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CREATING PATHWAYS TO FUTURE DURABLE SOLUTIONS FOR IDPs IN YEMEN

An analysis of the displacement context in Yemen and learning from the implementation of the EU funded
Durable Solutions Project

Project entitled “Promoting resilience and social cohesion through an integrated response to vulnerable communities in Yemen” (Reference: MIDEAST/2019/405-730)

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

CCCM	Camp Coordination and Camp Management
CIMP	Civilian Impact Monitoring Project
CSO	Civil society organization
DAC	Displacement-affected community
DFA	De Facto Authorities
DRC	Danish Refugee Council
DSP	Durable Solutions Project
DTM	Displacement Tracking Matrix
ERW	Explosive remnants of war
EU	European Union
GBV	Gender-based violence
HLP	Housing, land, and property
HRP	Humanitarian Response Plan
IAHE	Inter-Agency Humanitarian Evaluation of the Yemen Crisis
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
IDP	Internally displaced person
INGO	International non-governmental organization
IOM	International Organisation for Migration
IM	Insider Mediator
IPC	Integrated Food Security Phase Classification
IRC	International Rescue Committee
IRG	Internationally Recognized Government
KII	Key informant interview
MCLA	Multi-Cluster Location Assessment
NGO	Non-governmental organization
NRC	Norwegian Refugee Council
SCHMCHA	The Supreme Council for the Management and Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
ToC	Theory of change
TWG	Technical Working Group
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHCR	The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
UNSDCF	United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework

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INTRODUCTION

With the conflict in Yemen well into its eighth year, the humanitarian crisis continues to be among the largest in the world. Over 23 million people are in need of humanitarian assistance¹. The detrimental effects of conflict have been exacerbated by the collapse of the Yemeni Rial, which has led to increased prices for food, fuel, and healthcare². There are approximately 4.3 million internally displaced persons (IDPs), with approximately 1.6 million living in camps³. There were over 400,000 new displacements in 2021 primarily because of conflict, but also increasingly due to heavy rains and floods⁴.

An estimated 1.3 million IDPs have returned since the beginning of the conflict, many of whom remain exposed to protection risks, and face barriers to accessing services and finding sustainable livelihoods⁵. Ongoing conflict, insecurity, the economic situation, natural hazards, and decreased funding for agencies responding to displacement all present significant barriers to the 3 durable solutions settlement options (local integration, return, or settlement elsewhere in the country)⁶. Against this backdrop, humanitarian and development actors have begun to consider steps that can be taken to unlock protracted displacement and support durable solutions.

“Promoting Resilience and social cohesion through an integrated response to vulnerable communities in Yemen” (also known as the Durable Solutions Project) was a 2.5-year project funded by the European Union that pilots a durable solutions approach to programming in Yemen (reference MIDEAST/2019/405-730). The Durable Solutions Project (DSP) placed a focus on addressing the immediate needs and longer-term priorities of displacement-affected communities. The project was implemented by an ACTED-led consortium in partnership with Care, the Danish Refugee Council (DRC), the International Rescue Committee (IRC), the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), and Search for Common Ground in Lahj and Dhamar governorates. With the project ending in November 2022, it was an opportune moment to document learning from the project to better understand how actors responding to displacement in Yemen can implement programming that contributes to durable solutions for IDPs. With this in mind, the DSP consortium commissioned a consultant to undertake research with the following **3 objectives**:

OBJECTIVE 1: Solutions analysis	Analyse the context vis-a-vis durable solutions in Yemen and the barriers and opportunities it presents for durable solutions focused programming
OBJECTIVE 2: Learning from DSP	Identify learning, including challenges and promising practices, from implementing the DSP in Yemen, with a particular focus on how the project contributed to durable solutions
OBJECTIVE 3: Programming framework	Based on findings under objectives #1 and #2, develop a draft framework for future durable solutions-focused programming in Yemen

¹ Yemen Humanitarian Response Plan 2022

² Yemen Humanitarian Needs Overview 2022

³ UNHCR Data Portal: https://data.unhcr.org/en/situations/yemen_cccm

⁴ ibid

⁵ Yemen Humanitarian Needs Overview 2022

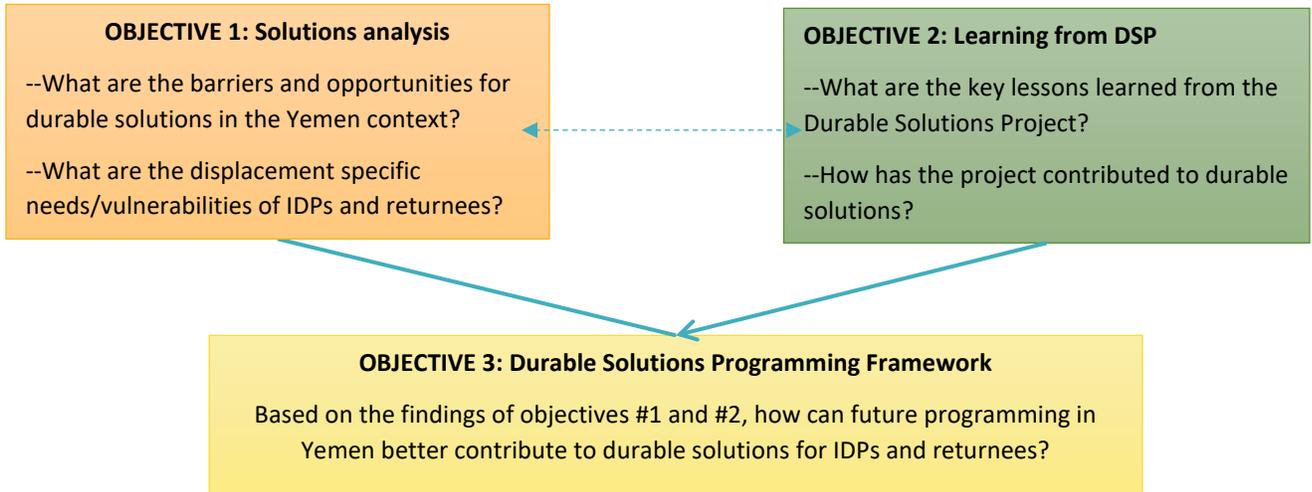
⁶ IDMC Yemen Country Profile: <https://www.internal-displacement.org/countries/yemen>

This report presents the findings and recommendations of this research. The next section presents the approach and methodology used in the research. Following this, the report is presented in 3 parts corresponding to the research's three objectives:

- **PART 1- Durable Solutions Analysis-** provides an analysis of the barriers and opportunities for durable solutions and the extent of displacement-specific needs and vulnerabilities in Yemen. It analyses the displacement context, the lived reality of individuals living in displacement-affected communities, and the nature of the current response to displacement and crisis in Yemen.
- **PART 2- Lessons Learned-** identifies learning, including challenges and promising practices, from implementing the DSP in Lahj and Dhamar governorates. Nine lessons learned, which are specifically related to how the project contributed towards durable solutions, are presented.
- **PART 3- Durable Solutions Programming Framework-** proposes interventions and approaches that can be adopted to design and implement humanitarian and development programming that contributes to durable solutions in Yemen. The Framework identifies a set of desired outcomes and a series of interventions related to assessment and analysis, programmatic actions, advocacy, and the adaptation of programming.

APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

The overall approach to the research is summarized in the diagram below:



These objectives were addressed through a 4-phase methodology:

Desk review	Existing assessments, research and other resources related to the displacement context and the response to the conflict and related crises in Yemen were reviewed to inform findings under objective 1. Specific DSP project documentation was also reviewed, including proposal documentation, donor reports, assessments conducted under the project, and monitoring data to inform findings under objective 3.
Key informant interviews	A total of 54 key informants were interviewed. These included staff from DSP agencies who had been involved in the project. External stakeholders interviewed included community representatives, representatives of national authorities (from IRG-controlled areas only), local authorities (from Lahj Governorate only), staff from UN agencies, and donors.
Durable solutions training workshops	Two training workshops were held. Participants were primarily staff from DSP partners agencies. These workshops also offered an opportunity to discuss the displacement context, identify learning from the DSP, and explore future actions that can be taken to support durable solutions in Yemen.
A validation workshop	Before the finalization of this report, a validation workshop was held where draft findings and recommendations were presented and discussed. This workshop was attended by key informants involved in the research.

Scope and limitations

The durable solutions analysis outlined in Part 1 of this report covers the whole of Yemen. It is only a “light” analysis based primarily on secondary data. Although some area specific findings are referenced, the analysis is mostly generalized to the country-level. The identification of displacement-specific needs was hindered by a shortage of data disaggregated by displacement status.

Part 2 of this report identifies lessons learned from the DSP, which was implemented in Lahj and Dhamar governorates only. Although it is intended for this learning to be applicable across Yemen, the reader should keep in mind that the project was implemented in just two governorates.

The draft Durable Solutions Programming Framework presented in Part 3 of this report is intended to be applicable across Yemen. However, the Framework will always need to be tailored to the local context.

What is a durable solution for an IDP and how can it be achieved?

The [IASC Framework for Durable Solutions for IDPs](#) (the IASC Framework) provides the following definition:

“A durable solution is achieved when internally displaced persons no longer have any specific assistance and protection needs that are linked to their displacement and can enjoy their human rights without discrimination on account of their displacement”.

A durable solution can be achieved through 3 settlement options, which IDPs must be able to pursue in a safe, voluntary, and dignified manner:

- Sustainable return and reintegration at the place of origin;
- Sustainable local integration in the place of displacement; or
- Sustainable relocation and integration in another part of the country (settlement elsewhere)

It is important to note that physical movement (i.e., return or relocation) does not in itself constitute a durable solution. It is rather the gradual reduction of, and eventual absence of, displacement-specific protection and assistance needs that enables the achievement of a durable solution for an IDP regardless of the settlement option pursued. Displacement-specific needs may include those arising as a consequence of the events that caused displacement (e.g. losing personal documents during flight), those resulting from absence from home (e.g. not having land to cultivate), those arising from not having a viable settlement option (e.g. uncertainty about being able to remain in current place of displacement because of eviction threats), or those resulting from discrimination (e.g. having limitations placed on freedom of movement or the right to work because of displacement status). The IASC Framework outlines 8 criteria which an IDP must achieve without discrimination on account of being displaced in order to have found a durable solution:

1. Long-term safety, security, and freedom of movement;
2. An adequate standard of living, including at a minimum access to adequate food, water, housing, health care and basic education;
3. Access to employment and livelihoods;
4. Access to effective mechanisms that restore their housing, land, and property (HLP) or provide them with compensation.
5. Access to and replacement of personal and other documentation;
6. Voluntary reunification with family members separated during displacement;

7. Participation in public affairs at all levels on an equal basis with the resident population; and
8. Effective remedies for displacement-related violations, including access to justice, reparations, and information about the causes of violations.

Currently, durable solutions are out of reach for most of the world's 60 million plus IDPs. Globally, protracted displacement is the norm for IDPs, and displacement-specific needs and vulnerabilities persist for many who have returned. Against this backdrop, supporting IDPs to make progress towards a future durable solution presents a significant and complex challenge for humanitarian and development partners. This report explores approaches that can be taken in the context of Yemen.

PART 1: DURABLE SOLUTIONS ANALYSIS

This solutions analysis explores the context in relation to durable solutions in Yemen. It considers the lived experience of displacement-affected communities as well as broader contextual factors such as the policy environment, the nature of the response to crisis and displacement, and existing/planned initiatives relating to durable solutions. The intentions of displaced populations regarding their future settlement options are also be examined. The solutions analysis is presented in the following sub-sections:

1. The displacement context (overall numbers, barriers to return and local integration, futures intentions etc.)
2. The situation in displacement-affected communities, including displacement-specific needs and barriers to return, by the following thematic areas which have been adapted from the 8 IASC criteria referenced above:

Physical safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Protection, safety, and security ➤ Social cohesion ➤ Exposure to climate hazards
Material safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Access to basic services (water & sanitation, education, health) ➤ Food security and livelihoods
Legal safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Housing, land, and property ➤ Access to documentation

This analysis reveals that many of the needs and vulnerabilities of IDPs, returnees and host community members are similar. It also highlights the impacts that displacement has had on the areas that host IDPs.

3. The response to the crisis and displacement in Yemen (the focus of response, funding, actors involved, plans/strategies)
4. Key takeaways from the solutions analysis that can help to inform future durable solutions-focussed programming in Yemen.

This represents a “light” solutions analysis, based primarily on a review of existing assessments, data, and research, which identifies key themes and trends across Yemen. It is recommended that similar analysis is undertaken at an area-level in the future to have a more localized understanding of the context vis-a-vis durable solutions.

1. THE DISPLACEMENT CONTEXT IN YEMEN

There are currently estimated to be 4.3 million IDPs in Yemen⁷, although the actual number is likely to be higher than this given that displacement tracking is currently limited in DFA-controlled areas⁸. In 2021, the number of IDPs increased significantly, with 491,000 new displacements⁹. This new displacement was largely due to conflict, particularly the offensive in Marib, with conflict being the cause of over 90% of new displacements¹⁰. Recent years have also seen an increasing number of people displaced due to climatic factors, most notably heavy rains, and flooding, as well as economic collapse¹¹. The rate of new displacement appeared to have slowed down during the truce which commenced in April 2022 and came to an end in October, with IOM's Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) recording a 60% decrease in new displacements in the second quarter of 2022¹².

Most IDPs have been displaced for more than 2 years and multiple displacements are the norm¹³. Of the 6,318 IDP households surveyed in the recent Multi-Cluster Location Assessment (MCLA)¹⁴, 32% had been displaced 2 or more times, and their average length of displacement was 7 years.¹⁵ The MCLA surveyed households in all districts of Yemen across IRG- and DFA-controlled areas.

Over 1.6 million IDPs live in camps¹⁶, with the remainder living among the host community. The situation in camps is characterized by a lack of land tenure security, a lack of adequate basic services, and an absence of livelihood opportunities¹⁷. Less than half of camps have access to humanitarian assistance¹⁸ and, before the truce, 45% of camps were said to be within 5km of conflict frontlines. An absence of land agreements in most camps means that there are significant limitations on constructing latrines, rehabilitating water sources, and providing transitional shelter installations, all of which present significant barriers to local integration. The fact that most IDPs are living outside of camps among host communities places pressure on services, including health and education, and diminishes access to economic opportunities¹⁹. This has led to increasing tensions between the host and IDP populations²⁰. The lived reality of those living inside and outside of camps, and the communities that host them, will be explored in the next section of this report- 'Analysis by thematic area'.

⁷ UNHCR Operational Data Portal: <https://data.unhcr.org/en/country/yem>

⁸ Yemen Humanitarian Needs Overview 2022

⁹ Ibid

¹⁰ IOM Displacement Tracking Matrix: Rapid Displacement Tracking Annual Report 2021

¹¹ Ibid

¹² IOM Yemen Quarterly Update April to June 2022

¹³ Yemen Humanitarian Response Plan

¹⁴ The Multi-Cluster Location Assessment (MCLA) is one of the tools designed to address the information gaps and improve evidence-based humanitarian prioritization and resource allocation. It was used to provide evidence-based data to inform the 2022 HNO.

¹⁵ Yemen Multi-Cluster Location Assessment 2022

¹⁶ UNHCR Data Portal: https://data.unhcr.org/en/situations/yemen_cccm

¹⁷ Yemen CCCM Cluster Strategy 2021

¹⁸ Yemen Humanitarian Needs Overview 2022

¹⁹ Ibid

²⁰ United Nations Yemen Common Country Analysis November 2021

Just under 1.3 million IDPs are estimated to have returned to their place of origin since the beginning of the conflict²¹, although in recent years the rate of return has been considerably lower²². The truce, which commenced in April 2022 and expired in October 2022, did not produce a significant uptick in the rate of IDP return²³. It is notable that of those who have returned in recent years, many report push factors, such as conflict in their area of displacement, disasters, and their difficult economic situation, as the primary reason for returning. In 2020, only 37% of recorded returnees stated that an improvement in the situation in their area of origin was the primary factor influencing their return.²⁴ Research conducted by the Executive Unit for IDPs Camp Management²⁵ in IRG-controlled areas in 2022 found that many of those who have returned have not received humanitarian support, experience food insecurity, and face challenges accessing shelter, health, and education.²⁶

Intentions surveys reveal a general trend that most IDPs would like to eventually return home, however, the majority do not plan to do so in the near future. For example, a 2020 survey conducted by NRC in 6 governorates (Hodeidah, Taiz, Dhamar, Lahj, Hajjah, and Amran) found that of the two thirds of respondents who expressed a preference to return, only 38% said they had the intention to do so in the next 6 months²⁷. Similarly, a 2022 IOM/DRC survey conducted in Hodeidah found that 72% of respondents had an intention to eventually return, however, only 31% stated that they planned to do so in the next 6 months.²⁸ UNHCR's protection monitoring across 18 governorates in 2022 found that only 1% of those surveyed planned to return in the coming 6 months.²⁹ Finally, the DSP's baseline assessment found that 80% of IDPs surveyed in Dhamar and 74% of IDPs in Lahj planned to remain in their place of displacement for at least the next 3 months.

Consistency in the findings of intentions surveys should not distract from significant local variations. For example, the NRC intentions survey found that 70% of respondents in Amran City expressed a preference for local integration compared with only 10% in Mohka in Taiz governorate. This points to the need to generate and act upon localized intentions data. IDP intentions can also change over time in response to changes in the unpredictable and fluid context in areas of displacement and areas of return.

Several economic and social factors may influence return intentions. The DRC/IOM survey found that being economically active was correlated with the intention to return. This is an interesting finding that is aligned with findings from other parts of the world that indicate that becoming more self-reliant while in displacement does not necessarily mean that people will prefer to remain in their place of displacement. This survey also found age to be a significant factor, with younger people more likely to return in the next

²¹ UNHCR data portal: <https://data.unhcr.org/en/country/yem>

²² IOM Displacement Tracking Matrix: Rapid Displacement Tracking Annual Report 2021

²³ ACAPS, Yemen Social impact monitoring report: April-June 2022

²⁴ IOM Displacement Tracking Matrix: Rapid Displacement Tracking Annual Report 2021

²⁵ The Executive Unit for IDPs Camp Management is the government agency responsible for IDP affairs in IRG-controlled areas

²⁶ The Executive Unit for IDPs Camp Management. Multi-sector Study of IDPs in Yemen 2021

²⁷ NRC, Assessing prospects for durable solutions in Yemen (February 2021)

²⁸ DRC and IOM, Reframing Durable Solutions along the Red Sea Coast of Yemen: Challenges of Long-term Programming in Protracted Crises (December 2021)

²⁹ UNHCR IDPs Protection Monitoring Update: 1 Jan 2022 – 30 Jun 2022

six months. Households with members with medical conditions were less likely to return, as were married respondents. This IOM/DRC survey was limited to Hodeidah governorate; it will be important to explore the social and economic factors that influence decision-making in future intentions surveys.

A lack of safety and security in areas of origin is the most cited barrier to return. This was a factor for 86% of respondents in the NRC survey, and around 90% in the DRC/IOM survey and UNHCR's Protection Monitoring data. Additionally, in the DSP's endline survey in Lahj governorate, 76% of IDP households said that they do not plan to return to their area of origin in the coming 3 months due to safety and security concerns. Lack of access to livelihood opportunities in areas of origin was the second most cited barrier to return in these surveys. Other prominent barriers to return are the lack of humanitarian assistance in areas of origin, the lack of public services, access to shelter and the absence of mechanisms to restore housing, land and property, and the presence of landmines and explosive remnants of war (ERWs). Barriers to return will be explored in more depth in the following section of this report.

2. ANALYSIS BY THEMATIC AREA

PHYSICAL SAFETY

Protection, safety, and security

Throughout the course of the conflict, areas of Yemen have been directly affected by airstrikes, shelling, small arms fire, and the presence of landmines and explosive remnants of war (ERWs). In 2021, the Civilian Impact Monitoring Project (CIMP) reported that over 2,500 civilians were killed or injured, many of these in Marib and Sadah, where hostilities had escalated.³⁰ The impact of such incidents stretches beyond physical safety, affecting access to services and livelihoods. IDPs have been more likely to be targeted due to their proximity to frontlines and military sites/infrastructure³¹. For example, in March 2021, IDP camps in the north of Marib city were repeatedly shelled³². At the beginning of 2021, 45% of IDP sites were situated within 5km of a frontline³³.

As highlighted above, issues related to safety and security are consistently stated by IDPs as the primary barrier to returning to their area of origin in intentions surveys. IDPs have cited concerns related to ongoing conflict and violence as well as the presence of landmines and ERWs in areas of return. The CIMP reported an increase in landmine casualties during the first 3 months of the truce, which was attributed to increased population movements, including some IDPs returning home.³⁴ Additionally, IDPs who have seen a change in the authority controlling their home area have cited fears related to arrest, extortion or

³⁰ Civilian Impact Monitoring Project 2021 Annual Report

³¹ Civilian Impact Monitoring Project, Thematic Report: The Impact of Armed Violence on Civilian Dwellings in Yemen July 2020

³² Human Rights Council, Situation of human rights in Yemen, including violations and abuses since September 2014 (September 2021)

³³ Yemen Humanitarian Needs Overview 2022

³⁴ Civilian Impact Monitoring Project, Quarterly Report: Q2 2022

being viewed as having loyalty to the authority controlling their area of displacement as a barrier to return.³⁵

Women and girls in Yemen find themselves exposed to a multitude of gender-related protection risks. Yemen is ranked 155th out of 156 countries in the Global Gender Gap Report 2021³⁶. Norms, attitudes, and policies exacerbate the risk of gender-based violence and men exert significant control over all aspects of women's lives. According to UNFPA, 52,000 women and girls are at risk of sexual violence, among a larger number of 2.6 million at risk of gender-based violence (GBV), including domestic violence, emotional violence, child marriage, and denial of access to services³⁷. These issues are pervasive and do not discriminate based on displacement status. However, it has been noted that displacement exposes women to a heightened risk of GBV for several reasons, including overcrowding in IDP sites and the loss of communal networks and safety nets³⁸.

The conflict has also had a severe impact upon child protection. Child marriage has increased, with two-thirds of Yemeni girls under 18 said to be married compared to a figure of 50% before the conflict³⁹. Child marriage is believed to be particularly prevalent among IDP and Muhamasheen communities.⁴⁰ Child labour is increasingly common, including begging on the streets⁴¹. The parties to the conflict have also been found to have recruited children to take part in hostilities, the vast majority of whom are boys.⁴² Displacement is generally thought to increase the likelihood of children being exposed to these protection risks, although no specific data was found comparing the situation of IDP and host community children. Children in camps are thought to be especially vulnerable, where an estimated 55% of households are said to be headed by children⁴³.

Social Cohesion

The conflict has placed a strain on relations between different social groups along geographical, political, and social lines. Despite this, communities have demonstrated significant solidarity and resilience in hosting displaced populations. Hosting communities have for the most part generously welcomed IDPs.⁴⁴ This solidarity is illustrated by the fact that the majority of IDPs live among host communities.⁴⁵ Many IDPs find themselves displaced within the same district or governorate where they have existing ties with the host community. IDPs originating from different areas, for example a family displaced to the south from a DFA-controlled area, and Muhamasheen face greater challenges in terms of social cohesion.

For the most part, the available data finds IDPs reporting positive relations with the host community. For example, in an assessment conducted by the authorities in IRG-controlled areas, only 7% of those living

³⁵ DRC and IOM, Reframing Durable Solutions along the Red Sea Coast of Yemen: Challenges of Long-term Programming in Protracted Crises (December 2021)

³⁶ World Economic Forum, Global Gender Gap Report 2022

³⁷ United Nations Yemen Common Country Analysis November 2021

³⁸ Protection Cluster Yemen, Yemen Protection Brief January 2021

³⁹ Ibid

⁴⁰ Ibid

⁴¹ Protection Cluster in Yemen and DRC, Exclusion from Humanitarian Aid in Yemen: The Perceptions of Groups at Risk (2020)

⁴² Human Rights Council, Situation of human rights in Yemen, including violations and abuses since September 2014 (September 2021)

⁴³ Yemen Humanitarian Needs Overview 2022

⁴⁴ World Bank, Yemen Dynamic Needs Assessment: Phase 3 (December 2020)

⁴⁵ NRC, Repairing Fractured Landscapes: Challenges and Opportunities for Resolving Disputes over Land, Housing, Water and other Natural Resources in Yemen (2019)

outside of camps reported experiencing tensions, with this figure rising to 29% for those living in camps. In DSP assessments in Lahj and Dhamar, 94% of surveyed IDP households said that they get on ‘very well’ or ‘somewhat well’ with the host community, versus 86% of host community households who reported positive relations with IDPs. Marriages between IDPs and host community are common and, in some areas, IDPs have been seen as an important source of labour.⁴⁶

However, an influx of IDPs in some areas has placed significant pressure on services and has led to tensions⁴⁷. Tensions have arisen in some areas over the delivery of humanitarian assistance, with the host community feeling that IDPs are unfairly prioritized for support⁴⁸. Recognizing this, the DSP placed a focus on conflict sensitivity: Search for Common Ground developed a Conflict Sensitivity Manual for programming in the context of internal displacement in Yemen and has provided training to consortium partners. Conflict has also emerged in some areas over the collection of firewood and the sharing of water sources⁴⁹. IDPs are often exposed to evictions too, often because of the tensions highlighted above.

Exposure to Climate Hazards

Yemen has a high vulnerability to climate change and a poor readiness to adapt- it ranks 168th out of 181 countries in the Notre Dame Global Adaptation Initiative⁵⁰. Climate change is significantly increasing Yemen’s vulnerability to droughts and flooding and will continue to lead to increases in temperature. Yemen’s already critical food security situation is being further threatened by climate change, with less land available for farming and less access to water.⁵¹ Climate change is also likely to exacerbate local water-related conflicts in rural areas.⁵² Flooding and drought in recent years have impacted upon access to services and livelihoods, and destroyed infrastructure and shelters.⁵³ Climate related hazards are increasingly a cause of displacement and are likely to present a significant challenge to local integration and the sustainability of any future IDP return. They also disproportionately affect people living in displacement sites, which have not been designed to consider flood risk⁵⁴. In 2022, tens of thousands of people were affected by flooding across multiples governorates. Displacement sites were the worst affected, with many IDPs left without shelter as a result.

MATERIAL SAFETY

Food security and livelihoods

⁴⁶ DRC and IOM, Reframing Durable Solutions along the Red Sea Coast of Yemen: Challenges of Long-term Programming in Protracted Crises (December 2021)

⁴⁷ Yemen Humanitarian Needs Overview 2022

⁴⁸ Reported by multiple key informants in this research

⁴⁹ NRC, Repairing Fractured Landscapes: Challenges and Opportunities for Resolving Disputes over Land, Housing, Water and other Natural Resources in Yemen (2019)

⁵⁰ IFRC Climate Centre, Yemen Country Overview (2021)

⁵¹ Ibid

⁵² United Nations Yemen Common Country Analysis November 2021

⁵³ United Nations Yemen, Press Release on World Humanitarian Day 2022

⁵⁴ IFRC Climate Centre, Yemen Country Overview (2021)

An already acute food security situation in Yemen has worsened in 2022. According to IPC data, over half of the population (17.4 million people) are in need of assistance, with this figure expected to increase to 19 million by the end of the year.⁵⁵ This figure includes 11.7 million people in IPC Phase 3 (Crisis), 5.6 million in IPC Phase 4 (Emergency), and 31,000 in IPC Phase 5 (Catastrophe), with the conflict-affected governorates of Al Hudaydah, Raymah, Hajjah, Sa'ada, Aden, Marib and Al Jawf worst affected.⁵⁶ Additionally, over 2 million children aged between 6 and 59 months are expected to experience acute malnutrition in 2022, with over a quarter of these suffering severe malnutrition.⁵⁷

Conflict and the economic crisis are the main causes of food insecurity. The conflict has disrupted markets and supply chains and negatively impacted upon livelihoods.⁵⁸ Areas that have seen large influxes of IDPs have experienced pressure on food supply and increasing prices.⁵⁹ Rising food prices and decreased opportunities to earn an income have had a grave impact upon food security and led to the increasing adoption of coping strategies such as selling productive assets, taking on debt, begging, and relying on humanitarian assistance.⁶⁰ 87% of households surveyed in the MCLA said they owe debt, with the major reason for taking on debts being the purchase of food on credit.⁶¹

Given the scale of the IPC figures, it is clear that acute food insecurity is a problem that does not just affect IDPs. Although both the Humanitarian Needs Overview and the Common Country Analysis state that IDPs, particularly those living in sites, are more like to suffer acute food insecurity, there appears to be a paucity of data comparing the food security situation of IDPs and returnees with that of the host community. The IPC does not publish data disaggregated by displacement status. An IPC Famine review conducted in 2022 stated that “*Surveys should ideally be designed to measure the status of IDPs (in host and camp) and residents separately*”.⁶² The DSP did collect data on food security in its baseline and endline assessments and found no significant difference in the levels of food security between IDP and host community households in target locations.

Access to a stable income poses a significant challenge throughout Yemen. The MCLA found that 75% of households had one member engaged in daily labour activities over the previous 30 days compared to only 20% of households who reported having a member in regular employment, and 31% with one self-employed member.⁶³ IDPs were more likely to be engaged in day labour activities than host community members (this was echoed in the findings of the DSP’s baseline assessment in Lahj and Dhamar).⁶⁴ DSP assessments in Lahj and Dhamar found that 33% of host community households were involved in agriculture versus only 9% of IDP households, with the mostly frequently cited challenge for IDPs being a

⁵⁵ Yemen: IPC Acute Food Insecurity and Acute Malnutrition Analysis- January to December 2022 (August 2022)

⁵⁶ Ibid

⁵⁷ Ibid

⁵⁸ United Nations Yemen Common Country Analysis November 2021

⁵⁹ Ibid

⁶⁰ IPC, Yemen: Food Security & Nutrition Snapshot (March 2022)

⁶¹ Yemen Multi-Cluster Location Assessment 2022

⁶² IPC Famine Review of the IPC Acute Food Insecurity and Acute Malnutrition Analyses: Conclusions and Recommendations for Five Areas in Yemen (March 2022)

⁶³ Yemen Multi-Cluster Location Assessment 2022

⁶⁴ Ibid

lack of land ownership. 87% of respondent households in the MCLA were found to be repaying debts, with this figure slightly higher for IDPs (91%).⁶⁵

Women face additional challenges in earning an income. Only 6.3% of the labour force is female and women are estimated to earn 7% of what men do.⁶⁶ Although there is traditionally a stigma around women working, the increase in female-headed households, particularly among displaced populations, means that more women are taking on new roles outside of the home as breadwinners.⁶⁷

Health

A World Bank assessment in 16 cities found that 38% of health facilities are damaged and only 49% are functioning⁶⁸. The functionality of health facilities is significantly affected by shortages of medical supplies, drugs, fuel, and critical medical staff, in addition to limited access to the electricity grid and the shortage of fuel for generators⁶⁹. The infrequent payment of salaries has also led to staff shortages in the health sector⁷⁰. Access to health facilities is also constrained due to insecurity and roadblocks in many areas⁷¹. In the MCLA, two-thirds of households reported having to travel more than 30 minutes to reach a health facility with rural and conflict-affected areas particularly affected⁷². The situation in IDP sites is particularly bad, with only 8% of sites having access to adequate reproductive health services.⁷³ In displacement-affected communities, an influx of people has placed a significant strain on existing health services.⁷⁴ Health conditions in Yemen have worsened during the conflict, illustrated by increased levels of child malnutrition and the spread of communicable diseases, particularly cholera.⁷⁵ One in five people are also estimated to be suffering from mental health disorders.⁷⁶ Women and children are significantly affected- every two hours one mother and six new-borns are estimated to be dying⁷⁷, with only 35% of women in rural areas able to access trained maternal health professionals during delivery.⁷⁸

Education

There have been widespread school closures due to conflict-related damage, or occupation by IDPs or armed groups⁷⁹. Only two-thirds of schools are currently functioning, with 2,500 fully or partially damaged or occupied by parties to the conflict or IDPs who have nowhere else to stay.⁸⁰ Insecurity has also affected

⁶⁵ Ibid

⁶⁶ United Nations Yemen Common Country Analysis November 2021

⁶⁷ Marta Colburn, supported by Reem Abdullah, USAID/Yemen Gender Analysis (Prepared by Banyan Global, 2020)

⁶⁸ World Bank, Yemen Dynamic Needs Assessment: Phase 3 (December 2020)

⁶⁹ Ibid

⁷⁰ Yemen Humanitarian Needs Overview 2022

⁷¹ United Nations Yemen Common Country Analysis November 2021

⁷² Yemen Multi-Cluster Location Assessment 2022

⁷³ Ibid

⁷⁴ Health Cluster Report 2020

⁷⁵ World Bank, Health Sector in Yemen Policy Note (September 2021)

⁷⁶ United Nations Yemen Common Country Analysis November 2021

⁷⁷ World Bank, Health Sector in Yemen Policy Note (September 2021)

⁷⁸ United Nations Yemen Common Country Analysis November 2021

⁷⁹ Yemen Education Cluster Secondary Data Review, 2020

⁸⁰ United Nations Yemen Common Country Analysis November 2021

children's access to school with risks of attacks on schools and children exposed to protection risks while travelling to school. Furthermore, the education sector is under-staffed, a consequence of the irregular payment of teachers' salaries⁸¹. A secondary data review conducted by the Education Cluster identified several additional issues, including school feeding being available in only in 35% of schools, inadequate school materials at each stage of learning and poor school infrastructure including WASH facilities.⁸²

An estimate 2.4 million boys and girls are out of school⁸³. Although displacement has disrupted education for IDP children, it is important to highlight that other children in displacement-affected communities face similar challenges in accessing education, and significant pressure has been placed on education facilities in areas hosting IDPs. The Multi-Cluster Location Assessment (MCLA) found that 40% of children in surveyed households were not in school. This figure was not significantly affected by displacement status: 43% of IDP children were found not to be attending school versus 39% of the non-displaced population⁸⁴. The DSP's endline assessment in Lahj governorate actually found that IDPs had slightly better access to education- 24% of host community respondents said that schools were either 'very hard to access' or they had 'no access', versus 15% of IDP households.

School dropouts are largely due to economic factors. 90% of MCLA respondents said they cannot afford education costs (including transportation costs). Assessments conducted by education actors have found that IDP children sometimes face specific challenges accessing education, including schools not accepting IDP students due to existing overcrowding or a lack of identification documents.⁸⁵ Children who are out of school are exposed to protection risks, including child labour and, to a lesser extent, recruitment into armed groups.⁸⁶ Early marriage is both a cause and a consequence of girls dropping out of school, with 72.5% of girls under 18 getting married.⁸⁷

Water

The problem of severe water scarcity in Yemen long pre-dates the conflict, with large numbers of the population not having safe access to water⁸⁸. This precarious situation is further threatened by climate change and recurrent drought.⁸⁹ The conflict has caused significant damage to water and sanitation assets and services.⁹⁰, and there is a strong reliance on humanitarian interventions to maintain WASH services.⁹¹

According to the Humanitarian Needs Overview, 17.8 million people need WASH support.⁹² The MCLA reported that 55% of households have to travel more than 30 minutes to collect water and 25% of

⁸¹ Yemen Humanitarian Needs Overview 2022

⁸² Yemen Education Cluster Secondary Data Review, 2020

⁸³ Yemen Humanitarian Needs Overview 2022

⁸⁴ Yemen Multi-Cluster Location Assessment 2022

⁸⁵ Yemen Education Cluster Secondary Data Review, 2020

⁸⁶ UNICEF Yemen, Education Disrupted: Impact of the conflict on children's education in Yemen (July 2021)

⁸⁷ Ibid

⁸⁸ United Nations Yemen Common Country Analysis November 2021

⁸⁹ IFRC Climate Centre, Yemen Country Overview (2021)

⁹⁰ World Bank, Yemen Dynamic Needs Assessment: Phase 3 (December 2020)

⁹¹ Yemen Humanitarian Needs Overview 2022

⁹² Ibid

households have no access to a functional latrine.⁹³ Such long journeys create protection risks for women and children, upon whom the burden of water collection largely falls. Water scarcity negatively impacts upon agriculture and livelihoods and contributes to food insecurity and malnutrition.⁹⁴

Areas close to conflict frontlines, which host high number of IDPs- Al Jawf, Al Bayda, Al Hodeidah, Hajjah, Marib, Shabwah and Taiz governorates- are exposed to water scarcity and have severe WASH needs.⁹⁵ IDPs sites lack sustainable water sources, with 28% dependent of water trucking⁹⁶, and 62% of IDPs sites having no access to WASH services within 30 minutes of walking.⁹⁷ However, a secondary data review conducted by the WASH cluster found that existing assessments suggest a higher level of access to WASH services in IDP sites than among the general population.⁹⁸ The DSP's baseline and endline assessments found IDP and host community households reporting very similar levels of access to water. Water sources have been placed under pressure in areas that have received large influxes of IDPs, affecting both displaced and host populations alike, and serving as a key reason for community-level conflicts.

LEGAL SAFETY

Housing, Land and Property

Housing, land, and property (HLP) rights were significantly challenged in Yemen even before the conflict. 90% of land ownership is informal and there is no widely used system for documenting and registering land ownership. Land disputes are therefore common, with women facing significant challenges in accessing their HLP rights.⁹⁹ The conflict has amplified HLP challenges in Yemen. The World Bank's Dynamic Needs Assessment (Phase III) found that 41% of houses had experienced some level of damage, with that figure rising to over 60% in Taiz, Mocha and Sa'da.¹⁰⁰

IDPs living in sites often find themselves living in temporary shelters, which can be overcrowded and have a lack of privacy.¹⁰¹ Flooding in several sites has led to the destruction of these shelters. The threat of eviction poses a significant barrier to local integration for IDPs. 91% of IDP hosting sites lack formal tenancy agreements¹⁰² and 19% of people living in these sites are estimated to be faced with the threat of eviction.¹⁰³ A high prevalence of eviction incidents have been recorded in Marib, Hajjah, Ad Dali', Taiz, Al Hodeidah, Aden and Ibb governorates.¹⁰⁴

⁹³ Yemen Multi-Cluster Location Assessment 2022

⁹⁴ Yemen Humanitarian Needs Overview 2022

⁹⁵ Yemen Humanitarian Needs Overview 2022

⁹⁶ CCCM Cluster

⁹⁷ CCCM Cluster

⁹⁸ ACAPS, Yemen WASH Cluster and Reach, Secondary Desk Review on WASH Assessments in Yemen (May 2020)

⁹⁹ Yemen United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework 2022-2024

¹⁰⁰ World Bank, Yemen Dynamic Needs Assessment: Phase 3 (December 2020)

¹⁰¹ Yemen Humanitarian Needs Overview 2022

¹⁰² CCM Cluster May

¹⁰³ CCCM Update May

¹⁰⁴ Yemen Humanitarian Needs Overview 2022

IDPs who live outside of sites and pay rent are also facing an increased risk of eviction. An assessment conducted in the south by the Executive Unit found that 14% of respondents were threatened with eviction due to their inability to pay rent.¹⁰⁵ The destruction of property and displacement have increased demand for housing in many areas, and many rental agreements are unwritten meaning that rents can be raised arbitrarily¹⁰⁶. This, coupled with inflation, has led to rising rents, which are disproportionately affecting IDPs who are much more likely than host community members to be renting accommodation. In the DSP's endline assessment in Lahj, 83% of IDP households reported that they were living in a rental property versus only 4% of host community households. The increasing inability to pay for rent is making female-headed households increasingly vulnerable to extortion and sexual exploitation¹⁰⁷. Discrimination against displaced Muhamasheen means they are also often prevented from living in IDP sites or renting properties forcing them to often live in unsafe locations.¹⁰⁸

The scale of the destruction of property as well as the widespread presence of landmines and ERWs on land in areas of origin in both the north and the south will present a significant barrier to IDP return and reintegration.¹⁰⁹ Secondary occupation is also likely to be a significant problem- IDPs who have returned to rural areas have found their land occupied by neighbours or militias, or sold to new owners.¹¹⁰

Civil Documentation

According to UNICEF, over 80% of children in Yemen are not in possession of a birth certificate¹¹¹. Recent protection monitoring data from UNHCR revealed lower but still significant numbers: 58% of households reported having at least one child not registered with a birth certificate.¹¹² Furthermore, 68% of households were found to have at least one member with no national ID card.¹¹³

Lacking documentation can have significant consequences. It can affect access to services, freedom of movement and access to humanitarian assistance.¹¹⁴ In limiting freedom of movement it can also hinder access to livelihoods, and in some instances can lead to arrest and detention at checkpoints.¹¹⁵ Children without birth certificates can be exposed to a number of issues, including being unable to attend school,

¹⁰⁵ The Executive Unit for IDPs Camp Management. Multi-sector Study of IDPs in Yemen 2021

¹⁰⁶ NRC, Repairing Fractured Landscapes: Challenges and Opportunities for Resolving Disputes over Land, Housing, Water and other Natural Resources in Yemen (2019)

¹⁰⁷ NRC, Repairing Fractured Landscapes: Challenges and Opportunities for Resolving Disputes over Land, Housing, Water and other Natural Resources in Yemen (2019)

¹⁰⁸ Yemen United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework 2022-2024

¹⁰⁹ Protection Cluster Yemen, Yemen Protection Brief January 2021

¹¹⁰ NRC, Repairing Fractured Landscapes: Challenges and Opportunities for Resolving Disputes over Land, Housing, Water and other Natural Resources in Yemen (2019)

¹¹¹ <https://www.unicef.org/yemen/stories/yemeni-children-are-receiving-their-passport-life>

¹¹² UNHCR IDPs Protection Monitoring Update: 1 Jan 2022 – 30 Jun 2022

¹¹³ Ibid

¹¹⁴ DRC and IOM, Reframing Durable Solutions along the Red Sea Coast of Yemen: Challenges of Long-term Programming in Protracted Crises (December 2021)

¹¹⁵ United Nations Yemen Common Country Analysis November 2021

and being exposed to child labour and forced recruitment. In the case of IDP families who have been separated, being without a birth certificate can make the process of family reunification more difficult.¹¹⁶

The primary barrier to obtaining documentation appears to be cost, with around 90% of respondents in recent UNHCR Protection Monitoring stating that this was the main reason for not being in possession of a birth certificate or a national ID.¹¹⁷ Other barriers include a lack of awareness of the importance of documentation and the procedures for obtaining it and the lack of a nearby office for registration. The institutions responsible for registration are also under-resourced and under-staffed.¹¹⁸ Although no data was found comparing the situation of IDPs and host community members, key informants engaged in this issue felt that IDPs were less likely to be in possession of civil documentation.

3. THE RESPONSE TO THE CRISIS AND DISPLACEMENT IN YEMEN

The humanitarian response in Yemen since 2015 has been one of the largest in history. The 2022 Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) identifies 23.4 million people in need of humanitarian assistance and has a funding requirement of \$4.27 billion. As of November, the 2022 HRP was 54% funded.¹¹⁹ Every HRP since 2018 has identified over 20 million people in need of humanitarian assistance and has had a requirement of greater than \$3 billion.¹²⁰

The 2021 HRP was 63% funded. The Food Security and Agriculture sector received the most funding (1.17 billion USD, the vast majority of this for food assistance) and received 68% of its required funding. This reflects the fact that food security has been recognized as the most pressing need by both response actors and affected communities. Most other sectors received below 50% of their required funding in 2021, with Shelter and NFI (23%), Health (23%), WASH (14%), and CCCM (8%) being the most underfunded based on the requirements identified in the HRP.

Other areas of work that are critical in supporting durable solutions have also been heavily underfunded. Although Protection received 51% of requested funding under the 2021 HRP, the Protection sector (which includes the AoRs of Child Protection, GBV, HLP, and Mine Action) only accounts for 2% of total funding received in HRP appeals from 2015-2021. Livelihood support has also been significantly under-resourced, despite being consistently cited by communities as one of their priority needs.¹²¹ The 2022 Inter-Agency Humanitarian Evaluation of the Yemen Crisis (IAHE) called for an increased investment in protection and livelihoods.

¹¹⁶ Protection Cluster Yemen, Yemen Protection Brief January 2021

¹¹⁷ UNHCR IDPs Protection Monitoring Update: 1 Jan 2022 – 30 Jun 2022

¹¹⁸ Yemen United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework 2022-2024

¹¹⁹ Financial Tracking Service- Yemen: <https://fts.unocha.org/countries/248/summary/2022>

¹²⁰ *Ibid*

¹²¹ IASC, Inter-Agency Humanitarian Evaluation (IAHE) of the Yemen Crisis (July 2022)

The vast majority of funding provided to Yemen has been humanitarian in nature, with limited multi-year funding opportunities available. Saudi Arabia, UAE and USA have been the three biggest donors, accounting for over half of the funding provided to Yemen since the beginning of the conflict.¹²² Funding, including that of development actors such as the World Bank, is mostly channelled through multi-lateral agencies.

Yemen has an IDP policy, developed by the Executive Unit with support from UNHCR, however, this was developed in 2013 before the current crisis. Based on interviews conducted for this research, neither the authorities in DFA-controlled areas, nor those in IRG-controlled areas appear to have a clear position or policy on durable solutions.

The main interlocutors for humanitarian organizations at the national-level are the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation (MoPIC) and the Executive Unit in IRG-controlled areas, and the Supreme Council for the Management and Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (SCMCHA) in DFA-controlled areas. Beyond this, the response engages lines ministries and governorate- and district-level authorities. Key informants highlighted restrictions on humanitarian activity by the authorities as a key constraint to operating in DFA-controlled areas, including limitations on sectors of intervention and *mahram*, which prevents women from travelling across governorates without the presence, or the written approval, of a male guardian.¹²³ In the south, respondents highlighted the lack of capacity among the authorities, lack of coordination between different levels of authority, and insecurity as key challenges in the delivery of humanitarian support. Authorities in both the north and south have regularly complained that humanitarian organizations do not adequately consult with them during the design and implementation of interventions.¹²⁴ The DSP's experience of working with the authorities in the north and the south is detailed in Part 2 of this report.

In 2022, the Inter-Agency Humanitarian Evaluation (IAHE) of the Yemen Crisis was published, covering the response from 2015-2021. The IAHE highlighted how *“the collective response has remained emergency-focussed”*, and that *“While billions of dollars of overseas development assistance have poured into Yemen for many years, tangible and sustainable improvements are limited”*.¹²⁵ While a nexus strategy was developed in 2019 and the importance of a nexus approach has been repeatedly highlighted in HRPs, the response itself has remained predominantly emergency in nature.

As well as being one of the worst humanitarian crises in recent years, the situation should also be viewed as a development crisis. Yemen faced significant development challenges before 2015, including weak governance, institutions with low capacity, and prevalent poverty, which have only been exacerbated by conflict and displacement.¹²⁶ Much of Yemen's basic services and infrastructure are currently maintained through ongoing humanitarian support, with money being channelled through humanitarian actors rather

¹²² <https://fts.unocha.org/countries/248/summary/2022>

¹²³ Amnesty International, Yemen: Huthis 'suffocating' women with requirement for male guardians (September 2022)

¹²⁴ IASC, Inter-Agency Humanitarian Evaluation (IAHE) of the Yemen Crisis (July 2022)

¹²⁵ Ibid

¹²⁶ Sana'a Centre for Strategic Studies, When Aid Goes Awry: How the International Humanitarian Response is Failing Yemen

than the authorities.¹²⁷ However, humanitarian assistance will not address the root causes of the challenges faced by those living in displacement-affected communities. Resolving protracted displacement in Yemen should be viewed primarily as a development challenge and finding eventual durable solutions for Yemen's displaced will be a long-term process that will require structural investments in infrastructure and services and a focus on building self-reliance and resilience of households and institutions.

There are some signs that the response might make something of a strategic pivot. Yemen's first United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF)¹²⁸ covers the period 2022-2024 and articulates the UN's plan for addressing humanitarian, peace, and development challenges in Yemen. The UNSDCF outcomes are focused around increasing food security, improving self-reliance, strengthening development systems, services, and social protection, and supporting economic transformation. The UNSDCF identifies IDPs as one of the priority vulnerable groups who are at risk of being left behind in development processes.

Additionally, an UN-led Durable Solutions Technical Working Group (DSTWG) will also be established before the end of 2022. This follows on from Yemen being selected as one of the priority countries for the [UN Secretary-General's Action Agenda on Internal Displacement](#), which has finding durable solutions for IDPs as one of its primary objectives. A ToR was developed for the DSTWG in the summer of 2021, however, efforts to establish the group are only gathering pace in the second half of 2022. According to its ToR, the DSTWG will "enable better coordination and information sharing on the issues and challenges related to displacement to attain durable solutions for displaced populations in Yemen".¹²⁹ Key areas of focus will be strategy and policy development, coordination, piloting area-based initiatives, and advocacy. The establishment of the DSTWG represents a welcome development, and it is hoped that the findings and recommendations in this report will help to inform its direction and activities. Critical to its success will be the meaningful representation of humanitarian, peace, and development actors, including national and international NGOs, as well as the establishment of close linkages to, and dialogue with, authorities in both IRG- and DFA-controlled areas.

4. KEY TAKEAWAYS FROM THE SOLUTIONS ANALYSIS

The findings from this solutions analysis provide us with several key takeaways which can inform future durable solutions-focussed programming in Yemen:

¹²⁷ IASC, Inter-Agency Humanitarian Evaluation (IAHE) of the Yemen Crisis (July 2022)

¹²⁸ Yemen United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework 2022-2024

¹²⁹ Durable Solutions to Displacement in Yemen Technical Working Group - Terms of Reference (June 2021)

- 1. Durable solutions currently remain out of reach for the vast majority of IDPs in Yemen in the short-term.** While recent intentions surveys reveal that most IDPs would prefer to eventually return home, only a small number feel they are able to do so in the next six months. Significant barriers to return include ongoing conflict and other insecurity, the presence of landmines and explosive remnants of war, and the absence of livelihood opportunities in areas of origin. For those IDPs who would prefer to locally integrate, this preference is hindered by numerous challenges and displacement-specific needs including an inability to securing their housing, land and property rights, limited access to services and challenges accessing livelihood opportunities. Programming therefore needs to adopt a medium-term approach, through gradually reducing displacement-specific needs and vulnerabilities, and supporting IDPs to become more self-reliant and resilient, and therefore better prepared to achieve a durable solution at a time when the conditions become more conducive.
- 2. Displacement, conflict, and economic collapse have impacted heavily upon the communities that host IDPs,** creating or worsening existing vulnerabilities, stretching access to services, diminishing access to economic opportunities, and increasingly creating tensions between the host and IDP populations. While displacement-specific protection and assistance needs persist for IDPs, the recently published Multi-Cluster Location Assessment underscores that many of the needs and vulnerabilities of host community members are frequently comparable with those of IDPs. Programming therefore needs to target displacement-affected communities in their totality, through addressing the needs of host populations and IDPs, as well as strengthening local institutions and services. It should also identify and try to address issues that cause tension in displacement-affected communities and support social cohesion.
- 3. There are multiple factors other than displacement status that can impact on needs and vulnerabilities.** Age, gender, disability, and minority status can all affect needs and exposure to risk, and for many issues, displacement is not the key determinant of need. While being mindful of the need to address displacement-specific needs, programming should aim to target people on the basis on vulnerability rather than status.
- 4. The response to the crisis in Yemen has been characterized by short-term humanitarian support, focused on saving lives and care and maintenance.** There is a need for a much stronger focus on building self-reliance, supporting sustainable livelihoods, and helping households, communities, and institutions to be more resilient. This will require more engagement of actors across the humanitarian-development-peacebuilding nexus.
- 5. There is an absence of clear strategies and plans to support durable solutions in Yemen.** Since the start of the conflict, neither the authorities nor humanitarian and development actors have articulated a plan for helping IDPs to move on from their displacement. The upcoming establishment of a national Durable Solutions Technical Working Group represents an important first step in having an inclusive dialogue and plan for supporting IDP's preferred solutions.

6. Better data is needed to guide efforts to support durable solutions. The solutions analysis process found that there is a shortage of data disaggregated by displacement status. This makes it difficult to identify displacement-specific needs. Additionally, although there have been several intentions surveys conducted in different areas in recent years, such surveys need to be conducted more widely and more frequently if they are to inform programming and ensure that is geared towards the needs and preferences of IDPs. More also needs to be done to understand the situation in areas of actual and potential return.

PART 2: LESSON LEARNED FROM THE DURABLE SOLUTIONS PROJECT

Part 2 of this report outlines 9 lessons learned from the DSP. These lessons relate specifically to how the project was contributing towards durable solutions and cover several thematic areas, including overall project strategy, targeting of communities and beneficiaries, community engagement, and engagement with the authorities. Before this, an overview of the DSP is provided for readers unfamiliar with the project. It is important to note that this is not a project evaluation. Endline data is still being collected at the time of writing and a full evaluation will be conducted at the end of the project. The aim here is to capture learning based on the perceptions of those who were most closely involved in the implementation of the project- primarily staff from consortium agencies, but also community representatives and government officials- and explore how this learning might help future programming to better contribute towards durable solutions for IDPs in Yemen.

The Durable Solutions Project (DSP) overview

The Durable Solutions Project was an EU-funded project that piloted a durable solutions-focused approach to programming in Yemen. The project placed a focus on addressing the immediate needs and longer-term priorities of displacement-affected communities. The DSP was implemented by an ACTED-led consortium in partnership with Care, DRC, NRC, Search for Common Ground, and IRC in Lahj and Dhamar Governorates. The project leveraged the expertise of these agencies to adopt a multi-sectoral approach that supported access to services and economic opportunities, enhanced protection, and contributed to the prevention and resolution of community-level conflicts in displacement-affected communities.

A project summary is provided in the table below:

Project Title	Promoting resilience and social cohesion through an integrated response to vulnerable communities in Yemen (also known as ‘The Durable Solutions Project’)
Locations	Three districts in Dhamar governorate (Dhamar City; Jahran; and Jabl Al Sharq). Five districts in Lahj governorate (Al Madaribah; Al Maqaterah; Habil Jabr; Radfan; and Tuban):
Duration	2.5 years
Overall Objective¹³⁰	To foster durable solutions (inclusive and sustainable social and economic development) for populations affected by displacement in the Lahj and Dhamar governorates in Yemen
Outcome	Increased resilience and social cohesion of communities affected by conflict (including IDPs, returnees and households in host/resident communities) in Lahj and Dhamar governorates in Yemen.

¹³⁰ This is the revised wording, after a revision to the logframe in early 2022

Outputs	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Enhanced access to basic services (food security, health, nutrition, WASH, shelter), decent employment and income generating opportunities for host communities, returnees and IDPs. 2. Reinforced capacities of the targeted returnees, IDPs and host/return communities to collectively identify and advocate for their rights and needs 3. Critical basic service infrastructure and community-based assets are rehabilitated 4. Strengthened capacities of local authorities, civil society, and communities to defuse tensions, prevent and resolve conflicts, and restore normalcy
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A summary of key activities against each of the 4 result areas is provided below:

1. ***Enhanced access to basic services, decent employment and income generating opportunities for host, returnees and IDPs:*** The consortium supported access to basic services to help targeted households cope with their immediate displacement-specific needs. This included improved access to WASH, health care and nutrition services. Safety nets (cash assistance) were provided to target households to prevent them from engaging in negative coping strategies such as disposal of productive assets and inputs. Vulnerable target groups were also supported to be more economically resilient. To strengthen beneficiaries' income opportunities, the consortium partners implemented livestock activities, distributed seeds, and established kitchen gardens, and provided training and toolkits to beekeepers. Targeted beneficiaries were also supported with vocational and business management trainings designed to diversify available sources of livelihoods, favour value chain growth of targeted farmers, increase employability, and raise the earning potential of previously unskilled workers.

2. ***Reinforced capacities of the targeted returnees, IDPs and host/return communities to collectively identify and advocate for their rights and needs:*** The consortium addressed a number of displacement specific protection needs and reduced protection risks in displacement-affected communities. Interventions included supporting community-based protection networks to identify protection needs and refer cases for assistance; counselling and legal assistance related to legal and civil documentation and HLP rights; and case management and assistance for individual protection cases. A community centre was also established in Lahj governorate, which plays a pivotal role in the community, through delivering awareness sessions and providing a safe space for other activities, including psychosocial support and literacy lessons.

3. ***Critical basic service infrastructure and community-based assets are rehabilitated:*** The consortium supported the rehabilitation of basic service infrastructure and community-based assets prioritized by community members. These activities were primarily implemented through cash for work schemes. A key aim was to enhance social cohesion between IDP populations and host communities through involving them in the selection of assets and infrastructure and engaging both in the cash for work schemes. Fifty-two community-based assets were identified for rehabilitation, including schools, roads, health facilities and irrigation channels.

4. Strengthened capacities of local authorities, civil society, and communities to defuse tensions, prevent and resolve conflicts, and restore normalcy: The consortium aimed to foster citizen-authority dialogue and promote stabilization at the local level through utilizing the Community Dialogue Approach methodology, and by strengthening capacity of local authorities and CSOs to resolve tensions and foster social cohesion at the local level. Community-based insider mediators were trained to identify local level conflict issues and lead inclusive community dialogues which resulted in action plans to address the identified conflicts. Additionally, the consortium partners selected 26 civil society organizations for capacity-building support, to strengthen their capacities and internal organizational processes to implement social cohesion community projects.¹³¹

The project targeted IDPs living out of camps, and the governorates of Lahj and Dhamar were chosen as it was felt that they had a degree of stability that would allow the project to support progress towards future durable solutions. While durable solutions were not achievable for IDPs within the project timeframe, the project helped to create pathways to future durable solutions through strengthening resilience and social cohesion in targeted communities.

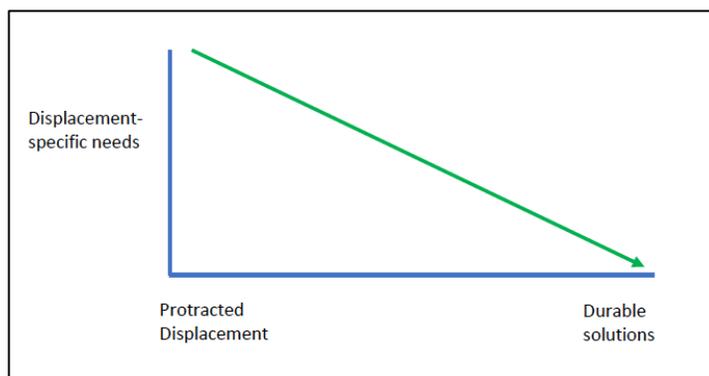


¹³¹ Please refer to the Response Letter attached for details on the amendment

NINE LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE DURABLE SOLUTIONS PROJECT (DSP)

Lesson #1 Durable solutions are out of reach at the present time for the vast majority of Yemen's IDPs. However, it is still possible for programming to support IDPs to make progress towards a future durable solution through gradually reducing their displacement-specific needs.

Protracted displacement is the norm in Yemen, with most IDPs finding themselves stuck in limbo and unable to move on from their displacement. According to the definition provided in the IASC Framework on Durable Solutions, IDPs obtain a durable solution when they no longer have displacement-specific protection and assistance needs and can enjoy their rights without discrimination on account of being displaced.



While durable solutions remain out of reach for most IDPs in Yemen at the present time, the DSP demonstrates that it is still possible to address some of the needs of IDPs that are specifically related to their displacement, and thereby help them to make progress towards a future durable solution. Using such an approach, we can view achieving a durable solution as an incremental process for IDPs where they can be supported to gradually reduce their displacement specific needs in relation to the 8 IASC durable solutions criteria.

During the inception stage of the project, the 8 IASC criteria were specifically used to assess needs and vulnerability in potential target communities, and the multi-sectoral nature of the project means that it contributes to most of these criteria. Furthermore, the project has a number of activities that are specifically geared towards addressing displacement-specific needs. Some examples are provided in the table below:

The 8 IASC criteria for the achievement of a durable solution:

1. Safety and security
2. An adequate standard of living
3. Access to employment and livelihoods
4. Access to effective HLP mechanisms
5. Access to documentation
6. Voluntary reunification with family
7. Participation in public affairs
8. Effective remedies for displacement-related violations

Displacement-specific need/vulnerability	Example project activity
Many IDPs have lost personal documentation, which is key to accessing basic services, employment, and freedom of movement	Information and specialized counselling to support IDPs (as well as host community) to obtain or replace personal documentation has been provided.
Many IDPs, both inside and outside of camps, face the threat of eviction	An advocacy forum was held which aimed to provide an analysis of linkages between land tenure security and evictions. The forum was attended by key stakeholders, including representatives of the local authorities and consortium agencies
IDPs struggle to access livelihood opportunities in their place of displacement	Vocational and business training was provided, along with small business grants to enable beneficiaries to start their own businesses
Tensions between IDPs and host community are rising in some areas	Community representatives were mobilized to identify sources of conflict and tension, including those which had arisen because of displacement, and address these through dialogue and the implementation of small interventions to improve services and infrastructure and mitigate tensions.

Reducing displacement-specific needs through programming requires accurate, regular data on these needs, starting at the assessment stage. While the project proposal, needs assessments, and reports to the donor highlight needs and vulnerabilities within displacement-affected communities, they do not present a lot of data disaggregated by displacement status. The baseline survey report does provide data disaggregated by displacement status. However, the proportion of respondents who identified as IDPs was relatively low and the baseline IDP data may not be fully representative of all IDPs in the two governorates. Future durable solutions-oriented programming would benefit from more comprehensive data collection focusing on comparing the situation of IDPs, returnees and host community members and provides a clear picture of displacement-specific needs.

As the project comes to an end, consortium partners are not in a position to say that IDPs targeted by the project have achieved a durable solution. IDPs' needs and vulnerabilities that are specifically related to their displacement persist, as do barriers to return, local integration, and settlement elsewhere. Addressing many of these needs will require peace, a political settlement, and significant development investment into areas of displacement and return. However, the project demonstrates how NGOs can support progress towards future durable solutions through gradually reducing some of the needs of IDPs that are specifically related to their displacement.

“As NGOs we do not achieve durable solutions for IDPs. A number of different stakeholders are required to support displaced persons find a durable solution”

Staff member from consortium agency

Case Study #1: Supporting access to documentation

Being without documentation can have significant consequences. It can affect access to services, freedom of movement and access to humanitarian assistance. Children without birth certificates can be exposed to several issues, including being unable to attend school and being exposed to protection risks such as child labour and forced recruitment. IDPs are particularly affected as many have lost documentation during displacement.

Under the DSP, the Norwegian Refugee Council has supported individuals to obtain birth certificates and national IDs from the Civil Registration Authority. They have provided information on rights and procedures for obtaining documents, through structured group information sessions, mass awareness campaigns, and the distribution of information, education, and communication materials. Counselling and legal assistance have also been provided by lawyers to vulnerable individuals who face particular challenges in obtaining documents. Further information can be found at:

<https://www.nrc.no/countries/middle-east/yemen/>

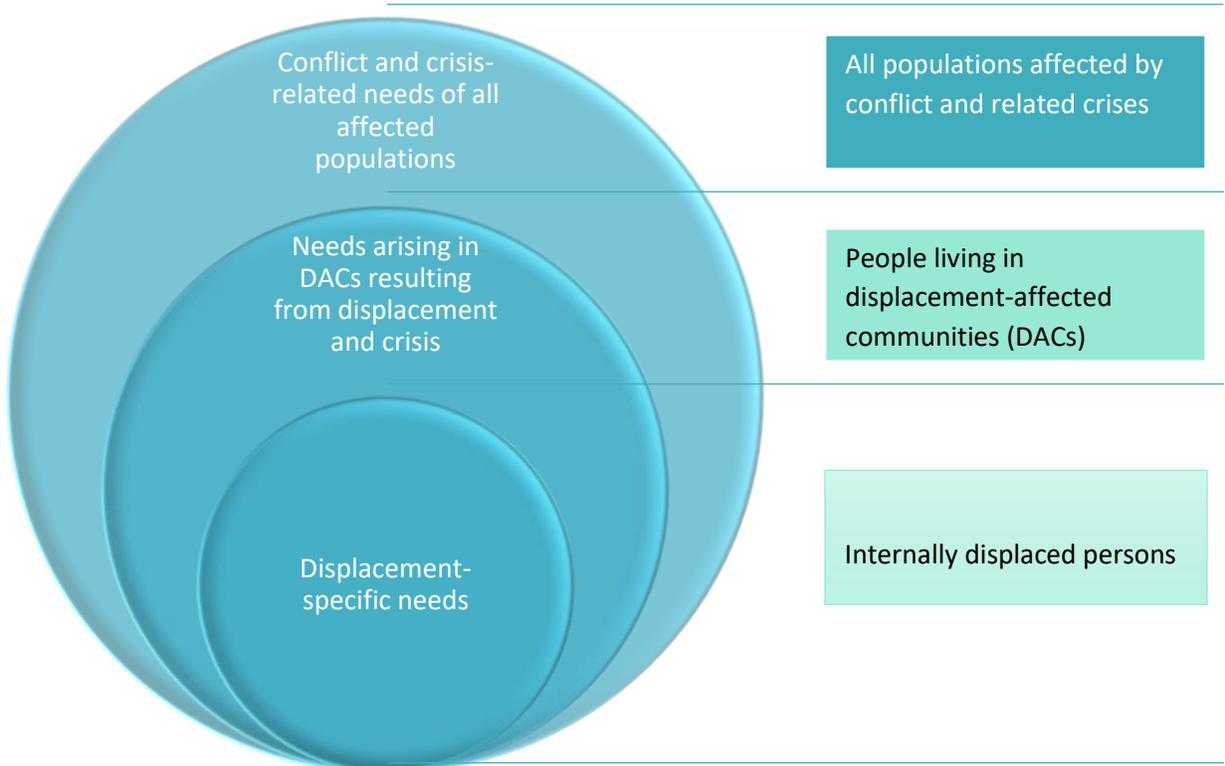
Lesson #2 Areas hosting IDPs in Yemen are significantly affected by displacement and crisis. It is therefore important for programming to support host communities, as well as local services and institutions, through an area-based approach

While displacement-specific protection and assistance needs persist for IDPs, the recently published Multi-Cluster Location Assessment, as well as the findings of the consortium project’s baseline and endline assessments in Lahj and Dhamar governorates, underscore that many of the needs and vulnerabilities of host community members are comparable with those of IDPs. This was also echoed by key project stakeholders, community representatives, and local and national authorities who were key informants in this research. Against this backdrop, programming must support host communities, as well as local services and institutions, in displacement-affected communities.

The key elements of an area-based approach:

1. It is implemented in a specific geographical area that is affected by displacement;
2. It considers the whole population in that area regardless of displacement status;
3. It adopts a multi-sectoral approach to promote physical, psychosocial, material, and legal safety;
4. It adopts a multi-stakeholder approach, recognizing that finding durable solutions is a collective responsibility

Three different levels of need, affecting IDPs, displacement-affected communities, and all populations affected by crisis in Yemen, are illustrated in the diagram below:



The DSP targeted the first two levels of need- 1) displacement-specific needs (see Lesson #1 above) and 2) needs arising in displacement-affected communities resulting from displacement and crisis- through adopting an area-based approach that targets defined geographical areas.

The following criteria were considered in the selection of areas of implementation for project:

- A large presence of long-term IDPs and returnees in need of basic services and early recovery interventions;
- A high level of vulnerability in targeted communities (mapped against the 8 IASC durable solutions criteria);
- A need for project activities previously identified by local authorities;
- Complementarity of proposed project activities with other ongoing interventions (a review of mapping and documents from cluster and humanitarian partners was undertaken); and
- Security and accessibility (Lahj and Dhamar governorates were originally chosen for the project as it was felt that they had a degree of stability that provided a conducive environment for durable solutions-oriented programming).

At the time the proposal was submitted, only the governorates of intervention- Lahj and Dhamar- had been selected. During the inception phase, districts of intervention were selected using the above-mentioned criteria. Once districts of intervention were determined, “communities” of intervention, which were either sub-districts or villages, were then selected.

Another key element of an area-based approach is to target the whole population (displaced, host community, others) on the basis of vulnerability rather than a particular displacement status. Most key stakeholders interviewed felt that humanitarian assistance in Yemen was provided disproportionately to IDPs, often failing to recognize the needs of the host community and creating tensions within displacement-affected communities. The consortium project was designed to have more of a “whole of population” approach. The project’s beneficiary selection guide does provide the following general guidance on proportions of beneficiaries: 40% displaced (30% IDP and 10% returnee), 50% host community and 10% marginalized. Several other vulnerability factors were considered when selecting project beneficiaries. These factors are listed in the table below:

Economic factors	Vulnerable Households not receiving any assistance from other sources
	Vulnerable Households with no productive assets
	Vulnerable Households with no reliable source of income (i.e., HH monthly income is 20,000 YER or below)
	Vulnerable HH not having anyone able to work
Socio-Demographic factors	Vulnerable female-headed households
	Child-headed households
	Vulnerable elderly-headed household
	Households with Pregnant or Lactating Women (PLW), or with children under 5 years old
	Households with children under 5 with Severe Acute malnutrition (SAM) or Moderate Acute Malnutrition (MAM)

	Vulnerable Households headed by chronically ill people
	Vulnerable Households headed by physically challenged heads
	Household size (>7)

The project faced challenges in reaching its target of 40% displaced beneficiaries, with only 11% of direct beneficiaries being IDPs and 9% being returnees. A number of reasons were put forward for this including significant reductions in the number of IDPs in the two governorates since they were first selected for the project in 2018; inaccurate data on displacement numbers; a lack of understanding of the definitions of IDP and returnee among communities; a lack of suitability of IDPs for certain livelihood activities (e.g. agriculture beneficiaries were required to have land); and the fact that some IDPs in target areas were already receiving similar support from other sources (this was particularly the case for cash assistance). Furthermore, many of the project’s activities were focused on supporting services and rehabilitating infrastructure that serves the whole community and, as such, had indirect rather than direct beneficiaries. The status of these indirect beneficiaries (i.e., whether they were IDPs, returnees or host) was calculated based upon population data for target community.

The project’s focus on supporting host communities as well as local services and institutions was appreciated by the local authority actors and community representatives interviewed as part of this research, who highlighted how previous humanitarian efforts usually focus on IDPs. Learning from this, it is important for future durable solutions focussed programming to have a dual aim of 1) reducing displacement-specific needs of IDPs, and 2) supporting displacement-affected communities to recover from crisis and the impacts of displacement. These two aims are complementary and mutually reinforcing- this is explored further in the Durable Solutions Programming Framework outlined in Part 3 of this report.

Case study #2: A community centre as a hub for enhancing protection and social cohesion in a displacement-affected community

In 2021, the Danish Refugee Council established a community centre in Al Anad, Tuban District, Lahj Governorate. Al Anad hosts many IDPs, many of whom are women and children, including female-headed households. The community centre provides a safe space that offers a wide range of services and activities for the IDPs, returnees, and the host community. These include awareness sessions on issues such as the importance of education, child protection, and COVID-19. The centre also serves as a base for the management of vulnerable protection cases, and the provision of assistance to these individuals including cash assistance and psychosocial support. Recreational activities, including table tennis and chess, and literacy lessons are also available. The community centre plays a vital role in terms of building social cohesion in a displacement-affected community through bringing the community together. It also helps to address some of the displacement-specific protection needs of the most vulnerable individuals.

More information can be found at: <https://drc-middleeast.exposure.co/yemen-a-community-centre-to-raise-awareness-and-ensure-protection>

LESSON #3 Reducing displacement-specific needs and supporting displacement-affected communities to recover from the impacts of displacement requires an integrated, multi-sectoral approach

The consortium project was able to leverage the diverse expertise of its partners to deliver interventions in multiple sectors in target districts. At the community-level, there are some good examples of where a comprehensive package of support was provided by consortium partners. For example, in Al-Khaddad, a community in Tuban district with a population of 875 households, partners provided support in WASH, protection, cash and livelihoods, and conflict mitigation, as well as civil documentation.

However, many key informants highlighted that integrating the interventions implemented by the different consortium partners in different sectors has been one of the major challenges of the project. Challenges relating to integrated programming on the project can be categorized at 3 different levels:

Fragmentation of the multi-sectoral approach below the district level	While there are some examples of a comprehensive package of support being provided within a community, project stakeholders said that this was not always the case, with some communities only receiving a small number of interventions. This problem was often exacerbated by requests from the authorities to reach a larger number of beneficiaries and a larger number of geographical areas which led to the fragmentation of different activities.
Sequencing of activities	Some partner agencies had their sub-agreements approved by the authorities later than others. This hindered an integrated multi-sectoral approach. For example, it was intended that the community-level conflict scans would inform the work of partners in the consortium. Although there are some good examples of this (see case study #5), the conflict scans were completed relatively late in the project and their influence on other project activities was therefore less than it could have been.
Restrictions on certain activities	The authorities in the north restricted certain activities that are an important part of a multi-sectoral approach to supporting durable solutions. For example, it was not possible to implement the community-level peacebuilding activities in Dhamar, and protection activities were also limited.

Ideally an area-based approach should deliver a comprehensive package of support in targeted areas, based on need and gaps. An individual project does not need to address all needs in a targeted area- it can complement other ongoing support. Future programming would benefit from the following:

- Holding a design workshop to specifically explore how different activities can be integrated to address displacement-specific needs, as well support host communities, services, and institutions.
- Engaging MOPIC, SCMCHA and other local authorities in dialogue and sensitization around the importance of integrated programming within an area-based approach from the design stage onwards.
- Sequencing activities carefully to ensure maximum impact.
- Targeting less geographical areas with a higher concentration of activities.

LESSON #4 The response to the crisis in Yemen has been largely emergency focused. Creating pathways to future durable solutions will require more sustainable, medium-term approaches, which emphasize building self-reliance, resilience, and social cohesion.

The consortium project's intended outcome is *"Increased resilience and social cohesion of communities affected by conflict (including IDPs, returnees and households in host communities)"*. For IDPs, this can be seen as a transitional outcome on the path to a future durable solution:



Several key informants also articulated the project's approach in terms of reducing dependence on humanitarian aid in displacement-affected communities. Key informants highlighted the value of certain activities which they felt would have more of a long-term impact than a lot of the humanitarian assistance that is delivered in Yemen. These activities included:

"You cannot go on providing for people's emergency needs and then just leaving them. You leave them in vulnerability, and you don't solve anything".

Staff member of consortium agency

- Efforts to build social cohesion and improve relations within displacement-affected communities, through the community-led identification of sources of conflict and the development of action plans to address these. (See case study #6)
- The rehabilitation of infrastructure and community assets in targeted communities, including roads, health facilities, school buildings, and water points. (See case study #4)
- Increasing the self-reliance of those living in displacement-affected communities, through the provision of vocational and business training, as well as the provision of grants to establish businesses (see case study #3).

The project’s intention to provide more sustainable forms of support was appreciated by the authorities in the both the north and south as well as the individuals and households supported under the project. The IAHE and the MCLA also highlight how communities prefer humanitarian support that improves livelihoods and builds self-reliance. Future durable solutions-focused programming should emphasize building self-reliance, resilience, and social cohesion in displacement-affected communities, all of which can serve as transitional outcomes or “stepping stones” on the journey to an eventual durable solution for IDPs. Effectively adopting a nexus approach in Yemen will be critical in supporting IDPs to find eventual durable solutions and supporting host communities to recover from the impacts of crisis and displacement. The increased of engagement of development and peacebuilding actors in responding to displacement is therefore critical.

“The Yemeni people have pride- they want to be self-reliant”

Staff member of consortium agency

Case study #3: Supporting economic resilience in displacement-affected communities

DRC, NRC, Care, and IRC supported the establishment of sustainable livelihoods. People were provided with training on the skills required to establish and maintain a small business, including financial and business management, business plan writing, book-keeping, and marketing. Trainees then submitted business plans, the best of which received small grants to establish and manage their businesses.

Through this support, targeted individuals were able to establish their business and generate an increased income to provide for their families. In some cases, these new businesses grew to the point where they started to provide employment opportunities for others. A wide range of business were established, including a catering business that prepares feasts for weddings and other occasions, a grocery shop, and a stationery shop, as well as businesses providing tutoring services on reading and writing, collecting scrap metal, making clothes, and making incense and perfume. In total, the project has supported over 1000 individuals to establish their own businesses and become more self-reliant.

More information on this activity can be found below:

<https://www.nrc.no/perspectives/2022/expanding-a-small-business-amid-a-conflict/>

<https://www.careyemen.org/index.php/media-center-en/stories-blogs/532-promoting-economic-resilience-of-vulnerable-communities-in-yemen.html>

Case Study #4: Rehabilitating infrastructure in displacement-affected communities

DRC, ACTED and Care worked with communities to identify and rehabilitate community assets, including schools, roads, health facilities and agricultural irrigation channels. The work was undertaken through cash for work, engaging the host community and IDPs, and contractor schemes. Once complete, the work was handed over to maintenance committees who are responsible for the ongoing maintenance of the sites.

One example comes from Al-Madarbah district, in Lahj governorate, where Care worked with communities to construct paved roads which connected 15 villages. Local communities highlighted how they had previously been struggling to access markets, economic opportunities, and services, with journeys often taking two hours on foot on treacherous, mountainous roads. The work involved community members through a cash for work scheme. The paving has eased the movement of vehicles

and has made the roads safer for pedestrians. It is estimated that the roads are used regularly by 23,000 people. More information can be found at: <https://www.careyemen.org/index.php/media-center-en/stories-blogs/524-a-paved-road-opens-up-possibilities-for-thousands-in-lahj-districts.html>

LESSON #5 There are currently very limited opportunities for IDPs to return or relocate voluntarily and in safety and dignity. However, programming should still explore opportunities to support return and relocation if they become possible.

The DSP is primarily focused on providing support in areas hosting IDPs. It has no activities that directly support the return or relocation of IDPs. Therefore, of the 3 durable solutions settlement options, the project is mostly contributing to local integration. During the initial stages of designing the project, there was a more explicit focus on supporting the return of IDPs. The original draft action document provides the following overall objective: *“to contribute to safe, orderly, dignified and sustainable return of internally displaced persons and promote the resilience and social cohesion of the communities to which IDPs return”, highlighting that “more stable return pockets have emerged”¹³². This was later changed in the submitted proposal to the following: “to promote resilience and social cohesion for vulnerable communities in Yemen”.*

When key stakeholders were asked why the focus on supporting return and relocation was toned down, they attributed this to the lack of a wider approach and system among government, humanitarian, and development actors for supporting return and relocation, the preference of IDPs to remain in their place of origin, and the persistence of significant barriers to return which were beyond the scope of the project as reasons for not including activities specifically supporting return and relocation.

Given the above, the project’s focus on strengthening resilience and social cohesion in displacement-affected communities makes sense. However, many key informants were keen for future programming to explore how to support return and relocation if the conditions become conducive. As a starting point for this, much better localized data on IDP’s future intentions is required, along with better tracking of return movements, and an understanding of the conditions in areas of origin or relocation. This discussion also raises questions on where to target assistance. Several key informants raised concerns generally about how focusing the humanitarian response in areas of displacement may disincentivize return, create dependency on humanitarian assistance and generate pull factors towards displacement-affected communities. On the other hand, others said that efforts to support return and work in areas of return should be approached with extreme caution so as not to promote or create incentives for return to unsafe areas where there is inadequate support available to enable reintegration. More detail on how future programming might cautiously explore supporting return and relocation is provided in the Durable Solutions Programming Framework section (Part 3) of this report.

Case Study #5: Refocusing a relocation initiative on local integration

¹³² Cite original action document

The original proposal did include an ACTED-led activity specifically focused on supporting IDPs to voluntary return or settle elsewhere in coordination with the local authorities and relevant clusters. This included providing support to transportation of households and their personal items, the provision of non-food items and a rehabilitation grant for home repairs. After discussion with the CCCM Cluster it was determined that this activity would not go ahead as there was no wider mechanism for supporting returns established in Yemen, and there was no wider support available in areas of return/relocation. It was decided to refocus the activity on supporting local integration through (i) the rehabilitation of shelters including latrine rehabilitation/construction; and (ii) provision of 6 months of rental subsidies in the place of displacement.

LESSON #6 There was a lack of clarity among project stakeholders about how the project was supporting durable solutions. Future projects would benefit from the development of a theory of change at the design stage demonstrating the project's contribution to durable solutions, as well as training on durable solutions for key project stakeholders.

Interviews with key informants who were involved in the project highlighted that there was a lack of clarity about durable solutions and related concepts. This was further confirmed in two trainings conducted for consortium staff by the consultant and the Durable Solutions Platform. The trainings covered durable solutions definitions and concepts, the application of these in the context of Yemen, and approaches to durable solutions programming.

Although the recognized IASC definition applies to IDPs only, a number of key informants referred to durable solutions as a desired outcome for all populations affected by crisis achieved through the provision of sustainable support. Although this an incorrect interpretation of the definition, it illustrates the level of impact of crisis and displacement upon communities that host IDPs and the fact that host communities and IDPs share many of the same needs and vulnerabilities. This lack of clarity on key definitions and concepts illustrates the importance of rolling out durable solutions trainings for staff working on future durable solutions-oriented project, ideally at the very start of the implementation phase. The training materials produced by the Durable Solutions Platform for the two trainings mentioned above are a useful resource that could be used in the roll out of future trainings in Yemen. Capacity strengthening around conflict sensitivity is also critically important, and Search for Common Ground's Conflict Sensitivity Manual, produced under the DSP, can serve as an excellent resource for this.

There was a lack of clarity among project stakeholders about how to articulate if and how the project was contributing to durable solutions. *Future programming would benefit from the development of a clear theory of change at the design stage, outlining the how a contribution will be made to durable solutions through 1) reducing displacement-specific needs, and 2) supporting displacement-affected communities to recover from crisis and the impacts of displacement.*

LESSON #7 Measuring a project's contribution to durable solutions is challenging; it requires understanding displacement-specific needs at the start of the project, and developing outcome indicators that can measure changes in these needs over time

Measuring an individual project's contribution to durable solutions is a challenging endeavour. If we strictly apply the IASC Framework's definition of durable solutions, then the extent to which an intervention contributes to durable solutions can be specifically understood to mean the effect that it has on reducing displacement-specific needs. This means that programming must clearly identify displacement-specific needs during the assessment stage and develop indicators that can measure the extent of these needs. Disaggregation by displacement-status is also crucial to ensure that the situation of IDP, host and returnee communities can be compared.

As highlighted under Lesson #1, assessments and other key project documentation of the DSP lack specific detail on displacement-specific needs, and this will therefore make measuring the project's impact upon addressing these needs challenging. The project's logframe does contain outcome-level indicators disaggregated by displacement status through which changes in relative levels of need for the displaced and host populations can be measured. These indicators will help to give some indication as to how the project has contributed to durable solutions, but they do not cover the full range of IASC durable solutions criteria to which the project contributes.

Future programming can better measure its contribution to durable solutions through:

- Developing a clear understanding of the nature and extent of displacement-specific needs at the assessment stage;
- Articulating a clear theory of change at the design stage (see Lesson #6); and
- Developing a set of outcome indicators that measure the extent to which the project has been able to reduce displacement-specific needs. Several existing resources can help to support this process and contain example indicators that could be adapted to particular projects and contexts. These include the [Joint IDP Profiling Service's Durable Solutions Indicators and Guide](#) and the [Durable Solutions Platform's Analytical Framework](#).

LESSON #8 The national and local authorities have the primary responsibility for supporting IDPs to find durable solutions. It is therefore important to meaningfully engage with the authorities from the very beginning of, and throughout, the project cycle.

Finding durable solutions for IDPs in Yemen is primarily the responsibility of local and national/de facto authorities, and future programming should aim to support the authorities to fulfil this role. The DSP consortium engaged with various authorities at different stages of the project cycle.

The consortium partners encountered the usual challenges in terms of getting approvals for project sub-agreements from the Supreme Council for the Management and Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance

(SCMCHA) in the north and MOPIC in the south. Some partners had to wait for one year to get approvals from SCMCHA for activities in Dhamar governorate. Limitations were also placed on some activities in the north which are critical for supporting durable solutions. Search for Common Ground was unable to implement the project’s community-level peacebuilding component in the north. Protection activities were also limited in Dhamar governorate, with DRC being unable to open a community centre, and limitations placed on NRC’s ability to support the housing, land, and property rights of those living in target communities. These limitations imposed by the SCHMCHA led to a significant revision to the scope of the project, with a narrowing down of the types of activity that were implemented in DFA-controlled areas. In the south, all partners obtained sub-agreements within 6 months of the start of implementation for work in Lahj governorate.

Assessments during the inception phase in Lahj and Dhamar were conducted with the participation of a wide range of stakeholders, including District Managers as well as representatives of the Agricultural Office, the Water and Sanitation Authority, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour, the Executive Unit for IDPs Camp Management (in IRG-controlled areas), SCHMCHA (in DFA-controlled areas) and local councils. Local government authorities were also involved in reviewing and approving the final selection of target communities. The District Managers for Maqaterah and Radfan in Lahj governorate who were interviewed for this research, expressed that there was good collaboration with consortium partners during these assessments. The assessment process faced some additional challenges in Dhamar governorate, where assessments could not go ahead until all project sub-agreements had been approved by SCMCHA in December 2020. The content of assessments was also limited in Dhamar, with SCMCHA making significant edits to assessment tools and removing several questions relating to protection and social cohesion.

There was a significant amount of activity-level engagement with the authorities during the implementation of the project. Some notable examples are provided in the table below:

Collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NRC and ACTED worked closely with the Ministry of Agriculture to ensure technical standards were met for livestock and beekeeping activities. • ACTED, CARE and Search engaged with the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour to select CSOs for capacity building. <p>IRC and CARE engaged with the Ministry of Health for monitoring visits to their health centres to ensure minimum standards were adhered to.</p>
Capacity building and technical support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IRC provided Clinical Care for Sexual Assault Survivors training for midwives • NRC provided trainings on civil documentation for local authorities, the Civil Registration Authority (CRA), the Executive Unit, and the local council in Lahj.
Financial and logistical support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IRC provided payment incentives to health workers, as well as medical supplies, drugs, and equipment to health facilities. • NRC provided equipment to the CRA in Dhamar, including printers, desktops, cameras, scanners, and office equipment.
Advocacy and dialogue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NRC held an advocacy forum focused on land tenure security and eviction which was attended by the local authorities and other consortium agencies.

- The local authorities participated in community dialogue sessions organized by Search for Common Ground and their community-based insider mediators.

Key informants proposed several ways in which future programming could strengthen its engagement with the authorities. Firstly, although the authorities participated in the assessments conducted during the inception stage of the project, a number of key informants felt that the project could have benefitted from involving relevant authorities more in the initial design stage of the project. Secondly, many key informants said there was a need to invest in training and sensitizing the authorities at various levels on durable solutions and related issues. As well as covering key definition and concepts, this training and sensitization should highlight the importance of integrated programming and area-based approaches (to ensure holistic support rather than fragmented support to a higher number of locations/beneficiaries). Finally, others felt that there was a need for a more structured dialogue with the authorities and communities on how best to support IDPs to be obtain future durable solutions.

LESSON #9 To best support IDPs find durable solutions, programming should be people-centred, and driven by the priorities and preferences of those living in displacement-affected communities.

The consortium adopted a community-based approach in many of its areas of implementation. Community Committees were formed in each selected community of intervention during the inception phase. These Committees were responsible for selecting beneficiaries and played a role in identifying community-level infrastructure to be rehabilitated. Beyond the Community Committees, several other community groups and representatives were central to the implementation of the project. These included:

- Water Management Committees
- Community Health Workers, who disseminated health messages within targeted communities
- Community Animal Health Workers, who provided veterinary care and advisory support
- Community-based Protection Networks, who supported the referral of vulnerable protection cases to partners for case management and assistance
- Maintenance Committees, who were responsible for the community infrastructure rehabilitated under the project (see case study #4).
- Insider Mediators, who conducted community level conflict analysis and held community-level dialogues about sources of tension and conflict (see case study #6).

Based on interviews with key project stakeholders several key considerations can be highlighted for community engagement in future programming:

- Community representative should be engaged in the assessment and design process.

- Programming should have flexibility to address the needs and priorities identified by community representatives during implementation. For example, conducting a community-led mapping of sources of tension at the beginning of the project can help to orient the intervention towards strengthening social cohesion in displacement-affected communities (see case study #5).
- For community groups to become more sustainable, it is important for them to engage with the authorities and be regarded as resources by community members as well as other NGOs and CSOs operating in the area.
- A two-way flow of information vis-a-vis durable solutions should be established between communities and implementing agencies. This means gathering information on IDP's intentions and future hopes and providing information that can help to support the informed decision-making of IDPs regarding future durable solutions settlement options. More specifics on how this might be approached are outlined in the Durable Solutions Programming Framework section (Part 3) of this report.

Case study 5: A community-based approach to addressing conflicts

Search for Common Ground has trained 89 insider mediators (IMs). The IMs are community members who navigate conflict between IDPs, host communities, returnees, and local authorities. IMs are initially nominated by the local council authorities. Once selected, they are trained to conduct “conflict scans”, identifying local issues that are causing conflict and tension. The IMs are then supported to hold community dialogues to develop action plans and propose initiatives to address the conflict issues identified. The work of the IMs has helped to strengthen social cohesion in displacement-affected communities through improving relations between IDPs and host communities and increasing dialogue between communities and local authorities.

One example of the IM's work was in a community in Al-Maqatera district. A conflict scan conducted by the IMs identified access to water as a major source of tension. The area had seen a significant increase in population since 2015 due to an influx of IDPs. A water tank that had been constructed before 2015 was inadequate in terms of meeting the community's water needs, and this was causing tensions between IDPs and host community members, as well as between the community and the local authorities. A dialogue session was held involving the IMs, other community representatives, the local authorities, and Search for Common Ground, as well as ACTED who were implementing WASH activities on the DSP. During the dialogue it was decided that ACTED would build a new 70m² water tank and install a solar water pump, which provided a greener, cheaper, and more sustainable solution.

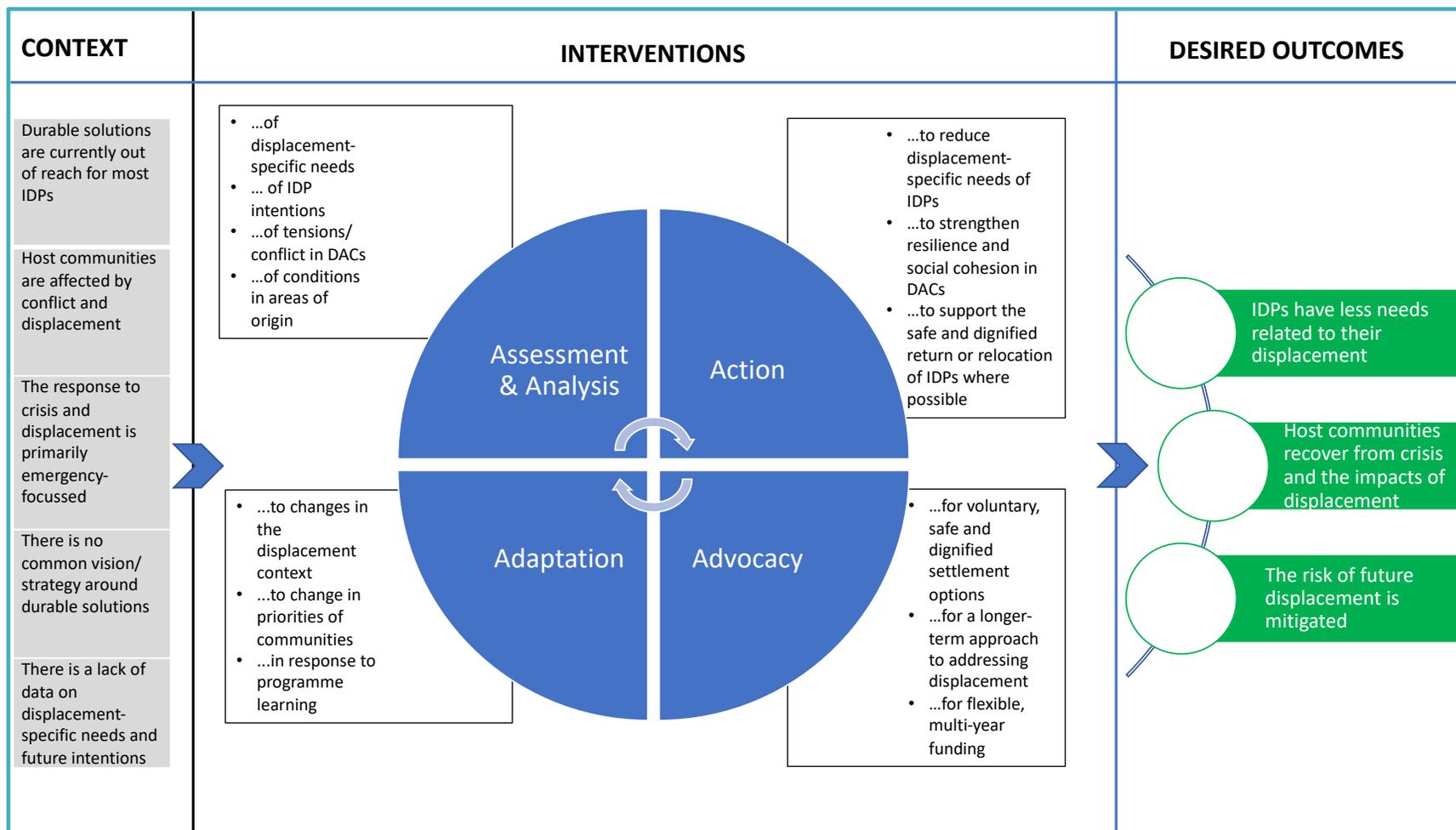
More information on the work of the Insider Mediators can be found at: <https://www.sfcg.org/how-insider-mediators-are-building-resilient-communities-in-the-worlds-worst-humanitarian-crisis/>

PART 3: A DRAFT DURABLE SOLUTION PROGRAMMING FRAMEWORK FOR YEMEN

This draft durable solutions programming framework is presented for consideration by humanitarian and development actors working in Yemen. It is informed by the solutions analysis (Part 1) and lessons learned from the DSP (Part 2) and is intended to support assessments, planning and implementation of interventions that contribute towards durable solutions. It can be used to support the design and implementation of interventions by an individual sector or organization. It can also be used at an inter-agency level to support the design of durable solutions strategies. The Framework includes 1) a summary of the key issues in the current context that impact upon durable solutions, 2) a set of interventions focussed on assessment and analysis, programming action, advocacy, and programme adaptation, and 3) three desired outcomes. A graphic summary of the framework is presented below, followed by a more detailed narrative.

“Durable solutions programming” is defined broadly here to encompass *a wide range of interventions and approaches that directly support durable solutions or help to build environments that create pathways towards future durable solutions*. Or, to put it more simply, it is programming that in some way contributes towards durable solutions. Action can be taken to support durable solutions in all contexts, even where the durable solutions themselves remain a distant prospect. It is unhelpful to think of activities and projects in binary terms (i.e., those that are “durable solutions activities/projects” versus those that are not). It is more useful to think of a project’s contribution to durable solutions as occurring somewhere along a spectrum. Rather than asking “Is this a durable solutions project?”, a more appropriate question is “To what extent does this project contribute to durable solutions?”

A DRAFT DURABLE SOLUTIONS PROGRAMMING FRAMEWORK FOR YEMEN



I. THE CONTEXT

Approaches to supporting durable solutions must always be tailored to the context. Important contextual factors to consider for durable solutions-oriented programming in Yemen are as follows:

- ***Durable solutions currently remain out of reach for the vast majority of IDPs in Yemen in the short-term.*** IDPs are unable to move on from their displacement. Barriers to return, relocation, and local integration persist, and IDPs continue to experience needs specifically related to their displacement. Furthermore, the available intentions survey data reveals that very few IDPs intend to return home in the near future.
- ***Displacement, conflict, and economic collapse have impacted heavily upon the communities that host IDPs,*** creating or exacerbating existing vulnerabilities, stretching access to services, diminishing access to economic opportunities, and creating tensions between the host and IDP populations.
- ***The response to the crisis in Yemen has been characterized by short-term humanitarian support, focused on saving lives and care and maintenance.*** In 2022, the Inter-Agency Humanitarian Evaluation (IAHE) of the Yemen Crisis stated that “while billions of dollars of overseas development assistance have poured into Yemen for many years, tangible and sustainable improvements are limited”. Funding and interventions have maintained a strong humanitarian character.
- ***There is an absence of a clear vision/strategy on how humanitarian and development actors can support durable solutions in Yemen.*** Since the start of the conflict, neither the authorities nor humanitarian/development actors have articulated a plan for helping IDPs to move on from their displacement.
- ***There is a lack of data needed to guide efforts to support durable solutions.*** The solutions analysis (see Part 1) has identified a shortage of data disaggregated by displacement status, making it difficult to identify displacement-specific needs. Additionally, although there have been several intentions surveys conducted in different areas in recent years, such surveys need to be conducted more widely and more frequently if they are to ensure that programming is geared towards the future preferences and intentions of IDPs.

The above contextual considerations are generalized for the country-level, but programming should always be mindful that there will be significant differences between governorates, districts, and sub-districts.

II. DESIRED OUTCOMES

The Framework identifies three desired outcomes for durable solutions programming in Yemen. These outcomes are mutually reinforcing and complementary.

- 1. IDPs have less needs related to their displacement:** While durable solutions remain out of reach for most IDPs in Yemen at the present time, it is still possible to address some of the needs of IDPs and returnees that are specifically related to their displacement, and thereby help them to make progress towards a future durable solution. Supporting IDPs and returnees to find a durable solution in Yemen can be viewed as a gradual process where humanitarian and development actors identify and address, where possible, the displacement-specific needs of IDPs and returnees in multiple areas, including protection, access to basic services, and economic recovery.
- 2. Displacement-affected communities recover from crisis and the impacts of displacement:** Efforts to support durable solutions must not focus on IDPs and returnees in isolation. This report has highlighted the importance of supporting host communities, including local services and institutions. Through placing a focus on building self-reliance of individual and households, promoting social cohesion between IDPs, returnees, host communities, and making investments in existing services and institutions, displacement-affected communities can be supported to recover from the impacts of crisis and displacement.
- 3. The risk of future displacement is mitigated:** Through working toward outcomes one and two, communities affected by displacement and return will become more resilient to economic and climate-related shocks and better able to resolve local-level conflicts and the risk of future displacement will be reduced. Risk cannot be eliminated of course- the political and conflict situation has proved unpredictable and will continue to generate new displacement.

III. INTERVENTIONS

To achieve the three desired outcomes, interventions need to be undertaken in 4 areas: 1) Assessment and Analysis, 2) Programming action, 3) Advocacy, and 4) Programming adaptation.

ASSESSMENT AND ANALYSIS: Understand the displacement context

Durable solutions programming needs to be informed by data that is localized and frequently updated. Data collection and analysis efforts should be coordinated, and could take place at a sector-, organization-, or inter-agency-level. Part 1 of this report presents a “light” solutions analysis which explores the displacement context, the lived experience of those in displacement-affected communities, and the nature of the response to crisis and displacement in Yemen. This quick analysis pulls out some of the key themes and trends across Yemen, but it is recommended that similar analyses are conducted at a more local level in the future to pull out granular level detail that can inform both programming and policy efforts. Three key areas for future data collection and analysis are presented below:

1. Identification and analysis of displacement-specific needs: Durable solutions are achieved when people no longer have protection and assistance needs related to their displacement. Durable solutions programming should therefore be informed by the identification and analysis of such needs. Displacement-specific needs may include those arising as consequence of the events that caused displacement (e.g. losing personal documents during flight), those resulting from absence from home (e.g. not having land to cultivate), those arising from not having a viable settlement option (e.g. uncertainty about being able to remain in current place of displacement because of pressure to return/relocate or threat of eviction), those resulting from discrimination (e.g. having limitations placed on the right to work), or those that prevent return (e.g. having one's house destroyed). Comparing the situation of the displaced and host population is the key to understanding displacement-specific protection and assistance needs. It is also important to consider the causes and effects of displacement-specific needs. For example, IDPs may be less likely to be in possession of civil documents. This may be caused by the fact that IDPs lost their documents during flight. The effect of not having documents may include being unable to access education and banking services and limiting freedom of movement.

Some key questions to consider when identifying displacement-specific needs include:

- What are the relevant laws and policies, and do these create barriers to accessing services/assistance/institutions?
- Do IDPs/returnees access the same services/assistance/institutions as the host population? If not, why?
- What barriers do people encounter in accessing services/assistance/institutions? Do IDPs/returnees face different/more/less barriers ¹³³ in accessing services/assistance/institutions than the host population? Are there particular groups who face more barriers to accessing services/assistance/institutions than others?
- What are the impacts of not having access to services/assistance/institutions?
- Does the provision and utilization of services and assistance result in any tensions between IDPs/returnees and the host population?

2. The future intentions of IDPs: Durable solutions programming must also be informed by the intentions and preferences of IDPs regarding their own futures, and particularly whether they plan to remain in their place of displacement, return to their place of origin, or move to a third location. Gathering data on intentions should be a collaborative process, which also engages the local authorities as well as SCMCHA and the Executive Unit. IOM, UNHCR and several NGOs have already conducted intentions surveys. But all actors can play a role- CCCM actors are well placed to learn about the intentions of IDPs living in camps for example. Efforts to collect data on intentions should consider the following:

- Data should be localized, as intentions will vary from community to community.

¹³³ These may include barriers related to money, security, documentation, ability, age, gender, laws and policies, or discrimination.

- Data should be frequently updated, as the context is fluid and IDPs plans will change over time.
 - The impact of demographic, geographic and social factors upon decision-making should be explored. For example: are age, gender, marital status, ability, economic status, and specific area of origin correlated with an intention to return or locally integrate?
 - Qualitative data should be collected alongside quantitative data, to fully explore people's reasoning behind their intentions and what it would take to help them pursue their preferred settlement option.
3. **Sources of tension and conflict in displacement-affected communities:** Social cohesion will be a key component of future durable solutions in Yemen, whether IDPs pursued local integration, return or settlement elsewhere. The community-based approach for conducting conflict scans utilized by Search for Common Ground to identify sources of tension within and between communities represents a good practice that should be utilized in future durable solutions programming.
 4. **Conditions in areas of origin:** Given that intentions surveys indicate that most IDPs would like to return home if the conditions allowed, it is also important to be aware of the situation in areas of origin. This includes areas that IDPs might potentially return to in the future or areas that IDPs have already returned to.

ACTION: Deliver programming that contributes to durable solutions

How can programming contribute towards durable solutions in an environment where the options are extremely limited? This framework proposes three mutually reinforcing and complementary approaches that humanitarian and development partners can adopt:

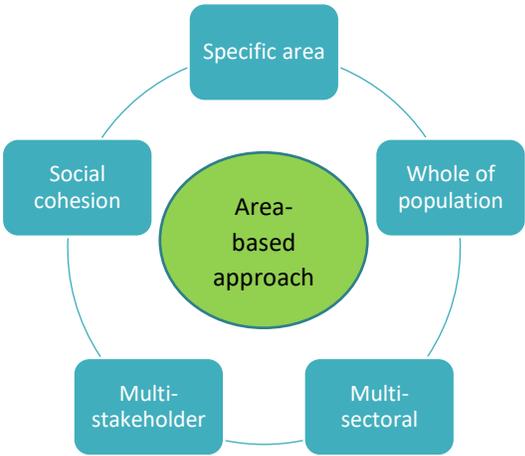
1. **Supporting the gradual reduction of displacement-specific protection and assistance needs:** Programming can contribute to durable solutions through identifying and reducing IDPs' needs that are specifically related to their displacement. Adopting such an approach helps us to understand that achieving a durable solution is an incremental process that takes place over time, and even in contexts where durable solutions remain a distant prospect, it will still be possible to address some displacement-specific needs. The 8 IASC durable solutions criteria can serve as a guide to identifying areas where displacement specific needs persist. Interventions in multiple sectors are required and displacement-specific needs of IDPs will vary from area to area. Some examples of required interventions will include:

Mine Action	Carrying out mine clearance; providing mine risk education to enable IDPs to return home safely to their homes and their livelihoods.
Access to documentation	Supporting displaced people to obtain/replace key documents, including birth certificates and national IDs; supporting the Civil Registration Authority as the agency mandated to do this.
Housing land and property	Supporting the rehabilitation of IDPs' shelters; engaging in negotiation in the event of potential forced evictions; providing post-eviction support; supporting individuals returning to their areas of origin to reclaim their HLP, in particular women who will face additional challenges, and supporting the institutions responsible for doing this.
Economic empowerment	Linking people receiving cash assistance up to livelihood support; vocational and business trainings linked to gaps in the market.

2. Strengthening resilience and social cohesion in displacement-affected communities through an area-based approach:

The key components of an area-based approach are as follows:

It is implemented in a specific geographical area that is affected by displacement: Locations selected for an area-based approach should have high levels of need and vulnerability, which have been created or exacerbated by hosting IDPs or receiving returnees. Determining a geographical area for an area-based approach should be done in partnership with the authorities, the displacement-affected communities, as well as other humanitarian and development actors.



It considers the whole population in the selected area regardless of displacement status: An area-based approach aims to equitably address the needs of IDPs, returnees, the host population and any other groups living in the area. Assistance is provided upon the basis of vulnerability rather than displacement status. This recognizes that host and displaced populations often experience similar

levels of need and that other determinants of need, such as gender, age, ability, and minority status, may be more impactful than displacement. A participatory approach is also central to an effective area-based approach. Representatives of all sections the displacement-affected community should be involved in assessment, planning and implementation of interventions.

It adopts an integrated, multi-sectoral approach to comprehensively address need: Interventions in a number of sectors, including protection, education, WASH, shelter, health and livelihoods are required to achieve the desired outcomes in this framework. By focusing the work of different sectors and actors with different specialisms in a specific geographical area, an area-based approach provides a good opportunity to avoid sectors working in silos and move towards integrated programming.

It adopts a multi-stakeholder approach, recognizing that finding durable solutions is a collective responsibility: The **authorities** have the primary responsibility for supporting IDPs to find a durable solution, and an area-based approach offers an opportunity for humanitarian and development actors to support the district authorities, local councils, line ministries, SCMCHA and the Executive Unit to fulfil this role. **Local actors**, including CSOs, the private sector and community representatives, should be supported to play a central role under an area-based approach, and the approach itself should capitalize on their local knowledge, expertise, networks, and relationships. The IAHE highlighted the need to enhance the focus on the **humanitarian-development-peacebuilding nexus** in Yemen. An area-based approach can offer an opportunity for humanitarian, development, and peacebuilding actors to work towards a collective set of outcomes in areas affected by displacement. The engagement of these actors in displacement-affected communities can help to build self-reliance and resilience and put in place the foundations for future durable solutions. A multi-stakeholder approach is about more than just coordination. It also entails exploring opportunities for joint assessments and planning, and the integration of programming across agencies.

It promotes social cohesion between IDPs, returnees, host communities and local authorities: This report has highlighted both the commendable generosity of host communities in Yemen, as well as the fact that tensions and conflict are starting to emerge between displaced and host communities in some areas. An area-based approach offers an opportunity to identify sources of tension and conflict within targeted areas and support communities to address these issues in partnership with local authorities.

3. Supporting the safe and dignified return or relocation of displaced populations if possible:

While durable solutions remain out of reach for the majority of IDPs, ‘pockets of stability’ may emerge to which IDPs may be able to return or relocate, and eventually integrate, in safety and dignity. Pursuing this will first require developing a much better understanding of IDP intentions, as well as the conditions in potential areas of return or relocation. If voluntary, safe, and dignified return or relocation to a particular area is viable, the following sequential activities may be considered:

- i. **Supporting informed decision-making:** Providing accurate, impartial information including on conditions in areas of return/relocation, available assistance, and entitlements etc. This may also include supporting “go and see visits”.*
- ii. **Preparedness:** Providing IDPs with the skills, knowledge and support they need before returning/relocating. E.g., providing technical/vocational training that will be useful in a new location, or supporting IDPs to obtain civil documentation or education documents that they will need in their new location.*
- iii. **Return/relocation movements:** This may include providing transportation, cash assistance, and provision of NFI upon arrival.*
- iv. **Integration/reintegration support:** Returning home or relocating does not mean that an IDP has achieved a durable solution. It will still be important to focus on reducing displacement-specific needs and supporting host/receiving communities where IDPs have moved to (see approaches #1 and #2 above).*

Programming must be vigilant to not create or support incentives that persuade or coerce displaced persons to pursue durable solutions options that are not voluntary, safe, and dignified.

ADVOCATE: be a strong and principled voice for the rights of IDPs and displacement-affected communities

It must be recognized that many of the barriers to durable solutions in Yemen are related to the actions of parties to the conflict, policy, and the nature of the current response to crisis and displacement and cannot be addressed thorough programming alone. Therefore, all durable solutions programming efforts must inform and be closely aligned with advocacy and policy influencing efforts. Key advocacy priorities should be identified as part of the Assessment and Analysis stage (see above) and may include:

- The maintenance of protection space for those living in displacement and ensuring they are not placed at risk of forced eviction or involuntary return. This should include land agreements for IDP sites and the identification of land for voluntary relocation of IDPs living in sites.
- Increased support for interventions which address displacement-specific needs including those which present barriers to return and local integration (e.g., mine action, HLP support).
- The adoption of a longer-term and comprehensive approach to addressing displacement and supporting durable solutions in Yemen.
- The inclusion of IDPs in planning and decision-making regarding their own futures.
- The increased availability of flexible, multi-year humanitarian and development funding for programming that builds self-reliance in displacement-affected communities and supports durable solutions.

ADAPT: Be flexible and adaptable in a changing context

Adapting in response to changing circumstances is a feature of all good programming and is particularly important in the context of durable solutions programming. Programming should be flexible in response to the following:

- **Changes in the displacement context:** The extent to which a context is conducive to durable solutions is dependent on numerous, often constantly changing variables, including the legal and policy environment; conflict/disaster dynamics; the actors involved (and not involved) in addressing displacement; the vulnerabilities, capacities and needs of displacement-affected communities; and levels of social cohesion.
- **Changes in the priorities and intentions of displacement-affected communities:** The priorities and intentions of IDPs and others living in displacement-affected communities may change in line with a fluid context. For example, intentions to return will likely increase in line with improvements in the security situation in areas of origin, or a deterioration in the economic situation in the place of displacement.
- **Real-time learning from programming:** Adaptations should also be made in response to learning on what works and what does not in applying the 3 approaches outlined above in the “Action” section:
 - Supporting the gradual reduction of displacement-specific protection and assistance needs;
 - Strengthening resilience and social cohesion in displacement-affected communities through an area-based approach; and
 - Supporting the safe and dignified return or relocation of displaced populations

Flexibility should be built into programme design, to ensure that learning can lead to effective and appropriate adaptation of programmes. The availability of flexible, multiple year funding is therefore important. However, flexibility is not just determined by the donor and their requirements. It is also about individual agencies and consortia determining their own degree of flexibility in terms of sectors of work and locations of implementation.

CONCLUSION

Durable solutions remain out of reach at the present time for the vast majority of the world's 60 million plus IDPs. Against this backdrop, supporting IDPs to make progress towards a future durable solution presents a significant and complex challenge for humanitarian and development partners. This report has explored how this challenge might be tackled in the context of Yemen.

The solutions analysis presented in Part 1 of this report highlights the scale of the challenge in Yemen: displacement-specific needs persist, there are a multitude of barriers to local integration, return and relocation, and agencies face significant operational constraints. Furthermore, conflict and related crises have impacted heavily upon those who are not displaced and therefore efforts to support IDPs to find durable solutions must not overlook the need to support host communities, as well as local institutions and services. Addressing this challenge will require a response that recognizes that addressing displacement in Yemen is a development issue as well as a humanitarian one

The lessons learned from the Durable Solutions Project presented in Part 2 of this report demonstrate that, while several improvements could be made to future programming, it is possible to place a greater focus on self-reliance, resilience and social cohesion when supporting IDPs and displacement-affected communities. Such an approach can have the dual aim of 1) gradually reducing displacement-specific needs, and thereby supporting progress towards a future durable solution, and 2) helping displacement-affected communities recover from the impacts of conflict and hosting IDPs.

It is hoped that the Durable Solutions Framework presented in Part 3 of this report will help humanitarian and development actors to consider how their work is currently contributing towards durable solutions, and what more they might do in the future. It is designed to be used by individual sectors, organizations, or at an inter-agency level. Supporting IDPs in Yemen to find durable solutions must be a collaborative endeavour and efforts to apply the Framework should be underpinned by the following principles¹³⁴, which have emerged as key themes during this report:

Local and national authorities have the primary responsibility: Programming should recognize that the national and local authorities have the primary responsibility for helping IDPs to achieve a durable solution and, where possible and appropriate, programming should support the authorities to fulfil this responsibility. This includes supporting the inclusion of displaced persons in national and local systems, strategies, and policy frameworks, providing technical, logistical, and financial support, and to the greatest extent possible supporting displaced populations to access shared services.

¹³⁴ These are adapted from the Durable Solutions Programming Principles developed by the Durable Solutions Platform, which can be found here: <https://dsp-me.org/media/3uzbj1pe/dsp-briefing-note-1.pdf>

A multi-sectoral and multi-stakeholder approach: Programming should interact and collaborate with other humanitarian actors, as well as development, stabilization, and peacebuilding actors when they are present, to promote a comprehensive multi-stakeholder, multi-sectoral approach to enabling durable solutions pathways. The strengths, weaknesses and specialisms of different actors should be leveraged to pursue durable solutions in the most efficient and effective manner.

Localization: Programming should engage with and support local actors, including CSOs, the private sector and community representatives, to facilitate locally led solutions. It should recognize and capitalize on the local knowledge, expertise, networks, and relationships of these actors, and promote sustainability through supporting them to play a central role in responding to displacement.

Needs and priorities defined by displacement-affected communities: Programming should meaningfully engage with IDP, returnee and host populations, and be driven by their perspectives, preferences, and intentions regarding their own futures. This means that programming must pay special attention to the specific concerns and perspectives of women, youth, persons with disabilities and marginalized groups, recognizing that they are likely to face additional barriers to finding durable solutions.

Informed, voluntary, safe, and dignified choices for IDPs: Programming must respect the right of IDPs to make an informed and voluntary choice on what durable solutions option to pursue and provide accurate and timely information to support them to do this. While recognizing the very limited opportunities for return/reintegration, local integration, or settlement elsewhere, programming should not create or support incentives that persuade or coerce displaced persons to pursue durable solutions options that are not voluntary, safe, and dignified.

Conflict sensitive: Programming should be delivered in a way which avoids creating or worsening tensions in displacement-affected communities, particularly between IDPs, returnees and host communities. Furthermore, programming should actively take opportunities to foster dialogue, collaboration, and joint planning between these groups.

RECOMMENDATIONS

A set of 7 key recommendations emerging from this research are presented for humanitarian and development actors, including implementing agencies and donors, working in Yemen:

- 1. *Strengthen data collection and analysis to inform durable solutions planning and programming:*** Implementing agencies, with support from donors, should collaborate to improve collaborative data collection and analysis. Key areas of focus should be the identification and analysis of 1) displacement-specific needs of IDPs and the wider needs in host communities resulting from displacement, 2) the future intentions of IDPs vis-a-via local integration, return and settlement elsewhere, 3) sources of tension conflict in displacement-affected communities, and 4) the conditions in areas of origin/return. Data and analysis should be localized and frequently updated. The Durable Solutions Technical Working Group should also consider supporting area-based durable solutions analyses which follow a similar format to the country-level durable solutions analysis outlined in Part 1 of this report.
- 2. *Increase awareness of durable solutions concepts and approaches:*** Efforts are required to increase awareness of durable solutions among a wide range of stakeholders, including INGOs, UN Agencies, CSOs, local and national authorities, and donors. This awareness should cover both the basic definitions, concepts and principles, and the practical approaches that can be taken to support durable solutions in the Yemen context. Strengthening capacity around conflict sensitivity is also highly important in the context of durable solutions programming. The Durable Solutions Platform, which conducted a durable solutions training for the consortia agencies in October 2022, would be well placed to support this work, along with Search for Common Ground, who trained partners on conflict sensitivity and produced a Guide to Conflict Sensitivity Programming in the Context of Internal Displacement in Yemen under the DSP.
- 3. *Move forward with the establishment of an inclusive durable solutions architecture:*** The establishment of a national level Durable Solutions Technical Working Group (DSTWG) (expected by the end of 2022) will be a welcome development. While recognizing the need to keep the group small, it is critically important to ensure the meaningful representation of civil society organizations, INGOs, and donors, alongside UN Agencies. The DSTWG must also establish an ongoing and meaningful dialogue with the authorities in both DFA- and IRG-controlled areas. Key initial priorities for the DSTWG should include the development of a durable solutions strategy for Yemen (see recommendation #4), and the design of pilot area-based interventions (see recommendation #5)
- 4. *Develop a durable solutions strategy for Yemen that is specifically tailored to the country's constraints:*** The DSTWG should move forward with the development of a durable solutions strategy that recognizes that durable solutions are currently out of reach for the vast majority of IDPs at the current time and places a focus on creating pathways to future durable solutions. An emphasis should be placed on 1) the gradual reduction of displacement-specific needs, 2) supporting people in displacement-affected communities, as well as local institutions and services, and 3) supporting

voluntary, safe, and dignified return and relocation in areas of stability should this become possible. It is hoped that learning from the Durable Solutions Project and the draft Durable Solutions Programming Framework presented in this report will be helpful in informing a durable solutions strategy for Yemen.

- 5. *Pilot multi-stakeholder, area-based interventions that contribute to durable solutions in areas where there is a degree of stability:*** Under the leadership of the DSTWG, area-based approaches should be piloted. Areas should be selected which have a high presence of long term IDPs, high levels of vulnerability and needs, and an adequate level of stability and access. Following the guidance outlined in the draft Durable Solutions Programming Framework, area-based approaches should target the whole population (displaced, returnee and host populations), integrate multiple sectors, and engage a wide range of actors, including the authorities and humanitarian, development, and peacebuilding actors, civil society, and the private sector. It is recommended a learning partner is engaged to support durable solutions analysis in selected areas and the identification of lessons learned from implementation. It is also critically important for donors to make available flexible, multi-year funding to support the roll out of these projects.
- 6. *Build an evidence base around how to support durable solutions in a context like Yemen:*** The selection of Yemen as a priority country under the UN Secretary-General's Action Agenda on Internal Displacement offers an excellent opportunity to gather learning on how to plan for and support durable solutions in a context where many of the enabling factors are not present. Much of the global learning around how to support durable solutions has been gathered in contexts where the conditions are more conducive for return, local integration and/or settlement elsewhere. Although the generally held belief is that we should plan for durable solutions in all contexts, there is a lack of evidence on how to do this particularly when many of the enabling factors are not in place.
- 7. *Pivot the overall response to crisis and displacement towards a more nexus-focused approach:*** Addressing displacement and supporting durable solutions in Yemen is a development challenge as much as it is a humanitarian one, and there is a need for the response to pivot towards the implementation of medium-term approaches, that go beyond saving lives and meetings basic needs. Key areas of focus including supporting self-reliance and building sustainable livelihoods, rehabilitating community assets, and supporting social cohesion at both horizontal (within and between communities) and vertical (between communities and authorities) levels. This will require a much greater engagement of development and peacebuilding actors in displacement-affected communities and a greater availability of flexible, multi-year funding opportunities.