohammed Al-Qahtani. The cell was sheltered by Naji Ali Saleh Jordan and Ali bin Ali Nasser Douha, who were later accused of killing Ma'rib's CID chief.

There are indications that Al-Qa'ida elements have utilized tribal customs, local grievances and frustrations in an effort to find safe haven and ferment tribal conflict in Ma'rib. Even tribesmen who are not sympathetic to Al-Qa'ida are often reluctant to hand over militants because of traditional tribal customs related to hospitality and generosity towards guests. There are reports that tribes disgruntled with the Government have been paid to provide havens for militants. Moreover, security forces are reluctant to move strongly against the tribes because, as one Government advisor put it, "...it becomes a war between the state and the tribes, which is not advisable."¹² The Alliance Council of Ma'rib and Al-Jawf Tribes has indicated that any foreign attack on tribes may lead to attacks on U.S. and other foreign interests in the country. Analysts have suggested that geographic isolation, tribal nature, poverty, illiteracy, social and economic marginalization and Government mismanagement all contribute to why tribes in Ma'rib give shelter to militants.

Al-Qa'ida militants, including fighters returning from foreign Jihad (e.g. Afghanistan and Iraq etc.), and members fleeing security crackdowns (e.g. Saudi Arabia), are believed to have established sanctuaries among a number of Yemeni tribes in Ma'rib. As a geographically remote and isolated Governate, strategically located astride (illegal) transit routes across the Yemen - Saudi Arabia border, Ma'rib has been described as belonging to the "triangle of evil"¹³ because of the heavy militant presence.

Despite initial hesitancy by the Yemeni government to deal with Al-Qa'ida, Yemeni security forces have detained and/or killed a number of Al-Qa'ida members in Ma'rib involved in planning and perpetrating terrorist attacks against Yemeni and Western targets, both in Yemen and abroad. Following the attack on the Spanish tourists in July 2007, security has been greatly increased across Ma'rib, which has led to a recent down turn in Al-Qa'ida attacks. President Ali Abdullah Saleh has made numerous appeals to Ma'rib tribesmen to stop supporting and harboring Al-Qa'ida. For example, in February 2009, the president told tribal leaders in Ma'rib that: *"Terrorism is a plague which hurts the people and development... There will be no development as long as terrorism, sabotage and violence continue."*¹⁴

Examples of Al-Qa'ida Activity in Ma'rib:

Al-Qa'ida activity in Ma'rib has centered on a number of geographic areas, most notably the Safer oil refinery. In addition to planned high profile 'spectacular' attacks (such as those on foreign tourists), Al-Qa'ida groups have also engaged in localized skirmishes with Yemeni security forces. Al-Qa'ida have utilized a number of operational methodologies.

June 25, 2008 - An armed group, allegedly affiliated with Al-Qa'ida, claimed responsibility for an attack on the Safer Oil refinery in Ma'rib. In a press release attributed to the so-called 'Yemen Warriors Battalions', the group stated the goal of the attack as: *"Rupturing the artery of Zionist - Crusader supply."*¹⁵

April 16, 2008 - A suspected Al-Qa'ida remotely-controlled landmine killed three soldiers in the City of Ma'rib. According to local Government sources, the attack followed a series of attacks targeting a local military Commander (gunmen reportedly fired at the military Commander's car on 13th April, killing his driver and wounding four people).¹⁶

April 12, 2008 - Two rockets were fired at the military headquarters of Ma'rib province by suspected Al-Qa'ida elements.¹⁷

February 2008 - An Al-Qa'ida attack targeting an oil pipeline in Wadi Anshar was apparently foiled according to the Ministry of the Interior. Several sources cited Al-Qa'ida as responsible for the attacks.¹⁸

August 18, 2007 - Authorities announced uncovering a suicide attack plot by suspected returnee Iraqi Jihadists. The cell leader was Mohammad Yaqot (also known as Al-Lahji), suspected of involvement in the July 2 Ma'rib suicide attack on Spanish tourists.¹⁹

August 6, 2007 - Al-Qa'ida attacked a power station and a Government building in Ma'rib, causing a major power outage.²⁰

August 5, 2007 - Security forces raided Al-Qa'ida hideouts in Ma'rib, which resulted in the killing of four Al-Qa'ida suspects. Three of those killed were wanted by Yemeni authorities in relation to assassination of Ali Mahmoud Qasaylah, the chief criminal investigator in Ma'rib, as well as the July 2nd attack on Spanish tourists.²¹

March 27, 2007 - Col. Ali Mahmoud Qusailah, head of Criminal Investigation Division (CID) in Ma'rib was ambushed and killed. December 10, 2007 Security services apprehended a wanted member of Al-Qa'ida.²²

July 2, 2007 - Eight Spanish and two Yemeni nationals were killed, and a number of others injured, in an Al-Qa'ida suicide bomb attack in Ma'rib. Al-Qa'ida issued a warning that these attacks were: "Only the first spark", and that future operations would be: "Severe and bitter".²³

September 15, 2006 - Four Al-Qa'ida suicide bombers attacked the Safer oil refinery in Ma'rib, two of whom (Shafiq Ahmed Omar Zaed and Omar Said Hassan Jar Allah) were among 23 Al-Qa'ida members who escaped from the Political Security Organization prison in Sana'a in February 2006.²⁴

NB: All statistical data unless otherwise indicated is given for Ma'rib Governorate, is the most current available, and is derived from Yemen's Central Statistical Organization (e.g. Statistical Yearbook 2007, National Census 2004, Household Budget Survey 2004, Transport and Communication Survey Report 2005, Building and Construction Survey 2006 etc.). Given the age and unreliability of some official data sets, data is included for illustrative purposes only.

4. Conflict, Development and Community Participation in Education: Pakistan and Yemen, Internationales Asienforum, Vol. 36 (2005), No. 3-4, pp. 289-310.

5. Source: Yemen Poverty Assessment 2007 (http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTYEMEN/Resources/310077-1197206771664/Volume_I_Main_Report.pdf).

6-13. Source: Fort Mill Times, May 3, 2009 (<http://www.fortmilltimes.com/106/story/551538.html>).

7. Conflict, Development and Community Participation in Education: Pakistan and Yemen, Internationales Asienforum, Vol. 36 (2005), No. 3-4, pp. 289-310.

8-9. <http://www.yemenpolling.org/english/Projects-en/Low%20of%20combating%20terrorism-English.pdf>

10. Source: The Jamestown Foundation, August 14, 2007 (www.jamestown.org/single/?no_cache=1&tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=4372).

11. Nasser Al Bahri, alias Abu Jandal, who served four years as Osama Bin Laden's bodyguard before he returned to Yemen where he was arrested after the suicide bombing of the USS Cole. Source: (<http://www.yobserver.com/front-page/10012550.html>).

12. Abdul-Karim al-Eryani, a political adviser to President Ali Abdullah Saleh, as quoted in the Fort Mill Times, May 3, 2009 (<http://www.fortmilltimes.com/106/story/551538.html>).

14. Source: Reuters (<http://www.reuters.com/article/latestCrisis/idUSL3348056>).

15. Source: Yemen Times, July, 2008 (<http://www.yementimes.com/article.shtml?i=1170&p=front&a=3>).

16-17. Source: International News Safety Institute, 16 April, 2008 (<http://mypetjawa.mu.nu/archives/194189.php>).

18. Source: Reuters UK, February 24, 2008 (<http://uk.reuters.com/article/worldNews/idUKL2444054520080224>).

19-20. Source: Armies of Liberation (<http://armiesofliberation.com/>).

21. Source: The Jamestown Foundation, August 14, 2007 (http://www.jamestown.org/single/?no_cache=1&tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=4372).

22. Source: Armies of Liberation (<http://armiesofliberation.com/>).

23. Sources: Foreign and Commonwealth Office, UK and BBC News, 3 July 2007.

24. Source: Official Yemen Report – Yemen's Efforts: Fight Against Terrorism.

Hadramout Governate

AL-MUKALLA CITY

"Hadramout is a region familiar with violence and ripe for Al-Qa'ida recruitment."



National and regional efforts at political reconciliation, social cohesion, and economic development in Hadramout Governate have been undermined by a fragile security environment. This has been characterized by weak governance (including corruption), general lawlessness (including kidnappings, smuggling, piracy etc.)², civil unrest (including demonstrations by unemployed workers and former army officers)³, continual (often violent) tribal feuding⁴, periodic outbreaks of 'Southern' separatist protest and violence, and sporadic attacks by Islamist militants, loosely affiliated under the banner of Al-Qa'ida in Yemen, and more recently Al-Qa'ida in the Arabian Peninsula (Al-Qa'ida)⁵. As the ancestral homeland of Al-Qa'ida leader Osama bin Laden, Hadramout has a long association with Islamist radicalization and militancy, particularly among youth, returnee Jihadists (from Iraq, Afghanistan etc.) and alienated strands of local society. In recent years, a new generation of younger, more radicalized homegrown Islamic militants, borne from the pool of disaffected, disenfranchised and vulnerable (often unemployed) youth, have stepped up attacks against President Ali Abdullah Saleh's regime and Western targets in the country, including Hadramout.⁶

GEOGRAPHY



Area: 167,280 sq.km (Hadramout is the largest Governate in Yemen). Hadramout Governate is situated in the east of Yemen and shares an international border with Saudi Arabia (to the north), the Gulf of Aden (to the south), and internal borders with the Governates of Al Maharah (to the east), and Shabwah, Ma'rib, and Al Jawf (to the west).¹¹

In recent years Hadramout has witnessed a notable increase in activity from local Al-Qa'ida cells, boosted by the February 2006 escape of 23 Al-Qa'ida members from the Political Security Organization prison in Sana'a, Jihadist returnees, and Al-Qa'ida fugitives from other international theaters.⁷ Al-Qa'ida is reported to use Hadramout as a recruitment and training center, logistical hub, operations base, and safe haven.⁸ Al-Qa'ida has also mounted a number of attacks in Hadramout, which have targeted foreign tourists (e.g. March 15, 2009, a suicide bomber killed four South Korean tourists in Shibam, and January 18, 2008 gunmen killed two Belgian tourists in Hajreen), Yemeni security forces (e.g. July 25, 2008, a suicide bomber attacked a Central Security Force compound in Sayoun), and oil installations (e.g. September 15, 2006, suicide bombers attacked the Al-Dhaba oil facility).⁹ There is mounting evidence that Al-Qa'ida members, including leadership elements, in Hadramout are becoming younger, increasingly radicalized and more coordinated.

Despite initial hesitancy by the Yemeni Government to deal with Al-Qa'ida¹⁰, Yemeni security forces have detained and/or killed a number of Al-Qa'ida members in Hadramout involved in planning and perpetrating terrorist attacks against Yemeni and Western targets, both in Yemen and abroad. Although such successes have weakened Al-Qa'ida in Hadramout, they are also likely to provoke further Al-Qa'ida retaliation, along the lines of the attack on the US Embassy in Sana'a on September 17, 2008. Given the lack of effective state authority and control in many areas of Hadramout, particularly rural areas, the abundance of 'soft' oil and tourism targets, the pool of disaffected youth, and the presence of Al-Qa'ida including leadership elements, the potential remains for Al-Qa'ida to regroup and step up its campaign of radicalization and militancy in Hadramout.

ADMINISTRATION	DEMOGRAPHY	COMMUNICATIONS
<p>The Provincial Capital of Hadramout Governate is Al Mukalla City. Other important urban centers include: Tarim, Shibam and Sayoun.</p> <p>Hadramout Governate is subdivided into:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30 Districts: Ad Dis; Adh Dhli'a'h; Al Abr; Al Mukalla; Al Mukalla City; Al Qaf; Al Qatn; Amd; Ar Raydah Wa Qusayar; As Sawm; Ash Shihr; Brom Mayfa; Daw'an; Ghayl Ba Wazir; Ghayl Bin Yamin; Hagr As Sai'ar; Hajr; Hidaybu; Huraidhah; Qulensya Wa Abd Al Kuri; Rakhyah; Rumah; Sah; Sayun; Shibam; Tarim; Thamud; Wadi Al Ayn; Yabuth; Zamakh wa Manwakh. • 31 Local Councils. • 606 Councilors (605 Male, 1 Female). <p>Governor of Hadramout: Salim Ahmed Saeed Al-Khanbashi.</p> <p>Secretary-General of the Local Council of Hadramout: Seed Ali Ba-yumein.</p> <p>Number of Societies, Unions, Syndicates (HQs) 2007: 41 (7 Forums, 1 Vocational Association, 1 Cultural Association, 22 Social Associations and 10 Charity Organizations).</p>	<p>Hadramout Governate Total Population: 1,126,355.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urban: 521,101. • Rural: 605,254 (Male: 580,596, Female: 545,759).¹² • The population of Hadramout is predominantly young. • Total No. Households: 136,676 (Urban: 65,472, Rural: 71,205). Locals reside in densely populated settlements which are centered on traditional water sources (e.g. Wadi Hadramout). • Sex Ratio: (No. of Males per 100 Females) 106.4. • Al Mukalla Total Population: 122,400.¹³ • Migration: Hadhramis have played a major role in historical patterns of Arab migration and the spread of Islam across Africa and Asia. Hadhramis not only maintain a strong presence in Yemen and in neighboring states in the Arabian Peninsula (e.g. Oman and Saudi Arabia), but also in Eastern Africa and South East Asia. • Hadramout has experienced significant immigration from Africa in the past few decades, including refugees from war torn Ethiopia, Eritrea and Somalia. • Many Yemenis, including Hadhramis, have temporarily travelled abroad to partake in violent Jihadist and/or radicalization efforts in countries such as Afghanistan, Iraq, Lebanon, and Saudi Arabia. Some such violent Jihadists are believed to have resettled in Hadramout. 	<p>All forms of broadcasting (including audio-visual and print media) are controlled by the Ministry of Information through the Public Corporation for Radio and Television. All forms of independent broadcasting are restricted and censorship is common. Religious content in all forms of programming is widespread and widely enjoyed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State-run Republic of Yemen Television operates two national channels (Channel One from Sana'a and Channel Two from Aden). Satellite dishes, which access foreign programming, especially from Saudi Arabia and Oman, are common. • State-run Republic of Yemen Radio operates two national stations (General Programme from Sana'a, and Second Programme from Aden). Local radio stations include: Al Mukalla Radio and Sayoun Radio. • Newsprint is heavily influenced by the Government (e.g. through the control of printing presses, newspaper subsidies, licensing requirements etc.). In addition to state-run publications a number of political party-affiliated and independent newspapers are also available. • Internet penetration is extremely limited in Hadramout, particularly in rural areas (although growing in Al Mukalla). • No. of Households who use a computer at home: 3,385 (Urban: 2,773 - Rural: 612), outside home: 2,886. • 814 Telecommunication Centers, 64 Internet Cafes. • Main ISP Providers: YemenNet, and Y.Net - both of which are part of the Government's Public Telecommunication Corporation (PTC). • Land and mobile cell-phone use is limited yet rising. Coverage is good in coastal areas. There are 9 telephones per 100 citizens. • Main Telephone Providers: Yemen Mobile, Sabaphone, M.T.N., TeleYemen.
LANGUAGES AND LITERACY		
<p>Languages: Arabic (official). English is used in some official and business circles.</p> <p>High levels of illiteracy (particularly in rural areas and among females) mean that Television and Radio are important news channels.</p>		<p>Transport: Road infrastructure is limited and generally in poor condition.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total Roads: 4,687.8 km (Gravel 2,386.3, Asphalt 2,301.5). • Al Mukalla Airport (Total Passengers 2007 129,000, Freight 407,000 tons).

ECONOMY

Poverty is widespread across Hadramout. Although poverty rates have declined in recent years (mostly due to oil-based growth), the poor, especially those in rural areas have not benefitted. 35.59% (urban: 31.45%, Rural: 39.17%) of people in Hadramout fall below the poverty line.¹⁴

- Hadhramis are dependent on the agricultural and fisheries sector (e.g. wheat, millet, dates, coconut, coffee, tobacco, fish canning, etc.).
- The oil sector is an important source of local revenue and employment. The Masila Oilfield is the largest in Yemen.¹⁵
- Al Mukalla City is Yemen's third most important seaport after Aden and Al-Hadeidah (2007 Unloaded Dry Cargo 658,000 tons, Loaded Dry Cargo 13,000 tons). It is an important fishery and fish canning center.
- The tourism sector is an important source of local revenue and employment. However tourism has been greatly affected by Al-Qaida attacks.
- Hadramout Governate was devastated by flooding in October 2008, which caused extensive damage to rural infrastructure and thousands of acres of farmland (affecting an estimated 80% of farmers), and left thousands displaced (approximately 25,000 IDPs). The flooding has aggravated already widespread poverty. Hadramout is now considered "a food-insecure Governate".¹⁶
- International development aid plays a significant role in the local economy (e.g. post 2008 flood reconstruction).
- Remittances from workers abroad (e.g. Saudi Arabia) plays a significant role in the local economy.
- Youth and adult unemployment and underemployment are high.
- Number of Beneficiaries of the Social Welfare Fund (2003-2007): 61,565.¹⁷

RELIGION AND ETHNICITY

The population of Hadramout Governate is predominantly Arab, with small minorities of immigrant African Arabs and South Asians. The vast majority follow the Shafii school of Sunni Islam (fiqh).

- Tribal Structures¹⁸ - The social structure of Hadhramis is based on a highly stratified and segmented tribal system.¹⁹ Tribes are classified according to nobility, which is underpinned by genealogy, religious and educational status, knowledge, power and responsibilities. Social stratification affects all aspects of social, political, economic, religious and kinship relationships.²⁰ Each tribe is headed by a Sheikh.²¹
- Sadah (or Sayyid) - The highest rank in Hadhrami society.²² Highly respected religious elite. Politically and spiritually powerful aristocracy who claim to be descendants of the Prophet Muhammad.²³
- Mashaikh (or scholars) - The second highest rank in Hadhrami society. Highly respected scholars, known for their (religious) education, knowledge and judgment who claim to be descendants of Qahtan.²⁴
- Gabail (or warriors) - Relatively irreligious armed tribesmen who occupy the majority of the land. Each tribe is headed by a Sheikh. Each tribe occupies its own territory, which is staunchly defended. Tribal feuds are common. Concepts of honor and shame are strong. The two main tribes present in Hadramout are the Qu'aiti and Kathiri.
- Masakin (or poor) - The lowest rank in Hadhrami society, lacking in religious status and *nasab* (noble descent). Regarded as *da'if* (weak), Masakin are unarmed and scattered and have no territory or villages of their own. They are politically weak and exist under the protection of other groups.
- Abids (or slaves) - Individuals who are descendants of former slaves, mainly from Africa.
- Family Structures - Nuclear and Extended Family units play a central role in Hadhrami society. Men head, protect, provide, and speak for their families. Women generally perform traditional household, labor, and childcare roles.

POLITICAL LANDSCAPE

The political climate in Yemen is underpinned by a fragile and distorted democracy, dominated at all levels by the ruling General People's Congress (GPC), headed by President Ali Abdullah Saleh.

- Islah Party, the main Islamist party, is the main opposition party in Hadramout. Although Islah has been accused of having connections to Islamic militants it has generally played a mediating role between the state and Yemen's more conservative religious elements. Some analysts claim that Islah, far from encouraging radicalization has in fact blunted more extreme forms of Islam and militancy in Yemen.²⁵
- The Yemen Socialist Party (YSP) is also a significant local political force, although it has been increasingly supplanted by the more religious and tribally-orientated Islah Party. Secretary of the Yemeni Socialist Party in Hadramout: Mohamed Abdullah Al-Hamid.
- Political corruption and injustice is often cited as a major driving factor behind recourse to extremism and radicalization. Politically-motivated violence is often used as a means to extract central Government concessions.²⁶ Political parties also use religion as a means to gain support and strengthen their campaigns.

GENERATING SUPPORT FOR AND RECRUITMENT INTO VIOLENT JIHADISM

Southern political / social grievances

Many southern Yemenis harbor resentment of the northern counterparts. Grievances include; perceived subjugation of the south following national unification in 1990 and the civil war in 1994; injustice, corruption, and the perceived theft of both public and private land by northern officials; embezzlement and unequal distribution of Government largesse between the north and south of the country; economic mismanagement, and deterioration of living conditions following Government mishandling of cleanup efforts in the wake of the 2008 flash floods which caused widespread damage to the province. Such grievances, particularly those relating to perceived central Government interference in local affairs, are being directly exploited by Al-Qa'ida propagandists in order to secure local support.

Youth alienation and social exclusion

Islamist extremism in Hadramout, as elsewhere in Yemen, flourishes among alienated, disaffected, disenfranchised youth. Education in Hadramout suffers from limited accessibility, poor attendance, high drop-out rates, and large educational disparities between rich and poor. The lack of access to, and poor quality of, state education facilities has meant that many children are enrolled in alternative forms of education, including religious institutes, some of which preach radical ideologies and act as breeding grounds for radical Islamic terrorism.

Vulnerable (often unemployed) youth lacking in life skills and self-esteem, are the primary target for Islamist radicalization and militant recruitment efforts. Youth face social exclusion and isolation both within their own families, tribes, and local communities and often feel a sense of hopelessness. Factors such as the lack of education, unemployment, poverty, lack of security and injustice, peer pressure etc. all contribute to the path to extremism, radicalization and militancy.

Presence of foreign Jihadist militants

Hadramout province has long been a bolt-hole for Islamist militants both foreign and domestic, and there are pockets of sympathy for organizations such as Al-Qa'ida (Osama bin Laden's fourth wife is the daughter of a prominent Hadramout Sheikh), and in the early-mid-1990's Al-Qa'ida reportedly made significant efforts to recruit fighters from among the province's more religiously conservative communities. This cadre may act as a driver of radicalization because of the opportunities they afford those disposed toward involvement in militancy to make contact with committed and experienced violent Jihadists.

Loose state control

Many areas of Hadramout are remote, rural expanses where central Government reach is poor. This has created a permissive environment in which violent Jihadist groups such as Al-Qa'ida can establish a presence relatively free of harassment from security forces.

BARRIERS TO RECRUITMENT INTO VIOLENT JIHADISM

Domestic living concerns:

A survey conducted by the Yemen Polling Centre in seven Governates (including Ma'rib) in 2008 found that respondents considered the cost of living as the top problem facing Yemen, followed by poverty, the economy, unemployment, security/ terrorism, corruption and the spread of weapons. Most citizens remain preoccupied with local concerns such as employment, the economy, and harsh living conditions – these more immediate concerns, whilst they may breed dissatisfaction and act as drivers for radicalization, might equally distract many ordinary Yemenis from involvement in Islamist militancy.

Views on Terrorism

Like Ma'rib, public opinion polling suggests most Hadramis hold strong negative views concerning the notion of terrorist attacks carried out on Yemeni soil. The 2008 Yemen Polling Centre survey in Hadramout found that terrorism was an activity generally disliked by citizens and associated closely with murder and the targeting of innocent civilians.

Anti-radicalization initiatives

There are a number of well-known religious schools in Hadramout, several of which have run their own study programmes aimed at countering the spread of radical Islamist ideologies.

MILITANT GROUPS

Al-Qa'ida in Hadramout

Local and foreign Islamic militants affiliated in varying degrees to the country's resurgent Al-Qa'ida network are believed to operate across Hadramout Governorate, including in Al Mukalla city. In recent years, Al-Qa'ida has attacked both Yemeni and Western targets in Hadramout, most notably foreign tourists, the security forces, and oil installations. Al-Qa'ida has used a variety of planned attack methodologies in Hadramout, including armed gun attacks, mortar attacks, the use of suicide vests, and Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) and Vehicle Borne Improvised Explosive Devices (VBIEDs), which indicate an increasing level of training, coordination, sophistication and leadership.

In addition, Al-Qa'ida in Hadramout is engaged in a sophisticated online Information Campaign consisting of ideologically framed propaganda, including videos, audio recordings and written communiqués that include, for example, demands for the release of prisoners, the expulsion of non-Muslims from the Arabian Peninsula, and the claiming of responsibility for attacks. Al-Qa'ida's ideology, demands and operations are chronicled in its online magazine, Sada Al-Malahim (the Echo of Battles).

As the ancestral homeland of Al-Qa'ida leader Osama bin Laden, Hadramout has a long association with Islamic radicalization and militancy, particularly among youth, returnee Jihadists (from Iraq and Afghanistan etc.) and alienated strands of local social society. In recent years, a 'new generation' of more radicalized homegrown militants, borne from the pool of alienated, disaffected, disenfranchised and vulnerable (often unemployed) youth, have stepped up attacks against President Ali Abdullah Saleh's regime and Western targets in Hadramout. This new generation, some of whom have fought in current international theaters of armed Jihad (e.g. Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Afghanistan etc.) reportedly reject what has been described by some commentators as the tacit non-aggression pact between the Yemeni government and 'older' Yemeni mujahideen who returned home after the Afghan-Soviet conflict and who agreed not to engage in militant actions within Yemen. This younger generation advocate for confrontation with both the 'Near' (hostile Arab regimes) and 'Far' (US / the West) enemies, and therefore consider both Government and foreign targets in Yemen as legitimate targets.

Al-Qa'ida in Hadramout consists of a number of independent, loosely-affiliated groups and/or cells of militant Islamists operating under different names (but all named after companions of the Prophet Muhammad), with differing levels of geographic space (both within and outside Hadramout), operational capacity, and different (sometimes) prominent Al-Qa'ida leaders. While such groups previously shared a minimal organizational overlap, the emergence of Al-Qa'ida in the Arabian Peninsula, the new Yemen-based regional Jihadist umbrella group, may now result in greater coordination of their activities.

Examples of Al-Qa'ida cells active in the Hadramout area in 2008 included:

The Khalid Bin Al-Waleed brigade; believed to be closely affiliated with prominent Al-Qa'ida leader Qassim Al-Raimi, who escaped jail in Sana'a in February 2006 and remains at large. The group is believed to operate across Yemen, including Sana'a and Hadramout. It was reportedly responsible for most of the high profile attacks on Westerners in Hadramout since 2006, such as the January 18, 2008 killing of two Belgian tourists and two Yemeni drivers near Hajreen, Daw'an District.

The Al-Qa'ida Bin Omar Al-Tamimi brigade; thought to be closely associated with (now deceased) prominent Al-Qa'ida leader Hamza Al-Quwaiti. The group is believed to operate from Aden to Mukalla and along the Wadi Douan / Sayoun / Tarim corridor. It was reportedly responsible for the 25, July 2008 suicide bomb attack on a central security forces compound in Sayoun.

The Al-Muthanna Harith Al-Shibani brigade; active around Shibam and is believed to be responsible for a spate of skirmishes with, and attacks on, Yemeni security forces in Wadi Hadramout around Shibam. Analysis of recent propaganda videos and the January edition of Sada al-Malahim suggest these networks, in particular the Khalid Bin Al-Walid Brigades, are now closely affiliated with Al-Qa'ida.

Despite a Government crackdown and a number of high profile arrests, in recent years Hadramout has witnessed a notable increase in activity from local Al-Qa'ida cells, boosted by the February 2006 escape of 23 Al-Qa'ida members from the Political Security Organization prison in Sana'a, Jihadist returnees, and Al-Qa'ida fugitives from other international theaters, most notably Saudi Arabia. Al-Qa'ida is reported to use Hadramout as a recruitment and training

center, logistical hub, operations base, and safe haven. Al-Qa'ida has mounted a number of attacks in Hadramout, which have targeted foreign tourists (e.g. March 15, 2009, a suicide bomber killed four South Korean tourists in Shibam, and January 18, 2008 gunmen killed two Belgian tourists in Hajreen), Yemeni security forces (e.g. July 25, 2008, a suicide bomber attacked a central security forces compound in Sayoun), and oil installations (e.g. September 15, 2006, suicide bombers attacked the Al-Dhaba oil facility). In addition to such high profile attacks Al-Qa'ida has been involved in minor gun battles and skirmishes with Yemeni security forces in a number of areas in Hadramout, including Al Mukalla city and Wadi Hadramout, west of Shibam.

Despite initial hesitancy by the Yemeni Government to deal with Al-Qa'ida, Yemeni security forces have detained and/or killed a number of Al-Qa'ida members in Hadramout involved in planning and perpetrating terrorist attacks against Yemeni and Western targets, both in Yemen and abroad. Although such successes have weakened Al-Qa'ida in Hadramout, they are also likely to provoke further Al-Qa'ida retaliation, along the lines of the sophisticated attack on the US Embassy in Sana'a on September 17, 2008. Given the lack of effective state authority and control in many areas of Hadramout, particularly rural areas, the abundance of 'soft' oil and tourism targets, the pool of disaffected youth, and the presence of Al-Qa'ida, including leadership elements, the potential remains for Al-Qa'ida to regroup and step up its campaign of radicalization and militancy in Hadramout.

In addition to Al-Qa'ida a number of foreign Islamic militant groups, such as Egyptian Islamic Jihad, are believed to be active in, or have links to, Yemen, although the extent to which they operate in Hadramout is unknown.

Examples of Al-Qa'ida Activity in Hadramout:²⁸

Al-Qa'ida activity in Hadramout has centered on a number of geographic areas, most notably Al Mukalla and Shibam. In addition to planned high profile 'spectacular' attacks (such as those on foreign tourists), Al-Qa'ida groups have also engaged in localized skirmishes with Yemeni security forces.

March 15, 2009 - A suicide bomber killed four South Korean tourists and injured a number of Yemenis in Shibam.

August 19, 2008 - Five members of Al-Qa'ida were arrested in Al Qatn District and one in Al Mukalla city. Security forces reportedly uncovered weapons, explosives, military uniforms and a workshop for assembling car bombs.

August 11, 2008 - Hamza Al-Quwaiti, an ALQ leader who escaped jail in Sana'a in February 2006 was killed by security forces along with four other Al-Qa'ida members near Tarim. Security forces reportedly uncovered weapons, explosives, and materials to build car bombs.

July 25, 2008 - Ahmed Bin Said Omar Al-Masjari, carried out a suicide VBIED attack on a Central Security Force compound in Sayoun, killing eight. Al-Masjari, who was born in Saudi Arabia, was a medical student at Hadramout University.

April 26, 2008 - Al-Qa'ida fired mortars at a Yemeni Army compound north of Al-Mukalla City.

April 22, 2008 - Al-Qa'ida fired mortars at a central security force compound in Sayoun.

March 29, 2008 - Al-Qa'ida fired mortars on a Calvalley Petroleum site in Wadi Hadramout (Block 9).

March 27, 2008 - Al-Qa'ida launched an IED attack on the Total pipeline (Block 10) south-east of Shibam.

March 1, 2008 - Al-Qa'ida skirmished with police near Al-Mukalla city stadium.

January 18, 2008 - Al-Qa'ida gunmen killed two Belgian tourists and two Yemeni drivers in a small arms ambush near Hajreen, Daw'an District.

December 13, 2007 - A number of security force personnel were injured in two bomb explosions in Hadramout reportedly linked to Al-Qa'ida.

September 15, 2006 - Al-Qa'ida attacked the Al-Dhaba oil facility in a double suicide VBIED attack.

NB: All statistical data unless otherwise indicated is given for Hadramout Governorate, is the most current available, and is derived from Yemen's Central Statistical Organization (e.g. Statistical Yearbook 2007, National Census 2004, Household Budget Survey 2004, Transport and Communication Survey Report 2005, Building and Construction Survey 2006 etc.). Given the age and unreliability of some official data sets, data is included for illustrative purposes only.

2. In some rural areas of Hadramout, where state control remains weak, tribal groupings retain effective power and authority.
3. There have been reports of periodic civil protests in Hadramout concerning negative economic conditions, such as high food prices, pensions etc.
4. Tribal conflicts are common throughout Yemen. Some conflicts span over several generations and primarily begin over disputes concerning land and access to resources, such as water. Tribal conflict sometimes necessitates government intervention. Youth are often play a major role in sparking new conflicts and exacerbating existing ones. Source: Assessment of Tribal Conflicts in Mareb, Al-Jawf and Shabwa (2007), National Democratic Institute for International Affairs.
5. Al-Qa'ida consists of a number of independent, loosely-affiliated groups and/or cells of militant Islamists operating under a number of different acronyms (e.g. Yemen Soldiers Brigade (YSB), Al-Qa'ida in the Southern Arabian Peninsula, Islamic Jihad in Yemen, Al-Waleed brigades, Al-Muthanna Harith Al-Shibani brigades etc.). Al-Qa'ida advocates for confrontation with both the 'Near' (hostile Arab regimes) and 'Far' (US / the West) enemies. Al-Qa'ida's ideology, demands and operations are chronicled in its online magazine, Sada Al-Malahim (SM) (the Echo of Battles).
6. A new generation of younger Al-Qa'ida radicals, such as Hamza Al-Quyati (killed in Hadramout in August 2008) has recently emerged in Hadramout. The new generation reportedly rejects what has been described by some commentators as the tacit non-aggression pact between the Yemeni government and 'older' Yemeni mujahideen who returned home after the Afghan-Soviet conflict and under which such fighters agreed not to engage in militant actions within Yemen. Unlike their forebears, this younger more radicalized generation consider both government and foreign targets in Yemen as legitimate targets.
7. Reports indicate that crackdowns on Al-Qa'ida in Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Afghanistan and elsewhere have forced a number of Al-Qa'ida operatives to relocate to Yemen, some of whom are believed to operate in Hadramout Governorate. Despite increased international border security, fugitive Islamist militants from throughout the Gulf region are reported to (regularly) cross what is still considered a porous border between Saudi Arabia and Yemen, including Hadramout Governorate (e.g. Nayif Al-Qahtani, an Al-Qa'ida leader in Saudi Arabia has reputedly called for Al-Qa'ida to leave Saudi Arabia and relocate in Yemen). Militant Islamists from Somalia, some of whom are reportedly associated with the Islamic Courts Union and/or operate through Somali refugees, are also believed to be present in Hadramout - Al Mukalla, as a major shipping port, straddles traditional seaborne smuggling routes (which include arms shipments) between East Africa and the Middle East. In addition, a number of Yemenis are known to be engaged in radicalization and militant Jihadist operations in other countries, such as Iraq and Afghanistan, some of whom have returned to Yemen where they have continued radicalization and/or militant jihadist activities.
8. Yemen is reportedly considered a safe haven due in part to the lack of effective state authority and control, and in part due to the lack of counterterrorism legislation which criminalizes those engaged in planning, facilitating, and/or carrying out acts of terrorism, both in Yemen and abroad. Participation in jihad abroad, such as Afghanistan, resonates well with many Yemenis.
9. Al-Qa'ida attacks have often been preceded by demands for the release of detained Al-Qa'ida members. Al-Qa'ida has announced its intention to attack foreigners (tourists) and oil and gas infrastructure, the lifeblood of the Yemeni economy, which has raised concerns regarding economic growth and investment, the security of shipping routes, and the transit of oil through the Suez Canal. Such attacks are specifically designed to damage Yemen's economic foundations, thwart inward investment and job creation.
10. Yemeni authorities stand accused of failing to effectively tackle Al-Qa'ida (e.g. the early release of convicted terrorists, prisoner escapes, deal making etc.), and even of having links with Al-Qa'ida (Yemeni authorities stand accused of allowing Al-Qa'ida members to train pro-government paramilitaries engaged in conflict with Houthis Shia rebels in Saada Governorate, North Yemen). In addition analysts point out the debt of gratitude that exists between the government and Islamic militants who fought with the government in the 1994 Civil War. Such hesitancy / complicity has damaged Yemen's international relations with a number of countries, including the US. Although the crackdown on Al-Qa'ida has been met with broader international approval, many remain sceptical of government motives and intentions.
11. Hadramout Governorate roughly incorporates the former territory of the Qu'aiti and Kathiri Sultanates, both of which were British protectorates in the Aden Protectorate until their abolition upon the independence of South Yemen in 1967.
12. 2007 Census projection.
13. 2004
14. Source: Yemen Poverty Assessment 2007 (http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTYEMENI/Resources/310077-1197206771664/Volume_I_Main_Report.pdf).
15. Oil production in Yemen has peaked and is expected to be depleted in the coming years. Oil accounts for approximately 30% of GDP, over 70% of total public revenue, and a significant proportion of the national budget. Source: Economist Intelligence Unit, Yemen Country Report 2008.
16. Source: UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) (<http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=81642>).
17. Source: Social Welfare Fund, 2007.
18. The term 'tribe' has multiple meanings across distinct communities and administrative districts. Perceptions of what constitutes a tribe, sub-tribe etc. vary.
19. A basic example of such stratification is the divide that exists between Sadah, who are reputed to be descendants of the Prophet Muhammad and generally have more power and status in society, as opposed to non-Sadah, who have a significantly lower status. Hadhrami society has traditionally been divided between two basic but contradictory forces - those who stand for the status quo (often Sadah) and those who advocate for social change and reform (often Masakin). Such social divisions have been particularly evident during times of conflict and social upheaval, such as the Yemeni Revolution which pitted pro and anti-Republican groups against each other.
20. Social stratification is exhibited in many forms, such as forms of address (e.g. Sadah are often referred to as habib meaning beloved), in shaking hands, in seating arrangements, in marriage - males cannot marry females who belong to higher social groups etc. Note that political developments, socio-economic modernization, and a deeper participation in the ideology and economy of the wider Arab world, are undermining traditional tribal and social power structures.
21. A sheikh is a leader of a tribal unit. Sheikhs vary in their importance given the size of tribal grouping they represent and the respect accorded to them. Some Sheikhs are considered maraghas, that is, they are known to be exceptionally effective in moderating or negotiating a solution to tribal tensions and conflicts. Source: Assessment of Tribal Conflicts in Mareb, Al-Jawf and Shabwa (2007), National Democratic Institute for International Affairs.
22. Sadah refers to those who claim to be descendants of the Prophet Muhammad. Sayyid means lord or master.
23. The vast majority of land in Hadramout is controlled by armed tribes, whilst some (holy) villages or Hawta are controlled by Sadah and to a lesser extent Mashaikh. Historically, Sadah have acted as a stabilizing force, settling disputes and mediating between feuding tribes. The Sadah are unified by their genealogy and act as religious leaders and preachers. 22. Sadah refers to those who claim to be descendants of the Prophet Muhammad. Sayyid means lord or master.
24. Mashaikh are not to be confused with tribal leaders 'Sheikh'.
25. Source: Yemen: Coping with Terrorism and Violence in a Fragile State, 8 January 2003, International Crisis Group.
26. For example: Tribal youth often claim that they resort to violence to pressure the government to deliver services, release prisoners, provide jobs, redress injustices, etc. There is a widespread perception that the government fulfils demands of tribesmen who carjack government vehicles and kidnap foreigners.

Source: *Assessment of Tribal Conflicts in Mareb, Al-Jawf and Shabwa* (2007), National Democratic Institute for International Affairs.

27. Opposition parties boycotted provincial governor elections.
28. Many of Al-Qa'ida's militant actions have had little strategic effect and are designed to be exemplary - i.e. the intent is to demonstrate defiance and inspire radicalization, as much as to have military effect.
29. Hamza Al-Quyati, was born to a Yemeni family in Saudi Arabia. He is believed, among other operations, to have been responsible for a mortar strike on the US Embassy in Sana'a on March 18, 2008 and a suicide bombing that killed eight Spanish tourists and two Yemeni drivers in July 2, 2007 in Ma'rib Governorate.
30. Tarim is widely acknowledged as the theological, juridical, and academic center of the Hadramout Valley. Tarim is an important locus of Islamic learning and reportedly contains the highest concentration of Sada' anywhere in the world.
31. Islamic Jihad in Yemen claimed responsibility for the attack. A statement released by the group said that the attack was carried out in order to protect Islam from festivals and concerts performed by Arab singers in Yemeni cities. Islamic Jihad in Yemen also claimed responsibility for the attack on the US Embassy in Sana'a on September 17, 2008.
32. The Republic of Yemen was established on May 22, 1990, with the merger of North Yemen (the Yemen Arab Republic - YAR) and South Yemen (the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen - PDRY). Violence linked to Yemeni civil conflict is common. For example, according to the Yemen Times (<http://www.yementimes.com/article.shtml?i=1255&p=front&a=2>), on April 29, 2009, security in Hadramout arrested 25 elements of the Southern Movement, after Independence demonstrations against the central state.
33. On May 21, 1994, Ali Salim al Baydh, former Vice President of the Republic of Yemen and Secretary-General of the Central Committee of the Yemen Socialist Party (YSP), together with other leaders of the former South Yemen declared secession and the establishment of a new Democratic Republic of Yemen centered in Aden. However, the new republic failed to achieve any international recognition and on July 7, 1994, President Ali Abdullah Saleh's Northern forces captured Aden, ending the civil war.
34. During the 1990's about 20 percent of the 6 million students in Yemen went through the religious high schools. Source: *Yemen Turns to Tribes to Aid Hunt for Qaeda*, Neil Macfarquhar, New York Times, October 27, 2002.
35. Source: *Yemen Cross Sectoral Youth Assessment: Final Report, 2008*, Education Development Center.
36. Source: *Youth Organizations in Yemen - A Report on the Mapping of Youth Organizations in Yemen, 2008*, Yemeni-German Reproductive Health Program.
37. Sources: *Youth Organizations in Yemen - A Report on the Mapping of Youth Organizations in Yemen, 2008*, Yemeni-German Reproductive Health Program. *The Directory of Non-Governmental Organizations in Yemen, 2003*, Human Rights Information and Training Center.
37. For example, NODS Yemen has operated a training project for Mosque-based religious preachers with the aim of promoting preaching and sermons based on tolerance and the peaceful resolution of conflict. Source: NODS Yemen.