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Final Evaluation Report

**Rebuilding Livelihoods and Capacities
of Conflict-Affected Small-Scale Fisheries Households (RELACC)
in Aden and Hadhramout**



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Disclaimer

Opinions expressed in this report are those of the evaluator and do not necessarily reflect those of UNDP.

1 Cover photo: two granted boats landing on Al Hawash coast, Aden

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List of acronyms and abbreviations

BNFs	Beneficiaries
CFM	Complains and Feedback Mechanisms
CO	Country Office
ERG	Evaluation Reference Group
FGDs	Focus Group Discussion
GAF	General Authority of Fisheries
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
GE	Gender Equality
GEWE	Gender Equality and Women Empowerment
GGGI	Global Gender Gap Index
GMS	General management support
GoJ	Government of Japan
HDI	Human Development Index
HHs	Households
IP	Implementing partner
KI	Key informant
KII	Key informant interview
MFW	Ministry of Fish Wealth
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MOPIC	Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation
MVI	Multidimensional vulnerability index
NFS	National Fisheries Strategy
NRC	Norwegian Refugee Council
PWD	Persons with Disability
RDT	Rapid Displacement Tracking
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SIDA	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
TOR	Terms of References
ToC	Theory of Change
TPM	Third-Party Monitoring
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
USD	United States Dollar

Project and Evaluation information details

Project Outcome/Information		
Project title	Rebuilding Livelihoods and Capacities of Conflict-Affected Small-Scale Fisheries Households (RELACC) in Aden and Hadhramout	
Project ID	00130720	
Country	Republic of Yemen	
Region	Arab States	
Date project document signed	December 2020	
Project dates	Start	End
	November 2020	April 2022
Project budget	\$3,520,849.11	
Project expenditure at the time of evaluation	\$3,520,849.11	
Funding source	Government of Japan	
Responsible party	Youth Leadership Development Foundation (YLDF)	
Evaluation Information		
Evaluation type	Project Evaluation	
Final/midterm review/other	Final	
Period under evaluation	Start	End
	November 2020	April 2022
Evaluator	Mohammed Almussaabi	
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Evaluation Dates	Start	Completion
	1 August 2022	30 September 2022

Executive Summary

This report presents salient findings of the final evaluation of the project 'Rebuilding Livelihoods and Capacities of Conflict-Affected Small-Scale Fisheries Households' (RELACC). The report gives an overview of RELACC and describes the methodology applied. Following terms of reference, the assignment sought to ascertain the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, sustainability, human rights, gender equality, and women's empowerment of RELACC support interventions on the well-being of the most vulnerable households and communities in the project's targeted areas.

Background and context of the evaluation

Yemen witnessed a series of catastrophic events and widespread political unrest. As a result, conflict erupted in 2015 causing unprecedented humanitarian, economic, and development crises. Adding to these serious challenges, COVID-19 and climate change have further intensified the context, leaving the country in a continued uncertainty, which is reflected in all vital sectors, one of which is the fisheries sector.

Fisheries sector in Yemen is an important tributary to the national economy due to its high contribution to the national exports, employment, and food provision. This sector used to contribute to the GDP by about three percent, which constitutes the third largest source of export revenues after oil. Despite its importance, the fisheries sector faces various challenges that began long before the conflict and remain unresolved today, such as overfishing and poor infrastructure at ports and landing sites. Poor production tools and methods are also still used which limits the quantity and quality of yields and poses a grave threat to the sustainability of the sector.

Fisheries sector has been heavily impacted by the conflict which caused a substantial decline in the volume of fish production and loss of livelihoods due to the military actions that imposed a ban on fishing in many areas. Climate change on the other hand has led to an unprecedented increase in hurricanes and floods, causing widespread destruction to the fishing sector and fishermen's assets.

Artisanal fishing is the predominant type of fishing in Yemen which is not an organized sector but rather depends on individual practices. The ministry of fisheries and its subsequent authorities are the institutional bodies assumed to oversee and organize the sector. However, many institutional challenges confront them along with the non-governmental communal structures of cooperatives formed by fishers.

About the intervention

In response to some of these challenges, the government of Japan funded UNDP to intervene in rebuilding the livelihoods and capacities of conflict-affected small-scale fisheries households in Aden and Hadhramout. The 3.5 million USD project aimed at assisting 1000 vulnerable small-scale fishers' household of which 10 percent of them are women. The local implementing partner, Youth Leadership Development Foundation (YLDF) supported the execution of the activities. The project sought to enable the targeted beneficiaries to regain livelihoods through business and skills training as well as the provision of grants, and assets. The project was designed with two components:

Component 1: To improve fisherfolk access to self-learning for productive assets for self-reliance in coastal communities by providing on-the-job training and fishing equipment.

Component 2: To improve income opportunities for women and youth through micro and small-scale enterprises in the targeted communities.

Evaluation scope

The evaluation took place between 1st August and 30th September 2022 and covered the project locations in Aden and Hadhramout. All relevant project stakeholders were involved in the assessment. Moreover, the evaluation encompassed the project's inception, design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of results. As a Gender Marker 2 project, special attention to gender equality and women empowerment was made to ensure having a gender lens throughout the evaluation.

The evaluation criteria depended on the OECD DAC of relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability as well as cross-cutting issues of human rights, gender equality, and disability. The final evaluation answered a set of questions based on the evaluation criteria. While this final evaluation results

are intended to serve as an accountability tool, the lessons learned and recommendations will help UNDP and project partners in designing and implementing future livelihoods related projects.

Methodology

The evaluation was conducted in conformity with UN evaluation standards and procedures, including those outlined in the UNDP Evaluation Guidelines. The evaluation drew heavily on:

- **Desk review**
The evaluation embarked on a thorough desk review of relevant documents mainly provided by the Evaluation Manager as well as other related documents from different sources.
- **Key informant interviews**
27 KIIs were held, most of which were face-to-face. However, some interviews were conducted over the phone/online, especially with those in Hadhramout given that the evaluator was not allowed to travel to Hadhramout for high-security risks. The email was used also to follow up on some interviews. Gender-related questions were assigned to each interviewee and a special interview was conducted with the project's gender focal point
- **Focus Group Discussions and field observations**
Field visits were conducted to inspect the newly funded start-ups and the distributed assets. Primary data collection from beneficiaries was the prime goal of these visits through 12 focus group discussions. Informal consultations were also considered. Random and purposeful sampling techniques were used in selecting respondents. Further, thematic analysis was used for grouping qualitative data. Answers from different stakeholders were compared and contrasted.

Key findings

- **Relevance**
It was found that the project with all its components is highly relevant. The project has relevant objectives that responded to the context of the targeted two governorates. It sought to provide a blend of integrated support that helped ease the immediate suffering of the targeted people and at the same time, it contributed to their resilience. The design of the project was mainly informed by two main studies conducted prior to the intervention: fisheries value chain and the study of the Multidimensional Vulnerability Index. Lessons learned from previous projects were also considered.
Investing in the support of fisheries sector is considered a wise choice as the sector significantly contributes to the national economy, which is deeply mired in severe crises. In such context, the intervention can be seen as an interpretation of related government policies which aim at developing the sector being an important reliable economic source. Project locations were selected based on the outputs of previous interventions in the targeted areas and scaling up to new areas, which enhanced the project relevance.
The relevance of selection is evident in its set of beneficiaries' selection criteria on which different consulted stakeholders agreed. Providing livelihood opportunities made RELACC gain a kind of humanitarian aspect complimenting some humanitarian response in the targeted areas and hence contributed to longer-term solutions for the targeted beneficiaries. Moreover, the project was in line with the UNDP Country Strategy Note (CSN) that prioritizes three interconnected areas: humanitarian – development – peace nexus (HDP Nexus), whole-of-society focus, and few, integrated, and at-scale programs. Although the project document did not explicitly refer to the Sustainable Development Goals, RELACC can be viewed as a reflection of three main Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); Goal 1: no poverty, Goal 5: gender equality, and Goal 8: decent work and economic growth.
While the approach to involving the direct beneficiaries was appreciated, there could have been a more direct engagement of stakeholders in the detailed design of the project. The project considered gender mainstreaming in the project design. Relevance to changing context was observed in the project response to the efforts made to raise awareness of COVID-19.
- **Effectiveness**
The project almost achieved all of its indicators at the activity and output levels. Regarding the quality of the inputs supplied and services offered, there was a high level of satisfaction. The inputs were thoughtfully

planned and assembled to serve their intended function. To the effectiveness of the project, catalytic effects and positive unintended results were observed when it attracted new donors to prioritize the Yemeni fisheries sector development and some local parties sought to replicate the project. The project was development-oriented and operated in a humanitarian context and could respond to beneficiaries' needs. What enhanced the project's effectiveness further was its blend of interrelated activities and the participatory approach it followed to engaging the primary stakeholders and actors. Accountability could have been better enhanced if a room was put for third-party monitoring, the complaints and feedback mechanisms were better communicated, and the grievance was channeled to UNDP as a commissioning organization instead of the responsible party (local partner) to ensure better segregation of responsibilities.

RELACC activities were designed based on the understanding of gender roles and relationships in the coastal society. The project embarked on a capacity assessment in which a number of focus group discussions were organized with coastal women to listen to their livelihood needs. The participants pointed out the need for training in sewing, hairdressing, making frankincense and other traditional livelihood sources. They did not prefer to work in the fisheries sector, as it was considered a male-only sector. However, women were sensitized to adopt funded enterprise plans related to some supporting roles within the fisheries sector though they did not prefer that. The low representation of female beneficiaries (10 percent) could have been increased to a higher percentage though it was justified as being a pilot project in the fisheries value chain in which women have only weak supporting roles. Other efforts credited to the project include the increase of the targeted women in business training from 100 to 126 women. The training activities considered the need to meet women's availability in terms of timing and privacy and additional efforts were made to enhance women's economic empowerment.

- **Efficiency**

From a budgetary performance point of view, the project's overall cost efficiency is acceptable. The actual expenditures report demonstrated commitment to the planned budget. Moreover, the direct physical inputs constitute around 30 percent of the project budget.

The project made good efforts to control costs and enhance project efficiency. This was clear in its efficient project structure, the provided adequate resources for gender analysis, data collection, and gender equality mainstreaming. To the efficiency of the project, RELACC provided high-quality deliverables which prevented failure and repetition, which means that a quality cost was incurred to avoid reworking and negative publicity. Commissioning a local partner, instead of costly direct implementation, was another cost-efficiency practice. Besides, the project contributed to promoting the local economy in the targeted governorates due to the large purchase volume of materials and services.

Despite the efforts made to keep the progress on track, some activities or deliverables were delayed; some of them were out of UNDP control. Moreover, the M&E framework satisfactorily allowed for good follow-up of the project activities. Finally, positive feedback was received from different beneficiaries on suitability of activities and delivery times.

- **Sustainability**

Initial findings demonstrated that the project's outputs have sustainable prospects as it invested a notable percentage in physical long-lasting productive assets and trainings. The project's integrated activities created opportunities for sustainability, i.e., the maintenance training program helped fishers maintain their assets for a long time and save on maintenance costs. Entrepreneurship training, mentoring and seed grants contributed to the sustainability of the formed enterprises.

Regarding the capacity and willingness of government agencies' expected role in building on the project outputs, the situation was uncertain due to the current situation of the country. What brings us back to optimism, is the fact that the project did not pose an environmental or social threat and the existence of a good sense of ownership among the primary stakeholders towards the project outputs. In terms of gender equality and women empowerment, RELACC's contribution has not been very high for reasons related to the modest input; limited economic empowerment only and the limited percentage of women targeted but eventually it, encouraged its advancement.

Cross-Cutting issues

The project was developed with a human rights-based approach that sought to reach vulnerable coastal communities through improving access to livelihoods. It had a gender-inclusive approach involving both men and women in the design and implementation. It communicated complaints and feedback mechanisms to enhance accountability. It also respected the local culture and norms during female-related activities.

UNDP undertook some steps to underline the importance of gender equality and women empowerment as highlighted above. The project document indicated the project is classified as gender marker 2, which ensured that gender equality is the main objective of the project and is fundamental in its design and expected results. The project risk matrix included the risk that intra-household tension and conflict on project benefits would lead to domestic violence and gender-based violence. However, this risk was tackled with certain mitigation measures.

Several stakeholders interviewed, as well as participants in the focus group discussions, confirmed that no cases of gender-based violence were reported, although there was a range of evidence of cases of women whose roles have shifted from housewives to contributors to family income, suggesting some sort of shift in gender roles or a change in power relations. The presence of women in the project staff in both UNDP and responsible party was fair. On both sides, they had leadership roles.

The project selection criteria ensured that vulnerable community members would be targeted, but for contextual reasons, IDPs and persons with disabilities were not widely included; fisher IDPs have a very limited presence in Aden, while they are completely absent in Hadramout while those with disabilities do not generally work at sea. However, there was a case of a disabled beneficiary trained in the maintenance of fishing nets. The underrepresentation of women, internally displaced persons, and persons with disability is not a discrimination act but rather an adaptation of the context. As for the elderly people, there was criticism over excluding those who are over 50 years, but it turned out that this was for reasons related to giving a chance to young people who are constantly working at sea and can pass on what they have learned to other fishers. However, they were encouraged to nominate their sons and especially their daughters to attend the training activities on their behalf.

Conclusion:

As drawn from the above-discussed findings, the evaluator concludes that despite the challenging operational context, RELACC successfully met its general goals to a good extent. High levels of relevance, effectiveness, and efficiency were maintained, producing significant effects, the majority of which are of sustainable potential.

Project's relevance is evident in its timely response to the identified livelihood needs. The wisely designed components provided coherent and integrated activities. RELACC reflected SDGs 1, 5, and 8. The project has the gender marker 2 and demonstrated good gender mainstreaming throughout the project phases though women were lowly represented.

The project effectively achieved its objectives to a good extent. A high satisfaction level was recorded regarding the quality of the delivered inputs and services. The budgetary performance review and the good utilization of resources confirmed the project's efficiency. Some deliverables delay issues were out of UNDP control. In general, project results justify the activities' cost.

The nature of the project outputs foretells the potential sustainability. The high sense of ownership found with the primary stakeholders supports this finding. RELACC showed acceptable commitment to integrating and mainstreaming the cross-cutting issues of human rights, and gender equality. It adopted a gender lens throughout the whole process and sought to include vulnerable people to benefit from the assistance.

Lessons learned

- Investment in supporting the fisheries sector in Yemen is considered an appropriate intervention due to its importance and high contribution to the national economy. The return on investment is actualized in the short term in terms of employing intensive labor, food security, and resilience building. In the long term, it will contribute to economic recovery and sustainable development. However, the needs in the fisheries sector are huge. Many stakeholders underlined the necessity of shifting the focus from providing more boats and fishing tools to rehabilitating the infrastructure. Providing more boats has become a burden on the conventional fishing areas in the absence of proper fish extension and suitable supporting facilities.
- Providing livelihood opportunities to fishers' communities does not mean sticking firmly to the value chain. The enterprises created by the female BNFs could have been non-fisheries to support their husbands on off-seasons and contribute to diversifying family income sources.
- Adopting a participatory approach and close engagement of the primary stakeholders in the different project stages is one of the key factors of development project success. The UNDP idea of setting up a project board to steer and oversee the project proved to be practical. Engaging the primary stakeholders in selecting the targeted areas, BNFs selection criteria, modality, and other details enhance their buy-in and lead to an increase in their sense of ownership toward the project outputs.
- Adopting innovative ways to aware BNFs of the CFM is essential when the conventional methods fail. When the responsible party (YLDF) made an SMS broadcast to BNFs, the complaints and feedback reporting sharply increased.
- Good gender mainstreaming entails that gender perspectives are crucial to all activities. Scheduling the project activities according to the suitable timing of both genders made it easy for both of them to attend the activities smoothly. Besides, respecting privacy and local norms encouraged women's participation.
- Although the inclusion of women was not widely welcomed at the beginning of the project, the tireless endeavors changed the mentality of the opposing stakeholders 180 degrees. Hence, change can be accepted by society if assurances are given to respect the social traditions and at the same time, the women's planned benefit is well illustrated.
- Public relations efforts and project activities communicated through social media made a catalytic effect. It attracted other donors and related authorities to replicate the project.
- Of the efficiency practices highlighted in this project that proved to be successful include allocating a notable percentage amount or investing in direct physical inputs, procuring high-quality goods and services, making use of the already available training curriculum with UNDP, responsible party, and other agencies instead of developing new materials from scratch saved resources and efforts and ensuring to purchase inputs that guarantee the availability of spare parts.
- The provision of an integrated fishing kit is much more useful than providing separate tools. Previous experiences show that distributing fishing tools such as engines only or nets only does not constitute a great benefit to fishers who lack the rest of the tools, so they resort to selling them immediately.
- Investing in training and capacity building has the potential to support the provided inputs more sustainably.

Recommendations to UNDP:

a) *Urgent recommendation*

Expedite the delivery of the remaining tools (GPS devices) as soon as possible so that the BNFs can get the paramount benefit as planned.

b) *Relevance*

1. Consider institutional development of related institutions when designing development programs, as the weakness of institutions is in the first place the root of the problem. Institutional

development will have an added value in deepening the benefit. Strengthening existing capacities would also increase the sustainability of the intervention and ensure long-term development. Institutional development can be done after a diagnostic analysis of targeted institutions with the main focus on capacity building and strategic management.

2. Engage BNFs and stakeholders more directly in the detailed design of the project to ensure a more buy-in attitude and work on making board meetings more regular in all project stages.

c) ***Effectiveness***

3. Recruit technical specialists at the beginning of the project; at design phase to benefit from their technical advice and produce a more robust design based on facts and relevant experience.
4. Conduct related studies to inform the design. Conducting a specific market assessment when a project involves purchasing to check items availability at the local market and /or the possibility of importing. The risk management outlined in the project document did not assume that some of the inputs would not be imported. Conducting a specific market assessment of the fishing tools at the design phase would reveal the supply gap. Given the same situation for gender roles and relations, conducting a gender analysis would reveal more about inequalities and proper targeting.
5. Activate the monitoring and accountability components to enhance accountability and keep a more transparent environment through:
 - i. Making more efforts to communicate the CFM to BNFs due to the critical importance of activating accountability.
 - ii. Considering the use of TPM.
 - iii. Segregating the RP responsibilities of implementing and monitoring through channeling BNFs complaints to UNDP.
6. Commit to UNDP policies related to women's inclusion, empowerment, and gender equality through
 - i. equitably increasing the percentage of female BNFs to ensure providing equal services as the context allows.
 - ii. ensure women's representation in communal structures like community committees.
 - iii. additional resources that could be allocated to address inequalities; exhibitions of women products can be a good example. The use of coastal women's associations active in the targeted areas to identify needs, coordinate and choose preferred activities and to build on the outcomes of RELACC.
 - iv. Weaving and maintaining of fishing nets can be a suitable activity for women introduced to fisheries sector as well as PWD.

d) ***Efficiency and sustainability***

7. Investigate ways to streamline the internal procurement to speed up the procurement process and keep track of the work plan. Qualifying new specialized suppliers to ease the future program's procurement is also highly recommended.
8. Connect grantees with microfinance banks to enable them to secure future loans to scale up their enterprises. Grants were distributed through a microfinance bank but the grantees were not sensitized to open bank accounts and learn about credit opportunities. In the same context, it is essential to provide support to the BNFs who do not hold national IDs required for accessing financial institutions' services.
9. Increase the amount of start-up aid in proportion to the rate of inflation so that the intended BNFs can start suitable, sustainable, and more profitable enterprises.

10. Conduct an impact assessment to evaluate the impact and sustainability of the project over the medium and longer term. It would also reveal which activities were practical and effective in achieving the project activities. The impact assessment could be informed by the MVI study which conducts a longitudinal study of BNFs. It is advised that the assessment could be done after one year of the project closure. This period is enough to show economic and social impacts.

e) *Cross-Cutting issues*

11. Study the possibility of reserving a quota of not less than 15% for IDPs and PWDs BNFs in future projects to ensure the inclusion of such vulnerable groups. Protection assistance such as facilitating the process of obtaining ID cards could be a key consideration in projects with mass BNFs.

Recommendations to YLDF

1. Take swift action when you see a low incidence of complaints to ensure that CFMs are well communicated.
2. Keep a gender-disaggregated complaint and feedback register and make more of an effort to follow up.
3. Ensure that large projects are assigned a dedicated M&E officer rather than assigning the role to the M&E team, which is busy with other projects and tasks so that it can be actively pursued.
4. Exert more efforts on budget flexibility when it comes to exceptional situations that require the reallocation of some budget lines in favor of impactful emerging needs.

1. Introduction

According to its evaluation policy, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Yemen commissioned the final evaluation of Rebuilding Livelihoods and Capacities of Conflict-Affected Small-scale Fisheries Households (RELACC) project in Aden and Hadhramout. An independent national consultant was tasked to conduct the mission between August and September of 2022. This report contains a general description of the project, the data collection process, data analysis, and findings. The assigned terms of reference (TOR) -Annex A- sets out the general framework of this final evaluation which was mainly to ascertain the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, sustainability, human rights, gender equality, and women's empowerment of RELACC support interventions on the well-being of the most vulnerable households (HHs) and communities in the project's targeted areas.

The final assessment of results is intended to serve as an accountability and learning tool for UNDP along with the relevant stakeholders as it provides an impartial assessment of the results produced by the project. Lessons learned and recommendations are intended to assist UNDP and project local partners with the design and implementation of future similar projects.

The report has been organized into six main chapters (including an executive summary and annexes):

(i) introduction, (ii) methodology (iii) Findings (iv) conclusion (v) lessons learned, and (vi) recommendations.

Background and context of the evaluation

The violent conflict is not the only crisis Yemeni is suffering from. Multiple crises have recently hit the poor country including the current unprecedented economic crisis, climate change impact, and COVID-19 pandemic. Before the conflict escalated in 2015, Yemeni people had been living in unstable conditions since 2011 when a series of conflict incidents emerged after protests and uprisings took place in the main cities as part of the Arab Spring protests calling for change and reforms.

The conflict has led to widespread destruction in various life sectors. According to the report issued by UNDP in 2019" *Impact of War in Yemen*" the conflict in Yemen has delayed development for more than 20 years and if the conflict continues until 2030, nearly 40 years of progress will be wasted¹. The escalation of conflict over seven years resulted in displacement, increased protection risks, and disruption of local economies and livelihoods. The UN estimated that 24.1 million people in 2021 were 'at risk' of hunger and disease, and roughly 14 million were in acute need of assistance². Moreover, a recent report on the impact of the civil war suggests that by 2021, Yemen's conflict will have "led to 377,000 deaths – nearly 60 percent of which are indirect and caused by issues associated with conflicts such as lack of access to food, water, and healthcare³. Besides the conflict, COVID-19 had a negative impact, especially on the health sector, food security, and livelihoods.

Before the conflict erupted, Yemen had been through many development challenges. The country went through years of instability that led to the exacerbation of complicated development problems like poverty, high rates of unemployment, illiteracy, outbreak of infectious diseases, social challenges, and local conflicts over limited resources. As a result, Yemen failed to meet most of the Millennium Development Goals (MDG). Thus, the ongoing conflict has aggravated the problem, particularly in terms of increasing unemployment, and deteriorating livelihood sources. The above-mentioned UNDP report

¹ UNDP-Assessing the impact of war in Yemen - Pathways for recovery (2019)

² HRP – Yemen 2021

³ Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), Humanitarian Crisis analysis – March 2022.

concluded that the conflict impacted Yemen across the core Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): No Poverty (SDG 1); Zero Hunger (SDG 2); Decent Work and Economic Growth (SDG 8); and Reduced Inequalities (SDG 10).

The fishery sector in Yemen is considered an important tributary of the national economy. The sector's importance is manifested in its contribution to national exports and labor. Yemen possesses a coastal strip of more than 2,500 km long, rich in fish and marine wildlife, from the Yemeni-Omani border in the Arabian Sea to the end of the Yemeni-Saudi border in the Red Sea besides many islands. It is one of the main and important sectors of the Yemeni economy which contributes to the domestic product by around three percent contributing the third largest source of export revenues after oil⁴. In addition, this sector provides 500,000 job opportunities to small-scale fishery workers, including those who sell in markets, cannery workers, restaurant workers, and 90,000 licensed fisherfolk⁵.

Despite the high importance of the fishery sector, it faces many challenges that even started long before the conflict and remained unsolved. The challenges include overfishing which is widely practiced by regional non-licensed fishermen in the national waters due to the absence of an effective coast guard role. Overfishing is also practiced by local fishers when they do not adhere to the fishing regulations in terms of off-season fishing and marine environmental destruction. Other challenges were listed in a paper prepared by Sana'a Centre for Strategic Studies which include the weak infrastructure at ports and landing sites, such as inadequate and poor processing facilities. In terms of production, fishermen still use traditional fishing tools and methods which limit production quantity and quality. Furthermore, the use of destructive fishing practices that threatens the sustainability of the sector is also an underlying challenge. The absence of an information center to inform the size of fish stocks makes it hard for decision-making and planning. Moreover, the fisheries sector lacks governmental support as high taxes are imposed on fish plants and factories which limit their capacities to scale up.⁶

Fishery sector has been heavily impacted by conflict, declining more than 65% of fish production volume compared to the context before the outbreak of war in 2015. According to a press report issued by the General Authority of Red Sea Fisheries, the volume of production reached to 61,000 tons, while it was 217,000 tons of fish in 2014. A major boom was witnessed from 2013 to 2014 when total market value of exports reached USD 289 and USD 170 million respectively. As a result, the fishery export market value shrunk, reaching USD 74 million in 2018⁷.

Hundreds of fishermen were killed as a result of the military operations in Yemen. According to a report issued by the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), at least 334 fishermen have been reportedly killed or injured since 2015. The report also quoted from Yemen's Fisheries and Aquaculture Authority statistics that two fishing depots and approximately 35 fishing boats were damaged or destroyed by airstrikes, shelling, and maritime mines in 2018⁸. Fishing was also banned in wide fishing areas and fishers were used to be arrested. These military actions led to a reduction in production and loss of livelihoods.

The fishing industry in Yemen mainly relies on artisanal fishing where groups of individual fishermen sail on small boats and use traditional nets and fishing tools. It is a labor-intensive production system, based on the harvest of fish products by small units of artisanal fishermen; typically, being a member of the

4 National Fisheries Strategy (2012-2025) ", Ministry of Fisheries, 2012.

5 A tale of two seas, UNDP – 2021.

6 Developing the Fish Sector in Yemen - Sana 'a Centre for Strategic Studies <https://sanaacenter.org/ar/publications-all/main-publications-ar/9509>

7 Fishery value chain, A market study with potential covid-19 impact analysis -UNDP – July 2020

8 Yemen: How fishing communities are fighting back <https://www.nrc.no/shortand/stories/yemen---how-fishing-communities-are-fighting-back/index.html>

same household or village with or without the use of externally hired workers⁹. They usually use simple equipment and sail for around one week (depending on the season) on small open decked wooden or fiberglass fishing vessels. When returned to the land, the catch is sold in public auctions and the vast majority goes for local consumption.

Institutional-wise, the Ministry of Fish Wealth (MFW) is the governmental body that regulates the sector. However, subsequent to the conflict, MFW remained divided between its old headquarter in Sana'a Headquarter and MFW Office in the interim capital of Aden since 2015. Moreover, like many governmental bodies, MFW suffers from many operational issues. Currently, MFW is incapable of carrying out the normal operations of the ministry, due to the lack of qualified staff and budget financing. Thus, there is almost no oversight or enforcement of industry standards nor support for fish harvesting, processing, logistics, exports, international marketing, or any other aspect of the industry¹⁰. Fisheries cooperatives, on the other hand, are civil entities formed by fishers and endorsed by the related authorities to represent members and provide some services including provision of fishing tools, fuel, fishing trip needs, training, and creating marketing channels. There are 17 cooperatives in Aden and 10 in Hadhramout. Yet most of these fisheries are not effective, especially in Aden.

The first confirmed COVID-19 case was formally announced by the end of April 2020. Since then, COVID-19 pandemic added new challenges to the country. Authorities worked on social distancing, closing markets, and cutting off roads between main cities. Hence, sales of fish dramatically dropped.

In addition to the destructive effect of current conflict on the fishery sector, the coastal cities in Yemen are vulnerable to the devastating impact of climate change. Yemen is a disaster-prone country that faces several natural hazards every year. Floods are the most prominent forms of disaster in the country, and high-intensity floods often result in agricultural land losses. Climate change will lead to the occurrence of more severe storms, including heavy and sudden rainfall, high wind speed, temperature fluctuations, and high storm rates, which may result in high sea waves, instability in the waters of the berths, and the impact on navigational operations¹¹. In a country steeped in war and dependent on aid, there are no plans to cope with the consequences of natural disasters or to help those affected.

At the level of gender equality (GE) and the Human Development Index (HDI), Yemen's HDI value for 2019 was 0.470 —putting the country in the low human development category — ranking it at 179 out of 189 countries and territories¹². As for the gender inequality index (GII), Yemen has a GII value of 0.795, ranking it 162 out of 162 countries in the 2019 index¹³. Gender inequality has led to many negative effects including women's movement restrictions, gender-based violence (GBV), early and forced marriage, and limited access to basic education. Additionally, since only 6 percent of Yemeni women are employed, there is a low level of female leadership and engagement in the public sector as well as paid formal and informal jobs.¹⁴ Thus, Yemen faces serious development issues and gender inequality remains one of the development obstacles.

9 The Fisheries Sector in Yemen Status and Opportunities, USAID, 2019.

10 Developing the Fish Sector in Yemen - Sana'a Centre for Strategic Studies <https://sanaacenter.org/ar/publications-all/main-publications-ar/9509>

11 Aden is threatened by the dangers of sea level rise - a paper presented to the symposium on the impact of climate change and its repercussions on Yemen - 4-6 November 2019 - Dr. Nada Al-Sayed Hassan Ahmed - Faculty of Science, University of Aden

12 Human Development Report 2020

13 ibid

14 Gender Equality, UNDP 2021, <https://www.undp.org/yemen/gender-equality>

In response to some of these challenges, the UNDP Yemen initiated the RELACC project to rebuild the livelihoods and capacities of conflict-affected small-scale fisheries HHs in Aden and Hadhramout. The project was implemented over 20 months, contributing to rebuilding livelihood opportunities in the fishery sector in the targeted two governorates. The project document stated that the fishery sector was selected because it was heavily impacted by the conflict. The specific capacity assessment conducted before the project implementation showed the high vulnerability among fisheries communities in the targeted areas and concluded that there is a wide range of fishermen in dire need of fisheries assets and technical support.

Description of the intervention

UNDP RELACC is a USD 3.5 million (\$3,520,849.11) project that focused on assisting vulnerable fishers and their families in regaining their economic and livelihoods through business and skills training as well as the distribution of grants, assets, and equipment in both Aden and Hadhramout governorates. The project sought to improve economic capacities through restoring livelihood opportunities, productive assets, and capacities to improve the socio-economic conditions of small-scale fishers.

The overall strategy for the planned economic capacity building was based on supporting small-scale fishers by providing opportunities for self-learning of operating and maintaining fishing equipment and gears and providing inputs and equipment to targeted HHs based on a comprehensive asset capacity needs assessment. Besides, it provided opportunities to promote entrepreneurship and encouraged forming micro-enterprises within the fisheries value chain by offering seed grants. The project was designed with two components:

Component 1: To improve fisherfolk access to self-learning for productive assets for self-reliance in coastal communities by providing on-the-job training and fishing equipment:

1,000 fisherfolk households trained

- 300 on fishing boat and engine maintenance
- 500 on GPS maintenance devices
- 100 on fishing net maintenance
- 100 on producing different palm fronds products

1,000 Yemeni fishers will receive fishing assets:

- 100 boats
- 100 engines
- 500 GPS devices
- 500 fishing nets

Component 2: To improve income opportunities for women and youth through micro and small-scale enterprises in the targeted communities through:

- 1,000 women and youth trained in business skills and entrepreneurship
- 500 micro and small-scale enterprises selected and provided grants to establish their businesses.

Project partners:

The following table shows the project main partners and roles

Table 1 Main partners and roles

Partner	Role
MFW	The line ministry responsible for fisheries sector
MOPIC	The governmental interface concerned with coordinating development projects
Aden and Hadhramout GAF	The direct governmental body emanating from the MAF through which the project coordinated. It approved the technical specs and directly supervised the project implementation.
Local authorities in both governorates	Facilitating and supervising roles
YLDF	the Responsible Party (local implementation partner)

- Link with UNSDCF and SDGs

The project came in line with United Nations Yemen Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework UNSDCF 2022 – 2024 which called for investing in the available opportunities in the fisheries sector as a means to ensure resilience " *The UN will support the promotion of fisheries sector development and improved fisheries interventions among small-scale fishers* ," as the UNSDCF planned. As with SDGs, the intervention is aligned with three SDGs; (SDG1) no poverty, (SDG 5) gender equality, and (SDG8) decent work and economic growth.

- The project management structure

The project document outlined a small and simple project structure that was established under some guiding principles that aimed at employing a project management methodology that emphasizes a simple and structured yet flexible framework. The project structure included a project board assigned to preside over the project offering advice and guidance to the overall implementation of the project. The UNDP implementation team was headed by an international project manager. The team included a national coordinator, two fisheries specialists in each of Aden and Hadhramout, a finance and administration Officer, and an M&E officer, (See the figure below (figure 1) for more clarification of the project structure).

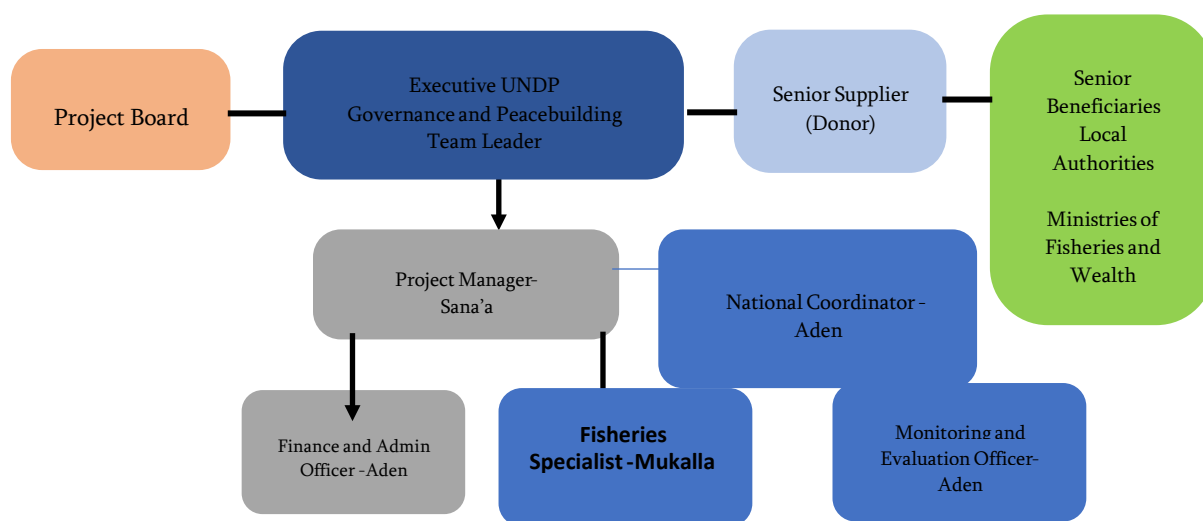


Figure 1The project management structure¹⁵

¹⁵ Source: Project document

Theory of change

The Theory of Change (ToC) presupposes that building local community capacities, creating conditions that allow impacted people to access livelihoods, and addressing cross-cutting issues will help them better manage risks and shocks with increased institutional capacity and economic self-reliance. The ToC is built upon the following assumptions:

- Local economic stabilization and revitalization through building assets, alternative income and livelihood opportunities, business recovery, diversification of rural livelihood activities, improvement of fisheries, and rehabilitation of productive assets of vulnerable rural communities.
- Supporting livelihood means and opportunities of the vulnerable communities will contribute to addressing socioeconomic issues due to COVID-19 and beyond.
- Resilience calls for an inherent and acquired condition achieved by managing risks over time in ways that minimize their negative impacts, build capacities to manage and sustain development momentum and maximize transformative potential.
- Livelihood restoration and support strengthen the coping mechanism, recovery, and self-reliance of the communities, but also builds the foundation for future and longer-term peacebuilding efforts.
- Inclusiveness and increasing the roles of women and youth in local decision-making and their access to services, protection, and jobs. The active participation of women and youth is aimed at a substantial strengthening of their role in socioeconomic impact response at the earliest stages of COVID-19 and beyond.
- Greater participation of women and youth in public and economic spheres contributes to lowering vulnerability to conflict.
- The lessons learned from micronarrative assessment indicate that women have a more positive view of the world-indicating that they see good outcomes. They are less likely to hold others to blame for a situation and more likely to see themselves as able to improve situations. They showed great self-reliance, but this is best supported in a safe social environment.
- Women's decision-making tends to be more social as well-they balance their minds with advice, instructions, and social norms.
- Therefore, it is important to prioritize gender under the intervention to support both men and women.

The following diagram describes the ToC general framework along with relevant assumptions and challenges.

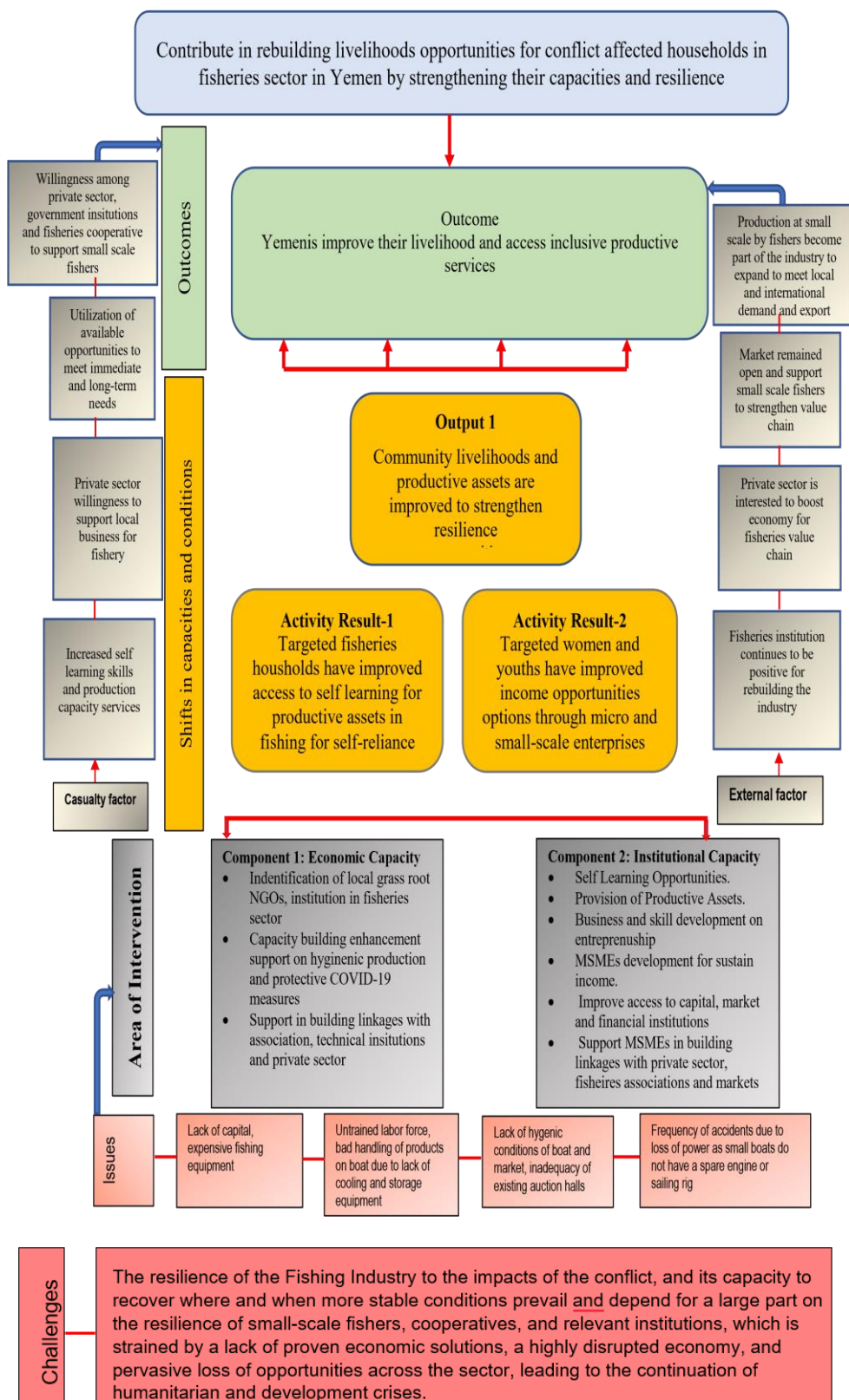


Figure 2 ToC General Framework¹⁶

¹⁶ Source: The Project document

Evaluation Purpose

The purpose of this evaluation is to analyze all activities undertaken in the framework of the project and assess answers received to the key evaluation questions (Annex B). As articulated in the ToR, the evaluation purpose is ‘to ascertain the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, sustainability, human rights, and gender equality and women’s empowerment (GEWE) of RELACC support interventions on the well-being of most vulnerable HHs and communities in the project’s targeted areas; and provide actionable recommendations to the Government of Japan (GoJ), UNDP and its Partners ‘implementation strategies, policies, approaches and activities on RELACC interventions’¹⁷.

Evaluation Objectives

The specific objectives of the evaluation as defined in the assignment ToR are:

- To assess the relevance and strategic positioning of the project in strengthening the Rebuilding Livelihoods and Capacities of Conflict-Affected Small-Scale Fisheries, mitigating the impact of the current crisis on local HHs and communities, and assisting institutions to progressively resume and scale-up service delivery.
- To assess the progress made toward project results and whether any unintended results could have been avoided or were due to factors beyond the project’s control
- To assess whether the project management arrangements, approaches, and strategies were well-conceived and efficient in delivering the project. It will also assess whether other approaches could have achieved the same objectives more cost-effectively.
- To analyze the extent to which the project enhanced the application of a rights-based approach, GEWE, social and environmental standards, and participation of other socially vulnerable groups such as children and the disabled.’¹⁸

Evaluation Scope

The evaluation took place between the 1st of August and the 30th of September 2022 and covers the project locations in Aden (Tawahi - Seerah - Kour Maksar - Buriqah) and Hadhramout (Ash Shihr – Ad Dis - Raidah and Qusayer - Mukalla - Broom - Ash Shiheer - Mayfa – Broum – Al Hami - Rukub).

All relevant project stakeholders were involved in the assessment. Moreover, the evaluation encompassed the project's inception, design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of results. It also covered both project components: component 1: to improve fisherfolk access to self-learning for productive assets for self-reliance in coastal communities by providing on-the-job training and fishing equipment and component 2: to improve income opportunities for women and youth through micro and small-scale enterprises in the targeted communities.

The evaluation embarked on an inception phase in which an evaluation matrix was developed. The matrix (see annex B) includes the main evaluation question by criteria, specific sub questions, data sources, data collection methods/tools, indicators/success standards, and methods for data analysis.

As a Gender Marker 2 project, special attention to GEWE was made to ensure having a gender lens throughout the evaluation. The evaluation criteria depended on the OECD DAC of relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability as well as the cross-cutting issues of human rights, gender equality, and disability. The final evaluation answered a set of questions based on the evaluation criteria.

¹⁷ Terms of reference

¹⁸ ibid



Picture 2 Map of Targeted Governorates

2. Evaluation approach and methodology

The final project evaluation conforms to UN evaluation standards and procedures, including those outlined in the UNDP Evaluation Guidelines¹⁹. The use of evidence-based information was a dominant approach in this evaluation. The evaluation process was participatory and consultative as it made efforts to maintain a participatory approach and close contact with the beneficiaries (BNFs) and other primary stakeholders.

Desk review

The evaluation embarked on a thorough desk review of relevant documents (Annex C) provided by the Evaluation Manager. The evaluation draws heavily on a desk review of relevant documents that include a range of project documents including gender-disaggregated data. The provided data did not note targeting people with disabilities. Other documents were also included in the document review especially those related to the fishery sector and development issues in Yemen. The desk review widely informed the inception phase and helped in making the initial understanding of the project objectives, implementation mechanism, and context in general. In the data collection phase, an in-depth desk review of secondary data and project documents was conducted to answer some of the evaluation questions.

Key informant interviews

Information from different related stakeholders was collected through semi-structured Key Informant Interviews (KIIs). A tailored tool was adapted from the evaluation questions for each stakeholder based on their role in the project. The interviews included key governmental staff, local authorities, project staff, project consultants, cooperatives heads, and responsible party (RP) staff²⁰.

¹⁹ [United Nations Development Programme - Evaluation Guidelines \(undp.org\)](https://undp.org/evaluation-guidelines)

²⁰ The donor focal point was contacted but the interview could not take place

A total of 27 KIIs were conducted (Aden, Hadhramout, and at the national level) (annex D). Most of the interviews were held face-to-face. However, some interviews were conducted over the phone/online, especially with those in Hadhramout as the evaluator was not allowed to travel to Hadhramout for security tensions in some areas located on the road between Aden and Hadhramout.

All stakeholders' interview protocol included prior verbal consent. High confidentiality was ensured to keep respondents' information. Respecting the promises made to interviewees, no comments or quotes will be assigned to specific interviewees.

To tackle gender issues and assess to what extent gender was mainstreamed in the project, gender-related questions were assigned to each interviewee. Besides, the evaluator ensured to target a gender balanced list of KIIs and a special interview was conducted with the project's gender focal point.

Focus Group Discussions and field observations

Field visits were conducted to inspect the created enterprises and assets distributed. Primary data collection from BNFs was the prime goal of these visits through focus group discussions (FGDs) and informal consultations. 12 FGDs were held to which 78 participants were invited. Two FGDs were held with non-BNFs to check their views and perspective about the project targeting and implementation. Table 1 below summarizes the FGDs conducted by type, gender, and location.

A random sample of BNFs was invited to FGDs in coordination with the project staff, cooperatives personnel, and fisheries authorities. Separate women's FGDs were held to ensure privacy and freedom of expression. Due to being unable to travel to Hadhramout, a local associate consultant supported the evaluator with organizing in-person FGDs. A special protocol was used to facilitate the BNFs data collection. Non-BNFs were consulted as well to check their views and perspective about the project targeting and implementation.

Table 2 Distribution of FGDs by number, type, gender and location

Type	Aden		Hadhramout	
	M	F	M	F
BNFs	2	2	4	2
Non- BNFS	1	1	0	0

Sampling

Two types of sampling methods were used in selecting respondents:

- Random sampling: This technique was used for the selection of the FGDs respondents from the direct men and women BNFs.
- Purposeful sampling: This technique was used to target key informants such as partners, staff, governmental representatives ...etc.

Limited sample size was considered due to time constraints and contextual security issues. However, the evaluator ensured to include a representative wide range of stakeholders within the sample framework.

Data analysis

A thematic analysis was used for grouping the qualitative data. Answers from different stakeholders were compared and contrasted on MS Excel sheets. The information received during the on-site

interviews and field observations was cross-checked with the project's results framework and information obtained from the desk review reports. Moreover, the evaluator was in continuous contact with the evaluation manager to obtain views from UNDP on project implementation and the issues raised by BNFs and stakeholders. Overall, the evaluator had solid information from the project's BNFs and a good impression from site visits to assess how the project contributed to achieving the project outputs.

Ethics and other norms for evaluation

The evaluation was carried out in accordance with the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) Norms and Standards, UNEG "Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation," and UNDP Evaluation Guidelines, ensuring compliance with the general norms for evaluation such as independence, impartiality, respect for human rights and gender equality, ethics, and transparency. Collected data from all parties were treated with high confidentiality to ensure privacy and rights of participants. Besides, all interviews were preceded by the interviewee's consent. The voluntary obtained consent was necessary to ensure the participants' understanding of the evaluation subject and the interest to give sufficient information enriching the topics discussed.

Quality assurance

UNEG Norms and Standards for evaluation were ensured to be followed from the early stages of preparing for the assignment. Moreover, to increase the level of data reliability, the triangulation technique was applied. The triangulation technique was used on two levels:

- Internal level through triangulating the same item in different questions within the same tool and applying different tools to the same group.
- External by triangulating the same item among different tools to different groups.

Challenges and Limitations

- The evaluator faced access problems to travel to Hadhramout for security reasons. Instead of in-person facilitating the planned FGDs, a consultant supported the evaluator. In the case of KIs in Hadhramout, they were all conducted remotely.
- One national consultant alone had to conduct all evaluation tasks of inception, planning, data collection, and analysis in a limited time caused stress. Some assistants helped in some supporting roles like FGDs facilitation and data entry.
- Due to time and resource constraints, no quantitative data was collected in the form of surveys to enrich the analysis findings. Instead, the evaluation relied on qualitative data.
- The targeted areas are geographically separated. It took hours of driving to reach an area such as Imran or Fuqum, not to mention internal movements between villages and small gatherings within these areas, as well as checkpoints scattered along the roads. To mitigate this challenge, the data collection in Aden was extended.
- The majority of those targeted fishermen are engaged in sea fishing during the day and it was hard to fix appointments. Extensive coordination efforts were paid to materialize the planned FGDs.
- Unexpectedly, less cooperation from some stakeholders in guiding the coordination for data collection as was expected. Extending the data collection helped in rescheduling some of the missed visits or interviews.

3. Findings

This section highlights the main evaluation findings broken down by evaluation criteria. This section brings together an integrated analysis of the findings of desk review, stakeholder interviews, and FGDs findings.

3.1 Relevance: *Is the intervention doing the right things?*

In general, this domain investigates to what extent the project was responsive to the identified needs.

Relevance of objectives and design:

Conceptually, the project approach can be seen as a suitable response to the context as it sought to provide a blend of integrated support that helped ease the immediate suffering of the targeted people and at the same time, contributed to their resilience. The project was based on a ToC that assumed that building local community capacities, creating conditions that allow impacted people to access livelihoods, and addressing cross-cutting issues will help them better manage risks and shocks with increased institutional capacity and economic self-reliance. Accordingly, the project goal was to strengthen the capacities of the targeted fisheries communities in Aden and Hadhramout whose livelihoods were severely disrupted to cope with the effects of conflicts. The logic of the project promoted a broadly appropriate response to the context of the two main governorates in the south of Yemen. The relevance of this concept was generally accepted by the stakeholders whose views were solicited. As quoted from a KII, *“the case of our country, at the current stage, needs development programs to restore its capacities and enable it to stand on its feet, not more food baskets assistance”*. Moreover, the project design was mainly informed by a value chain study that studied the fishing process stages right from the capture to end users and another UNDP study of the Multidimensional Vulnerability Index (MVI) which concluded that the fishery sector, like some other sectors, is most exposed and sensitive to environmental vulnerabilities²¹.

Investing in the support of the fishery sector is seen as a sensible selection due to the sector's significant contribution to the national economy. Before the conflict erupted, this sector used to be the third source of the national GDP after Oil and Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) exports and one of the promising sectors of Yemen for sustainable socio-economic development²². According to the National Fishery Strategy NFS (2012-2025), the fishery sector has significant potential to achieve diversification in the country's economy and in realizing job-creating pro-poor economic growth for the country's socio-economic development²³. Subsequently, the support can be deemed as a reviving attempt and recovery endeavor.

Addressing some of the related institutions' needs would double the benefit. According to the project document, the project encompasses and rests on capacity building in two key areas: economic and institution. The institutional side focuses on *“building the capacity of local and grassroots organizations, backward and forward linkages among fisheries MSMEs, association, technical institutions, and private sectors”*. However, the project indicators did not refer to any of such activities. The evaluation revealed the high need to support the capacity building of many entities in direct link with the fisheries value chain such as the Marine Technical Institute which was subjected to extensive destruction as a result of the war and the Fish Extension Department in the MFW which needs to activate its role in fishers' guidance. Fish cooperatives in both governorates, on the other hand, could have been targeted also with institutional capacity building especially those with actual presence. Targeting such institutions would

²¹ Multidimensional Vulnerability Index for MSMEs in Yemen: Longitudinal Assessment Final Report

²² National Fisheries Strategy (2012-2025) ", Ministry of Fisheries, 2012.

²³ *ibid*

have an added value in deepening the project benefit. However, a project staff member explained that capacity building was not part of the project design which mainly addressed livelihood needs rather than supporting institutions²⁴.

Relevance of selection

The selection of the project locations considered building-on previous interventions outputs and scaling up. The selection of the targeted governorates was built on the ongoing UNDP Stabilization Program (YSP) implemented in the two southern governorates of Aden and Lahj, and including Hadhramout was an attempt to scale up the current model²⁵. Being sea governorates, the fisheries sector is one of the most dominant factors in their local economy. Thus, the selection of Aden and Hadhramout reflects a kind of criteria relevance. The project was extended to all sea districts in both governorates and the distribution of the BNFs took into consideration the most vulnerable sub-districts and those who benefited from earlier interventions by other organizations.

The project set out a list of criteria for BNFs selection on which different opinions agree. The criteria were developed in collaboration with the project management board²⁶ which focused on giving the priority to the most in-need youth men and women who belong to the coastal community of the targeted two governorates. To ensure vulnerable people were reached, the criteria included some other conditions such as that a BNF must be a head of a HH, with low income, being war or natural disasters affected, and belonging to the small-scale fishers. The FGDs participants confirmed they match the selection criteria. Meanwhile, the capacity assessment conducted in both governorates shows the vulnerability of the selected BNFs. Overall, FGDs male and female participants indicated that they and their communities widely welcomed the project interventions as a relevant priority.

Stakeholders hinted that transparency in the selection of BNFs was widely overwhelming while acknowledging the existence of a limited percentage of imbalances although the selection of names went through two stages: nomination and verification. The limited imbalances could be attributed to some reasons, the most important of which was the lack of updated databases with the fishing authorities that show the availability of fishing means for fishermen and their benefit from previous assistance.

Relevance with governmental policies and plans

The intervention can be seen as an interpretation of the related governmental policies. The NFS goal is *“to enhance the fisheries sector contribution to the national economic growth whilst ensuring the environmental and resource sustainability, improving community livelihoods, strengthening the food security needs, and job-creating economic empowerment opportunities with a focus on youth and women”*²⁷. However, the NFS was prepared by UNDP and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) in 2012 as part of the Transition Plan 2012-2014. However, it is not well disseminated to the duty-bearers. The evaluator could only find an English copy online.

²⁴ A project staff member claimed that the project indirectly contributed to the capacity building of the related institutions such as developing the fishers training curriculum.

²⁵ Project document

²⁶ The project board was formulated from the general fisheries authorities in Aden and Hadhramout GAF and Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation MOPIC, Fisheries Cooperatives Union FCU and UNDP. The board mission was mainly to oversee the project.

²⁷ *ibid*

Relevance with the humanitarian context

The project was aligned with the humanitarian response in the country even if this is not done on purpose. Providing livelihood opportunities made RELACC gain a kind of humanitarian aspect complimenting some humanitarian responses in the targeted areas and hence contributed to longer-term solutions for the beneficiaries targeted. Though RELACC was of more development aspect, it can be seen to be in harmony with the Yemen Humanitarian Response Plan (YHRP) 2020 and Food Security and Agriculture Cluster (FSAC) strategic objectives. The conflict and COVID-19 outbreak impacted millions of Yemenis lives putting them at grave risk. The second objective of the strategy called for the *“help of millions of destitute Yemenis overcome hunger by providing food and nutrition assistance, increasing household incomes, and advocating for measures that bring economic stability”*²⁸.

RELACC worked on providing production assets to the targeted fishers. The project aimed at increasing the fish production which is one of the key food sources in Yemen. Moreover, it invested in capacitating the youth and women through vocational training programs that aimed at equipping them with new livelihood skills. The Responsible Party (YLDF) acknowledged that they coordinated with the food cluster in Aden.

Relevance with country office strategy

The project was in line with the UNDP country office strategy. UNDP Country Office (CO) has been working in Yemen for decades, which enabled it to deepen its knowledge of the development situation in the country. In its Country Strategy Note/Country Programme Framework, UNDP focuses on three highly interconnected and interdependent priority areas: humanitarian – development – peace nexus (HDP Nexus), whole-of-society focus, and few, integrated, and at-scale programs²⁹. As for the CO programme priorities, boosting food security and inclusive economic development come at the top priorities. To achieve this target, the strategy note highlights the importance of fisheries sector capacity development outlining its untapped promise in contributing to the national economy. This priority comes from UNDP CO understanding that the country needs to boost domestic food production – either for domestic consumption or export – and diversify the economy. The strategy note refers to RELACC and some other planned fisheries-related interventions that materialize this aim.

Alignment with SDGs

Though the project document did not explicitly refer to the SDGs, RELACC can be viewed as a reflection of some related SDGs, particularly (SDG 1): no poverty, (SDG 5): gender equality, and (SDG 8) decent work and economic growth. However, the challenges faced by the war-affected country to ensure the SDGs are on the right path and are well understood.

Benefiting from previous lessons learned

The project design considered lessons learned from previous projects. The design benefited from the *Fisheries Value Chain*³⁰. According to the project document, the design benefited from lessons learned and knowledge management from the 2017-19 Yemen Livelihood and Human Security Impact Assessment Report, in which it highlighted three key areas to strengthen. Firstly, the economic interventions along with the provision of livelihoods targeting unemployed youth. Secondly, promote community security to enable social cohesion and thus reduce and mitigate social conflict. Lastly, promote community-based initiatives that support security and stability³¹. Project staff confirmed that UNDP always builds upon its knowledge management in every new design. The detailed risk matrix annexed to the project document implies that the project design reflected lessons learned from earlier projects.

²⁸ Humanitarian Response Plan, OCHA 2020

²⁹ Country Strategy Note 2021 – 2024, UNDP Yemen

³⁰ *Fisheries Value Chain, A Market Study with Potential COVID-19 Impact Analysis* produced in July 2020

³¹ The project document

Stakeholders' engagement

While the approach to involving the stakeholders was effective, there could have been a more direct engagement of the stakeholders in the detailed design of the project. According to the project staff, the project was designed by the UNDP in consultation with the primary stakeholders. However, some stakeholders claimed that they did not have the chance to suggest amending the activities that they thought were not that effective. *"I suggested adding a training course on the fish good handling practices due to its high importance, but it was refused as the training program was already approved"*, a key informant (KI) said. Conversely, the project staff indicated that there was a wide engagement of the stakeholders in the design stage. *"The locations selection, BNFs selection criteria, and technical specifications of kits were left to the fisheries authorities in each of Aden and Hadhramout to decide,"* a project staff member said. In this context, it has been observed that the recruitment of the two fishery specialists/consultants came after launching the project. It would have been more effective if the specialists were hired at the design stage so that their experience would add value to the design. A board member confirmed the close engagement in the project's early stages, but the member criticized the interruption of meetings during the phases of implementation and closing.

As for engaging the direct BNFs, the project depended on a capacity assessment that aimed to understand the specific needs of each targeted fisherman in terms of production tools and skills. It served as a kind of verification of the nominated lists of BNFs. Women were also listened to in organized FGDs.

The project formed two community committees that are assumed to represent the BNFs. The documents provided show that in Aden, the committee was mainly formed of some fisheries cooperatives heads (syndicates) whereas in Hadhramout it was formed of five members representing Hadhramout (GAF) (governmental organization) in five districts. The GAF in both Aden and Hadhramout, as well as the Fisheries Cooperative Union (FCU), were represented in each community committee. Effectively, this reflects a kind of inconsistency as governmental staff forms a committee that represents the project BNFs. Moreover, women's representation in both committees was completely devoid. *"Equal gender representation in the fisheries sector is not an easy or acceptable job due to social considerations that made the sector close to men only,"* a KI stated.

Gender mainstreaming in the design phase

The project considered gender mainstreaming in the project design. RELACC, with a Gender Marker 2 in the design phase, could adequately address gender in the project document. Though fisheries-related studies showed that women's direct presence in the value chain is completely absent³², the project sought to enable women to play some supporting roles in the industry. Notwithstanding, the project aimed to support 1,000 HHs with at least 10% female-headed HHs. The project document explained that the project planned to include women in vocational training, business training, and seed grants. The project indicators note the targeted BNFs of each output and disaggregate it by gender. Though some stakeholders argued that the plan to target 10% only was not fair, the total benefit resulting from improving the livelihood opportunities would include both men and women in the targeted communities. However, it could have been increased to a higher percentage since the vulnerability in the coastal areas is high. At the level of staffing, the project document underlines hiring one female staff but actually two female staff could join forming one-third of the staff. From the Responsible Party (YLDF) side, the team consisted of 70% female staff and 30% male.

Adaptation to the changing context

The project offered a good response to the efforts made to raise awareness of COVID-19, since it came upon the spread of COVID-19. In response to the pandemic, the project contributed to raising the BNFs

³² Fisheries value chain, UNDP, 2020

awareness on methods of protection from the epidemic. Furthermore, the project included new activities for distributing hygiene items and sterilizers.

3.2 Effectiveness: *Has the intervention achieved its objectives?*

Generally, this domain refers to the extent to which the intervention achieved its objectives.

Effectiveness of delivery and results

At the activity and output level, it can be said that the project nearly achieved all of its indicators.

The table below summarizes the project's main results and achievements by location and gender.

Table 3 Activities achievements by location and gender

Results	Activity	Target / Achieved	Aden		Hadhramout		Notes
			M	F	M	F	
Result 1: Targeted fisheries HHs have improved access to self-learning for productive assets in fishing for self-reliance.	300 fishers to receive training on boat engine maintenance and boat maintenance	Target	150	-	150	-	Completed
		Achieved	150	-	150	-	
	100 kits (boats and engines) distribution; each kit to a group of three BNFS	Target	50	-	50	-	Completed
		Achieved	50	-	50	-	
	100 fishing nets distributed to the BNFS benefited from boat and engines maintenance	Target	50	-	50	-	Completed
		Achieved	50	-	50	-	
	500 fishermen to receive training on the use of GPS devices	Target	250	-	250	-	Completed
		Achieved	250	-	250	-	
	500 GPS devices distributed to those who benefited from GPS device training.	Target	250	-	250	-	GPS procured but permission to ship the items from Djibouti to Aden is still pending.
		Achieved	0	-	0	-	
	300 nets distribution to the GPS training and devices BNFS	Target	150	-	150	-	Completed
		Achieved	150	-	150	-	
	100 fishers to receive training on fishing net maintenance	Target	50	-	50	-	Completed
		Achieved	50	-	50	-	
2: Targeted women and youth have improved income opportunity options through micro and	1000 women and youth to get entrepreneurship training	Target	450	150	450	150	989 only (99%)
		Achieved	421	69	439	60	
	500 business plans will be evaluated and each will be granted a seed grant of \$950	Target	200	50	200	50	Completed
		Achieved	183	67	192	58	
	150 coastal women received training on fishing nets maintenance and producing some palm leaf products.	Target	-	-	-	150	Completed
		Achieved	-	-	-	150	

Results	Activity	Target / Achieved	Aden		Hadhramout		Notes
			M	F	M	F	
small-scale enterprises.							

Besides, the following table shows the indicators matrix shows along with the status of their achievement:

Table 4 Achievement by Indicators

Indicator	Output Indicators	Baseline	Target	Status
Indicator 1	# Fishery households benefited from self-learning skills training and equipment (and business skill training	0	1000 HHs	Achieved
Indicator 2	# self-learning fishing equipment provided based on each household's needs	0	100 fishing boats, 100 engines, 500 nets, 500 GPS sonars	Achieved, except for GPS devices which are still expected
Indicator 3	Contribution to enhancing female employment in the fishery industry	0	at least 100 women trained and employed	achieved
Indicator 4	# Selected households provided with 950\$ seeds grant to establish their fishery business	0	500 HHs (at least 10% female-headed households)	Achieved
Indicator 5	# tons/day, # tons/3 months increase of catch quantity by providing fishing assets and training	1.45t/day, 130t/3 months for 1000 HHs	4.5 tons/day, 405 tons/3months for 1000HHs	The project's final report indicated an increase in the quantities of fish caught where Hadhramout recorded 118.2 tons and Aden 3266.8 tons ³³
Indicator 6	% of fishing industry productivity improved through the project (activity 1 and activity 2)	0	2%	Achieved 3.2%
Indicator 7	% of HHs supported by the seeds grants will keep their micro-business as regular income even after the exit of the project	-	80%	Achieved 96%
Indicator 8	# HHs provided with COVID-19 Protective Gears (masks, globes, liquid soaps) and risk mitigation training	0	1000	Achieved

³³ Initial numbers from the draft report

For actualizing benefits, the seed grants PDM report showed that 37 % of BNFs surveyed confirmed that the monthly net income from their enterprises was more than 200,000 YER, 28% between 100,000 and 200,000 YER, and 18% confirmed that their net monthly income ranged from 50,000 to 100,000 YER³⁴.

Effective design

The project was effectively designed. The following points features how the effective design helped in attaining the planned results:

- Providing 100 fishing kits for two governorates was deemed a reasonable number. Several stakeholders agreed that this number is suitable as more boats will lead to depletion or overfishing. *“It is enough to add more fishing boats. We have reached a saturation level in artisanal fishing. Many organizations keep providing production tools without looking into the infrastructure and environmental factors,”* a KI stated.
- The technical specifications of the provided boats considered adding some supplements like a place for an icebox in the boat to enable fishermen to keep their caught fish in good condition and consequently provide good quality fish.
- Providing integrated fishing kits, not separate tools, prevented the sale of these productive assets. A KI pointed out that in previous projects when a fisher gets a fishing net alone, he immediately sells it because he does not own a boat.

Quality of inputs and services

A high satisfaction level was observed over the quality of the delivered inputs. Aden FGDs revealed that the delivered kits were very satisfactory. The same was concluded from the stakeholders’ consultations who confirmed that the deliverables conformed to the standards set at the beginning of the project. *“Aden GAF put detailed specifications of the boats, engines, and nets, which the project committed to,”* a KI stated. FGDs participants confirmed that they received good quality nets and boats. *“We could sail to longer distances with the new boats,”* an FGD participant in Aden said. *“We could capture Tuna (yellowfin fish), which usually requires high-quality fishing nets,”* another participant commented. Nevertheless, some quality issues were reported in Hadhramout. It turns out that the distributed nets had some manufacturing defects, especially in the float pieces. In response to the complaints received, the parts were returned to the supplier for replacement.

The inputs were carefully designed and arranged to achieve their purpose. The boats were designed to be of a suitable size and capacity³⁵ to sail beyond the traditional fishing areas,³⁶ which were subjected to overfishing by local fishermen onboard small boats with limited capacities. *“The objective was to enable the BNFs to explore new fishing areas that are usually exploited by non-licensed fishers from some countries in the region. Moving to new fishing areas would give an opportunity for the growth of fish pastures in the depleted traditional areas,”* a KI explained. With the deterioration of livelihoods on land, the sea received new fishermen for the first time, creating additional pressure on fish resources so much, to the extent that some fish stocks were running out due to the absent role of the fishing extension. To take advantage of the large size of the boats, the project stipulated that one boat is distributed to three fishermen forming a fishing crew equipped with an engine, nets, and the navigation equipment GPS³⁷.

³⁴ Business Startup and Seed Grants PDM report, YLDF

³⁵ The delivered boat size in Aden was 10.3 meters long and Hadhramout 11.5 both with an engine of 40 HP motor.

³⁶ The traditional fishing areas are within 6 nautical miles from the coast line.

³⁷ The original design was that each crew to be consisted of five partners. This design was opposed by some stakeholders who suggested that one boat to one fisher and since the alternative plan was not practical and against the project rationale, it was agreed that the boat would be owned by three fishermen.

Efforts were made to form harmonious groups giving them the freedom to choose their groups. Despite that, there were cases of disputes that forced some individuals to sell their boats, either to their partners or to other fishers³⁸.

Issues highlighted by Hadhramout fishers regarding the delivered inputs were:

- Participants in Hadhramout FGDs raised the issue that the large boats were equipped with small engines. When the evaluator brought this issue to key project staff, he advised that the technical specifications were approved ahead by the authorities pointing out that the boats were designed to sail to a specific distance, but later on, the fishers wished to sail further to capture more fish, which consequently required a stronger engine or additional one. He added that because each boat was distributed to three fishers, it becomes collectively affordable for them to buy a new engine if they wish.
- Hadhramout FGDs highlighted the issue that they were trained on Yamaha engines, but they were given Daihatsu. A project staff member advised that *“Yamaha has no agency in Yemen anymore and there are no fundamental differences between the two types since the maintenance training was limited to basic troubleshooting not purely technical. When the tender was announced, a Daihatsu agent submitted the most suitable technical and financial offer”*.

Similar satisfaction was noticed with the training activities. Participants in male and female FGDs confirmed that the training activities were successful to a high extent. In general, they referred to their experience in terms of qualified trainers, time suitability, suitable venues near their residences, and digestible training materials. However, the following issues were highlighted:

- The first GPS training course in Aden used a training material of a device that was different from the device to be distributed. The miscommunication issue was avoided later.
- The fiberglass raw material requested for the practical activities was not provided according to the requested quantity, which reduced the practical sessions. Moreover, Low-quality safety materials were provided.
- The morning time was not suitable for fishers who come from the sea directly to the training rooms exhausted. In Hadhramout, fishers' training was reported to be in the evening time.

When these issues were discussed with the responsible party (YLDF) staff, it was admitted that they faced such issues in the early courses but all of them were avoided later.

Catalytic effects and positive unintended results were observed. Both UNDP and RP project staff talked about positive echoes created by the project. At the level of UNDP, the project attracted big international institutions like the World Bank and KFW to support the development of the fishery sector in Yemen. *“There are plans underway to launch a big project that aims at the development of the fisheries infrastructure soon. The upcoming project is to be built on the outputs delivered by RELACC and will provide integrated support,”* a KI said. The RP side, on the other hand, talked about some endeavors to copy the intervention to the coastal governorate of Al Hodeida in the north.

HDP nexus approach

The project was development-oriented and operated in a humanitarian context. Some stakeholders pointed out that Yemen is no longer a humanitarian crisis. They argued that it is rather a development crisis, at least in the last three or four years after the war became protracted. Although this statement cannot be completely true as many groups of IDPs are unable to go back their homes, some international

³⁸ As preventive actions, Aden GAF coordinated with the Coast Guard to have a sort of license number for the boats, ownership card under the name of one fisher and two partners.

authentic reports talk about pockets of some degrees of famine in some areas. Hence, the project operated with HDP nexus where it offered development schemes in a humanitarian setting. *“From a donor perspective, it is not a humanitarian project, and it did not come from a humanitarian window,”* a KI confirmed.

The modality of providing income-generating livelihood opportunities rapidly contributed to improving resilience and helped mitigate the effects of the humanitarian crisis resulting from the protracted conflict and also enhanced the resilience of the targeted communities to become less vulnerable to possible shocks. It also proactively served in creating a climate for post-conflict recovery.

Flexibility and responsiveness

The intervention was responsive to BNFs' needs. This statement was concluded from the analysis of different FGDs and key informant interviews (KIIs). *“The project came on time. I have been working onboard other fishers' boats. With the current price rise, my income does not cover my family's needs. The boat gave me a good opportunity to be independent,”* a male BNF said in an FGD in Aden. The only negative point that could be concluded from the BNFs FGDs regarding the responsiveness was that the grant amount of 950 USD was not enough to make a good micro-enterprise due to the inflation and price rise. Several stakeholders suggested that 1500-2000 USD would be a good capital to start up a small enterprise in the fisheries sector. Moreover, female and male BNFs appreciated the project staff's flexibility and responsiveness in the registration, training, and at distribution sites. A KI reported that many creative proposals were submitted by men and women BNFs but the provided seed grant was not adequate for their plan or ambition. Some of them were lucky to have savings to add to their enterprises.

Blend of interrelated activities

The project can be seen as effective in its blend of interrelated activities. The project first focused on the technical training activities where BNFs could get new skills. Following the training, the BNFs received production assets of boats and nets. As in the case of the business training, the training was followed by distributing seed grants of 950 USD to the winning enterprises' proposals. As seen, the activities were interrelated, and coherent and reflect a kind of streamlining that serves the materialization of objectives.

Local market revival

The project contributed to promoting the local economy in the targeted governorates. RELACC promoted the local suppliers when it created a demand to supply considerable inputs and services. The fiberglass boats were locally made and local suppliers were engaged in contracting with international peers to provide the procured nets. As for the training component, long lists of trainers were hired. Training venues and facilities were rented as well.

Communicated grievance mechanism

Accountability could have been better enhanced if the complaints and feedback mechanisms (CFMs) were better communicated. Unexpectedly, variance in BNFs knowledge about the project complaints and feedback mechanisms was observed. While FGDs participants confirmed being aware of the project like phone number and suggestion box others BNFs like in Qussaier and Ar Raidah reported that they had no idea of CFM. Most of those who knew about the project CFM stated that they had no issues to communicate and some of them tried to call, for some inquiries, but there was no answer.

The project did not include an indicator to measure CFM's knowledge awareness, but a PDM concluded that only 25% of the surveyed grant BNFs only do not know about CFM.

When examining the complaints log (prepared by the RP), we found that it covers only two months period (from 19th Dec. 2021 to 15th Feb. 2022). The limitation of the record to such a short period in the life of the project raises doubts about the CFM's effectiveness. The log contained 166 cases only, most of which were queries. 72% of complaints/feedback came from Hadhramout. This confirms that BNFs in Aden were not aware enough of the project CFMs. Though the number of those who could file a

complaint was not that high, 33% of the BNFs surveyed in the grants PDM said they did not get any response to issues they raised. As for the media through which feedback was communicated, around 69% of the feedback was received through WhatsApp and the rest through the hotline (28%) and SMS (3%), which reflects BNFs lack of other available media. From a gender type point of view, 44% were from male BNFs 6% from female BNFs, and 50% from BNFs whose gender was not identified. There were no extra efforts made to follow up on the cases and update the senders' gender in the register to keep a gender-disaggregated register.

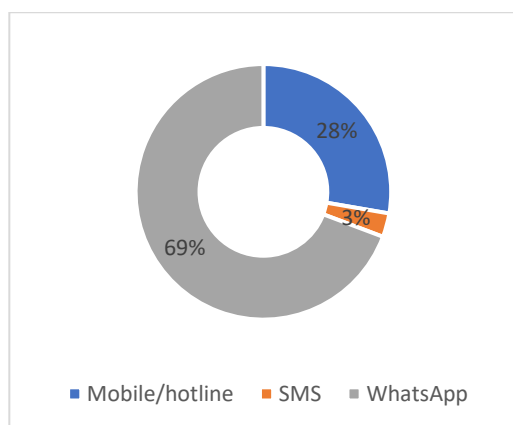


Figure 3 Feedback by media

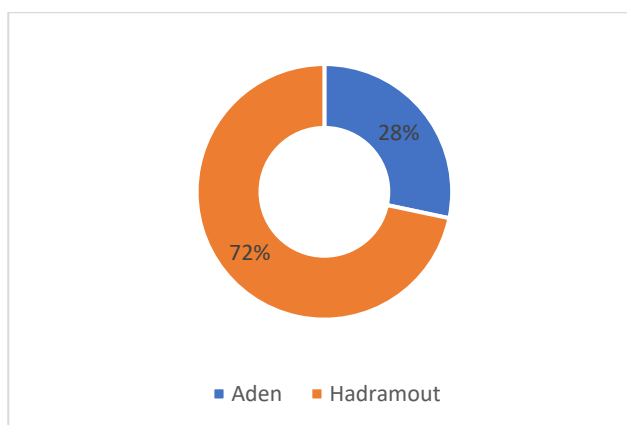


Figure 4 Feedback by governorate

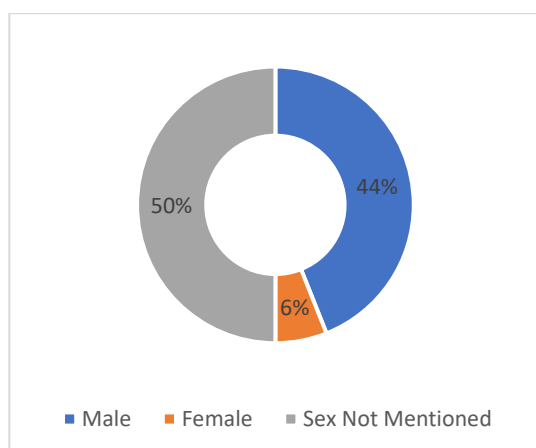


Figure 5 Feedback by gender

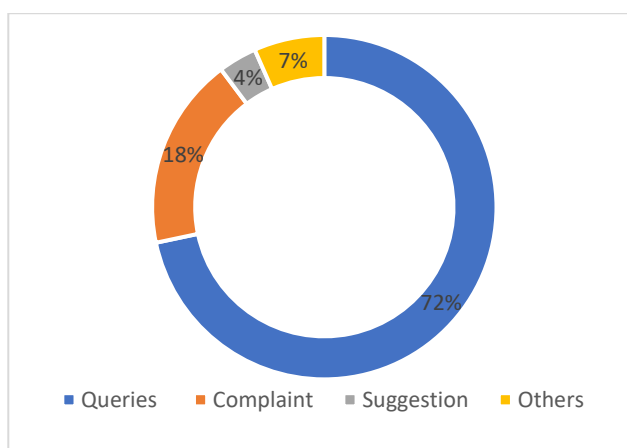


Figure 6 Feedback by type

MEAL contribution

Though there were two layers of MEAL system which were operating in parallel, there were some issues that reduced the effectiveness of some of its components. According to the project document, the project would be monitored through: results progress tracking; monitoring and managing risks; learning; annual project quality assurance; and reporting³⁹. The project MEAL function was led by the RP on the ground. At the same time, the UNDP MELA system was in place mainly to track the progress. Within UNDP project staff, an officer was assigned to be responsible for the MEAL function. However, a KI mentioned that the MEAL function was mainly limited to results progress tracking monitoring. The RP, on the other hand, did not allocate an M&E officer, instead the role was left to the RP M&E unit which is responsible for different projects. “The M&E unit was responsible to handle the registration and verification processes as well as on-site monitoring, and post-distribution monitoring”, a KI indicated. What undermined the monitoring endeavors here was the absence of third-party monitoring (TPM)

³⁹ Project document

which is usually resorted to when it is inaccessible to their staff to perform direct monitoring⁴⁰. Additionally, the TPM will ensure offering an unbiased viewpoint on the project performance instead of relying on the RP.

The accountability component lacked segregation of responsibilities. Complaints and feedback were channeled to the RP MEAL unit only unlike the best practices that usually assign BNFs complaints and feedback to the commissioning organization staff so that the RP is being observed and held accountable in case of any failure.

As is the case of learning, this component was of an active contribution. The project could capture knowledge, good practices, and gender-sensitive learning products. The products reviewed included ‘*A Tale of Two Seas*’, and ‘*Yemeni Fisherfolk, A Legacy as Rich as the Sea*’⁴¹.

Collaboration with different stakeholders

Remarkable close engagement of related stakeholders was seen and such collaboration efforts paid off. There was a unified consensus among stakeholders that their close engagement was one of the most factors that contributed to the project’s achievement. The primary stakeholders of fisheries authorities in both governorates were satisfied with the coordination level in all project phases. The same impression was found also in the local authorities who facilitated the project activities on the ground. National wise, the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation (MOPIC) was the first interface that the project coordinated with and facilitated the coordination with the concerned authorities. The consulted stakeholders appreciated the idea of establishing a project board to oversee the project. “UNDP is the only organization that steers its project by a board that combines the relevant stakeholders which gives its projects enabling environment to succeed,” a KI said. While the project board was active during the design period, there were criticisms of the interruption of its meetings during the implementation and closing period, although communication remained individual.

Gender mainstreaming, equality, and women empowerment

RELACC activities were designed based on understanding of gender roles and relationships in the coastal society. The project included some activities that were targeted at the needs of women, such as vocational training, entrepreneurship training, and provision of seed grants. While Aden female BNFs did not receive vocational training, their counterparts in Hadhramout received a training course on making products out of palm fronds. According to a KII, Aden GAF belittled the importance of such training and therefore it was canceled on the basis that palm fronds products are not popular in Aden coastal areas like Hadhramout. “Weaving and maintaining of fishing nets was an alternative, but it was not considered”, a KI said. Out of 129 women who participated in the entrepreneurship training, 125 women were given a seed grant of 950 USD whose enterprise proposal met the selection criteria.

In the same context as the project design, the project included a gender focal point assigned to support gender mainstreaming. Project documents involved gender-segregated data that help in identifying gender inequalities and building gender-oriented responses.

Gender was considered in the capacity assessment held at the beginning of the project. Four FGDs were organized to identify the special needs of coastal women in areas that could help them enhance their families’ livelihoods. Hadhramout FGDs participants indicated that the main preferred profession in their areas is to make products of palm fronds. However, they indicated that sewing, henna designs, livestock raising, and hairdressing could be interesting livelihood training. Similarly, the FGDs in Aden came up with similar results.

⁴⁰ The desk review showed that only three spot check visits were done throughout the project duration

⁴¹ Published in May 2021

Despite the consultations that took place with the women, the project management pushed women to adopt enterprise plans related to the fisheries sector. Attendees of the entrepreneurship training were requested to present enterprise proposals to be granted seed capital. The project management insisted on linking the proposals with the fisheries value chain though it was not preferred. Some consulted stakeholders noted that providing the fishermen's HHs with income opportunities outside the fishing industry would diversify their income, instead of relying on the sea as their main source of income, which is primarily unstable, and would also help decrease the likelihood of overfishing. When this issue was brought to the project staff, the consequences were minimized. *"We are working in a specific value chain and there are other funds that provide traditional handcraft training opportunities. The value chain study shows that women are engaged in processing and marketing. Moreover, this is a pilot project that UNDP could learn the extent to which women can add to the fisheries value chain,"* a project staff member explained. Another challenge that resulted from narrowing the scope was in terms of ideas being similar. The grantees' lists showed how the winning enterprises were similar in their proposition of the products/services provided and thus competitiveness may limit the success of the enterprises, especially if the providers' locations are close to each other⁴².

The stakeholders who opposed the idea of linking women's projects to the fisheries sector value chain justified their argument that there are certain seasons when fishermen cannot go to the sea and thus their source of livelihood is interrupted. If both men and women depend on the sea together, the family would be most probably exposed to a real threat. This was confirmed by a case study found in a female FGD in Al Buriqa district, Aden governorate where a participant working in renting fishing nets to fishers said that the high wind speed prevented her fisherman husband from going to the sea, and at the same time, she cannot rent her nets.

It was evident that coastal women's associations were not actively involved in the planning and implementation of the project. For those involved with the project, their roles were restricted to nominating women beneficiaries only, although many of them are active in their fields and their contribution could have been more positive.

Low representation of female BNFs could have been increased to a higher percentage. The percentage of women who were targeted was only 10%. Many stakeholders advised to increase this percentage because it was unfair at all. A project staff member attributed this low percentage to some reasons, including the project being a pilot initiative in the fisheries sector, and normally a low percentage is wisely taken. Besides, the value chain does not show a wider involvement of women in the sector. Nevertheless, this target was overachieved when 129 women instead of 100 were targeted with training. *"The over-age fishermen nominated for training were encouraged to suggest someone in their families attend the training on their behalf and women were prioritized,"* a KI stated.

The training activities considered the need to meet women's availability timing and privacy. Female FGDs revealed that they were taken into account while choosing suitable training times. Moreover, female staff trainers were provided in respect of the local norms and traditions to ensure trainees' privacy. Conversely, women were not included in positions of decision-making in communal structures, such as the community committee.

Additional efforts were made to enhance women empowerment. In an encouraging step to promote women enterprises, an exhibition of the female BNFs products was established in both Aden and Hadramout. According to one of the monitoring reports, *"A Bazar for the coastal women has been conducted in one of the malls in Mukalla. The BNFs showed their products which varied between handcrafts, food, and net making and most of the items have been sold"*⁴³. This exhibition could be viewed as an attempt by the project to address inequalities in general, and gender issues in particular. Though it was innovative to hold such events, it was noticed that the duration was very limited; one day. The RP justified that it was due to budget limitations when the USD exchange rate dropped dramatically at that time

⁴² Aden female BNFs are located in one district; Al Buriqa.

⁴³ Back to Office Monitoring Report - RELACC RFF - Jan2022

making it difficult to host the participants who came from remote areas. It would have been possible for the RP to make an exceptional request to fund the event to increase its effectiveness.



Picture 3 from the female BNFs products exhibition held in Al Mukalla, Hadramout. © Photo credit to YLDF

There is scant proof that the project was successful in significantly advancing gender equality. GE is about providing equal access to resources and opportunities for all people, regardless of gender including economic participation and decision-making. In the case of Yemen, the country has a long negative history with the Global Gender Gap Index (GGGI) for women's equality and therefore it is not realistic to talk about gender equality. The project inclusion of women was quite low which means no equal opportunity was provided. The women's low presence in the fisheries sector value chain is one of the factors behind this limitation. However, RELACC could engage women in a new field paving the way for more and better women engagement.

The inclusion of women in the project that mainly targets small-scale fishermen can be viewed as a goodwill gesture to cope with the principle but with limited targeting and inputs, the impact is not that substantial. Nevertheless, the project failed to push women to take a representative role, let alone a leadership role in the two community committees.

Women empowerment in its different forms was limitedly approached. Out of the economic, social, educational, political, and psychological empowerment forms, economic empowerment can be only initially noticed. The project could push the targeted women to get some income opportunities. If the project succeeded in getting the targeted women to realize sustained income, then we can say the project contributed to realizing economic empowerment. Though the sample of female BNFs consulted during the FGDs confirmed that they initially could make some revenues, the evaluator couldn't issue a final judgment on the volume of this economic empowerment at this early stage of their enterprises. An impact or longitudinal study would confirm the extent to which economic empowerment could reach.

No strong evidence of social empowerment was observed as there was no evidence of providing any enabling force that boosts women's social relations and their situation in the social structure⁴⁴. However, we cannot ignore the change of roles reported by some women BNFs who became breadwinners of their families or contributors. In this context, there was a possibility to facilitate the registered women getting national IDs, but it was not seized. It was reported that those who did not have national IDs had some trouble while receiving the grants. Helping these vulnerable women get IDs could have been arranged to add value in terms of protection and social empowerment. Moreover, vocational empowerment could be achieved to some extent. The project scope anyway justified why educational, political, and psychological types of empowerment were not tackled.

Another factor that the project undermined GEWE was the society's rejection of any change that might be caused by assigning any new role to women. A KI mentioned that it was not easy to get the target number of women. *"Key stakeholders resisted the inclusion of women in the project and belittled the women*

⁴⁴ International Forum of Teaching and Studies, Vol. 9 No. 2 2013

activities value calling for shifting activities in favor of men,” a KI stated. A deeper analysis of gender dynamics in the coastal areas would have better informed the project design about the roles. Another KI also blamed some of the women who preferred to remain in the shadows. *“There are women who benefited from the entrepreneurship training and grants but in the end, they submitted their enterprises to their husbands to run, either because of social limitations related to women's work or because of their fear of any family problems that may erupt,”* a KI said. This implies the heavy social heritage related to women's position in the community. This hard-to-penetrate attitude requires long-term change efforts and investment in education to the extent that society values the importance of women's role in any development process.

Donors' visibility and communication

Remarkable efforts were made to ensure good visibility and communication. The donor visibility was clearly seen on the boats distributed as well as in different pictures or materials that showed the project visibility items, banners, and news. The BNFs in Aden had an alternative name for the project calling it “the Japanese assistance/grant”. As for communication, both UNDP and RP made good efforts to cover the project activities news on their social media pages⁴⁵. In contribution to the communication, the RP also shared with the evaluator a brochure and a video on the project objectives.

3.3 Efficiency: *How well are resources being used?*

Budgetary performance

The project's overall cost efficiency was acceptable. Starting with the project budget, if the project cost efficiency was calculated per capita, the project seems to be relatively expensive as the 3.5 million budgeted project could only reach 1000 BNFs with a unit cost of around USD 3500 per HH. However, project outputs were considered, and benefits were realized to be of a long-term prospective, which may contribute to sustained changes in livelihoods for a wide range of small-scale fishers HHs. If we remove the operation and support cost, the direct amount spent on actualizing the planned outcome comes to 74% of the overall budget. Project management costs constituted 19% only as UNDP covered part of the management personnel costs. In addition, the budget was committed to the UNDP General Management Support (GMS) fee of 7% which was approved by the donor. To the well financial resources planning, there was no need for re-allocation between outputs. In general, there was a good overall budgetary performance. Overall, according to the evaluator's insights into the planned budget published in the project document and actual expenditures report, the project implemented the activities according to the planned budget. Besides, many respondents agreed that the project results justify the incurred cost. Thus, we can conclude that the project cost efficiency is acceptable providing benefits for both women and men.

Utilization of resources

There are many instances of good resource utilization. The project staff reported they ensured to strictly follow the relevant procurement policies and procedures. They stated that tenders for each procurement activity were openly advertised. *“We ensure to select the best quotation in terms of price*

⁴⁵ The two hashtags; #RELACC and #هيلا_يا_صيد were used in UNDP and YLDF facebook and twitter pages as coverage threads which included news and public relation promotion of the project objectives.

and quality,” a project staff member said. *“We did our best to make the best value for money by purchasing high-quality materials from local markets to reduce import and transportation costs”*, another staff commented. Balancing cost and quality implied following best practices and an attempt to ensure efficiency.

The project made use of the already available training curriculum with UNDP, RP, and other actors instead of developing new materials from scratch, which was a costly and time-consuming process. However, the training materials were subjected to some adaptation and updates to fit project objectives and trainees. Moreover, the project hired qualified trainers⁴⁶ to deliver the training within four main activities (entrepreneurship, boat, engine, fishing nets maintenance, and GPS training), which certainly saved a considerable amount of money. The use of volunteers to facilitate training activities, which were held concurrently, reduced the staffing cost.

Of the efforts made to control costs and enhance project efficiency:

- The project structure outlined in the project document reflected a kind of efficiency. The small local team was led by an international project manager and included a national coordinator, a finance and administration officer, an M&E officer, and two fisheries consultants. Including technical consultants added value not only to the UNDP team but also to the RP team as their technical assistance and advisory support were provided to both. In terms of team costs, UNDP covered the costs of three staff by 40%.
- The project's structure reflected the existence of adequate resources for gender analysis, data collection, and gender equality (GE) mainstreaming.
- The project made use of some resources to address GEWE which were consistent with the equivalent outcomes attained.
- Despite all the points raised regarding the ineffectiveness of some of the MEAL components, the M&E framework satisfactorily allowed for good follow-up of the project activities.
- It was reported that saving was made from a budget line due to some items' price decrease and the saving was reallocated within the RP budget and reinvested.
- Depending on a local partner instead of direct implementation contributed to saving as UNDP operation cost is usually high and at the same time the local partner has more agility at the field level.
- Except for Hadhramout fishing nets BNFs, most other BNFs reported that the inputs and services were of good quality. Providing high-quality deliverables from the first time prevented repetition and failure.
- When the engines were procured, it was ensured to select the offer that guaranteed the availability of spare parts.

Though it was concluded that the project structure worked efficiently in general, some issues could have been improved to increase efficiency:

- Accountability could have been enhanced if a room was put for a TPM and the feedback mechanism was channeled to the UNDP MEAL unit, not to the RP.
- It was reported that the project board was only active in the design phase. There was no reference to meetings in the implementation and closing phases which could have pushed the results further.

⁴⁶ As confirmed by the consulted FGDs participants.

- Miscommunication between UNDP and RP teams could have been better to avoid some cases of misunderstanding. The RP side claimed that they started the fieldwork without being updated on the agreement signed between the UNDP and relevant governmental bodies, which caused some challenges. Training the first GPS course trainees on a device other than the expected one is another example of miscommunication.
- Though the project could achieve its objectives with the help of a local partner, some stakeholders, especially in Aden, highlighted some issues related to the RP including poor performance and miscoordination. When this point was brought to the RP side, the RP highlighted the difficult operational environment in Aden which took them three weeks to get the permits while it took only three days in Hadhramout. It is recommended to ensure selecting the RP with good access and acceptance. Furthermore, it was reported that the RP field coordinator who was behind some miscommunication issues was fired as a corrective action.

Time Management

Despite the efforts made to keep the progress on track, some activities or deliverables were delayed.

There was an agreement among different respondents including the project staff and RP that the project experienced several delay issues. Though the project started and ended on time and achieved nearly all the planned activities, some internal activities faced delay problems. In BNFs FGDs, participants pointed out the long time between registration and receiving their assistance. *“There was a long time between our registration and the reception of the nets to the extent that some of us thought it would not be delivered,”* a male BNF participant in an FGD in Aden commented.

The distribution of nets and GPS were the most remarkable delay issues. While writing this report, the evaluator came to know that the last batch of fishing nets distribution was finally completed. A project staff member indicated that the GPS devices could not be shipped from Djibouti to Yemen for political and security reasons. Though the shipping failure could be considered a force majeure case, efforts were still made to facilitate their import.

As concluded from different KIIs, the delays could be attributed to some reasons, the top of which are:

- The internal procurement process took a long time, especially when the fishing nets were procured. A KII claimed that the purchase was through a general services office, not a specialized supplier.
- Hard operational environments and bureaucratic obstructions obligated the project to request many permits from different authorities, which were supposed to come from and be processed at one window in the ideal situation.
- COVID-19 pandemic consequences.

Concerning suitability of activities delivery times, there was relatively positive feedback from different BNFs. Whereas some trainers stated that the morning time was not good for fishermen who usually spend the whole night at the sea, other trainers indicated that their courses were off the fishing season. Hence, it is recommended to consider avoiding the fishing season (months of November, October, and December) to maximize the training value. For maintaining trainees' commitment to frequently attend sessions, the project management took into account that the training places should be close to their

residences, selecting well-equipped venues, providing refreshments and daily transportation allowance⁴⁷.

The waiting times at the distribution points were generally reported to be short⁴⁸, though crowdedness was referred to by some respondents. Moreover, a project member indicated further facilitation provided by the project as a mobile team targeted the cash BNFs in remote areas.

Other points related to efficiency

- Despite all the highlighted obstacles, the project went according to its plan and no extension was considered.
- The RP had a kind of budget inflexibility. Two instances confirmed this point: Case 1: when it was suggested to add a training course on fish extension; Case 2: when the female BNFs exhibition could not be extended. In both cases, rejection was on the basis of budget limitation while some justified re-allocation of budget lines would fix the issue.
- According to different stakeholders, there was no duplication of the same intervention in the targeted areas except in Al Mukalla district where GIZ provided a limited intervention providing some boats and training.



Picture 4 A BNF fishermen prepares fishing nets in preparation for sailing

3.4 Sustainability: *Will the benefits last?*

Initial findings demonstrated that the project's outputs had sustainable prospects. The project activities specifically focused on rebuilding livelihoods and capacities. The project invested a notable percentage in physical long-lasting productive assets and handed most of them over to the targeted BNFs, which helped them generate appropriate incomes. The GPS devices, expected to arrive later, will also help them to safely reach the fishing places and thus achieve greater benefit. Benefit actualization was confirmed by most of the nets and boats BNFs consulted in the FGDs. They also confirmed that the benefit is likely to continue. The evaluator found the same impression with the grants BNFs. When some female BNFs were asked about whether the fears that their enterprises would not last long as enthusiasm might be reduced over time,

⁴⁷ Dispensed by the end of the course not on daily basis.

⁴⁸ cash distribution sites and currency exchange points

they belittled these fears and indicated that they had real responsibilities that only their enterprises would help.

The seeds grants PDM confirmed the sustainability possibility of the newly formed enterprises. The report indicated that 80% of HHs supported by the seed's grants will keep their micro-business as a regular income even after the exit of the project. Besides, it showed that 28% of the surveyed BNFs confirmed that they will appropriately spend the profits on raising their capital, 4% on paying off their debts, 16% on personal savings, and 38% will spend their profit on household expenses. Others believed that they will spend the profits on personal expenses and opening new enterprises⁴⁹. Unfortunately, the data is not gender-disaggregated from the source.

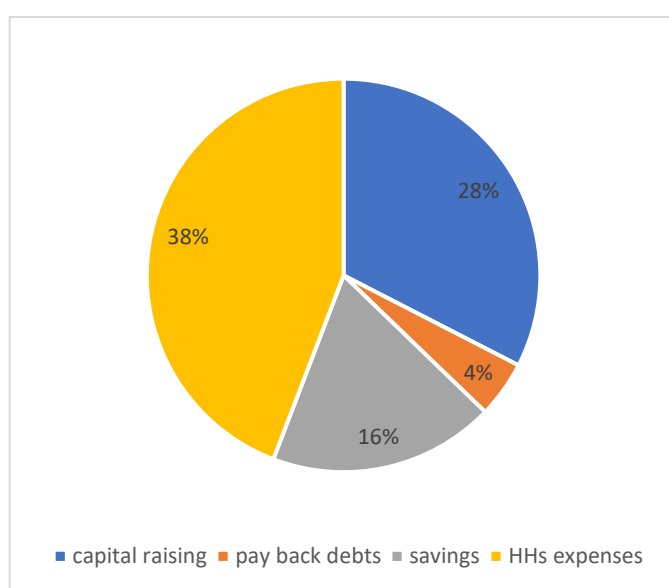


Figure 7 Grants BNFs use of their enterprises profits

The project's integrated activities created opportunities for sustainability. The training program on boats, fishing nets, and engine maintenance helped fishers maintain these assets for a long time and helped them save on maintenance costs. Entrepreneurship training, seed grants, and mentoring paid to the formed enterprises of both women and men BNFs contributed to deepening the benefit and its continuance. Outputs of the training components had the potential to support the provided inputs more sustainably. Moreover, different stakeholders had a uniform consensus that the project outputs were sustainable, which provides reassurance of the early probable sustainability.

Although the evaluator has a strong sense of sustainable project outputs, it is highly recommended to carry out an impact evaluation to assess project's impact and sustainability in the medium and longer term.

Certain steps could have further improved the sustainability of the outputs if were well considered:

- **Fish extension and quality control training courses could have been added to the training program to enhance sustainability.** Although the maintenance training provided to fishers

⁴⁹ Business Startup and Seed Grants PDM Report, YLDF, Sep. 2022

proved to be effective, some other training courses were deemed to be of great importance and would enhance the sustainability of outputs. As concluded from different KIIs, raising the capabilities of fishermen in issues related to fish extension, handling practices and quality control would have led to better results. *“Some organizations provide training on the maintenance of boats and engines from time to time and it would have been better with the generous support of the UNDP to include a unique training program different from the repetitive ones,”* a KI suggested. Another KI highlighted the absent role of fish extension among fishermen to the extent that they practice fishing with no awareness of the proper catching season to exploit and the breeding season to avoid. However, it is recommended to coordinate with other organizations working in this field to target RELACC BNFs with the suggested training in their upcoming activities.

- **Linking those who received seed grants with microfinance banks would enable them to secure future loans to scale up their enterprises.** The grants were distributed through a microfinance bank. However, it was a distribution process only. The BNFs were not sensitized to open bank accounts and know about loan opportunities. Similarly, it is recommended to coordinate with relevant organizations mandated in improving the micro-enterprises to offer mentorship and support to scale up the created enterprises as they are in a critical stage of their life cycle.
- **Strengthening the existing capacities would leverage the sustainability of the intervention.** Investing in the capacity or institutional building of the key fish cooperatives would add value to the sustainability of the outputs. Capacity building could mainly have focused on replacing the ineffective manual work processes with automated ones through providing some information technology IT hardware/software along with some related training courses.

The context is uncertain concerning the capacity and willingness of government agencies to build on project outputs. The conflict in Yemen has no predictable end though the country is in a truce extended two times so far. Continuation of current conditions will lead to further deterioration in the performance of government agencies, which threatens the expected role of relative authorities in building on the project outcomes. *“The MFW does not have resources that would enable it to bring about a radical change for the advancement of the fish sector at the time being,”* a KI said. However, a different optimistic perspective was concluded from another governmental source who assured the evaluator that the government has an ambitious plan to invest in the fisheries sector development. The plan he referred to involves the rehabilitation of some landing sites along with the improvement of some basic services. As such, it may be concluded that the context remains uncertain regarding the state's directions in the short run. It is specifically unknown to what extent the government is planning to benefit from the outputs of the project and whether there are effective plans to make use of the potential resources that the fisheries sector can provide if it is better managed and developed.

Consulted stakeholders mentioned some regional and international organizations that had similar interventions in the fisheries sector including Emirates Red Crescent, King Salman Center, GIZ and SMEPS, etc. However, they indicated that all these interventions were of limited objectives and did not provide comprehensive or integrated benefits.

The project, as per the consensus by all stakeholders, did not pose an environmental or social threat. The commitment to environmental consideration was in the favor of the sustainability of project outputs. *“The number and size of boats provided are suitable because if the number was larger and size was smaller, it would deepen the overfishing problem,”* a KI said. Thus, the project design helped in sustainability. Socially, the project did not create societal disputes over the provided benefits. In the FGDs held with some community members who did not benefit from the project, the evaluator found

good understanding with a natural feeling of jealousy, but in any case, it did not cause division or animosity. Overall, we can conclude that the project was of social and environmental compliance.

The evaluation has revealed the existence of a good sense of ownership towards the project outputs. Primary stakeholders' sense of ownership allowed for project benefits to be sustained. *"When we came to know that some boat partners started to quarrel among themselves and sell their boats, we took preventive actions; we stopped their remaining share of the fishing nets and blacklisted them from any future support,"* a KI confirmed. Moreover, as preventive actions, Aden GAF coordinated with the Coast Guard to issue a sort of license number for the boats, and registration ID card under the name of one fisher and two partners. The close engagement of the relevant and active actors succeeded in fostering this sense of ownership.

Regarding the GEWE, RELACC could throw a stone into the stagnant water. Though the contribution of the project to GEWE was not high for objective reasons, related to the modest input; economic empowerment only and the limited percentage of women targeted, it encouraged its advancement. Those who were rejecting the idea of women's inclusion, in the early stages of the project, changed their minds after the project management could convince them of the necessity to address women's needs. The project could attract attention to the coastal women's needs and their success in their enterprises will reflect their potential abilities and they can contribute to the development of the fisheries sector in particular and their communities in general. It is highly essential to carry forward the results attained through continuous support that builds on outputs for further enhancement.

3.5 Cross-Cutting issues: *Were they considered?*

Human rights

The project was developed with a human rights-based approach that sought to reach vulnerable coastal communities through improving access to livelihoods. Mainstreaming human rights in development-related projects mainly means that the principles of inclusivity of vulnerable groups are upheld and rights are protected.

Human rights principles were found to be aligned with the project design and implementation to a good extent in terms of the following: points:

- The core idea of the project; rebuilding livelihoods and capacities of conflict-affected small-scale fisheries HHs has connotations related to human rights and decent living
- The project was of a gender-inclusive approach involving both men and women in the design and implementation. However, if the women percentage was representative, it would be a real embodiment of the human rights principles in this regard.
- The project communicated a CFM to ensure getting feedback on the project activities. The complaints records were free from sensitive issues and most of the recorded feedback was inquiries about eligibility, times of distribution, and so on.
- The project sought to include IDP BNFs but for contextual reasons, it could only target IDPs in Aden (see IDPs section below).
- The project respected local norms where activities related to women were ensured to consider gender intermingling and privacy issues.
- A convenient environment was ensured to be provided in different training venues.
- The project was aligned with the principle of 'do-no-harm' and no environmental threat posed by the project.
- In response to the COVID-19 measures, efforts were made on awareness and distribution of sterilizers for BNFs, especially during training activities.

Gender equality and women empowerment

UNDP undertook some steps to underline the importance of GEWE. As highlighted in previous sections (see Gender equality and women empowerment under effectiveness section), UNDP made certain actions to emphasize the significance of GEWE. These actions can be highlighted as follows:

- **Project document indicated the project is classified as gender marker 2.** This approach ensured that GE is the main objective of the project/program and is fundamental in its design and expected results. The project/program would not have been undertaken without this WE objective⁵⁰. This was evident in the gender disaggregated results framework where women and men were pushed to benefit from the project. Though the percentage is not equal, the project staff attributed the low representation of women to the fact that women are limitedly present in the fisheries value chain and the piloting aspect of the project. In this context, it is highly recommended to carry out a gender analysis to better understand the dynamics, needs, and roles before the project design. Other efforts credited to the project include the increase of the targeted women in business training from 100 to 126 women and overcoming the social barriers of limiting women's roles.
- The project risk matrix included the risk that intra-household tension and conflict on project benefits would lead to domestic violence and GBV. However, this risk was tackled with practical mitigation measures that included:
 - Clear and transparent targeting process with shared and accepted eligibility criteria for BNFs.
 - Awareness creation with culturally sensitive messaging on the importance of gender inclusion.
 - Men must be addressed equally to women.
 - Local leaders were involved in the awareness of the importance of women's program intervention.
 - Awareness campaigning and monitoring intra-household tension/conflict on social cohesion⁵¹.

Although there was a variety of evidence of women cases whose roles have changed from being housewives to contributors to family income, suggesting some sort of shift in gender roles or a change in power relations, many of the stakeholders interviewed and those who participated in the focus group discussions confirmed that no cases of gender-based violence were reported.

- The presence of women as project staff members in both UNDP and RP staff was fair. In both organizations, female staff had leadership roles. At UNDP, the national coordinator and gender focal point is a female staff member at a senior level. The fisheries specialist (consultant) also is another female staff member. The RP team is led by female staff in the position of project coordinator and the team also involves a female field coordinator.

IDPs and persons with disability

The project selection criteria ensured to target the vulnerable community members, but due to contextual objective reasons, IDPs and persons with disability (PWDs) were not widely included. According to the IOM Yemen Rapid Displacement Tracking (RDT)⁵², there is a high presence of IDPs much

⁵⁰ Handbook on the OECD-DAC Gender Equality Policy Marker

⁵¹ Project document

⁵² <https://dtm.iom.int/yemen>

more than the case in Hadhramout. This could be due to its proximity to the conflict areas and other social reasons. Some fishermen IDPs, mainly displaced from the northern areas (mainly Hodeida Governorate), works in fishing which was their original source of livelihood. The project could include some of them according to some consulted stakeholders. The BNFs lists did not show the locality status; IDP or host community member⁵³. On the contrary, no IDPs works in the fisheries sector in Hadhramout according to identical indications from several consulted stakeholders. As for PWDs inclusion, it is understood that the nature of the fishing profession entails physical strength and capability to overcome the dangers of sailing. However, the evaluator came across one case of a person in a wheelchair in Aden who benefited from the nets maintenance training. It is not clear that women with disabilities were not included in business training and grants which could have been a suitable opportunity. The underrepresentation of women, IDPs, and PWDs is not a discrimination act but rather an adaptation of the context.



Picture 5 while talking to a BNF with special needs in Al Areesh, Aden

Some stakeholders raised the question of why old men (above 50 years) were excluded from the project selection criteria. The project staff indicated two main reasons for this exclusion; old men do not frequently go to the sea, and they cannot be active in training. Instead, they were encouraged to nominate their sons and daughters to attend the training activities on their behalf.

4. Conclusions

Despite the challenging operational context, RELACC successfully met its general goals to a good extent. High levels of relevance, effectiveness, and efficiency were maintained, producing significant effects, the majority of which are of sustainable potential.

To the relevance of the project, it timely addressed the coastal community needs in Aden and Hadhramout with a specific focus on the small-scale fishers and their HHs affected by the conflict and climate change consequences. While the direct benefit of the targeted fishermen was represented in obtaining fishing kits, vocational and entrepreneurship training, and seed grants, the fishermen's community, in general, benefited from boats with high capabilities that enabled their owners to sail longer distances, thus reducing the practices of overfishing in conventional fishing areas.

Though women BNFs were given a low percentage, the project designed appropriate gender-sensitive selection criteria that aimed at targeting vulnerable coastal households who lost their income sources and taking into account women's empowerment and human rights. The project came in harmony with the relevant government policies aimed at developing the fish sector because of its great importance to the national economy . Although the project was primarily developmental, provision of livelihood

⁵³ A KII mentioned that it was done on purpose to avoid any possible provocation of the host community against the IDPs.

opportunities in the current context has strengthened the humanitarian intervention program. RELACC can be viewed also as a reflection of some SDGs, particularly (SDG 1): no poverty, (SDG 5): gender equality, and (SDG 8) decent work and economic growth.

One of the contributing factors to the success of this project was the positive interaction shown by the main stakeholders as a result of their active involvement since the conceptualization of the project. As for GEWE, the project has the gender marker 2, which means that GE was a dominant goal. The evaluation revealed that good efforts were made to mainstream gender throughout the project phases.

At output and activity levels, the project achieved its objectives to a good extent due to the coherent and well-designed activities. The delivery of GPS devices is the only remaining activity due to reasons out of UNDP control. A high satisfaction level was recorded regarding the quality of the delivered inputs and services. The project could bring positive catalytic results as new donors were attracted to intervene in the development of the fisheries sector and local parties expressed their intention to replicate the project in other governorates.

UNDP could have reinforced its MEAL system by putting room for TPM, handling the grievance issues directly, and increasing the awareness of the CFMs. The evaluation showed good gender mainstreaming practices in the design and implementation phases. The low representation of women was attributed to contextual factors associated with the fisheries value chain in which women have very limited roles and women's inclusion was just a pilot.

In general, there was a good overall budgetary performance and acceptable cost efficiency. Many stakeholders agreed that the project results justify the cost of activities. There were many instances of good resource utilization including efficient project structure, providing high-quality deliverables, making use of the already available resources, good follow-up of the project activities, and investing the re-allocated savings. The project created a demand to supply considerable inputs and services making a good promotion for the local economy of the targeted two governorates. Some delivery delays were reported. Some of these delays were due to some internal procedures and some of which were out of UNDP control.

The nature of the project outputs foretells the potential sustainability. What makes this finding affirmative is the nature of the integrated activities that created opportunities for sustainability. Certain steps could have further improved the sustainability of the outputs if were well considered including adding fish extension and quality control training courses to the training program, strengthening the existing capacities, and linking grantees with microfinance institutions.

RELACC showed good commitment to integrating and mainstreaming the cross-cutting issues of human rights, and gender equality through the project stages. It adopted a gender lens throughout the whole process and sought to include vulnerable people to benefit from the assistance.

5. Lessons learned

Out of the above analysis, the following points sum up the lessons learned for future similar livelihoods initiatives:

- Investment in supporting the fisheries sector in Yemen is considered an appropriate intervention due to its importance and high contribution to the national economy. The return on investment is actualized in the short term in terms of employing intensive labor, food security, and resilience building. In the long term, it will contribute to economic recovery and sustainable development. However, the needs in the fisheries sector are huge. Many stakeholders underlined the necessity of shifting the focus from providing more boats and fishing tools to rehabilitating the infrastructure. Providing more boats has become a burden on the conventional fishing areas in the absence of proper fish extension and suitable supporting facilities.
- Providing livelihood opportunities to fishers' communities does not mean sticking firmly to the value chain. The enterprises created by the female BNFs could have been non-fisheries to support their husbands on off-seasons and contribute to diversifying family income sources.
- Adopting a participatory approach and close engagement of the primary stakeholders in the different project stages is one of the key factors of development project success. The UNDP idea of setting up a project board to steer and oversee the project proved to be practical. Engaging the primary stakeholders in selecting the targeted areas, BNFs selection criteria, modality, and other details enhance their buy-in and lead to an increase in their sense of ownership toward the project outputs.
- Weaving and maintaining fishing nets can be a good activity for women.
- Adopting innovative ways to aware BNFs of the CFM is essential when the conventional methods fail. When the responsible party (YLDF) made an SMS broadcast to BNFs, the complaints and feedback reporting sharply increased.
- Good gender mainstreaming entails that gender perspectives are crucial to all activities. Scheduling the project activities according to the suitable timing of both genders made it easy for both of them to attend the activities smoothly. Besides, respecting privacy and local norms encouraged women's participation.
- Although the inclusion of women was not widely welcomed at the beginning of the project, the tireless endeavors changed the mentality of the opposing stakeholders 180 degrees. Hence, change can be accepted by society if assurances are given to respect the social traditions and at the same time, the women's planned benefit is well illustrated.
- Public relations efforts and project activities communicated through social media made a catalytic effect. It attracted other donors and related authorities to replicate the project.
- Of the efficiency practices highlighted in this project that proved to be successful include allocating a notable percentage amount or investing in direct physical inputs, procuring high-quality goods and services, making use of the already available training curriculum with UNDP, responsible party, and other agencies instead of developing new materials from scratch saved resources and efforts and ensuring to purchase inputs that guarantee the availability of spare parts.
- The provision of an integrated fishing kit is much more useful than providing separate tools. Previous experiences show that distributing fishing tools such as engines only or nets only does not constitute a great benefit to fishers who lack the rest of the tools, so they resort to selling them immediately.
- Investing in training and capacity building has the potential to support the provided inputs more sustainably.

6. Recommendations

First and foremost, it is strongly advised that UNDP keep up the outstanding work they do in their various programs, especially the outstanding practices highlighted in the above sections. Before listing the recommended actions, it is worth highlighting the importance of expediting the delivery of the remaining tools (GPS devices) as soon as possible so that the project BNFs can get the paramount benefit as planned. For future replications, the following recommendation might be considered:

Recommendations to UNDP

Relevance

1. Consider institutional development of related institutions when designing development programs, as the weakness of institutions is in the first place the root of the problem. Institutional development will have an added value in deepening the benefit. Strengthening existing capacities would also increase the sustainability of the intervention and ensure long-term development. Institutional development can be done after a diagnostic analysis of targeted institutions with the main focus on capacity building and strategic management.
2. Engage BNFs and stakeholders more directly in the detailed design of the project to ensure a more buy-in attitude and work on making board meetings more regular in all project stages.

Effectiveness

3. Recruit technical specialists at the beginning of the project; at design phase to benefit from their technical advice and produce a more robust design based on facts and relevant experience.
4. Conduct related studies to inform the design. Conducting a specific market assessment when a project involves purchasing to check items availability at the local market and /or the possibility of importing. The risk management outlined in the project document did not assume that some of the inputs would not be imported. Conducting a specific market assessment of the fishing tools at the design phase would reveal the supply gap. Given the same situation for gender roles and relations, conducting a gender analysis would reveal more about inequalities and proper targeting.
5. Activate the monitoring and accountability components to enhance accountability and keep a more transparent environment through:
 - i. Making more efforts to communicate the CFM to BNFs due to the critical importance of activating accountability.
 - ii. Considering the use of TPM.
 - iii. Segregating the RP responsibilities of implementing and monitoring through channeling BNFs complaints to UNDP.
6. Commit to UNDP policies related to women's inclusion, empowerment, and gender equality through
 - i. equitably increasing the percentage of female BNFs to ensure providing equal services as the context allows.
 - ii. ensure women's representation in communal structures like community committees.
 - iii. additional resources that could be allocated to address inequalities; exhibitions of women products can be a good example. The use of coastal women's associations active in the targeted areas to identify needs, coordinate and choose preferred activities and to build on the outcomes of RELACC.
 - iv. Weaving and maintaining of fishing nets can be a suitable activity for women introduced to fisheries sector as well as PWD.

Efficiency and sustainability

7. Investigate ways to streamline the internal procurement to speed up the procurement process and keep track of the work plan. Qualifying new specialized suppliers to ease the future program's procurement is also highly recommended.
8. Connect grantees with microfinance banks to enable them to secure future loans to scale up their enterprises. Grants were distributed through a microfinance bank but the grantees were not sensitized to open bank accounts and learn about credit opportunities. In the same context, it is essential to provide support to the BNFs who do not hold national IDs required for accessing financial institutions' services.
9. Increase the amount of start-up aid in proportion to the rate of inflation so that the intended BNFs can start suitable, sustainable, and more profitable enterprises.
10. Conduct an impact assessment to evaluate the impact and sustainability of the project over the medium and longer term. It would also reveal which activities were practical and effective in achieving the project activities. The impact assessment could be informed by the MVI study which conducts a longitudinal study of BNFs. It is advised that the assessment could be done after one year of the project closure. This period is enough to show economic and social impacts.

Cross-Cutting issues

11. Study the possibility of reserving a quota of not less than 15% for IDPs and PWDs BNFs in future projects to ensure the inclusion of such vulnerable groups. Protection assistance such as facilitating the process of obtaining ID cards could be a key consideration in projects with mass BNFs.

Recommendations to YLDF

1. Take swift action when you see a low incidence of complaints to ensure that CFMs are well communicated.
2. Keep a gender-disaggregated complaint and feedback register and make more of an effort to follow up.
3. Ensure that large projects are assigned a dedicated M&E officer rather than assigning the role to the M&E team, which is busy with other projects and tasks so that it can be actively pursued.
4. Exert more efforts on budget flexibility when it comes to exceptional situations that require the reallocation of some budget lines in favor of impactful emerging needs.

7. Annex

Annex A: Consultant TOR

Annex B: RELACC Evaluation questions matrix

Attached

Annex C: Documents reviewed

Attached

Annex D: list of interview key informants

Annex A. Consultant TORs

Rebuilding Livelihoods and Capacities of Conflict-Affected Small-Scale Fisheries Households (RELACC) in Aden and Hadhramout

Final Evaluation TOR

1. Background and context

Yemen is considered not only the worst humanitarian crisis in the world, but also one of most disproportional and devastating development crises. As per the UNDP's recent report— Assessing the Impact of War on Development in Yemen – at November 2021 the war in Yemen had thrust development back by more than two decades. Should the war continue through 2030, this will become nearly 40 years of development lost. In light of the COVID-19 pandemic and the global evidence, the impact on socio-economic situation of the already stressed Yemeni population, would be severe and compounded with multiple shocks and stresses.

The 2021 Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) stated that at least 40% of Yemeni households have lost their primary source of income. Agricultural production and fishing, employing nearly 70 per cent of the workforce, has shrunk by a third. Between March and August 2015, 26 per cent of businesses closed due to the war. Business run by women have been the hardest hit with 42 per cent closing. The World Bank estimated that economic output has contracted about 50 per cent since the outbreak of the 2015 conflict and poverty has significantly increased with 52 per cent living below the US\$ 1.90 a day PPP and 81 per cent at a rate of US\$3.20 a day. Moreover COVID-19 impacted the fisheries production and employment significantly because of business shutdown measures and social distancing.

Yemen has, since 10 April 2020 when the first case of the corona virus (COVID-19) was confirmed in the country, registered an exponential increase in the number of infections to 11808 confirmed COVID-19 cases, including 2144 deaths as of 4 April 2022. These numbers may not be representative of the severity of the outbreak, as Yemen's health system is overwhelmed and does not have adequate capacity to test all the suspected cases. The case fatality rate (CFR) in observed cases is alarmingly high at around 24 per cent –about four times higher than the worldwide observed CFR. Reports indicated that many more people are symptomatic and are dying with COVID-19-like symptoms.

Livelihoods of thousands of Yemenis are being affected by three streams of influences: (1) Loss of jobs and incomes as a result of containment measures and closure (temporary and permanent); (2)

Disruption in the local, national and global supply chains; and, (3) Distortion of consumption patterns due to reduced purchasing power as a result of job and income loss.

Business owners with no financial cushion such as savings or credit lines were forced to use their business capital for consumption and close their informal business, temporarily or permanently. This led to loss of jobs and incomes for both owners and employees, with decreased consumption and demand having spiralling effects on production decline, shortages, price increases, further loss of income, lasting damage to the economic fabric and deepening poverty, in a vicious circle.

As per the fisheries value chain study, retailers, restaurants and street vendors are the most affected actors, with normal fishery outlets no longer working properly. Due to closure of fishery outlets and restaurants, trade has sharply decreased by more than half. Consequently, almost half of the workers have been laid off or suspended and only critical workers retained. Curfew has also forced employers to reduce working hours to half. Moreover, cessation of fish exports has resulted in huge losses for the fishery associations, as export is considered the main source of income for them. Fishermen with big and small boats, usually carrying a crew of up to 20, temporarily suspended and lay off most workers and went fishing using smaller boats. However, fish being an essential food item, demand will continue to exist during the outbreak.

Fishing was the main occupation of about 83,400 artisanal fishermen directly supporting about 583,600 members of their families (Annex5: Yemen Fishery Value Chain Report June 2020).

Relatively high number of people were also engaged in different aspects of fishery products processing and marketing. The fish processing plants, spread along the Yemen Red Sea and Gulf of Aden coastal zones, employed large number of people, including women, in fish processing, canning and lobsters processing plants.

In line with Japan's positions advocated during the G7 Ise-Shima Summit, the UNDP Rebuilding Livelihoods and Capacities of Conflict- Affected Small-Scale Fisheries Households in Aden and Hadhramout . The project provided the following outputs and activities:

- Community livelihoods are improved to strengthen resilience
 - Capacity building and training on self-learning of affected households in fisheries asset building skills for 1000 household 10% of whom were women
 - Provision of self-learning equipment/inputs for improvement of skills for building productive assets for 1000 households 10% of whom were women
 - Business skill development training for targeted households on micro and small-scale enterprise development for 1000 household which 10% of whom were women
 - Provision of seed grant for micro/small scale enterprise establishment for 500 households

The general fisheries authority in both governorates Aden and Hadramout were the main stakeholder, all coordination and activities facilitations went through them.

The project contributes to SDG (1, 5, 8)

Basic project information can also be included in table format as follows:

PROJECT/OUTCOME INFORMATION	
Project/outcome title	Rebuilding Livelihoods and Capacities of Conflict-Affected Small-Scale Fisheries Households in Aden and Hadhramout
Atlas ID	00130720
Corporate outcome and output	Yemenis improve their livelihoods and access inclusive productive services.
Country	Yemen

Region	RBAS	
Date project document signed	December 2020	
Project dates	Start: Nov 2020	Planned end: June 2022
Project budget	5,150,849 USD	
Project expenditure at the time of evaluation	\$4,604,075	
Funding source	Japan and UNDP	
Implementing party ⁵⁴	Youth Leadership Development Foundation (YLDF)	

2. Evaluation purpose, scope and objectives

With an anticipated RELACC project end date of 1 June 2022, this evaluation is being conducted to assess the project's contribution towards strengthening the resilience capacity of poor and vulnerable communities and households to effectively cope with the impact of the crisis, mitigating the impact of the current crisis on local households and communities and assisting their recovery from the bottom-up using local systems, capacities and institutions to progressively resume and scale-up service delivery.

UNDP commissions a project final evaluation serving as an important learning and accountability tool, providing the GoJ, UNDP, national stakeholders, and partners with an impartial assessment of the results achieved by the project. The evaluation also assesses the internal and external factors affecting the project's outcomes. The evaluation will assess the project's relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability; identify and document lessons learned; and provide recommendations to inform key stakeholders; relevant national institutions/partners, donors, UNDP, UN agencies, civil society organizations on any adjustment/redirection that may be necessary for future social safety net support in emergency contexts.

The principal objectives of the evaluation are to ascertain the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, sustainability, Human rights and Gender equality and women's empowerment of RELACC support interventions on the well-being of most vulnerable households and communities in the project's targeted areas; and provide actionable recommendations to the GoJ, UNDP and its Partners' implementation strategies, policies, approaches and activities on RELACC interventions. The specific objectives of the evaluation are:

- To assess the relevance and strategic positioning of the project in strengthening the Rebuilding Livelihoods and Capacities of Conflict-Affected Small-Scale Fisheries, mitigating the impact of the current crisis on local households and communities, and assisting institutions to progressively resume and scale-up service delivery.
- To assess the progress made towards project results and whether any unintended results could have been avoided or were they due to factors beyond the project's control
- To assess whether the project management arrangements, approaches and strategies were well-conceived and efficient in delivering the project. It will also assess whether other approaches could have achieved the same objectives more cost-effectively.
- To analyze the extent to which the project enhanced the application of a rights-based approaches, gender equality and women's empowerment, social and environmental

⁵⁴ This is the entity that has overall responsibility for implementation of the project (award), effective use of resources and delivery of outputs in the signed project document and workplan.

standards and participation of other socially vulnerable groups such as children and the disabled.

The evaluation will focus on project interventions implemented by UNDP and its national Responsible Parties (RPs) in Aden and Hadhramout governorates in Yemen from the project's inception in November 2020 to June 2022. The evaluation will cover the RELACC conceptualization, design, implementation, monitoring, reporting and evaluation of results and will engage all project stakeholders. The evaluation will assess the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of the project; explore the key factors that have contributed to the achievement or non-achievement of planned results including the impact of COVID-19 pandemic; and determine the extent to which the project contributed to improving the resilience of vulnerable Yemenis and responded to COVID-19 to the targeted beneficiaries and communities; addressing key challenges and gaps, crosscutting issues of gender equality and women's empowerment and human rights that may have affected/limited the attainment of the project development objective and recommend actionable intervention; and forging partnership at different levels, including with donors, UN agencies, national partners and communities.

3. Evaluation criteria and key guiding questions

The evaluation will answer the following questions structured around the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC) criteria of relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, and sustainability. Furthermore, the evaluation will also answer specific questions related to human rights, gender equality, and impact of COVID-19 and limitations.

Relevance/ Coherence

- ✦ To what extent was the RELACC project in line with national development priorities, country programme outputs and outcomes, the UNDP Strategic Plan 2022-2025, and the SDGs?
- ✦ To what extent does the project contribute to the theory of change for the relevant country programme outcome?
- ✦ To what extent were lessons learned from other relevant projects considered in the design?
- ✦ To what extent were perspectives of men and women beneficiaries who could affect the outcomes, and those who could contribute information or other resources to the attainment of stated results, taken into account during project design processes?
- ✦ To what extent does the project contribute to gender equality, the empowerment of women and the human rights-based approach?
- ✦ To what extent has the project been appropriately responsive to political, legal, economic, institutional, etc., changes in Yemen?

Effectiveness

- ✦ To what extent were the project outputs achieved, considering men, women, and vulnerable groups?
- ✦ What factors contributed to effectiveness or ineffectiveness?
- ✦ In which areas does RELACC have the greatest achievements? Why and what have been the supporting factors? How can the project build on or expand these achievements?
- ✦ In which areas does the project have the fewest achievements? What have been the constraining factors and why? How can or could they be overcome?
- ✦ Are the project objectives and outputs clear, practical and feasible within its frame? Do they clearly address women, men and vulnerable groups?
- ✦ To what extent have different stakeholders been involved in project implementation?

Efficiency

- ✦ To what extent was the project management structure as outlined in the project document efficient in generating the expected results?
- ✦ To what extent were resources used to address inequalities in general, and gender issues in particular?
- ✦ To what extent have the UNDP project implementation strategy and execution been efficient and cost-effective?
- ✦ To what extent has there been an economical use of financial and human resources? Have resources (funds, male and female staff, time, expertise, etc.) been allocated strategically to achieve outcomes of the RELACC project?
- ✦ To what extent have resources been used efficiently? Have activities supporting the strategy been cost-effective?
- ✦ To what extent have project funds and activities been delivered in a timely manner?
- ✦ To what extent do the M&E systems utilized by UNDP ensure effective and efficient project management?

Sustainability

- ✦ To what extent will targeted men, women and vulnerable people benefit from RELACC interventions in the long-term?

- ✦ To what extent will financial and economic resources be available to sustain the benefits achieved by the project?
- ✦ To what extent did UNDP actions pose an environmental threat to the sustainability of project outputs, possibly affecting project beneficiaries (men and women) in a negative way? What is the chance that the level of stakeholder ownership will be sufficient to allow for the project benefits to be sustained?
- ✦ To what extent do mechanisms, procedures and policies exist to allow primary stakeholders to carry forward the results attained on gender equality, empowerment of women, human rights and human development?
- ✦ To what extent do stakeholders (men, women, vulnerable groups) support the project's long-term objectives?
- ✦ What could be done to strengthen exit strategies and sustainability in order to support female and male RELACC beneficiaries as well as marginalized groups?

cross-cutting issues

Human rights

- ✦ To what extent have poor, IDPs and vulnerable, indigenous and physically challenged, and other disadvantaged and marginalized groups benefited from the intervention of RELACC in Yemen?

Gender equality

- ✦ To what extent have gender equality and the empowerment of women been addressed in the design, implementation and monitoring of the project?
- ✦ Is the gender marker data assigned to this project representative of reality?
- ✦ To what extent has the project promoted positive changes in gender equality and the empowerment of women? Were there any unintended effects?
- ✦ How the project has contributed to the empowerment of women and reduced gender inequalities (keep women in poverty, accelerate transformations for sustainable development, reduce structural vulnerabilities to shocks and crisis)?

Disability

- ✦ Were persons with disabilities/IDPs engaged in project planning and implementation?
- ✦ What proportion of the beneficiaries of the project were persons with disabilities/IDPs?

- ✦ What barriers did persons with disabilities/IDPs face? How it was overcome?
- ✦ What is the impact of the project on the lives of people with disability and IDPs. Have any positive changes have been added?

The final key guiding questions to be used in the evaluation should be clearly outlined in the inception report and fully discussed and agreed between UNDP, key stakeholders and the evaluator

4. Methodology

The evaluation will be carried out in accordance with UNDP evaluation guidelines and policies, United Nations Group Evaluation Norms and Ethical Standards; OECD/DAC evaluation principles and guidelines and DAC Evaluation Quality Standards.

The evaluation will employ a combination of both qualitative and quantitative evaluation methods instruments: The evaluator is expected to follow a participatory and consultative approach that ensures close engagement with the evaluation manager, implementing partners, project direct and indirect beneficiaries and communities with gender balanced. However, final decisions about the specific design and methods for the evaluation emerge from consultations with the UNDP Oversight and Support Team (OST), the evaluators and key stakeholders about what is appropriate and feasible to meet the evaluation purpose and objectives and answer the evaluation questions, given all limitations including time, security situation, accessibility, budget and data. Suggested methodological tools and approaches include:

1. Desk Review: Document review of all relevant documentation. This includes a review of Project Document; theory of change and results framework; Contribution agreement, Responsible Party Agreement (RPA) with national RPs and proposal; project quality assurance reports; annual workplans; annual reports; RELACC results-oriented monitoring report; highlights of project board meetings/Donor's; and technical/financial monitoring reports.
2. Interviews and meetings with key stakeholders (men and women) such as key national counterparts, donor community members, representatives of key civil society organizations, United Nations country team (UNCT) members and implementing partners:
 - a. Semi-structured interviews, based on questions designed for different stakeholders based on evaluation questions around relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability, human rights, and gender equality and women's empowerment.
 - b. Key informant and focus group discussions with beneficiaries, communities and stakeholders with gender balanced.
 - c. All interviews with men and women should be undertaken in full confidence and anonymity. The final evaluation report should not assign specific comments to individuals.
3. Surveys ⁵⁵ and questionnaires including direct and indirect beneficiaries, respective communities with gender balanced (at least 10% female to be engaged during the evaluation survey), UNCT members and/or surveys and questionnaires to other stakeholders at strategic and programmatic levels (if necessary).
4. Field visits and on-site validation of key outputs and interventions. The evaluator is expected to follow a participatory and consultative approach that ensures close

⁵⁵ The evaluation will ensure to interview at least 10% women respondents including the project and its IPs gender capacities/FPs. Separate women and men interview and FGDs will be conducted to enable both sexes to participate freely. Inclusion of PWDs, ID

- engagement with the evaluation manager, project team, implementing partners and direct beneficiaries.
- 5. Other methods such as outcome mapping, stakeholder analysis/consultations, observational visits, group discussions, etc.
- 6. Data review and analysis of monitoring and other data sources and methods. To ensure maximum validity, reliability of data (quality) and promote use, the evaluation team will ensure triangulation of the various data sources.
- 7. Gender and human rights lens. All evaluation products need to address gender, disability, and human right issues.

The evaluator will need to conduct funding analysis to answer the related evaluation questions. UNDP will provide the needed funding data to support the analysis.

The final methodological approach including interview schedule, field visits and data to be used in the evaluation will be clearly outlined in the inception report and be fully discussed and agreed between UNDP, stakeholders, and the evaluator.

5. Evaluation products (deliverables)

The evaluation will be expected to deliver the following:

- a. Evaluation inception report (maximum 15 pages except annexes). The inception report should be carried out following and based on preliminary discussions with UNDP after the desk review and should be produced before the evaluation starts (before any formal evaluation interviews, survey distribution or field visits) and prior to the country visit/project site visits in the case of international evaluator/national evaluators respectively. The evaluation inception report should highlight how the evaluation is planning to integrate major gender aspects during data collection and reporting.
- b. Evaluation debriefings. Immediately following an evaluation, the evaluation team will conduct a preliminary debriefing of findings and key critical observations including gender issues.
- c. Draft evaluation report (maximum 60 pages including 4-5 pages executive summary). UNDP and stakeholders will review the draft evaluation report and provide an amalgamated set of comments to the evaluation team within 10 days, addressing the content required (as agreed in the inception report) and quality criteria as outlined in the UNDP evaluation guidelines.
- d. Evaluation report audit trail. Comments and changes by the evaluation team in response to the draft report should be retained by the evaluators to show how they have addressed comments.
- e. final evaluation report. The final report should address comments, questions and clarification
- f. Presentations to stakeholders and the evaluation reference group (ERG).
- g. Evaluation brief and other knowledge products/impact case studies (potentially, focusing on project components/sub-components/intervention sectors (Capacity building, Assets, livelihood impact of beneficiaries and communities, gender/women empowerment) agreed in the inception report.

Standard templates that need to be followed are provided in the Annexes section. It is expected that the evaluator will follow the UNDP evaluation guidelines and UNEG quality check list and ensure all the quality criteria are met in the evaluation report.

In line with UNDP's financial regulations, when determined by the Country Office and/or the consultant that a deliverable or service cannot be satisfactorily completed due to impact of COVID19 and limitations to the evaluation, that deliverable or service will not be paid.

6. Evaluation team composition and required competencies

The national Consultant should have the following qualifications:

- a. The candidate should have at least a master's degree in Economics/Development Study/Social Sciences/or related field especially advanced academic certificate/diploma courses on International Humanitarian and Emergency Action and Social Safety Net Programme will be added value.
- a. At least 5 years or more of experience in designing/implementing, monitoring, and evaluating livelihood interventions and experience in implementing/M&E economic inclusion and/or cash assistance, and /or the Graduation Approach.
- b. At least five years of relevant work experience and must have completed minimum two high quality evaluations in the areas of emergency employment and livelihood, social safety net programme, humanitarian response or actions, at least one of them being related to emergency crisis response support in Yemen. Provision of sample work is required.

Key Competencies expected of the national Consultant for the successful delivery of the milestones:

- a. Extensive experience on gender equality and women's empowerment and in conducting relevant studies/ research.
- b. Experience in applying results and human rights-based and community-driven approaches for assessing social safety net, community development, humanitarian response actions/programmes,
- c. Teamwork skills and experience of working as a member of evaluation team to be considered as one of key technical competencies for the national consultant
- d. Strong familiarity with solid knowledge and skill on UNDP work in social safety net, emergencies, and work experience with UNDP is an advantage. Familiarity with the sociocultural context of Yemen and the cultural, political and religious sensitivities relevant to the Yemen crisis.
- e. Excellent writing and communication skills in English and Arabic, with sufficient experience in applying all required tools and methods for conducting project evaluation in crisis settings including participatory appraisal techniques in data collection, sensitive to gender issues etc.

Explicit statement of the evaluator's' independence from any organizations that have been involved in designing, executing, or advising any aspect of the intervention that is the subject of the evaluation should be provided

7. Evaluation ethics

This evaluation will be conducted in accordance with the principles outlined in the UNEG 'Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation'.⁵⁶ The consultant must safeguard the rights and confidentiality of information providers, interviewees, and stakeholders through measures to ensure compliance with legal and other relevant codes governing collection of data and reporting on data. The consultant must also ensure security of collected information before and after the evaluation and protocols to ensure anonymity and confidentiality of sources of information where that is expected. The information knowledge and data gathered in the evaluation process must also be solely used for the evaluation and not for other uses with the express authorization of UNDP and partners.

8. Implementation arrangements

The UNDP Yemen Country Office will select the consultant through a competitive process in line with UNDP's rules and regulations. UNDP will be responsible for the management of the evaluator and will in this regard designate an evaluation manager and focal point. Project Manager will assist in facilitating the whole evaluation process - providing relevant documentation, constituting the evaluation reference group, support to conduct selected project site visits/interviews with key informants, reviewing evaluation products stated above etc.

The evaluation manager will convene an evaluation reference group comprising of technical experts from partners and UNDP with gender balanced to enhance the quality of the evaluation. The reference group will review the inception and the draft evaluation reports, providing detailed comments related to the quality of methodology, evidence collected, analysis and reporting. Comments and changes by the evaluator in response to the draft evaluation report should be retained by the evaluator to show how they have addressed the comments (audit trail). The reference group will also advise on the conformity of the evaluation process to UNDP and UNEG standards.

The national Consultant will be responsible to conduct the evaluation. He/she will ensure the quality of the evaluation process, outputs, methodology and timely delivery of all products. He/she will be responsible on the conceptualization and design of the evaluation and shapes the findings, conclusions, and recommendations of the report.

As the livelihood specialist, the national consultant in accordance with the nature and structure of the project interventions, will be responsible for the implementation of the evaluation inception guideline including application of all agreed evaluation methodologies to collect, analysis, and draft report (plus drafting case studies/knowledge products) in line with field findings covering all agreed approaches such as consultations and meetings with selected different stakeholders, FGDs, etc. the consultant will conduct a debriefing to UNDP and key project stakeholders and consolidated the comments to the draft report.

The national consultants should have M&E technical knowledge and experience in key critical crosscutting areas such as gender equality, empowerment, disability issues, rights-based approach and capacity development.

9. Time frame for the evaluation process

A tentative time frame for the evaluation is provided below. The evaluation is expected to be completed by 35 workdays within two months. This might be subject to change depending on the prevailing situation on ground at the time of the evaluation. However, the consultant should propose a timeline to submit the deliverables in his proposal. Necessary and adequate time (at least two weeks) should be allocated for review and quality assurance processes of the deliverables by the UNDP Team and Partners.

⁵⁶ UNEG, 'Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation', 2020. Access at: <http://www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/2866>

ACTIVITY	ESTIMATED # OF DAYS	DATE OF COMPLETION	PLACE	RESPONSIBLE PARTY
Phase One: Desk review and inception report				
Meeting briefing with UNDP (Team leaders (OST, Programme Unit) Project manager and project staff as needed)	-			Evaluation manager and commissioner
Sharing of the relevant documentation with the evaluation team	-	At the time of contract signing	Via email	M&E Officer
Desk review, evaluation design, methodology and updated workplan including the list of stakeholders to be interviewed	6 days	Within two weeks of contract signing	Home-based	Evaluator \Consultant
Submission of the inception report (15 pages maximum)	-	Within two weeks of contract signing	Via email	Evaluator \Consultant
Comments and approval of inception report	-	Within one week of submission of the inception report	UNDP Yemen Office	Evaluation Manager
Phase Two: Data-collection mission				
Consultations and field visits, in-depth interviews and focus group discussion, stakeholder consultants, case studies according to agreed methodologies incorporated in the evaluation inception report	15 days	Within five weeks of contract signing	In the sample sites in along with southern governorates support from UNDP PMT, (Aden and Hadramout)	National subproject required of Yemen relevant stakeholders

Debriefing to UNDP and key project stakeholders	1 day		Remotely/In person	Evaluator \Consultant
Phase Three: Evaluation report writing				
Preparation of draft evaluation report (60 pages maximum excluding annexes), executive summary (4-5 pages)	7 days	Within three weeks of the completion of the field mission	Home-based	Evaluator \Consultant
Draft Report Submission		-	Via email	Evaluator \Consultant
Consolidated UNDP and stakeholder comments to the draft report		Within one week of submission of the draft evaluation report 25 April 2022	UNDP	Evaluation Manager
Debriefing with UNDP	1 day	Within one week of receipt of comments	Remotely/In person	Evaluator \Consultant
Finalization of the evaluation report incorporating additions and comments provided by project staff and UNDP country office	5 days	Within one week of final debriefing	Home-based	Evaluator \Consultant
Submission of the final evaluation report to UNDP Yemen country office (60 pages maximum excluding executive summary and annexes)	-	Within one week of final debriefing	Home- based	Evaluator \Consultant
Estimated total days for the evaluation	35 days			

10. Application submission process and criteria for selection

Maximum Score in the Technical Evaluation = 70 Points			Points obtained by Candidates		
Minimum points for passing = 49 points			A	B	C
Evaluation Criteria	Maximum Obtainable points	Weightage			
1. Overall Presentation: Clarity of presentation and general adherence to Terms of Reference	5	7%			
2. Proposed methodology and approach a. Understanding of scope, objectives and completeness and coherence of response b. Proposed evaluation approach, methodology c. Proposed Implementation Plan – whether the evaluators will complete work within the prescribed timeframes, Deliverables are addressed as per TOR	40	57%			
3. Technical capacity of the applicant: Qualifications, competencies, experience and skills as per the ToRs.	25	36%			
TOTAL	70	100%			

11. Financial Proposal (total score: 30 points)

Price proposal shall be fixed lump-sum, all-inclusive price.

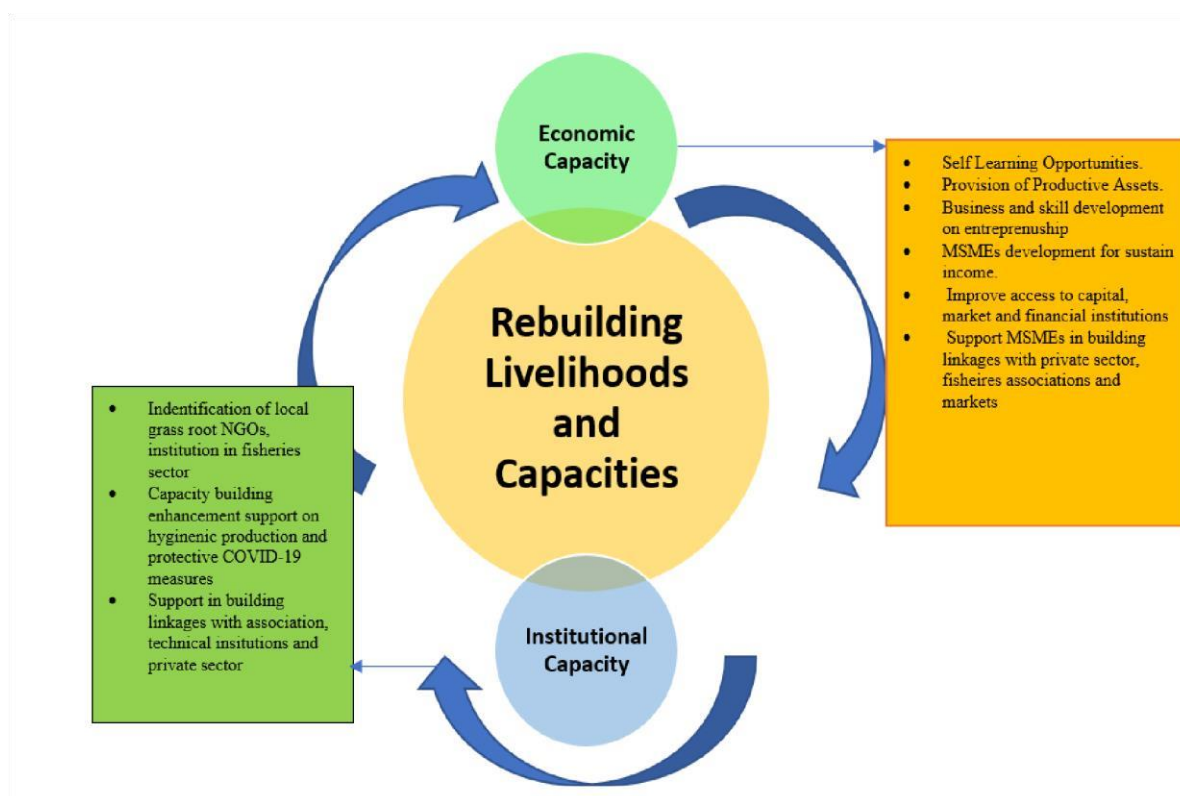
Financial proposal will be assessed based on the completeness, clarity and appropriateness. The maximum number of points shall be allotted to the lowest Financial Proposal that is opened /evaluated and compared among those technical qualified candidates who have attained a minimum 70 points in the technical evaluation. Other Financial Proposals will receive points in inverse proportion to the lowest price applying the formula:

Marks Obtained = Lowest Priced Offer (Amount) / Offer being considered (Amount) X 30 (Full Marks)

12. TOR annexes

Annexes can be used to provide additional detail about evaluation background and requirements to facilitate the work of evaluators. Some examples include:




- ✦ **Intervention results framework and theory of change** ○ assumes that improving capacities of the local communities, enabling conditions for the



access of affected people to livelihoods means and addressing cross-cutting issues will enable the local communities to manage risks and shocks with increased economic selfreliance and enhanced institutional capacities.

- ✦
- ✦ **Key stakeholders and partners.**
 - **Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Fisheries** ○ **General Fisheries Authority** ○ .
- ✦ **Documents to be consulted.** A list of important documents and web pages that the evaluators should read at the outset of the evaluation and before finalizing the evaluation design and inception report. This should be limited to the critical information that the evaluation team needs. Data sources and documents may include:
 - [Relevant national strategy documents.](#)
 - Strategic and other planning documents (e.g., [programme and project documents](#)).
 - Monitoring plans and indicators.

- Partnership arrangements (e.g., agreements of cooperation with governments or partners).
- Previous evaluations and assessments. ○ [UNDP evaluation policy, UNEG norms and standards and other policy documents.](#)

○	○	○ 3	○ 4	○ 5	○
○	○	 2022 Project AWP RELACC - RFF FINAL R	 - RPA_YLDF_Si f	 YLDF-Needs ment-Report-	○ Assess RELACC

- ✦ **Evaluation matrix** (suggested as a deliverable to be included in the inception report). The evaluation matrix is a tool that evaluators create as a map and reference in planning and conducting an evaluation. It also serves as a useful tool for summarizing and visually presenting the evaluation design and methodology for discussions with stakeholders. It details evaluation questions that the evaluation will answer, data sources, data collection and analysis tools or methods appropriate for each data source, and the standard or measure by which each question will be evaluated. Table 5 provides a sample evaluation matrix template.

Table 1. Sample evaluation matrix

Relevant evaluation criteria	Key questions	Specific subquestions	Data sources	Data collection methods/ tools	Indicators/ success standards	Methods for data analysis

- ✦ **Required format for the evaluation report.** The final report must include, but not necessarily be limited to, the elements outlined in the [template for evaluation reports](#) (
- ✦ **Dispute and wrongdoing resolution process and contact details** (annex 3)
- ✦ **Pledge of ethical conduct in evaluation.** UNDP programme units should request each member of the evaluation team to read carefully, understand and sign the '[Pledge of Ethical Conduct in Evaluation of the United Nations system](#)'.⁴
- ✦ [Inception report](#)
- ✦ [Audit trail](#)
- ✦ [UNEG Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the UN system](#)
- ✦ [Integrating Gender Equality and Human Rights in Evaluation - UN-SWAP Guidance, Analysis and Good Practices](#)
- ✦ [UNDP Evaluation Guidelines](#)
- ✦ [Evaluation Quality Assessment](#)
- ✦ [UNEG Quality Checklist for Evaluation Reports](#)

Annex D: KII list

#	Name	Gender	Designation	Affiliation
1	Arvind Kumar	M	Project manager	UNDP
2	Khaled Magead	M	Program officer	UNDP
3	Mohammed Al Hitari	M	M&E officer	UNDP
4	Khulood Al Shiekh	F	Gender focal point & National Coordinator	UNDP
5	Raidah Royshed	F	Fisheries specialist	UNDP
6	Abdulrahman Al Saaidi	M	Fisheries specialist	UNDP
7	Waleed Mohammed	M	Finance and administration	UNDP
8	Nayel As Surori	M	Head of Aden GAF	MAF
9	Salah Ba Buraidah	M	Planning director - Hadhramout GAF	MAF
10	Ali Bin Shuba	M	National Secretary-General	Fish Cooperative Union
11	Saleh Al Omari	M	Mukalla district director	Local authority
12	Anwar Salem	M	Secretary general - Al Haswah Cooperative	Fisheries cooperatives
13	Mohammed Hadi	M	Secretary general - Seerah Cooperative	Fisheries cooperatives
14	Saleh Al Husaini	M	Secretary general - Al Areesh Cooperative	Fisheries cooperatives
15	Nawal Ad Dubais	F	Programs manager	YLDF
16	Amal Al Qatta'a	F	Project Coordinator	YLDF
17	Sharrefah Mohammed	F	Aden field coordinator	YLDF
18	Mohammed Al Ghurabi	M	Hadhramout field coordinator	YLDF
19	Sumaiah Al Henshi	F	Entrepreneurship trainer-Hadhramout	Trainer
20	Nadia Bin Othman	F	Entrepreneurship trainer-Hadhramout	Trainer
21	Hussien Saleh	M	Entrepreneurship trainer-Hadhramout	Trainer
22	Jumaan Bahabara	M	Boat maintenance trainer-Hadhramout	Trainer
23	Mohammed Ba Lakham	M	Fishing nets maintenance	Trainer
24	Nour Adden Abdullah	M	Boat maintenance trainer - Aden	Trainer
25	Rana Sadeq	F	Entrepreneurship trainer – Aden	Trainer
26	Adeeb Ahmed	M	GPS trainer- Aden	Trainer
27	Mohammed Al Hali	M	Boat maintenance trainer - Aden	Trainer