

York researchers publish major study on crisis in Yemen

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Facing the complexities of popular unrest, the threat of civil war and the continuing war on terror, Yemen poses both a major concern and challenging dilemmas for international policy makers.

In their final report, *On the Edge of [Failure](#): Conflict and Crisis in Yemen*, the PRDU team offers a comprehensive analysis of the country in the lead up to the Arab Spring and suggests options for the future. The study examines the root and trigger causes of the main internal violent conflicts in Yemen and identifies the drivers of the country's broader socio-political and economic crises, as well as analysing national, regional and international responses.

The findings are based on the PRDU team's Yemen Common Country Assessment 2010 commissioned by the United Nations Development Program in 2010. The project incorporated a series of high-level consultations in the Yemeni capital, Sana'a, with senior representatives of the main UN agencies, government ministries, international NGOs and civil society representatives.

The purpose was to help design the main UN policy framework and to identify a set of strategic options for all parties. In the wake of the Arab Spring, the findings are particularly significant in helping to understand the causes of the ongoing crises and the implications for the international community and the Yemeni people. The final report is co-authored by PRDU Director and Team Leader Professor Sultan Barakat, Dr. David Connolly (Deputy Team Leader & PRDU Lecturer), and project

researchers Dr. Sean Deely and Alexandra Lewis.

Professor Barakat said: “Overall the study demonstrates the importance of understanding the evolution of humanitarian and development challenges in Yemen, and the need to reflect more critically on the impact of international policies on stability and progress. Our findings indicate a recent reversal in development trends, due to rapid population growth, economic and fiscal shocks, protracted violent conflict, widespread inequality, and vulnerability to environmental degradation among other factors. These issues have been aggravated by a significant lack of state capacity and budget--most government ministers admit that they have ‘barely enough money to pay for staffing, and nothing left over to launch new development projects’. Due to these endemic challenges, progress towards most development priorities has been extremely weak at best in most sectors.”

The PRDU team identifies a set of opportunities for change and points of engagement in an attempt to shape current debates inside and outside Yemen. Of prime importance is the need to resolve critical disagreements between national, regional and international stakeholders in terms of their development priorities and operational strategies.

The authors have also published an article, ‘Reassessing State Fragility and Policy Responses in Yemen’ in the June 2011 edition of *Parliamentary Brief*, which focuses on the policy implications of their findings, and will publish a more substantive academic article later this year.

More information: The full report is available at [www.york.ac.uk/politics/centre ... port-&-publications/](http://www.york.ac.uk/politics/centre...port-&-publications/) .

Provided by University of York

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