Strengthening Institutional and Economic Resilience in Yemen (SIERY)

Mid-Term Evaluation

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Project and Evaluation Information	
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Final/midterm review/ other	Mid-term review
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ACRONYMS

ALNAP	Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance
COVID 19	Coronavirus
CPD	Country programme document
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DCT	District Core Team
DFT	District Facility Team
DRPs	District Recovery Platforms
ER	Economic Resilience
ET	Evaluation Team
EU	European Union
IEC	International Evaluation Consultant
IR	Institutional Resilience
KII	Key Informant Interview
MoLA	Ministry of Local Administration
MTE	Mid-term Evaluation
NEC	National Evaluation Consultant
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OECD	The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
PT	Project Team
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SIERY	Strengthening Institutional and Economic Resilience in Yemen
SMEs	Small and Medium Enterprises
ROM	Results-Oriented Monitoring
RP	Responsible Party
TOC	Theory of Change
TOR	Terms of Reference
TPM	Third Party Monitoring
UNDP	The United Nations Development Program
UNEG	The United Nations Evaluation Group
UNSDCF	United Nations Yemen Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

The "Strengthening Institutional and Economic Resilience in Yemen (SIERY)" project, implemented by UNDP and funded by the European Union, was designed as a comprehensive response to the significant challenges faced by Yemen due to the ongoing conflict. Since the conflict began in 2014, Yemen has been plunged into one of the world's worst humanitarian crises, with over 24 million people requiring some form of assistance. The SIERY project is a critical intervention that seeks to address these challenges by focusing on two primary objectives:

1. Enhancing the institutional resilience of local governance structures.
2. Promoting economic resilience through support for small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and economic recovery efforts.

The project is being implemented across nine governorates in Yemen, namely Aden, Hadramaut, Hajjah, Hodeida, Ibb, Lahj, Marib, Sana'a, and Taiz. These regions have been selected based on their strategic importance and the severity of the challenges they face, making the project both relevant and essential for the country's recovery.

SIERY's approach is holistic, integrating multiple components that address both the immediate and long-term needs of Yemen's population. The project's activities range from capacity building for local authorities to the rehabilitation of critical infrastructure, as well as providing economic opportunities to the most vulnerable groups, including women, youth, and internally displaced persons (IDPs). By focusing on local governance and economic resilience, the project aims to create a foundation for sustainable development in Yemen, even amidst ongoing conflict.

Purpose and Objectives of the Evaluation

The mid-term evaluation of the SIERY project was conducted with the primary purpose of assessing the project's progress towards its goals and determining its effectiveness in addressing the complex challenges in Yemen. This evaluation, covering the period from August 2020 to February 2024, aimed to achieve several key objectives:

1. To evaluate the relevance of the project's interventions in relation to Yemen's national development priorities and the specific needs of the targeted governorates. The evaluation sought to understand how well the project's activities align with the broader goals of resilience and recovery in Yemen.
2. To assess the coherence of the project's design and implementation, ensuring that the various components of the project work synergistically to achieve the desired outcomes. The evaluation

explored how different elements of the project, such as governance support and economic initiatives, complement each other.

3. To analyze the efficiency of resource utilization, including financial resources, human capital, and time, to determine whether the project has been implemented in a cost-effective manner. This involved a review of the project's budgeting, expenditure, and resource allocation practices.

4. To measure the impact of the project's interventions on the targeted communities, particularly in terms of enhancing institutional and economic resilience. The evaluation looked at both the intended and unintended outcomes of the project, providing a comprehensive understanding of its impact.

5. To evaluate the sustainability of the project's outcomes, focusing on the long-term viability of the interventions and their integration into local governance and economic systems. This included assessing the potential for the project's benefits to continue beyond its formal conclusion.

6. To identify key lessons learned from the implementation of the project to date, providing actionable recommendations for enhancing the effectiveness and impact of the project in its remaining duration and in future phases. The evaluation aimed to capture insights that could inform not only the continuation of SIERY but also future projects in similar contexts.

Evaluation Approach and Methods

The evaluation adopted a participatory and evidence-based approach, ensuring that the views and experiences of all relevant stakeholders were considered. The methodology employed for this evaluation was a mixed-methods approach, combining both qualitative and quantitative data collection techniques to provide a comprehensive assessment of the project. Key methods used included:

1. Extended Desk Review: A thorough analysis of project documents, including progress reports, monitoring data, financial documents, and other relevant materials, was conducted to assess the project's outputs and outcomes. The desk review provided a foundational understanding of the project's implementation and its alignment with planned objectives.

2. Key Informant Interviews (KIIs): A total of 63 KIIs were conducted with key stakeholders, including project team members, local authorities, representatives of civil society organizations (CSOs), and beneficiaries. These interviews provided in-depth insights into the project's implementation, successes, and challenges. The KIIs were crucial for gathering firsthand accounts of the project's impact on the ground.

3. Focus Group Discussions (FGDs): Ten FGDs were held with various beneficiary groups to gather qualitative data on their experiences and perceptions of the project. These discussions were crucial for understanding the project's impact on the ground, particularly in relation to the inclusion of vulnerable groups such as women and youth.

4. Field Visits and Observations: Field visits were conducted to observe project activities firsthand and to validate the information gathered through other data collection methods. These visits

allowed the evaluation team to see the project's results in context, providing a more nuanced understanding of its impact.

5. Case Studies: Specific success stories were highlighted to illustrate the tangible impacts of the SIERY project. These case studies shed light on how the project has positively influenced individuals and communities, offering valuable insights into best practices and effective interventions. The case studies helped to contextualize the broader findings of the evaluation.

The evaluation framework was structured around the OECD DAC criteria (Relevance, Coherence, Efficiency, Effectiveness, Impact, and Sustainability), ensuring a holistic assessment of the project's performance. Additionally, the evaluation paid special attention to cross-cutting issues such as gender equality, human rights, and disability inclusion, recognizing their importance in achieving sustainable development outcomes.

Summary of Key Findings, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Key Findings

The evaluation revealed several key findings that underscore the importance and impact of the SIERY project:

1. Relevance: The SIERY project is highly relevant to Yemen's development priorities, particularly in the context of its ongoing conflict and humanitarian crisis. The project's focus on strengthening local governance and promoting economic resilience directly addresses the critical needs of the targeted communities. The evaluation found that the project's design is well-aligned with both local needs and international development frameworks, such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

2. Coherence: The project design is coherent, with its various components complementing each other to achieve the overall objectives. The alignment of the project with Yemen's national development strategies and international frameworks, such as the United Nations Yemen Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) and the EU's Global Strategy, further enhances its coherence. The evaluation highlighted that the project's multi-faceted approach ensures that governance improvements and economic resilience efforts reinforce each other, leading to more sustainable outcomes.

3. Effectiveness: The project has made significant progress towards achieving its intended outcomes. The capacity-building activities for local authorities have led to noticeable improvements in governance and service delivery. Economic interventions, such as support for SMEs, have contributed to economic recovery and the creation of job opportunities in the targeted areas. The evaluation also found that the project has been particularly effective in

integrating gender considerations, with many women benefiting from economic empowerment initiatives.

4. Efficiency: Despite the challenging operating environment, the project has been implemented in a cost-effective manner. The utilization of local expertise, transparent procurement processes, and the strategic allocation of resources have contributed to the project's efficiency. However, delays in fund disbursement and procurement have occasionally hampered the timely execution of activities. The evaluation suggested that while the project has generally managed resources well, there is room for improvement in streamlining certain administrative processes.

5. Impact: The project has had a positive impact on the targeted communities, particularly in terms of enhancing institutional and economic resilience. The improvements in service delivery and economic opportunities have contributed to better living conditions and increased community resilience. The evaluation found that the project's impact is particularly evident in areas such as local governance, where improved capacity has led to more effective and responsive local government institutions.

6. Sustainability: The sustainability of the project's outcomes is a critical consideration. While the project has laid a strong foundation for sustainable development, continued efforts are needed to ensure that the benefits of the interventions are maintained beyond the project's lifespan. This includes integrating project outcomes into local governance structures and securing long-term funding for key initiatives. The evaluation emphasized the importance of ongoing capacity building and the need for exit strategies that ensure local authorities can sustain the improvements made.

Conclusions

The SIERY project has demonstrated its value as a critical intervention in Yemen's ongoing conflict and recovery efforts. The project's relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, and impact underscore its importance in addressing the immediate needs of Yemen's most vulnerable populations while laying the groundwork for long-term resilience and development.

However, the evaluation also highlights several areas where the project could be strengthened. These include the need for improved coordination between central and local authorities, the importance of addressing funding gaps, and the need to enhance access to financial services for SMEs and entrepreneurs. Additionally, the sustainability of the project's outcomes must be a continued focus, with efforts to integrate these outcomes into local governance and economic systems.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the evaluation provides the following recommendations to enhance the effectiveness and impact of the SIERY project:

1. Strengthening Coordination: Improve coordination between central and local authorities to ensure the alignment of project activities with broader national policies and enhance the sustainability of project outcomes. This includes establishing clearer communication channels and more regular coordination meetings between different levels of government.

2. Addressing Funding Gaps: Explore additional funding opportunities and partnerships to address financial constraints that have limited the scope of certain project activities. This will enable the project to fully realize its potential and achieve its intended outcomes. The evaluation recommends actively seeking new partnerships with international donors and private sector stakeholders to diversify the project's funding base.

3. Enhancing Financial Access: Focus on improving access to financial services for SMEs and entrepreneurs, particularly in the most vulnerable and underserved areas. This will support economic recovery and growth, contributing to the project's overall impact.

Specific recommendations include expanding microfinance initiatives and creating more robust support networks for entrepreneurs.

4. Sustaining Gender and Social Inclusion Efforts: Continue to prioritize gender equality and social inclusion in all project activities. This includes empowering women and youth in decision-making processes and ensuring that marginalized groups benefit from the project's interventions. The evaluation suggests that additional resources be allocated to gender-focused programs and that these efforts be closely monitored to ensure their effectiveness.

5. Implementing Effective Exit Strategies: Develop and implement effective exit strategies to ensure the sustainability of project outcomes beyond the project's lifespan. This includes building the capacity of local authorities and providing long-term support for SMEs to ensure they can continue to thrive after the project ends. The evaluation recommends that these strategies be developed in close consultation with local stakeholders to ensure they are practical and tailored to the specific needs of the communities.

1   INTRODUCTION

Yemen's development is substantially and negatively affected by a complex civil war and conflict that started in 2014. It led Yemen to one of the world's worst humanitarian crises. Over 24 million people, approximately 80% of the population, require some form of humanitarian assistance. It has also led to massive displacement. Access to basic necessities such as food, clean water, and healthcare is extremely limited. Cholera outbreaks and malnutrition are rampant, and the healthcare system faces substantial challenges.

The Yemeni economy has been severely impacted by the conflict. The country's GDP has contracted significantly, and the country faces hyperinflation, widespread unemployment, and a severe lack of public services. The economic infrastructure, including ports, roads, and markets, has been damaged or destroyed. Agriculture, once a backbone of the economy, has suffered due to the lack of resources and ongoing violence, exacerbating food insecurity. Yemen has lost 90 billion USD in economic output and more than 600,000 people have lost their jobs. Fifty-eight percent of the population is living in extreme poverty.[1]

Gender inequality in Yemen presents another significant challenge, deeply affecting women's participation in social, economic, and political live. Cultural norms and the economic conditions often limit women's rights, leading to restricted access to education, healthcare, and employment opportunities. Women are underrepresented in decision-making processes, at local (district), regional (governorate), and central (national) level, which further entrenches their marginalization. The ongoing conflict exacerbates these issues. In 2021, Yemen ranked 155 of 156 in the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Index, depicting huge gender disparities.[2]

Development efforts in Yemen are significantly hindered by the ongoing conflict and political instability. Infrastructure development is challenging due to security concerns and the destruction of existing facilities. In response to such challenges, the project "Strengthening Institutional and Economic Resilience in Yemen (SIERY)", funded by the European Union (EU) and implemented by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) Yemen has been designed to support the resilience of local governance systems in Yemen. It aims to build local capacities, enhance economic opportunities, and improve governance structures at the local level. The project includes two main components: 1) building institutional resilience (IR) and 2) building economic resilience (ER) with many sub-projects that are crucial for laying the groundwork for long-term recovery and development in Yemen.

This report is the independent mid-term evaluation of the project, conducted between February and July 2024. This evaluation assesses the project's progress, effectiveness, and impact, providing critical insights into its implementation and identifying areas for improvement. The evaluation seeks to offer

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[1] https://yemen.un.org/en/about/about-the-un
[2] https://www.undp.org/yemen/gender-equality

recommendations to enhance the project's outcomes and therefore further contribute to Yemen's sustainable development.

The primary audience of the evaluation and this report are mainly four stakeholders:

1) UNDP in Yemen, which commissioned the evaluation and has a genuine interest in learning from an external perspective about its achievements, identification of best practice and recommendations how to strengthen similar work in the future.

2) The European Union funding the project and having a similar interest like UNDP to learn what works, what does not work, why, and what was achieved with a relatively large project for the EU.

3) The Yemeni government cooperating with the project. Ideally, the evaluation report will be shared and help the government to identify suitable approaches to development that can also be continued at its own initiative and/or supported by other donors and development initiatives.

4) The people of Yemen, directly and indirectly benefitting from the project and the development it enables.

2 DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT

The project has a total financial volume of EUR 69,800,000 for the period August 2020 until August 2025 (after no-cost extension). The project is based on the assessment that in a context of protracted conflict and large-scale population displacements across the country, which negatively affect women, children and youth disproportionately, the resilience and recovery of local populations cannot depend only on their self-help capacities or on foreign aid: it needs also local authorities to fulfill more effectively their core functions, work and mandate, including basic service delivery, emerging needs (such as conflict resolution, delivery of humanitarian aid, disaster management, and support to internally displaced people), as well as economic recovery.

According to project documents, local authorities in Yemen have proven remarkably resilient in the face of the prolonged effects of the conflict but their situation remains precarious.

Further deterioration will have serious implications for the sustainability of aid and recovery and the viability of any future political settlement and transition.

The growing gap in capacities, resources, and outcomes of local governance systems between the different and political areas of the country creates severe institutional and economic resilience unbalances and opens up new conflicts, thereby threatening to perpetuate conflict. Because of this, local authorities in Yemen need structured and systematic attention and support to maintain, enhance and expand their performance.

At the same time, Micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) and entrepreneurs are crucial for creating new paths to more sustainable and inclusive growth, through their role in providing employment and decent work and through this reducing income inequalities. However, they can only fulfil this role if there is an enabling institutional environment, and they can obtain the finance necessary to start and grow their businesses.

SIERY is a five-year project that aims to improve economic and social wellbeing for the Yemeni population, in particular for the poorest and most vulnerable (**overall objective**).

SIERY responds to some of the most important development challenges highlighted above and is aligned with the EU's Global Strategy including building resilience by supporting good governance, strengthening the Humanitarian-Development Nexus, and supporting private sector development.

The first component focuses on institutional resilience, and on building and improving service delivery needs of local populations and considers the role that responsive and legitimate local governance can play in rebuilding peace and stability from below (specific objective 1). SIERY provides district authorities with technical support and discretionary funding to devise and implement, in partnership with communities, the private sector and local influential actors, recovery plans, including basic service delivery, managing population influx, emergency responses, humanitarian aid and economic recovery, and to fulfil their missions in a more participatory, inclusive, and accountable manner. SIERY also fosters the emergence of a nation-wide compact for recovering the Yemeni local governance system in a way that can support peace- and state-building. In line with the agenda 2030, the imperative of leaving-no-one- behind, and in particular women, children, and youth, by supporting innovative and effective approaches to address vulnerabilities in all aspects of local governance, is inherent to SIERY's approach.

The second component focuses on economic resilience and aims to improve the business environment for economic recovery and employment opportunities.

This component empowers private sector players (SMEs and microfinance service providers), working on selected value chains, for skills development, capital support, job creation, and employment. SIERY will rehabilitate or reconstruct community-prioritized infrastructure, support small and medium enterprises for the expansion and scale-up of businesses. It will enable and engage microfinance service providers and network, private sector or business associations and regulators to support producers, private sectors, and local authorities to de-risk unstable market environments.

The project streamlines gender equality and women's empowerment by ensuring implementation of both at all programme stages while acknowledging the social and cultural barriers faced by women in Yemen.

It includes the following **key activities**:

Promoting women and youth in development planning processes:

SIERY helps to minimize the gap of women's participation in Yemen's local governance structure by involving women and youth in both the District Facility Team (DFT) and District Core Team (DCT) – particularly in Marib where there is less participation.

It focuses on building technical skills, especially in the areas of gender and youth sensitivity; implementing a gender analysis that measures the impact of the conflict on the change in the roles and needs of women, men, girls, and boys. These efforts aim to encourage local authorities to reflect community needs – especially women and youth– in an accurate and inclusive way in local development plans. This has resulted in women's and youth needs being reflected in the local government plans, and the building or rehabilitation of schools, maternity and childhood hospitals, vocational centers for women and rehabilitating technical institutes for youth.

Engaging women in value chains:

The programme helps promoting women's engagement in Yemen's value chains by training them to produce new value-added products and connecting them to a leading company that helps with promotion, marketing, and distribution of the products. Among others, the value chain sectors include dates, fish processing, henna, breeding, and honey.

Promoting economic and social rights by empowering girls and women:

This is done by rehabilitating basic service infrastructures such as schools, health facilities, sanitation and water facilities. With these improved basic services, girls and women will be able to actively participate in social and economic activities.

The project's **Theory of Change (ToC)** includes the following elements and considerations:

Overall objective: To enhance institutional and economic resilience in Yemen by strengthening local governance, improving service delivery, and fostering sustainable economic opportunities in conflict-affected regions.

For the **Impact level**, the following are envisioned:
1. Sustainable improvements in governance and economic resilience in Yemen's conflict-affected regions.
2. Empowered and resilient communities capable of driving their development and recovery.
3. AA significant contribution to peacebuilding and long-term stability in Yemen.

Key **assumptions** for achieving the overall objective and the impact are:

1. Stability in Local Governance: Local authorities will remain functional and engaged despite the ongoing conflict.
2. Community Participation: Communities will actively participate in planning and implementation, ensuring that interventions meet local needs.
3. Support from Government: The national-level government will support the integration of local governance improvements into national frameworks.
4. Continued Funding: Adequate financial resources will be available throughout the project's lifespan to sustain activities.
5. Gender and Social Inclusion: Women, youth, and marginalized groups will be empowered to participate fully in governance and economic activities.

To achieve the impact, overall, three **Outcomes** are planned for:

1. Institutional Resilience: Local authorities are better equipped to manage public services, development projects, and respond to emergencies; strengthened governance structures that contribute to stability and peacebuilding.
2. Economic Resilience: SMEs and entrepreneurs are thriving, contributing to job creation and economic growth; Youth and women have improved employment prospects, leading to greater economic stability.
3. Social Cohesion: Increased trust and collaboration between communities and local authorities; enhanced social cohesion, with communities actively participating in their development.

To achieve those Outcomes, the main **Outputs** are:

1. Improved capacities of local authorities, leading to better governance and service delivery.
2. Increased access to financial services and support for SMEs, resulting in stronger local economies.
3. Enhanced infrastructure that meets the basic needs of communities, improving overall living conditions.
4. Greater inclusion of women, youth, and marginalized groups in governance and economic activities.

The **key partners** in the implementation of the SIERY project and their roles are as follows. These partners work together to ensure the successful implementation of the SIERY project, each contributing their expertise and resources to achieve the project's goals:

1. UNDP: UNDP is the primary implementing agency responsible for the overall coordination, management, and execution of the project. They provide strategic guidance, oversee project activities, and ensure that the project's goals and objectives align with Yemen's development

priorities.

2. The EU: The EU is the primary funding source for the SIERY project. They provide financial support and work closely with UNDP to ensure that the project aligns with EU development policies and objectives. The EU also engages in monitoring and evaluation activities to ensure the project's effectiveness.

3. Local Government Authorities: Local authorities play a crucial role in the on-the-ground implementation of the project. They are involved in planning, decision-making, and executing activities at the local level. Their involvement ensures that the project's interventions are tailored to the specific needs of the communities they serve.

4. Yemen's Ministry of Local Administration (MoLA): MoLA is a key governmental partner, providing support and coordination between local and central government levels. They help integrate the project's outcomes into broader governmental policies and practices, ensuring sustainability.

5. Civil Society Organizations: CSOs are involved in the social accountability activities of the project. They work closely with local communities to ensure transparency, community participation, and that the project's benefits reach the intended beneficiaries. They also play a role in monitoring and evaluating the impact of the project at the community level.

6. Private Sector (SMEs, Microfinance Institutions): The private sector is engaged in activities related to economic resilience. This includes supporting small and medium enterprises (SMEs), facilitating access to finance, and promoting entrepreneurship. Their involvement is critical for the economic recovery components of the project.

7. Public Works Project: PWP is one of the strategic partners of UNDP involved in implementing infrastructure-related components of the project. They handle the rehabilitation of community assets and other construction-related activities.

8. Small and Micro Enterprise Promotion Service: SMEPS is another strategic partner focusing on the economic resilience aspect of the project. They support SMEs through training, capacity building, and financial support to foster economic growth and job creation.

The project's **main beneficiaries** and most vulnerable groups benefiting from the SIERY project are as follows:

Primary Beneficiaries:
1. Local Authorities and Government Officials: Local authorities and government officials at the district and governorate levels are primary beneficiaries, receiving training, capacity-building, and technical support to improve governance, service delivery, and institutional resilience.

2. Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and Entrepreneurs: SMEs and entrepreneurs benefit from economic support, including training, access to finance, and market opportunities. This support aims to enhance economic resilience, job creation, and sustainable business growth.

3. Civil Society Organizations (CSOs): CSOs benefit from training and involvement in the project's social accountability initiatives. They play a role in ensuring community participation and transparency in the project's implementation.

The most Vulnerable Groups are:
1. Women: Women are a key focus of the project, benefiting from gender-specific initiatives such as the Women Fellowship Initiative, entrepreneurship support, and involvement in local governance processes. The project aims to empower women by enhancing their participation in economic activities, decision-making, and leadership roles.

2. Youth: Youth, particularly young women, benefit from vocational training, employment opportunities, and participation in local governance and development planning. The project targets youth to reduce unemployment and promote social stability through their active involvement in community development.

3. Internally Displaced Persons: IDPs are among the most vulnerable groups in Yemen, benefiting from the project's focus on improving access to basic services, including water, sanitation, healthcare, and education. The project also provides economic opportunities to IDPs to help them rebuild their lives.

4. Rural and Conflict-Affected Communities: Communities living in rural and conflict-affected areas benefit from improved infrastructure, better access to essential services, and increased economic opportunities. The project's interventions aim to enhance the resilience of these communities, enabling them to cope with the impacts of the ongoing conflict.

5. Persons with Disabilities: The project includes a focus on disability inclusion, ensuring that

persons with disabilities benefit from improved access to services and are included in community development initiatives. The project promotes their participation in local governance and economic activities.

The SIERY project's **geographic coverage** includes multiple governorates across Yemen. The project specifically targets the following nine governorates: 1. Aden, 2. Hadramaut, 3. Hajjah, 4. Hodeida, 5. Ibb, 6. Lahj, 7. Marib, 8. Sana'a, 9. Taiz.

These governorates were selected through a consultation process and based on the strategic importance and the level of need for strengthening institutional and economic resilience. The project's interventions are implemented across these regions, focusing on areas heavily affected by conflict, economic instability, and governance challenges. The coverage ensures a broad impact on local governance structures and economic recovery efforts throughout Yemen.

The following **types of projects** were implemented under SIERY:

1. Rehabilitation of Public Works Buildings
2. Maintenance of Water Networks
3. Installation of Solar Energy Systems
4. Training and Capacity Building for Local Authorities
5. Support for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs)
6. Vocational Training for Youth and Women
7. Rehabilitation of Educational Facilities
8. Community Cleanliness Campaigns
9. Economic Value Chain Development

3   EVALUATION SCOPE AND OBJECTIVES

3.1 Evaluation scope

The evaluation covers the period from the project's initiation in August 2020 up to February 2024. Geographically, the evaluation covers all governorates targeted by project activities. It evaluates both main project components of IR and ER. Following the OECD DAC evaluation criteria, the evaluation assesses the project's relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability. Additionally, the evaluation team emphasized learning by compiling lessons learned and formulating recommendations to guide future project programming and operations. In addition to the OECD/DAC

evaluation criteria, cross- cutting issues such as human rights, gender equality and empowerment, and disability were also assessed.

The following evaluation questions were developed and agreed upon during the inception phase and based on the ToR for the assignment:

Evaluation criteria	Evaluation questions
Relevance	1. To what extent was the project in line with national development priorities, the country programme's outputs and outcomes and the SDGs? 2. Was the project appropriate and strategic to the main development goals and challenges in the country at the time of the EU project's design? Did relevance continue throughout implementation? 3. Was the project relevant to the needs and priorities of the target groups/beneficiaries? Were they consulted during design and implementation of the project? 4. Did the project's theory of change clearly articulate assumptions about why the project approach is expected to produce the desired change? Was the theory of change grounded in evidence?
Coherence	5. To what extent did the EU project complement work among different entities, especially with other UN actors? 6. If the project was part of a broader package of the EU support, to what degree were the project's design, implementation, monitoring, and reporting aligned with that of other projects?
Effectiveness	7. To what extent did the project achieve its intended objectives and contribute to the project's strategic vision? 8. To what extent did the project substantively mainstream a gender and support gender-responsive planning? 9. What factors have contributed to achieving or not achieving intended project outputs and outcomes? 10. To what extent has the project succeeded in fulfilling female and male beneficiaries' practical and strategic needs including but not limited improved access to services, enhanced practical capacity, and gaining leadership skills?
Efficiency	11. To what extent was the project management structure as outlined in the project document efficient in generating the expected results? 12. To what extent have the project implementation strategy and execution been efficient and cost-effective? 13. To what extent has there been an economical use of financial and human

	resources? Have resources (funds, human resources, time, expertise, etc.) been allocated strategically to achieve outcomes? 14. To what extent have the M&E systems utilized by the UNDP enabled effective and efficient project management?
Impact	15. What are the intended and unintended results of the project? What are the positive and negative results and how do they differ between both sexes? 16. To what extent did COVID-19 impact positively and negatively to the project implementation?
Sustainability	17. To what extent will financial and economic resources be available to sustain the benefits achieved by the project? 18. To what extent have relevant Ministries or national offices integrated project outcomes into ongoing policies and practices? 19. To what extent are lessons learned being documented by the project team on a continual basis and shared with appropriate parties who could learn from the project? 20. To what extent the interventions have well-designed and well-planned exit strategies? 21. Were the project's results sustained after the intervention? Did sustainability differ for female and male beneficiaries?
Human rights	22. To what extent have poor, indigenous and physically challenged women, men and other disadvantaged and marginalized groups benefited from the work of UNDP in the country?
Gender equality and empowerment	23. To what extent have gender equality and the empowerment of women been addressed in the design, implementation, and monitoring of the project? 24. To what extent has the project promoted positive changes in gender equality and the empowerment of women? Were there any unintended effects?
Disability	25. Were persons meaningfully involved in programme planning and implementation? 26. What proportion of the beneficiaries of a programme were persons with disabilities? What barriers did persons with disabilities face?

3.2 Evaluation objectives

The purpose of this mid-term evaluation was to provide the project's main stakeholders, namely UNDP Yemen, the EU, key national stakeholders, civil society partners, and local government authorities at the targeted governorates with an impartial assessment of the results generated to date, including on gender equality and women's empowerment.

Table 1: Stakeholder Analysis

Stakeholder	Interest in evaluation	Involvement in evaluation
European Union	Project donor	KIIs with project officers; final evaluation report review
UNDP	Project implementer	KIIs with project officers; final evaluation report review
Implementing partners	Contributing to evaluation findings; giving recommendations	KIIs and FGDs with staff
Local government authorities	Contributing to evaluation findings; giving recommendations	KIIs and FGDs with staff
Beneficiaries	Contributing to evaluation findings; giving recommendations	KIIs and FGDs with staff

The evaluation assessed the project's relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability/catalytic; identify and document evidence- based findings; and provide stakeholders with recommendations to inform the design and implementation of other related ongoing and future projects.

Specific evaluation objectives were to:

1) Assess the relevance and strategic positioning of the project to respond and provide protection needs and the overall peacebuilding needs in Yemen.

2) Assess the progress made towards project results and whether there were any unintended results.

3) Assess what can be captured in terms of lessons learned for future institutional capacity enhancement initiatives in Yemen.

4) Analyze the case of reprogramming due to COVID-19.

5) Assess whether the project management arrangements, approaches, and strategies, including monitoring strategies and risk management approaches, were well-conceived and efficient in delivering the project.

6) Analyze the extent to which the project enhanced application of a rights-based approach, gender equality and women's empowerment, social and environmental standards, and participation of other socially vulnerable groups such as children and the disabled.

7) Outline evidence-based findings and recommendations that can be used for future

        programming.

8) Provide constructive and practical recommendations on factors that will contribute to project sustainability, and to inform any course corrections (if required and relevant).

The project evaluation started in February 2024 and was finalized in July 2024. It covered all project locations – nine governorates in Yemen (Aden, Hadramaut, Hajjah, Hodeida, Ibb, Lajh, Marib, Sana'a, Taiz). The evaluation covered programme conceptualization, design, implementation, monitoring, reporting and evaluation of results and engaged all relevant project stakeholders.

4   EVALUATION APPROACH AND METHODS

4.1 Evaluation process

The evaluation included three key phases as presented in Figure 1 below. It followed UNDP's latest Evaluation Guidelines.[3]

Figure 1: Evaluation Process

Feb.-May 2024	Evaluation Inception
May-July 2024	Data and evidence collection Preliminary analysis
July-August 2024	Analysis and Reporting Findings and recommendations validation

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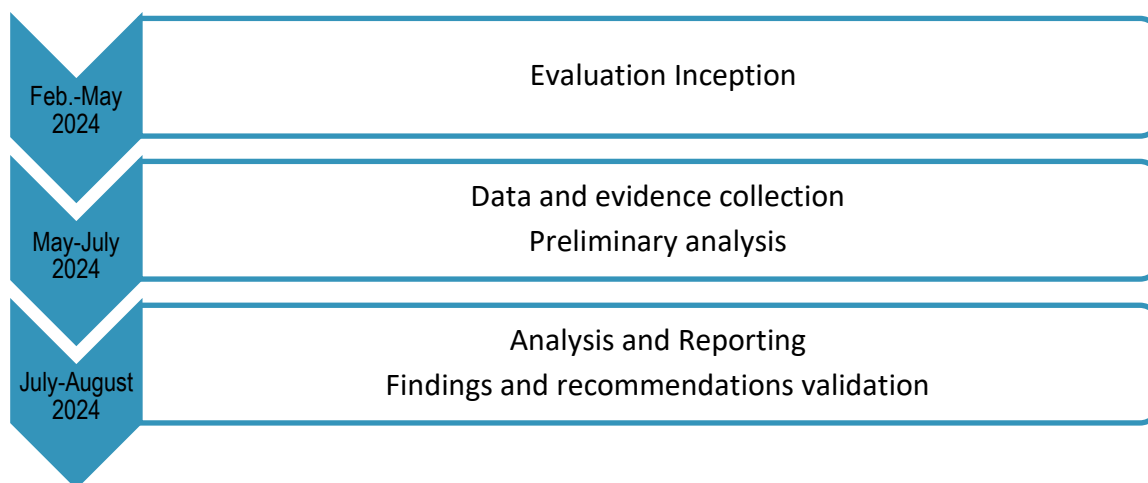
[3] UNDP Evaluation Guidelines, 2021

4.2 Evaluation methodology

Overall approach:

The evaluation adopted:

- a participatory approach, in which key stakeholders (UNDP, responsible parties RP, Ministry of Local Administration MoLA, EU) were closely involved in all stages of the evaluation.
- an evidence-based approach, all data collection tools have source(s) of verification, i.e. documents, reports, website, beneficiaries, RPs, project team, donor, and other stakeholders. In addition, all findings and conclusions are based on triangulated information.

Based on the OECD DAC evaluation criteria, and the additional cross-cutting topics (human rights, gender, and disability), an evaluation matrix was developed. Data collection tools included extended desk review, consultative meetings, key informant interviews, and field visits observations.

Data collection:

Data collection included the following:

Extended desk review:

The desk review was conducted to assess the project's outputs and outcomes, and included project documents, progress reports, monitoring data, TPM reports, ROM reports, financial documents, TOC, log frame, training materials and other realtered documents.

Key Informants Interviews (KIIs):

A total of 63 KIIs were conducted with key project stakeholders (EU, UNDP project team, MoLA, RPs, local authorities' representatives, related civil society organizations CSOs) to gather in-depth insights into the project's implementation, outcomes, challenges, and successes. The list of interviewees can be found in annex 4.

Focus group discussions (FGDs)

The evaluation organized a total of 10 FGDs with various beneficiary groups to gather qualitative data on their experiences, perceptions, and satisfaction with the project activities. These discussions helped to capture diverse perspectives and identify key areas of impact and areas for improvement.

Observations:

Field visits were conducted to observe project activities and validate the information gathered through interviews and meetings.

Case studies:

Some success stories were highlighted to illustrate the tangible impacts of the SIERY project. They shed light on some examples of how the project has positively influenced individuals and communities, offering valuable insights into best practices and effective interventions.

Data analysis

The collected data was analyzed qualitatively to identify key themes, patterns, and insights related to the project's progress, achievements, challenges, and lessons learned. The evaluation also specifically assessed the project's impact on gender equality and women's empowerment, as this has been a major focus of the project's activities. For this, the evaluators used an Excel table, in which all responses to all questions were tabulated and then analyzed. All findings were also triangulated, i.e. before being included they needed to be evidenced by a minimum of two independent sources (e.g. a KII and a document).

Based on the evaluation findings and conclusions, actionable recommendations are provided to further improve project implementation, address challenges, and maximize impact.

Lessons learned and best practices were identified to inform future project activities. This comprehensive evaluation report was prepared and shared with UNDP to be circulated to relevant stakeholders. Dissemination workshops or meetings may be organized to present the findings and facilitate discussions on enhancing project effectiveness and impact.

To ensure highest quality standards, the evaluation adhered to the best practice of the international evaluation community (ALNAP and OECD DAC), in addition to UNEG evaluation guidelines, UNEG ethical guidelines, UNDP Evaluation guidelines, UNDP evaluation policy, UNDP's evaluation quality assurance checklist, UNDP templates, and UNDP Evaluation Audit trail.

4.3 Ethics and data protection

In a fragile context like Yemen, programme components and related M&E activities can unwillingly aggravate existing conflict dynamics. To avoid or mitigate any negative impacts on conflict dynamics, the evaluation incorporated a do-no-harm approach, carefully assessing and avoiding any potential negative impact on conflict dynamics and ensuring that the research is not causing harm.

Throughout the evaluation, a range of steps was taken to uphold conflict-sensitive approaches, from the design and implementation of the evaluation to the communication of its results. For example, all interview tools were checked, and the questions were designed in a way that is conflict sensitive. All relevant population groups were included in an inclusive manner while respecting gender and other societal dynamics when forming focus groups.

We further respected data collection ethics and privacy protection. To preserve the privacy and confidentiality, we included safeguards to ensure against potential harms resulting from an invasion of privacy or a violation of confidentiality. For example, respondents were made aware at the outset of each interview, focus group or KII that their participation is subject to their own informed consent, which they may withdraw at any stage of the interviewing process. Furthermore, it was made clear at the introduction of the interviewing that their participation is completely anonymous.

4.4 Evaluation risks and limitations

The evaluation process itself faced a number of risks that were anticipated and mitigated. Those included:

#	Limitation	Description	Mitigation Strategy
1	**Security and Access Constraints**	Access to certain areas and project sites was restricted due to security issues and instability, which increased especially in the summer of 2024.	The evaluation relied on local partners, used remote data collection methods, and leveraged secondary data sources.
2	**Geographical and Cultural Barriers**	Land distances between targeted governorates and communication challenges arising from cultural factors that impact the understanding of local perspectives.	Local evaluators and researchers were included, and interviews and FGDs were conducted in local dialects for better communication.

3	**Bias and Subjectivity**	There is a risk of bias in stakeholder responses, especially from those affiliated with local authorities, IP or RPs.	Ensured anonymity and confidentiality, used mixed methods to balance perspectives, and cross-referenced data.
4	**Time Constraints**	The tight timeframe limited the depth of analysis, with data collection interrupted by extended Eid al-Adha holidays, during which local authorities' staff were largely unavailable as they travelled to their villages.	Prioritized key evaluation questions, focused on critical data, and recommended further studies or follow-ups.

5   EVALUATION FINDINGS

A response to all evaluation questions according to the OECD DAC criteria, as well as additional evaluation questions about cross-cutting issues, is provided in this section.

5.1 Relevance

The evaluation team finds that the SIERY project is highly relevant. All consulted stakeholders and BNFs have a broad consensus about SIERY's relevance. The project is well-aligned with the development priorities of the targeted areas it serves. The project focuses on priority areas such as operating and enhancing stalled projects, which are crucial given the dire situation in the country affected by the conflict. This alignment with local priorities is evident in the support provided to the recovery plans of the governorates, addressing critical needs in vital sectors like public works, health, and education. "*The project aimed to enhance the institutional and economic resilience of the governorate through recovery efforts, such as improving service delivery, building the capacity of government personnel, and implementing comprehensive development projects.*", a senior local authority representative confirmed.

The project aligns with national development priorities by enhancing institutional and economic resilience. The project addressed various deficiencies and weaknesses caused by the years of conflict, such as facility equipment and rehabilitation. This includes improving services provided by executive facilities, enhancing staff skills through specialized training, and rehabilitating and furnishing facilities. The project has contributed significantly to the work of local authorities, which face severe budget constraints and limited resources. During an evaluation interview, a senior government official

described the project's inception: "*The project was not a coincidence. It resulted from deliberate efforts to restore the capacities of local authorities, which had suffered significant resource losses in various aspects due to the prolonged conflict*. "As such, SIERY project main governance contribution was to support local authorities in delivering essential services more effectively. "*The project contributed to the governorate's six-year recovery plan, which was a key national priority*.", a local authority representative in Marib added.

The SIERY project is well-aligned with the strategic objectives outlined in the United Nations Yemen Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) 2022-2024. The UNSDCF prioritizes enhancing resilience, promoting inclusive governance, and improving livelihoods, all of which are core components of the SIERY project. Specifically, the SIERY project's focus on strengthening local governance and building institutional capacity directly contributes to Outcome 2 of the UNSDCF: "By 2024, people in Yemen, especially women, adolescents and girls, and those in the most vulnerable and marginalized communities experience more rights-based good governance, comprised of effective people-centered, equitable, and inclusive gender and age-responsive improved public services, and rule of law.[4]" SIERY's efforts to empower local authorities and communities to manage development processes effectively support this outcome by enhancing public service delivery and governance at the district level.

Moreover, SIERY's initiatives to promote economic recovery and resilience align with Outcome 3 of the UNSDCF: "By 2024, people in Yemen, especially women, adolescents, girls, and those at risk of being left behind, become more resilient to economic shocks by increasing their income security and access to decent work.[5]" The project's work in rehabilitating community assets and providing vocational training for youth and women directly supports this outcome by fostering economic opportunities and improving livelihoods in conflict-affected areas.

Additionally, the SIERY project's focus on community resilience and social cohesion aligns with Outcome 4 of the UNSDCF: "By 2024, people in Yemen, especially women, adolescents, girls, and those at risk of being left behind, will experience strengthened social protection and social services, which are people-centered, evidence- and needs-based, equitable, inclusive, and gender- and age-responsive.[6]" By focusing on strengthening local governance and improving service delivery, the SIERY project contributes to building more resilient communities that can withstand the challenges posed by ongoing conflict and economic instability.

SIERY project aligns closely with the strategic objectives outlined in the UNDP Country Programme Document (CPD) for Yemen (July 2019 - June 2021). The CPD emphasizes building resilience, promoting inclusive and accountable governance, and enhancing livelihoods, which are also core components of the SIERY project. Specifically, the project's focus on strengthening local governance, building institutional capacity, and promoting economic recovery directly contributes to Outcome 1 of the CPD:

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[4] United Nations Yemen Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework 2022 – 2024 January 2022
[5] Ibid
[6] Ibid

"Yemenis contribute to and benefit from inclusive, accountable, and gender-responsive governance at local and central levels.[7]" This outcome is reflected in the SIERY project's efforts to empower local authorities and communities to manage development processes effectively, thereby enhancing public service delivery and governance at the district level.

Furthermore, SIERY's activities that support local economic recovery and resilience-building are aligned with Outcome 2 of the CPD: "Yemenis improve their livelihoods and access inclusive productive services[8]." The project's initiatives to rehabilitate community assets and provide vocational training for youth and women contribute directly to this outcome by enhancing economic opportunities in the targeted districts.

While focused on development, the SIERY project didn't overlook the pressing humanitarian situation in the country. Recognizing the growing number of displaced people in Marib, the project aimed to effectively respond to their challenges. The SIERY project aligned with and supported the objectives of Yemen's Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) by addressing immediate humanitarian needs, such as improved access to essential services[9]. The project included components that addressed urgent humanitarian needs, such as enhancing access to clean water and reliable energy - vital for both immediate relief and long-term stability.[10]

Local authorities were actively consulted during the project design and implementation phases. After the early design workshops held with line ministries, coordination moved to the local authority level. The project essentially was designed to address the specific needs identified by local authorities, involving them in every step, from initial briefing workshops, forming DCT and DFT to prioritizing plans and programs. This active participation has ensured that the project remains relevant to local needs, addressing deficiencies and weaknesses. The involvement of local authorities in the design and implementation has facilitated a more tailored approach to addressing the specific needs of each sector.

The nomination of DCT and DFT was based on strict selection criteria established by the project management to ensure their relevance and effectiveness. The evaluation reveals that these criteria were meticulously followed, to a good extent, to maintain high standards and ensure that the appointed members could do the planned task, which mainly include peers training and developing recovery plans[11].

SIERY's project log frame is highly aligned with the UNDP Yemen country program outputs and outcomes, particularly in relation to economic resilience and support for service delivery in communities. The project strengthens local economies by supporting MSMEs, providing grants, and

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7 UNDP Yemen country programme document for the Republic of Yemen-July 2019 to June 2021
8 Ibid
9 Yemen Humanitarian Response Plan, 2020
10 According to the TPM report 2023 Q2&3, a high survey approval with 97% of respondents from (local authority members, CSOs, education, ministry of MoLA, MoPIC, and other project stakeholders) mentioned complete or moderate alignment of the project's goals and objectives with the community's values and priorities.
11 A number of recovery plans were checked as part the desk review

enhancing entrepreneurial skills, particularly for women, directly contributing to UNDP's goals of promoting sustainable economic growth and resilience. Capacity-building initiatives for local authorities and institutions ensure effective management of economic activities and development programs, aligning with UNDP's objective of building institutional resilience.

In response to the country's humanitarian situation over the past years, UNDP Yemen has undertaken numerous humanitarian projects. However, with the SIERY project, UNDP resumed its main development mandate, focusing on long-term resilience and sustainable development.

The SIERY project log frame aligns well with several Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), reflecting its comprehensive approach to sustainable development:

- SDG 1: No Poverty: The support provided to economic activities and providing financial resources to local businesses and entrepreneurs, the project contributes to reducing poverty and promoting economic opportunities.
- SDG 5: Gender Equality: The project emphasizes women's empowerment through targeted training, capacity-building, and support for female entrepreneurs, directly contributing to gender equality and empowering women and girls.
- SDG 6: Clean Water and Sanitation: The rehabilitation of water infrastructure ensures access to clean water and improved sanitation, addressing one of the core SDGs focused on ensuring the availability of water and sanitation for all.
- SDG 7: Affordable and Clean Energy: Many of SIERY#s sub-projects aimed at providing reliable and sustainable energy sources, such as solar energy, support the goal of ensuring access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy for all.
- SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth: Promoting entrepreneurship, supporting MSMEs, and enhancing local economic resilience, the project contributes to sustained, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all.
- SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities: Enhancing the capacity of local authorities and improving infrastructure contributes to making cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable.

The activities under the project are directly related to the problems and priorities identified in the CPD, which emphasizes the need for capacity building, rehabilitating institutions, and strengthening local governance to improve public service delivery in conflict-affected areas. . Different consulted stakeholders agreed that the project contributed to improving local authorities' public services. Stakeholders provided examples such as improved waste management services, better infrastructure maintenance, and enhanced local planning and budgeting processes. For instance, in some districts, the project supported the rehabilitation of water supply systems and the training of local staff in service delivery, which directly improved the efficiency and reliability of public services. This has helped local authorities address the challenges posed by the war and the resulting service delivery disruptions. Some interlocutors noted that while the project addressed many critical needs, it did not cover wide necessary areas comprehensively. For example, there were specific gaps in sectors like education,

where coordination with the Ministry of Planning and International Corporation (MOPIC) Office was insufficient, resulting in some education components being overlooked. However, a project staff highlighted that the needs are huge and beyond SIERY's ability. "*The most important point is that the SIERY project has restored local authorities to a leadership role. Previously, they were sidelined, merely observing while local relief efforts and organizations took charge. Development, in its true sense, means that local authorities must lead. They must be at the forefront, guiding and representing the community themselves*.", a stakeholder reported.

The project conducted numerous training sessions for various stakeholders, including the core team of the governorate, facilitators, civil society organizations, youth initiatives, and neighborhood chiefs acknowledging that building the capacity of key local actors is essential for improving governance and service delivery in conflict-affected areas. These sessions were tailored to meet the specific needs and priorities of the targeted communities, aligning with national development strategies The selection of participants was based on their scope of work and relevance to the courses being conducted. The training sessions covered various topics, such as participatory planning, risk management, and local governance. The training was generally well-received, with participants gaining valuable knowledge and skills. However, there were issues regarding the duration, trainers' capacities and practical training application. Participants noted that the training sessions were often short and compressed, with limited practical application. A senior government official reported that some RPs hired trainers with limited capacities. He attributed that RPs contracted have only major experience in the humanitarian field which requires further qualifications to intervene in developmental projects. Additionally, some participants highlighted some issues related to delays in the distribution of stationery and other training materials. Overall, these raised issues need to be addressed in the future to enhance the overall effectiveness of the training programs.

Development sub-projects under SIERY were selected through a participatory process involving various community groups, including youth, civil society organizations, women, the core team, executive offices, and local authorities. Projects were prioritized based on community input and urgency. The involvement of the Planning Offices and other relevant entities ensured that the selected projects were well-aligned with local needs. Launched projects included the rehabilitation of public works buildings, maintenance of water networks, and installation of solar energy systems.

While the vast majority of interviewed respondents agreed that sub-projects selected for the Local Resilience and Recovery Fund (L2RF) were of high relevance, some felt these projects lacked urgency and importance, believing they were chosen at the expense of more critical needs. Addressing this concern, a senior government official mentioned that MOLA is finalizing a platform for recovery plans, which will enable donors and organizations to browse and choose projects that align with their preferences and capacities, which gives relief that efforts won't be lost.

The project's objectives, design, and implementation methods were generally well-received by the target communities. The community's involvement in prioritizing projects and their active participation in the planning and execution phases contributed to the positive reception. However, while the project

was generally well-received, there were some concerns regarding the level of consultation and participation during the project design and implementation phases. Although local authorities were involved, some stakeholders felt there was not enough initial understanding and communication about the project led to difficulties in grasping the project's concept and objectives at the beginning, according to many interlocutors

Drawing from previous evaluations, it is clear that people value projects with tangible components that address their daily needs[12]. SIERY stands out for its well-balanced mix of both soft and hard components. According to a key informant, local authorities' cooperation improved significantly after receiving furniture and equipment, in contrast to just receiving training. This suggests that prioritizing hard components, at least partially, is essential to securing the buy-in of authority representatives. Projects directly addressing community needs, such as energy and water initiatives, were particularly welcomed. SIERY addresses the immediate and long-term needs of the communities it serves, thereby enhancing its overall relevance and effectiveness. "*SIERY project stands out due to its participatory approach and its wide spectrum of subprojects in both economic and institutional resilience, making it a model project that future development initiatives should learn from*.", a senior KI stated.

Direct beneficiaries expressed their satisfaction with the project's relevance. The feedback from Henna farmers in Hadhramaut highlights the relevance of the SIERY project, emphasizing significant improvements in irrigation efficiency and water supply due to the rehabilitation of canals. The project, selected by local authorities and neighborhood leaders, has reduced irrigation time, eliminated water leakage, and ensured more water reaches farms. This has benefited a wide range of farmers, including those growing palms and legumes. Similarly, the feedback from female entrepreneurship training participants in Aden underscores the relevance of the SIERY project's entrepreneurship training. The training provided valuable knowledge on project planning, marketing, and financial management, which were previously unknown to them. This practical knowledge helps them in creating sustainable business plans and managing profits effectively.

The evaluation results confirm that the project has the ability to adapt over time. As the conflict in Yemen evolved, so did the challenges faced by local authorities and communities. The project demonstrated flexibility by adjusting its activities to respond to these changing needs, such as shifting focus to more urgent sectors or modifying training programs to better equip local authorities under the new circumstances. This adaptability ensured that the interventions remained aligned with the evolving context and continued to address the most pressing issues faced by the targeted districts.

The project made significant contributions to gender equality and women's empowerment. The evaluation revealed that in the IR component, women were involved at every stage of the project, from forming the DCT and DFT to training and voting on project selection. Notably, a relevant quota was dedicated to women in the DCT and DFT, with around 30% representation, ensuring substantial female

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[12] UNDP Yemen ESPCRP evaluation findings serve as a strong example, highlighting how projects with tangible components that directly address daily needs are particularly valued by the community

participation. The training program for the DCT and DFT includes training on women's inclusion in the women's fellowship project in Marib, which provided training and employment opportunities for women in local authorities and demonstrates the project's commitment to empowering women. The project also ensured that women were represented in decision-making processes and benefited from training and capacity-building initiatives. The active involvement of women demonstrates the project's alignment with the 'leaving no one behind' principle, ensuring relevance by addressing women's needs in conflict-affected areas and providing them with opportunities and a voice in decision-making. In the long term, the project aimed at activating women affairs units at local authorities' offices to enable them to provide specialized services to women. This involved partnerships with women's institutions, including the Yemeni Women's Union, the National Women's Committee, and Women's Development Departments from MOLA and to produce gender strategic documents, as a step towards institutionalizing gender mainstreaming. Nevertheless, while stakeholders acknowledged the importance of activating women's affairs offices, they expressed concerns about the limited impact due to the lack of an operational budget which makes it necessary for the project to advocate for sufficient budget allocation to ensure these offices function effectively and achieve the desired outcomes.

In the ER component, SIERY supported female entrepreneurs by enhancing their enterprises, including offering grants to women running clinics, laboratories and other MSMEs. Notable examples include the support given to the Foqum Coastal Women's Association in Aden and the Women's Business Forum in Hadhramaut. These initiatives reflect the project's commitment to building the capacity of women's structures and empowering women, thereby demonstrating its dedication to gender equality.

The evaluation findings support the ToC's relevance and effectiveness as the project's focus on capacity building and institutional strengthening had a positive impact on improving service delivery in the targeted districts, validating the ToC's underlying logic. SIERY project's ToC is well-articulated and grounded in evidence. It clearly outlines the pathways through which the project intends to achieve its outcomes, with a focus on building institutional resilience and supporting economic recovery. The ToC articulates how its interventions are intended to bring about change amid Yemen's ongoing conflict and instability. Grounded in evidence from previous UNDP projects and international experiences in post-conflict settings, the ToC is based on the premise that enhancing institutional resilience and local economic recovery will lead to increased socio-economic resilience in targeted districts, ultimately improving living conditions for vulnerable populations.

The ToC explicitly identifies key assumptions, such as the continuity of local authority operations despite the conflict, their effective use of increased capacity, and the expectation that improved service delivery will enhance social cohesion and stability. These assumptions, while reasonable, necessitate continuous monitoring throughout the project's implementation. The ToC's focus on institutional and economic resilience demonstrates a deep understanding of the challenges facing Yemen's governance and economic systems. The use of capacity building, financial support, and community engagement strategies aligns with best practices in post-conflict recovery, highlighting the importance of local ownership and sustainability.

5.2 Coherence

The **EU's support** to Yemen and especially to the SIERY project is coordinated by two EU staff officers in the EU delegation to Yemen (based in Amman), with one being responsible for the IR and governance aspects and the other one being responsible for the ER component. They also facilitate coordination, information exchange and the exploration of possible synergies with other EU-funded projects (such as the ERRY project mentioned further below). However, the evaluation did not find specific examples of such coordination that would have any tangible result.

The project objectives and strategies are well-aligned and internally coherent across its various components and activities. . The SIERY project demonstrates this internal coherence through its clear focus on both institutional and economic resilience. The project's strategies, outputs, and activities are systematically designed to support these dual components. Institutional resilience efforts enhance the capacity of local authorities and governance systems to deliver essential services, manage emergencies, and support community recovery efforts. In parallel, economic resilience initiatives aim to improve the business environment, support MSMEs, and facilitate economic recovery and job creation through a value-chain approach. The project's logical framework is well-structured, providing clear linkages between activities, outputs, outcomes, and overall objectives. For example, capacity-building activities for local authorities and establishing the L2RF are directly tied to the project's goals of improving service delivery and enhancing economic opportunities.

All interlocutors agreed that they did not come across other projects that are similar to the SIERY project in its objectives, scope or activities. This uniqueness highlights SIERY's distinct role in addressing specific needs, contributing to its coherence by filling gaps that other initiatives do not cover. Occasional references were made in interviews to the "Resilience enhancement" project implemented by the German GIZ, which involved training local authorities but did not include producing recovery plans or implementing sub-projects to enhance institutional or economic resilience. Additionally, stakeholders mentioned the Tamkeen initiative by the Social Fund for Development (SFD), which developed strategic plans at the district and governorate levels. However, these plans were criticized for being developed by hired consultants and lacking the broad participatory approach that SIERY adopted. Besides, what distinguishes SIERY is its focus on working directly with formal government structures, such as local authorities and directorates.

The SIERY project has made concerted efforts to coordinate with other international and national interventions to ensure complementarity and avoid duplication. This includes alignment with the Enhanced Rural Resilience in Yemen (ERRY) Joint Programme and the Yemen Emergency Crisis Response Project (YECRP), both implemented by UNDP. However, UNDP staff also explained that this coordination was started relatively late and could have been organized more efficiently. Ultimately, no real synergies were found between the two projects. Coordination efforts also involved identifying areas of operation to prevent overlap with projects such as the governance project conducted by GIZ.

However, differences in work methodologies and approaches limited effective collaboration. While there was some coordination and communication with other UNDP projects and international organizations, the extent and nature of this integration were not clearly specified except for the efforts to avoid overlapping[13].

SIERY incorporates gender equality and social inclusion as cross-cutting themes, but also as primary targets of its activities. The project ensures that women, youth, and marginalized groups are actively involved in planning and decision-making processes. Specific initiatives, such as Marib Women Fellowship aims to empower women and enhance their role in local governance and economic activities.

Given the conflict context in Yemen, the project includes measures to address conflict sensitivity and promote social cohesion. The project document highlights that measures will be taken to avoid aggravating the existing conflict or creating additional sources of tension. Supporting local governance structures can be seen as an attempt to manage conflicts and deliver services in a way that fosters trust and legitimacy among communities. The project's emphasis on inclusive participation and fair resource allocation further contributes to social cohesion.

5.3 Effectiveness

The SIERY project has made significant progress towards achieving its intended goals and contributing to the high-level objective of enhancing institutional and economic resilience in Yemen.

Key achievements, at the outcome level are summed up in the table below as of Q2 2024. [14]

Outcome (specific objective) 1: Increased institutional and socio-economic resilience in targeted districts in Yemen				
Indicators	**Baseline (2019)**	**Final Target (2025)**	**Summary of achievements**	**Status**
Indicator 1.1: Proportion of population living in households with access to essential public services (**SDG 1.4.1**)	61% (2019)	63%	Beneficiaries in the areas of intervention which totaling of 6,280,799 Yemeni. Education (Female: 83,630; Males: 84,015; Total: 167,645) Energy (Female: 403,460; Male: 417,010; Total 820,470) Health (Female: 21,812; Male: 251,779; Total: 573,591) Roads Infrastructures (Female:	Partially achieved

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[13] Besides UNDP CO internal coordination among running projects, some examples were reported confirming the collaboration efforts that were paid with UNICEF in Taiz and UNOPS in Aden to align efforts.
[14]

			473,858; Male: 494,168; Total: 968,026) Sanitation (Female: 1,974,312 Male: 1,609,979; Total: 3,584,291) Water (Female: 83,143; Male: 83,633; Total: 166,776)	
Indicator 1.2: Primary school attendance rate	63%	66%	99.39% (school year 2022/2023).	Achieved
Outcome (specific objective) 2: Improved business environment for economy recovery and employment opportunities				
Indicator 2.1: Number of people benefiting from jobs and improved livelihoods in crisis or post-crisis settings.	4,930	48,000	A total of 30,337 people benefiting from jobs and improved livelihoods.	63%
Indicator 2.2: Proportion of women among beneficiaries of recovery programmes (Governorates)	30%	33%	**37%** of women beneficiaries participated and/or benefited from economy recovery programmes (Aden, Hadramaut, Hodeida, and Sana'a)	123%
Indicator 2.3: Number of producers/retailers/buyers benefitted from the market infrastructure rehabilitation.	**0**	10,000	Zero (0) producers/retailed/buyers, benefiting from the market infrastructure. The construction of market infrastructures is about to start. It is anticipated around 12,000 producers/retailers/buyers benefiting from market	0
Indicator 2.4: Number existing business associations with improved financial capacity at district level including funding for business advisory services through SIERY.	**0**	6	This year, the project focused on re-activating four (4) business associations in Aden and Hadramout governorates in collaboration with Chamber of Commerce (CoCs).	67%

- At the output level, most sub-output indicators are nearing completion, with some even exceeding their targets and overachieving 100%. Only a few indicators remain underachieved. (See annex)

- The project demonstrated strong performance in enhancing local authorities' capacities and improving public service providers' outreach (Outputs 1.1 and 1.2), which are critical for achieving the project's goals of improving governance and service delivery. However, significant underachievement in strengthening central-local relations (Output 1.3) and increasing access to

financial services (Output 2.2) suggests that these areas need more focused attention and possibly a revision of strategies to ensure overall project success.

- The moderate success in strengthening linkages between SMEs and value chains (Output 2.1) highlights the need for continued efforts to fully integrate economic actors and achieve the intended economic recovery and resilience.

- Most indicators are nearing achievement, demonstrating steady progress towards the project's objectives. Indicators related to developing gender-responsive District Capacity Development Plans (DCDPs), community structures connected to district authorities, and women and youth participation in training activities are close to reaching their targets.

- A few indicators are underachieved, highlighting areas that need additional focus. These include:
  - Market infrastructure rehabilitation.
  - Business associations with improved financial capacity at the district level.
  - Number of smallholders and SMEs with access to business support services.

However, the no-cost project extension provides time for improvement to achieve the underachieved indicators. and achieve the project's comprehensive goals.

The evaluation finds that SIERY has demonstrated good performance at both the output and outcome levels, with significant achievements and some areas requiring further attention during the remaining project duration to fully meet all targets. Interlocutors and stakeholders highlighted several challenges that hindered the achievements of SIERY's project indicators, including:

- The ongoing conflict and political instability in Yemen have significantly hindered project implementation. Frequent changes in local authorities and governance structures disrupted planned activities and delayed the achievement of project milestones. To address these challenges, the project management adopted an adaptive management approach by regularly reassessing and adjusting its activities to align with the shifting political landscape. This included maintaining flexibility in project planning, building strong relationships with local authorities, and ensuring that key stakeholders were continuously engaged despite the instability.

- Bureaucratic hurdles and political instability created delays in the approval and execution of project plans. Coordination between different levels of government and obtaining necessary permissions often took longer than anticipated. In response, the project management implemented strategies to streamline bureaucratic processes, such as establishing dedicated liaison roles to expedite communications and approvals.

- Funding limitations affected the project's ability to meet all its targets. The financial resources available were sometimes insufficient to cover the extensive identified needs, leading to prioritization and, consequently, the underachievement of some indicators. To mitigate this, the

project prioritized critical activities, reallocating resources as needed and implementing strict financial management measures. Different levels of capacity of local authorities and implementing partners also posed challenges. In some areas, the lack of skilled personnel and inadequate institutional capacity hindered effective project implementation and monitoring.

The following table showcases the Total Indicators Achievement as of 2024, 2nd quarter

No	Output	% of Comp.	Accumulative % of Comp.
1.1	Strengthened Local authorities' capacities to respond to community needs for services in an inclusive and accountable manner	93.3%	**93.3%**
1.2	Improved capacities of public services providers for scaling up the outreach to the most vulnerable	91.3%	**84.7%**
1.3	Strengthened central-local and horizontal relations between local governance stakeholder	23.3%	**23.3%**
2.1	Strengthened linkages/cooperation opportunities between SMEs, private sector and MFIs involved in the value chain	59.7%	**59.7%**
2.2	Increased and de-risked access to financial services for economic agents in promising value chains	22.5%	**22.5%**
	Total outputs achievement in percentage:	**58.0%**	**56.7%**

Cultural and societal norms in certain areas posed barriers to the active participation of women in project activities. Despite efforts to include women, achieving the targeted representation and engagement levels was challenging in some conservative areas. Nevertheless, the evaluation also finds that **women played critical roles at many stages of the SIERY project**.

Key roles assigned to women included:

- Participation in planning and decision-making: Women were actively involved in forming the DCT and DFT. They participated in training sessions, strategic planning, and project selection processes.
- Participation and representation: Interlocutors confirmed women's active participation in community structures and local governance structures, ensuring their voices were represented in decision-making.
- Economic empowerment: Women entrepreneurs received support to enhance their businesses, including training in project planning, marketing, and financial management. Specific projects targeted female-led enterprises, providing grants and resources to support their growth.

Women were prioritized in community structures to ensure gender-balanced representation, with a target of at least 30% participation. This strategy aimed to empower women and promote gender equality within the project. Importantly, women were not included based on a quota, but were selected based on meaningful criteria, including relevance of experience in governance, leadership, and entrepreneurship, and their capacity and willingness to actively participate in project activities.

Overall, women's participation in the SIERY project was substantial and multi-faceted. **The project succeeded in integrating women into key roles, ensuring they were not only participants but also leaders and decision-makers.** For example, women were given leadership roles within the DCTs and DFTs, where they played crucial roles in sub projects planning. Additionally, the project supported gender transformation by providing targeted training programs that equipped women with the skills needed to effectively participate in governance and economic activities. This empowerment not only increased women's representation but also challenged traditional gender roles, fostering a more inclusive and equitable environment in the targeted communities. The emphasis on economic empowerment through targeted support for female entrepreneurs further underscored the project's commitment to and specific focus on gender equality. Despite some cultural and societal challenges, the project managed to achieve significant milestones in women's empowerment, setting a precedent for future initiatives in Yemen.

SIERY has effectively addressed the practical and strategic needs of local authorities and beneficiaries by improving access to essential services and enhancing capabilities. The project's impact on local development and resilience is evident through several representative examples:

- **Capacity building**: The project prioritized capacity building of local authorities and community leadership. Comprehensive training programs were offered to local government officials, covering governance, strategic planning, and emergency management. These programs equipped officials with the necessary skills to manage resources effectively and respond to community needs.

- **Inclusive development plans**: Development plans were developed through inclusive representation, with at least 30% of women in the DCT and DFT. Women actively participated in strategic planning and project selection, ensuring their perspectives were integrated into local development initiatives. Recovery plans were developed based on extensive community participation.

- **Implementation of recovery projects**: As a result of the developed recovery plans, various projects were implemented, including the installation of solar energy systems, office equipping, water schemes, road construction, and the rehabilitation of schools and health facilities. A key official in the local authority of Taiz reported that the project's multiple interventions included the rehabilitation of streets and installation of street lighting in Sala district, the provision of classroom seating for approximately eight schools, complete furnishing of the Al Qaherah Directorate, and an intervention in the sewage system with some equipment. In Hadhramaut, a local authority representative said the project strengthened institutional infrastructure by providing essential furniture like tables, chairs, and ICT materials. It also addressed the district water issues and established an operational department with medical equipment, enhancing the quality of healthcare services. All counterparts' interlocutors in different governorates reported different interventions in the sectors of education, health, water, and roads with varying

progress where some sub-projects have already completed implementation and some approved but not begun. However, the local authorities in Lahj governorate reported that the delay was more than expected. When this was brought to a project staff, he advised that certain contextual factors, different from one subproject to another, limit the implementation, including late submission of projects by some authorities in the third or fourth quarter instead of the required first quarter, contributed to these delays. As a result, implementation had to be postponed to the following year.

- Economic empowerment programs: Female entrepreneurs received substantial support through business development training, grants, and resources. For instance, Foqum Coastal Women's Association in Aden benefited from enhanced production and market reach, contributing to increased economic stability and growth.

For the effectiveness of the project, the sub-projects had selection criteria for prioritizing and approving sub-projects. The project staff carefully evaluates project proposals submitted by local authorities based on various criteria such as project feasibility, cost-effectiveness, previous interventions, target beneficiaries, gender equality, environmental impact, and alignment with the project's objectives. The evaluation process ensures that projects with genuine needs and potential for positive impact are selected.

During the SIERY evaluation, it was noted that the project struggled to achieve one of its primary activities: enhancing the accountability of local authorities. Some stakeholders attributed that to the weakness of the Central Organization of Control and Auditing (COCA); the governmental organization concerned with this activity. Some interlocutors indicated that it was not robust enough to support and enforce accountability measures effectively. Additionally, there was significant resistance from local authorities who were reluctant to embrace these measures, possibly due to fears of exposure, perceived threats to their autonomy, or a general lack of trust in central oversight mechanisms. These combined factors created a challenging environment for implementing accountability within local authorities, highlighting the need for strengthening COCA's capacity and fostering a culture of transparency and accountability through intensive capacity-building efforts and strategic change management. "We *couldn't implement this activity and therefore the budget allocated for it was return to UNDP accoun*t", an RP KI confirmed.

Special highlights on the effectiveness of three main SIERY activities:

The project engaged community stakeholders, including CSOs, the private sector, and community leaders, in participatory planning to prioritize local needs and develop strategic plans. The evaluation team met some CSOs that took part in the social accountability activities and concluded the following:

- Around 50 CSOs participated in SIERY activities of social accountability.

- CSOs were selected based on their previous experience working on social accountability, their participation in initial training sessions, and their performance during preliminary phases.
- CSOs received comprehensive training on governance, social accountability, conflict sensitivity, and participatory planning. Specific training programs included strategic planning, good governance, and developing complaints mechanisms.
- Some CSOs implemented various community initiatives, such as improving the quality of services provided by public offices, establishing complaint systems, and enhancing community participation in accountability processes. Initiatives also included raising awareness among school students and the broader community about accountability and proper waste disposal.
- According to several interlocutors, some social accountability activities led to improved access to services by identifying weaknesses, improving communication between service providers and beneficiaries, and implementing complaint mechanisms. Activities increased community cooperation and involvement, especially through awareness campaigns and educational programs in schools. "*We focused on improving the Solid Waste Management Service of the Cleanliness and Improvement Fund in Taiz City by developing a community accountability mechanism, including a complaints and suggestions policy, a communication policy, and a hotline. Additionally, we enhanced community participation by engaging 50 government schools across three districts (Salah, Al Qaherah, and Al-Mudhaffar) in environmental education and awareness activities, leading to significant community interaction and support*.", a Taiz based CSO head reported.
- CSOs faced challenges such as changes in office leadership, lack of essential resources, and limited financial support.

The ET also found that the Marib Fellowship initiative was effective in achieving its outcomes. Participants reported a high level of improvement in their leadership skills, with an average rating of 85-90%. The training sessions were well-designed, utilizing a variety of methods, including theoretical and practical applications. The following points sum up the effectiveness of the initiative based on feedback from both the participants and the Manrib Girls Foundation management.

- The six-month training program offered a comprehensive curriculum that included essential courses like computer skills, leadership skills, and communication skills. Participants also received specialized training in areas such as women's rights, local governance, conflicts, participatory planning, and more specific subjects like public procurement and project management.

- Participation and selection were conducted in a fair and transparent manner. A total of 70 women, including 35 government employees and 35 recent graduates , were selected. The participants consisted of 60% displaced persons and 40% from the host community. The selection process involved public announcements, application submissions, interviews, and adherence to predefined criteria. "*The initiative was in partnership with the local authority, and agreements were made with government offices that nominated the participating employees for training. Priority was given to service offices*.", an interviewee in Marib reported.

- After training, 35 graduates were placed in various government offices, with 10 receiving permanent employment due to demonstrated competence. The initiative facilitated practical application of skills in real workplace settings, which led to employment opportunities.

- Participants reported significant improvement in leadership skills, with effectiveness ratings ranging from 80% to 90%. Skills acquired included computer skills, report writing, database creation, and communication. "*I have gained valuable skills that have had a significant impact on my professional life. From computer handling skills to mastering typing and archiving, learning database creation and communication skills* ", one participant said.

- Although the feedback was generally positive, particularly regarding the training quality, materials, timing, breaks, and transportation incentives, participants suggested that the program could be improved by including a Training of Trainers (TOT) course to enable them to transfer their knowledge to others, as well as a course on archiving and secretarial skills.

Collaboration Platforms for Local Economy Recovery (CP4LER), (locally known as Development ambassadors) were established in six IRG governorates. These structures aimed to engage the private sector along with NGOs and local authorities in development endeavors. The collaboration platforms comprise 10-12 members per governorate, 4-5 representatives of the local authority, 4-5 representatives of the private sector, and 2 representatives of CSOs active in development in the local society. The development ambassadors were capacitated on local development and assigned to conduct field visits to assess the local economic situation, identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges, and gather input from local businesses, authorities, and civil society. Based on the needs assessment, they developed plans for strategic economic projects for their governorates. Additionally, they participate in policymaking and coordination with local authorities to foster local economic development while also monitoring the implementation of economic development plans and providing feedback for continuous improvement.

- Ambassadors were selected based on specific criteria set by the Economic Media Center and nominations from the Chamber of Commerce and Industry, local authorities, and active CSOs. Ambassadors received training in collaborative planning, goals setting, budget preparation, monitoring and evaluation, strategic planning, and understanding local economic development. Training sessions were generally well-received, although some participants noted issues such as high pressure during the training period and poor communication from coordinators.

- Although the initiative was ambitious, the feedback was partially positive. Consulted ambassadors indicated that they contributed to some studies, but no tangible outputs have been yet implemented on the ground. "*We contributed to the preparation of several projects in the agricultural sector (tomatoes, sesame), the establishment of an industrial city, and other ideas that were submitted to the governor's office*", a respondent in Marib reported. In Taiz, an ambassador expressed his optimism towards a study he worked on that addressed the electricity problem in Taiz city. However, the consulted ambassadors in Hadhramaut expressed dissatisfaction about the unclear vision and limited achievement of mere data collection. Other ambassadors noted that there was a lack of effective coordination among ambassadors, with many working individually rather than as a cohesive team. Each ambassador worked within their own field, which led to a lack of collective achievement. The ET concludes that this activity needs further leadership improvement to activate the ambassador's roles, clear their vision, and do the required coordination as many respondents indicated the lack of effective leadership and direction. Enhancing these areas will likely lead to better outcomes and greater impact for the Development Ambassadors initiative.

Support to educational infrastructures and capacity building is one of the key interventions of SIERY. The desk review showed positive outputs achieved. According to the provided reports, 482 educational personnel from 230 schools and education offices (41% women) were trained on Vocational Guidance Training. Besides, 943 personnel (44% women) from 230 schools, 23 district education offices, governorate level education offices participated in a practical training on safety and risk mitigation and management. To complement this practical training, a set of safety and security equipment was provided including included fire extinguishers, instruction boards, of using fire extinguishers, safety and security dashboards, and first aid boxes. The schoolteachers, school administrators, and staff of education offices were also trained on using this equipment.

- The FGD conducted with direct beneficiaries of the training offered to the educational offices in Taiz's three districts revealed a positive reception of the intervention. The training, which spanned over two years, covered educational planning, security and safety, guidance and counselling, governance, and crisis management. According to the participants, the training involved 100 participants, with 57 males and 43 females, indicating a balanced gender representation, and participants were carefully selected based on specific criteria. The FGD participants agreed that the training topics were highly relevant and addressed real challenges faced by educational staff. Participants reported that the training met their actual needs and significantly improved their performance in various areas, such as planning, safety, and leadership. "*The planning skills were applied to all school principals, and now all the schools have their own specific plan*.", a school principal participant reported.
- Although the overall organization of the training was rated as excellent, some participants felt that the duration of certain programs, such as the planning course, was insufficient. The lack of adequate time required teams to work even on Friday afternoons to complete the training. Besides, while visiting the education office, it was found that the planned infrastructure support

hasn't been delivered. The participants indicated the educational offices need furniture, solar energy, and ICT materials.

5.3 Efficiency

Examining SIERY project's efficiency in implementation was a crucial aspect to examine, as it directly impacts the project's ability to achieve its intended outcomes in a cost-efficient and timely manner. The analysis of feedback from various stakeholders gave insights into the strategies employed by the project team to optimize resource utilization, integrate capacity-building initiatives, and foster strong stakeholder collaboration. Key aspects of this analysis included the effectiveness of resource allocation, the cost-effectiveness of project activities, and the timeliness of implementation. This assessment of the project's efficiency sheds light on the factors that contributed to its successes, as well as areas where improvements could be made to enhance the overall effectiveness of the initiative.

1. Financial efficiency:

In terms of financial efficiency, many interlocutors agreed that the project has been able to utilize its budget effectively, ensuring that funds are directed towards key activities and outputs. The project imposed strict measures on procurement, costs and expenditure, which helped keep the cost per output generally within the planned and expected range. Additionally, the project has managed to keep administrative costs reasonable (for UN standards), thereby maximizing the resources available. However, financial constraints such as delayed fund disbursements and logistical challenges impacted timely implementation. Yet, the project showed adaptability in managing unforeseen issues.

The project has faced challenges in adhering to the initial timelines due to the complex operating environment in Yemen, but also due to slow and bureaucratic UNDP procedures, e.g. for hiring project staff. Delays in fund disbursement and the procurement process have been noted, affecting the timely execution of planned activities. Yet, the project has shown adaptability in responding to unforeseen challenges, such as security issues and logistical constraints. This flexibility has been crucial in maintaining progress despite delays.

2. Management Structure:

The project's management structure is well-designed to navigate the complex challenges of implementation in Yemen. The project document shows decentralized implementation model, overseen by four field coordinators, ensures adaptability to diverse local contexts. This approach,

combined with the strategic guidance of the Project Board and the expert leadership of the project management senior staff, has proven effective in balancing national priorities with localized needs.

While the multi-layered structure may present coordination challenges, it is strengthened by the comprehensive support provided by specialized roles within the Project Management technical staff. The Project Board includes senior beneficiaries, suppliers, and the UNDP Resident Representative. The Project Board reviews these reports and, together with advisory committees, undertakes decisions to adjust project strategies as needed. Decisions are made by consensus in the Project Board, with input from advisory committees as necessary. The CTA/PM plays a key role in implementing these decisions on the ground.

The M&E framework, coupled with the oversight from the UNDP Country Office Resident Representative, ensures accountability, efficiency, and a focus on delivering meaningful outcomes. Besides, the project document clearly defines roles and responsibilities for local authorities, community leaders, and project staff, the project has fostered efficient execution and oversight.

3. Deployment of field and national coordinators:

The inclusion of multiple field coordinators across different regions ensured effective management and timely reporting. Five field coordinators were assigned to the project regions, supported by two national coordinators responsible for each component, for targeted interventions and efficient reporting. This approach significantly contributed to the project's operational efficiency and was often remarked by implementing partners. The field coordinators' on-site presence, targeted oversight, rapid response, and coordination with local authorities collectively helped prevent financial mismanagement in the SIERY project.

 4. Cost-effective implementation:

Generally, the project was efficient and cost-effective, utilizing local expertise and transparent procurement processes. Moreover, RPs conducted thorough assessments to accurately estimate project costs. This process ensured that projects were neither overfunded nor underfunded, aligning resources with the actual needs on the ground. Additionally, the project integrated training and capacity-building activities into the responsibilities of local authority staff. This approach minimized expenses related to allowances and transportation, with participants receiving only modest compensation ($10-15) for their involvement. In a few sub-projects, however, delays and bottlenecks were encountered, e.g. in procurement processes of required equipment, especially when this had to be procured from outside Yemen. According to interviewees this led to delays that could have been avoided through faster and more transparent management of these procurement processes.

5. Effective monitoring and evaluation (M&E):

The M&E system was integrated into the project management, ensuring regular reporting and data quality. Feedback sessions and data validation further enhanced this system. "*The M&E system was simple but effective, ensuring regular reporting data quality and comprehensive tracking of indicators*," a project staff said. SIERY's M&E system is well-functioning, focusing on data quality, comprehensive tracking, and activities monitoring. The M&E system emphasizes data quality and comprehensive tracking of project indicators. Regular feedback sessions and data validation ensure accurate reporting and effective monitoring. According to consulted stakeholders, the project integrated gender-sensitive monitoring, measuring the transformative impact of activities on gender dynamics. This comprehensive approach included documenting success stories and long-term impact measurement.

SIERY project's indicators largely adhere to the SMART framework, with most demonstrating specificity and measurability. However, indicators related to qualitative outcomes require more nuanced measurement tools to ensure accurate evaluation. Moreover, while indicators have shown progress, the achievability of some may have been influenced by factors beyond the project's control. Future projects could benefit from more flexible timelines and adaptive management strategies to address unforeseen delays. Besides, the indicators are directly aligned with the project's objectives of strengthening local governance and economic resilience, making them relevant to the project's success. However, achieving targets for certain indicators may require adjustments to timelines or implementation strategies. **Due to the country security situation and access limitations, there has been increasing dependency on Third Party Monitoring TPM since 2017.** TPM companies conduct field visits, interact with stakeholders, and provide quarterly reports. The templates used by TPMs are reviewed to ensure they align with the project's objectives. However, there were challenges with the quality of third-party monitoring reports. According to project staff, TPM reports are sometimes considered routine and not deeply analytical. Efforts were made to improve the depth and quality of these reports.

UNDP does not have a dedicated complaint and feedback mechanism to address issues and complaints related to the project. However, UNDP SIERY received the tracking of complaints and feedback from the RPs and analyzed those. This information is fed into a monthly meeting between UNDP and RPs. However, the evaluation also found that **there is a need for a direct complaint mechanism for beneficiaries to address issues directly with UNDP**. "*Complaints from beneficiaries do not directly reach UNDP; rather, they are received by RPs who then handle them, and report results to UND*P", a respondent highlighted.

6**.** Partnership approach:

The project did not limit the partnership to the two strategic partners of the UNDP CO; PWP and SMEPS, but it expanded to include more local organizations to build capacity and facilitate a

transition from humanitarian to development action. Expanding the partnership base to include 18 local partners working across nine governorates enhanced the project's reach and capacity-building effort. Local RPs with initially limited experience significantly improved their project management skills through numerous meetings and training sessions facilitated by SIERY. Additionally, RPs involved in infrastructure projects received supervision and training from UNDP's engineering teams. They were instructed on maintaining equality in project execution and monitoring, ensuring adherence to UNDP's standards.

7. Financial commitment to gender activities:

A substantial portion of the budget, approximately 30%, was allocated specifically for gender-related activities. This financial commitment ensured that gender initiatives were adequately funded and prioritized. The project implemented various gender-related activities such as the Women Fellowship Initiative, gender capacity building, and women value chain initiatives. These activities were well-funded, reflecting the project's dedication to gender balance and integration. "*The project ensured that gender-related activities were not underfunded. Financial resources were allocated as needed, avoiding any cuts or compromises on the planned activities*.", a project staff explained. The allocated funds to support the Women's Fellowship Initiative in Marib, was a key component of the project's gender activities. This initiative did not only provide training and immediate employment opportunities for women within local authorities but also enhanced their voices in decision-making processes. The dedication of budget to such initiatives reflects the project commitment to integrating gender considerations into its overall objectives.

8. Communication strategy:

In the first year, there were some challenges as the project was new, and people were unaware of it. However, over time, the project gained more visibility in the field, and people and authorities started to grasp its significance. "*The SIERY project has gained significant visibility across various platforms, including the UNDP website, social media, news websites, and even at the UNDP headquarters in New York*.", a project staff commented. The project is widely discussed and featured, showcasing the success of the communication strategy. The project's media indicators showed positive interactions, including from social media, and were among the most engaging posts at the UNDP office[15]. "*The project employed specialists in communication, initially three and now reduced to two, who continue to operate effectively in promoting the project*." a project staff reported.

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[15] UNDP Yemen's account on X (https://x.com/UNDPYemen) actively showcases the hashtag #SIERY, highlighting ongoing engagement with the SIERY project.

The communication team focused on collecting success stories and incorporated specific communication requirements in cooperation with RPs. This included targets for social media posts, videos, and other visibility activities.

9. Risk management:

The SIERY project operates in a highly volatile environment characterized by political instability, and socioeconomic disruption. The project document dedicated a special section for risk management. Effective risk management was paramount to its success. The project's risk management strategy, outlined in the project document, involved a proactive approach to identifying, and mitigating potential risks.

A comprehensive range of risks were identified including political, operational, financial, and security domains. The ongoing conflict and frequent changes in local governance were recognized as high-impact risks that could significantly disrupt project activities.

The project's risk management approach was both proactive and adaptive, allowing it to identify and address risks effectively. The use of specific, context-sensitive mitigation strategies ensured that the project remained relevant and effective even in the face of significant challenges.

5.4 Impact

The SIERY project has started to show initial impact through enhanced local authority capacities, improved working environments, and increased community participation. Early successes include better access to essential services, significant economic empowerment through grants to MSMEs, and strengthened gender equality and women's involvement in development activities. Though many sub-projects and activities were still ongoing or pending at the time of the evaluation, these initial outcomes demonstrate the project's potential to create impactful change.

The following points highlight the main features of the project's impact:

1. Enhanced local authority capacities:

A vast majority of interlocutors agreed that the SIERY project enhanced the capacities of local authorities across targeted districts to carry out their duties effectively. Training programs and capacity-building initiatives empowered local authority members with the skills needed to manage administrative tasks and plan development projects. This improvement in capabilities has led to a more efficient and responsive local governance structure. "*Through targeted training and equipment, the SIERY project has empowered local authorities to better perform their duties*", a KI reported. Other interlocutors highlighted that this capacity development has had a ripple effect, as increased

collaboration and coordination among different levels of local government offices, from the directorates to the governorate center. Creating comprehensive, participatory development plans - with input from community groups, youth, and CSOs - has helped bridge the gap between citizens and authorities, strengthening the bond and trust between them.

2. Improved working environments:

The project contributed to enhancing and improving the working environments of local authority facilities. It was achieved through infrastructure upgrades and the provision of essential office equipment, which has resulted in more conducive working conditions and improved job performance among local authority employees.

3. Promotion of community participation:

SIERY contributed to promoting community participation by involving various societal groups in the planning and implementation of projects. Besides implementing principles of social accountability, the project has enabled citizens to actively identify and address deficiencies in local services. This participatory approach has increased societal awareness of the importance of community involvement, thereby enhancing the relationship between citizens and authorities.

The project's emphasis on involving diverse community groups, including women and youth, in the planning and implementation stages has been transformative. For example, the inclusion of women in the District Core Teams (DCTs) and District Facilitation Teams (DFTs) allowed them to take on leadership roles, directly influencing decision-making processes. Youth were actively engaged in local governance initiatives, particularly through training programs that equipped them with the skills needed to contribute effectively. This inclusive approach has not only enhanced the sense of project ownership but also amplified the unheard voices, leading to more equitable and responsive development outcomes.

4. Improved access to services:

The project has improved access to essential services such as education and veterinary animal health. For example, the provision of school chairs, desks and laboratories has enhanced the educational environment, while veterinary health interventions have improved animal health services, benefiting livestock-dependent communities. Furnishing schools with desks and laboratories and enhancing sanitation facilities, SIERY has directly enhanced the learning environment and opportunities for students.

5. Economic empowerment:

SIERY has had a positive impact on livelihood opportunities and income levels for beneficiaries. Initiatives such as grants to MSMEs and support for value chain development, particularly in sectors like Henna and livestock, have led to increased revenue and economic stability for many households. For instance, milk centers established in Bait Al-Faqih and Al-Sukhna have generated significant monthly income for participating households. The project's economic empowerment initiatives, particularly those targeting women, have led to improved livelihoods and increased incomes for beneficiaries. Innovative approaches, such as supporting Henna production, have not only boosted household earnings but also contributed to opening new market access and business networks for local entrepreneurs.

6. Gender equality and women's empowerment:

The project has enhanced the role and importance of women in development activities, contributing to gender equality. Women's participation in project activities, including training and economic initiatives, has improved living standards and greater involvement in local governance and economic activities. Establishing the Women Business Forum in Hadramout is a notable achievement in this regard. The forum has played a positive role in advocating for the inclusion of women in the local economy. It has provided women with essential training in areas such as financial literacy, marketing, and business management, equipping them with the skills needed to start and grow their businesses. This initiative has not only empowered individual women but also contributed to broader economic resilience in Hadramout by supporting the growth of women-led businesses.

Additionally, the forum has created a supportive community where women can address challenges specific to female entrepreneurs, such as access to finance and navigating cultural barriers. Through mentorship programs and peer support, the Women Business Forum has helped increase women's confidence and visibility in the business sector, challenging traditional gender norms and paving the way for greater gender equality in Hadramout's economic landscape.

7. Social change and ownership:

SIERY has fostered social change by creating a sense of project ownership among local actors which community structures are part of that. This was achieved through the implementation of social accountability principles and the involvement of civil society organizations in project selection and implementation. The project's collaborative approach has strengthened partnerships among local authorities, civil society organizations, and the private sector, leading to a more cohesive and united community effort in development.

Success Story: Thabat Neighborhood's Road to Resilience

For years, the residents of Thabat neighborhood endured significant hardships due to the rough and inaccessible state of their main road. Their primary road, once a vital artery, had deteriorated into a treacherous path. The journey to access necessities - water, food, healthcare - was fraught with challenges. Emergency situations were particularly harrowing, with delays often proving critical.

A collaborative spirit ignited change. With UNDP's SIERY project implemented by Generations Without Qat Organization's, the neighborhood's dreams of a passable road began to materialize. A unique aspect of this project was the active participation of residents, who generously donated land to widen the road though agricultural land is considered very valuable for them. This unprecedented community engagement was a testament to their collective desire for improvement.

The transformation was swift and impactful. The once impassable road now hums with activity. Ambulances can reach residents in need swiftly, and essential supplies flow uninterrupted. The neighborhood's economic prospects have also seen a boost, as businesses can now operate more efficiently.

Beyond the physical infrastructure, the project has fostered a renewed sense of community. Residents, who once bore the brunt of isolation, now find strength in their collective action. The success of the road rehabilitation has become a symbol of hope and resilience, proving that even in the face of adversity, communities can drive positive change. "*This project stands as a testament to what can be achieved when international aid, local expertise, and community ownership converge. It's more than just a road; it's a pathway to a brighter future for the people of Thabat*.", a community leader concluded.

Before

After

The SIERY project has yielded several unintended positive outcomes that have further enhanced its impact. These outcomes demonstrate the project's broader influence on the local level within the district and its potential to drive sustainable development beyond its initial scope.

Those include:

1. Increased societal awareness:

The project has inadvertently increased societal awareness of the benefits of modern agricultural practices and other innovative solutions. For example, the introduction of grapevine trellising in Bani

Hushish significantly boosted income from grape production, demonstrating the value of adopting new techniques.

2. Strengthened collaboration:

SIERY significantly enhanced collaboration among diverse stakeholders by serving as a channel for dialogue and partnership. The establishment of platforms such as District Recovery Platforms (DRPs), the project created spaces for local authorities, community structures, the private sector, and NGOs to come together, share views, and jointly develop resilience and recovery plans. This approach promoted a sense of shared ownership and responsibility, leading to more effective decision-making and implementation. This collaborative spirit could be seen as an ambitious step in bridging gaps between different administrative levels. .

3. Enhanced market access:

While not initially planned, some project activities have improved market access for local businesses. Training programs and workshops, particularly those focused on the henna sector, have enabled local producers to enhance their products and expand their markets.

Although SIERY has made significant strides in enhancing local authority capacities, improving working environments, and increasing community participation, feedback indicates that not all community needs were met, highlighting the importance of continuous stakeholder engagement and balancing top-down and bottom-up approaches. A comprehensive impact assessment is necessary after project closure, along with baseline and endline studies for all activities to measure the project's impact more accurately.

At the impact level on both sexes, the project achieved significant positive outcomes, particularly in empowering women and improving access to services. The focus on gender-sensitive interventions led to substantial benefits for women, especially in governance and economic participation. The differences in impact between the sexes highlight the project's success in addressing gender disparities, but they also underscore the need for ongoing efforts to overcome the remaining barriers. The project's ability to empower women was a major achievement, but the limitations faced by some women due to cultural norms indicate areas where further work is needed to ensure that both men and women can equally benefit from development initiatives.

5.5 Sustainability

Yemen has faced immense challenges due to ongoing conflicts, economic volatility, and a severe humanitarian crisis. **Ensuring the sustainability of development projects in such a complex environment is challenging but also crucial for achieving lasting impact**. SIERY strengthened local governance, economic recovery, and resilience through a range of interventions. When evaluating the project's sustainability, it is important to assess the long-term viability of the outcomes and the project's ability to continue generating benefits even after its completion.

One of the key aspects of sustainability includes the availability and management of financial and economic resources independent of SIERY funding, which vary from one sub-project to another. For example, sewer infrastructure sub-projects may face different sustainability challenges compared to alternative energy projects that might be phased out if conventional electricity becomes available or when at least some components, like batteries, are worn out. Most projects focus on providing services, and some are purely construction-oriented, such as activities that focus on market rehabilitation or construction. The sustainability of these types of projects is often linked to continuous funding and the local capacity to manage and maintain the constructed markets. Continuous organizational support is crucial for maintaining the project's achievements, with a commitment to providing the support needed to ensure the longevity of these benefits. Additionally, the project has developed plans to improve the economic situation by maximizing financial resources, creating opportunities, and developing markets.

The SIERY project has significantly progressed in capacity building and training across various sectors. The training programs have empowered local administrations with the necessary skills to enhance institutional resilience, enabling them to sustain project activities and generate positive outcomes even after the project's completion.

Local community committees, institutions, private sector partners, and NGOs have been actively involved in preparing policies and strategic plans to sustain project activities. This collaboration has fostered a sense of ownership and responsibility that is critical for long-term success. Strategic planning sessions with facilitators, supervisors, the Chamber of Commerce, businessmen, and community committees have been conducted to ensure community buy-in and participation, recognizing that projects incorporating local input and management are more likely to be maintained and supported over time. This inclusive approach has strengthened the relationship between local authorities and the community, promoting shared decision-making and institutional development for sustainable impact.

As the project is well aligned with communities' needs, as previously discussed in the relevance section of this report, **this alignment enhances the sustainability of its activities, outputs, and outcomes**. The relevance of activities ensures direct benefits to the local population, fostering ownership and a strong sense of responsibility among local actors including community members. The participatory approach of DCT & DFT, which brings in-depth first-hand knowledge of the community needs, has been a key factor in the success and sustainability of the project. This local insight helps in designing and

implementing more effective and sustainable interventions. Projects tailored to specific local issues are more effective and impactful, ultimately leading to sustainable and long-lasting outcomes.

For the ER component of the project, the project's focus on multiple economic value chain developments and grants to micro, small and medium-size enterprises (MSMEs) demonstrates strong sustainability potential. While continuous organizational support remains essential, securing long-term direct benefits for beneficiaries is equally critical. Furthermore, the project has proactively developed economic plans to enhance financial resource management and establish resources inlets for local development.

SIERY includes sub-project that address environmental sustainability, such as alternative energy solutions and water management practices. Sustainable environmental practices are crucial to ensuring that the benefits of the project are not undermined by environmental degradation.

As an additional achievement, SIERY arranged a visit to Rwanda for Marib local authorities to learn from their governance and local development experience. One of the first lessons learned was applied, leading to the initiation of a broad community cleanliness campaign launched by the Deputy Governor in 2023. This campaign, conducted on the last Monday of each month with official and public participation, emphasizes the importance of cultivating communal responsibility towards cleanliness. The monthly campaign aims to instill a positive societal attitude towards the environment and cleanliness, ensuring the sustainability of the initiative through continuous community engagement and support.

SIERY contributed to creating a bank of developmental plans. The recovery plans produced by DCT and DFT that were not selected for the L2RF were gathered at local authorities and presented to other donors. This involved showcasing development plans and budgets to secure additional funding and support, ensuring that valuable initiatives could still be implemented and sustained despite not being initially funded by L2RF. This proactive approach enhances the project's sustainability by diversifying funding sources and maintaining momentum for ongoing and future projects.

The broad participation of women in the SIERY project significantly contributes to its sustainability. Women's involvement in DCT and DFT, value chain development, MSME grants, and capacity-building training, the project ensures enhanced community buy-in by addressing the needs and priorities of the entire community. This inclusion brings diverse perspectives, leading to more comprehensive and effective project outcomes. Through training and active involvement, the project builds women's capacity to take on leadership roles, ensuring the continuity and sustainability of project initiatives. Economic empowerment initiatives, including targeted grants and support for women-led businesses, promote more stable and sustainable economic growth.

The project team reported documenting lessons learned throughout its implementation, capturing both the challenges and successes faced. These insights have been shared with key stakeholders

through reports, workshops, and collaborative meetings. This necessitates the need to ensure that such valuable knowledge is passed on to those working in similar settings of conflict-affected areas.

Despite all above listed, SIERY also faces several challenges or threats to its sustainability Including political and economic instability. Frequent changes in local governance disrupt established processes and diminish local ownership, while weakened institutions struggle to maintain and build on the project's outcomes. Security concerns hinder consistent project implementation, and the reliance on external funding raises risks for long-term continuity. Additionally, political instability shifts community priorities, potentially reducing engagement and undermining the sustainability of SIERY's achievements. On the other hand, the economic instability poses risks to financial resources for project maintenance. Besides, capacity gaps require continuous development to keep up with evolving challenges, and security concerns that can disrupt activities. To address these challenges, the project should focus on several key areas: Firstly, continuous training programs and refreshers should be implemented to update the skills of local authorities and community members. Secondly, exploring diversified funding sources like international donors, private sector partnerships, and local revenue generation. Additionally, enhancing coordination with other UN agencies, NGOs, and local stakeholders to foster collaboration and prevent duplication. Promoting local ownership of all local actors including community members through participatory approaches and establishing robust monitoring and evaluation systems are also crucial for tracking progress, identifying challenges, and adapting strategies effectively.

5.6 Cross-cutting issues

The SIERY project has demonstrated a strong commitment to cross-cutting issues, integrating human rights, gender equality, women groups and disability considerations into its design and implementation.

1. Human Rights

SIERY has demonstrated a solid commitment to upholding human rights and ensuring that all community segments, regardless of their socioeconomic status or background, benefit from its interventions. SIERY emphasized inclusivity and non-discrimination by ensuring that all community segments, including marginalized and disadvantaged groups, benefited from its initiatives. Projects were designed to be public and inclusive, benefiting everyone rather than targeting specific groups. For instance, equipping hospitals and improving public facilities were intended to serve all community members, including the disabled and marginalized populations. "*The project does not differentiate between the poor, disabled individuals, children, or marginalized and disadvantaged groups because everyone benefits from the project. We cannot segregate these public projects for a specific category*.", an interviewee confirmed.

The project has prioritized the needs of marginalized groups, such as the poor and physically disabled, by integrating their requirements into the design of facilities like schools and hospitals. One notable example is the installation of a water scheme in Najrah's Al-Aman market, Hajjah governorate, which specifically targeted a block inhabited by marginalized groups, connecting water to each of their homes. This targeted approach has helped address the unique challenges these communities face and contributed to their enjoyment of basic human rights.

The project has also ensured that the selection of priorities for implementation (L2RF) benefits all categories of society, including marginalized groups, women, and youth, without creating conflicts or negative impacts within the communities. This inclusive approach has generated more income and opportunities for the communities, further promoting human rights and social cohesion.

2. Gender Equality and Empowerment

Women's participation was integral to the SIERY project from its inception. Women were involved in forming core teams, attending training sessions, participating in field visits, drafting plans, and voting on project priorities. This comprehensive involvement ensured that women's needs and perspectives were incorporated into project planning and implementation. "*Women participated in all stages of the project, attending workshops both as part of the core team and the recovery team. They participated in planning, identifying needs, and voting for projects alongside civil society organizations*.", a project stakeholder stated.

The project has implemented targeted interventions to empower women economically, such as supporting women livestock breeders in Al-Sukhna and Bait Al-Faqeeh. It has also rehabilitated schools and provided furniture, fans, and sanitation facilities specifically for female students, benefiting thousands of female students in Hodeida and Hadhramaut.

The project actively addressed barriers to women's participation by ensuring their inclusion in planning and decision-making processes. The project has ensured that women's voices are heard, and their needs are addressed by establishing accountability mechanisms and protection measures. Women have been actively involved in selecting project priorities, with some priorities in Hajjah being implemented based on women's recommendations.

The inclusion of women not only met the project's goals but also led to unintended positive outcomes, such as increasing women's visibility and influence in their communities. Women who participated in the project gained recognition and opportunities beyond the project's scope.

3. Disability

People with disabilities benefited from the SIERY project both directly and indirectly. The project included representatives from disability associations in planning and voting for priority subprojects in a number of districts. Although there was no specific targeting, the needs of people with disabilities were considered in various project components, such as ensuring accessible infrastructure in rehabilitated schools. In the rehabilitation of schools and construction of buildings, the project has ensured the inclusion of accessible features such as ramps.

However, the project acknowledges that more can be done to meaningfully engage and benefit people with disabilities. The obstacles faced by this group, such as limited educational opportunities and societal barriers, need to be addressed through targeted interventions and advocacy efforts.

To conclude, the SIERY project has made significant strides in addressing cross-cutting issues in its design and implementation. Involving marginalized groups, women, and people with disability, the project has contributed to more equitable and inclusive development outcomes. However, there is still work to be done to address the challenges faced by these groups and ensure that the project's impact is sustained over the long term. The lessons learned from the SIERY project can inform future initiatives and help to create a more just and inclusive society in Yemen.

6 CONCLUSIONS AND LESSONS LEARNED

6.1 Conclusions

A detailed response to all evaluation questions is included in the previous Findings section. Here, the higher-level Conclusions for each of the evaluation criteria is presented:

Relevance:

The evaluation team finds that the SIERY project is highly relevant. The project is well-aligned with the development priorities of the targeted areas it serves. The project focuses on priority areas such as operating and enhancing stalled projects, which are crucial given the dire situation in the country affected by the conflict. The project aligns with national development priorities by enhancing institutional and economic resilience, while not overlooking the humanitarian situation in the country. SIERY's project log frame is highly aligned with the UNDP Yemen country program outputs and

outcomes, particularly in relation to economic resilience and support for service delivery in communities. It is also well-aligned with SDGs 1, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 11.

Coherence:

The SIERY project demonstrated strong coherence with national development priorities, particularly in its alignment with local governance and economic recovery strategies. The project's approach to integrating efforts with other UNDP initiatives and international organizations ensured that activities were complementary rather than duplicative, enhancing the overall impact. Coordination with local authorities and CSOs further reinforced the project's relevance and effectiveness.

Effectiveness:

The SIERY project has made significant progress towards achieving its intended goals and contributing to the high-level objective of enhancing institutional and economic resilience in Yemen. At the outcome level, four out of six indicators made good progress with cumulative achievement rates of 62%, 99%, 50%, 50%, and 77%. Only two indicators are underachieved. At the output level, most indicators are nearing completion, with some even exceeding their targets and overachieving 100%. Only a few indicators remain underachieved. Several indicators have not only met but exceeded their targets, showcasing the project's strong performance.

The evaluation also concludes that women played critical roles at many stages of the SIERY project, including participation in planning and decision-making, representation in all community structures and local governance structures, and women's economic empowerment.

Efficiency:

In terms of financial efficiency, many interlocutors agreed that the project has been able to utilize its budget effectively, ensuring that funds are directed towards key activities and outputs. The project imposed strict measures on procurement, costs and expenditure, which helped keep the cost per output generally within the planned and expected range. But the project has also faced challenges in adhering to the initial timelines due to the complex operating environment in Yemen, but also due to slow and bureaucratic UNDP procedures, e.g. for hiring project staff. Delays in fund disbursement and the procurement process have been noted, affecting the timely execution of planned activities.

For the project's management and implementation structure, well-defined roles for various stakeholders, including local authorities, community leaders, and project staff were outlined and followed. This clarity facilitated efficient management and execution. The inclusion of multiple field coordinators across different regions ensured effective management and timely reporting.

SIERY also has an efficient monitoring and evaluation system, well-integrated into project management and ensuring regular reporting and data quality.

Impact:

The SIERY project has started to show initial impact through enhanced local authority capacities, improved working environments, and increased community participation. Early successes include better access to essential services, significant economic empowerment through grants to MSMEs, and strengthened gender equality and women's involvement in development activities. Main elements of impact include enhanced local authority capacities, improved working environments of local authorities, promotion of community participation, improved popular access to services, and economic empowerment, especially of women.

Sustainability:

The SIERY project strengthened local governance, economic recovery, and resilience through a range of interventions. When evaluating the project's sustainability, it is important to assess the long-term viability of the outcomes and the project's ability to continue generating benefits even after its completion. Most projects focused on providing services, and some are purely construction-oriented, such as the activities that focus on market rehabilitation or construction. The sustainability of these types of projects is often linked to continuous funding and the local capacity to manage and maintain the constructed markets. SIERY has also made significant strides in capacity building and training across various sectors. The training programs have empowered local administrations, local community committees, institutions, private sector partners, and NGOs with the necessary skills to enhance institutional resilience, enabling them to sustain project activities and continue generating positive outcomes even after the project's completion. But the SIERY project also faces several challenges to its sustainability. The economic instability in the country poses risks to financial resources for project maintenance. Besides, capacity gaps require continuous development to keep up with evolving challenges, and security concerns that can disrupt activities.

Cross-cutting issues:

The SIERY project has demonstrated a strong commitment to cross-cutting issues, integrating human rights, gender equality, and disability considerations into its design and implementation.

Human rights: SIERY ensured participation of all segments of the community, regardless of their socioeconomic status or background, and emphasized inclusivity and non-discrimination by ensuring that all community segments, including marginalized and disadvantaged groups, benefited from its initiatives.

Gender equality and empowerment: Women's participation was encouraged in all activities which is highly aligned with the UNDP Gender Equality Strategy. Women were involved in forming core teams, attending training sessions, participating in field visits, drafting plans, and voting on project priorities and were often prioritized as beneficiaries.

Inclusion of PWDs: While targeting PWDs was not explicitly outlined with specific indicators in SIERY project, measures were taken to include them in the formed teams and training programs. Additionally, their needs were considered in infrastructure development, ensuring accessibility. However, the lack of explicit targeting suggests that further efforts are needed to fully integrate PWDs into future projects.

6.2 Lessons learned

The SIERY project has provided several valuable lessons that can be applied to future projects to ensure sustainability and effectiveness. Incorporating these lessons will help replicate and sustain the success of the SIERY project in Yemen's challenging context.

1) Alignment with community needs: Projects designed through a community-based participatory approach and detailed needs assessments are more sustainable and successful, as they align with community priorities.

2) Capacity building and training: Providing capacity-building training to local authorities, NGOs, public service providers, and community groups equips stakeholders with the necessary skills to sustain outcomes. This support is a form of organizational and institutional reinforcement, as continuous organizational support and strong institutional frameworks are essential for maintaining project achievements. Building local institutions in administrative, financial, planning, and project implementation capacities is crucial for ensuring sustainability.

3) Community engagement and ownership: Engaging local stakeholders and fostering a sense of ownership are crucial for the sustainability of project outcomes. The project's success was largely attributed to local collaboration , which is crucial for project sustainability. Engaging local communities in decision-making processes in project implementation fosters a sense of

ownership and responsibility. "*Local community committees, institutions, private sector partners, and NGOs have been actively involved in preparing policies and strategic plans to sustain project activities. This collaboration has fostered a sense of ownership and responsibility that is critical for long-term success*.", a stakeholder confirmed.

4) Involving women: Women's active involvement ensures that the project addresses the needs and priorities of the entire community, leading to greater acceptance and support. This buy-in is crucial for the long-term success and sustainability of the project.

5) Flexibility in adapting to local needs: The SIERY project demonstrated the importance of flexibility in achieving sustainable outcomes. The project adapted its components to address evolving local needs throughout the project duration.

6) Innovative approaches and learning from success: SIERY incorporated innovative approaches, such as arranging a visit to Rwanda for Marib local authorities to learn from the Rwandan developmental experience. Learning from successful practices in other contexts provided valuable insights that improved project implementation and contributed to sustainability.

7) Sustainable economic practices: Focusing on economic resilience through value chain development and grants to MSMEs has strong sustainability potential.

8) Environmental sustainability: Addressing environmental sustainability within project components helps ensure that project benefits are not compromised by environmental degradation.

9) Monitoring and evaluation: in a big and complicated project like SIERY, establishing robust M&E systems enables better project management and adjustment of strategies based on feedback and results. It helps also in identifying challenges and adapting strategies accordingly.

10) Social Accountability: introducing the principle of social accountability performed by capacitated CSOs was an ambitious step from the project to ensure project sustainability even after its closure. This involves identifying needs, holding listening sessions, and clarifying deficiencies in all facilities to ensure that projects meet community needs and are sustainable.

7   RECOMMENDATIONS

Strategic recommendation

While many UN and international NGOs exert significant efforts in capacity development, these initiatives often lack a unified national strategy. UNDP should spearhead the development of a comprehensive, nationwide development strategy in close collaboration with UN specialized agencies such as FAO, UNICEF, and WHO. This unified approach aims to replace fragmented efforts with a cohesive plan that optimizes resource allocation and training expenditures, replacing fragmented efforts and reduces the high expenses of short and low practical training. The plan should include certificate-based education programs to cultivate a cadre of high-caliber leaders capable of driving sustainable development initiatives.

Recommendations based on stakeholder feedback:

1) Given its significant positive impacts and successful implementation, the SIERY project should be taken as an exemplary model for the next developmental stage in Yemen. Future projects should replicate SIERY's strategies, emphasizing inclusivity, sustainability, and adaptability to local contexts, to ensure continued progress and development across Yemen.

2) There is a consensus recommendation to continue the SIERY project and expand its activities to cover more areas and target more beneficiaries. It is suggested to extend the SIERY project into a second phase and expand coverage to include additional directorates and service sectors. This includes maintaining the momentum of current initiatives and introducing new projects to address emerging needs.

3) There is a need to focus more on economic empowerment projects, particularly those that enhance livelihood opportunities for disadvantaged groups. Implement additional economic empowerment initiatives, such as grants for small businesses, agricultural projects, and vocational training.

4) Delays and gaps in project implementation and training sessions were identified as significant issues that need to be addressed with extra care. It was repeatedly recommended by different stakeholders to streamline project implementation processes and ensure consistent scheduling of training sessions to avoid these gaps and delays to enhance overall project efficiency.

5) Stakeholders emphasized the importance of involving local authorities and community members in the planning and decision-making processes. Enhance the involvement of local authorities and community members in all stages of project planning and implementation to ensure that interventions are well-aligned with local needs and priorities.

6) Stakeholders emphasize the need to prioritize infrastructure projects in high-need areas, especially in the two vital sectors of education and water. This includes renovating existing schools and constructing new educational complexes to address pressing community needs and foster a more inclusive and supportive environment for all residents. However, the complexity of water projects has also led to delays, as they often require importing material from outside Yemen. This needs to be kept in mind when prioritizing water projects, for example.

7) Retain and support the trained cadre, especially the DCT and DFT as development entities, to maximize the investment in training for future interventions. At the immediate term it is recommended to provide formal recognition for their contributions and conduct periodic refresher training to keep their skills current. This will ensure continued effectiveness and sustainability in future interventions.

8) Improving partnerships with CSOs through leveraging their expertise and networks to enhance the impact and sustainability of project activities.

9) Conduct comprehensive gender assessments to identify specific obstacles hindering the participation of women.

10) UNDP should advocate for the sub-projects not selected for the L2RF in the next project phase or other developmental initiatives. Explore a broader range of funding mechanisms for these plans, including partnerships with the private sector, international donors, and innovative financing models. This approach will help secure the necessary resources for their implementation and ensure long-term sustainability.

11) Strengthen the project's M&E system especially through enhancing accountability by directing beneficiaries' concerns and feedback to both local authorities and UNDP instead of relying on implementing partners.

Annex 1: Evaluation Matrix

Criteria	Key Question	Sub Question	Data sources	Methods / tools	Indicator Success Standard to success	Methods for data analysis
Relevance	1.To what extent was the project in line with the national development priorities, the country programme's outputs and outcomes and the SDGs?	1.1 To what extent the project logframe is in line with Yemen priorities in terms of economic resilience and support the response plan (HRP) 1.2 to what extent is the project logframe is in line with UNDP country programmes outputs and outcomes in relation to economic	Situation analysis, problem, and proposed strategies Yemen Humanitarian Reponse Plan, UNDP country strategic plan, SDGs, Project Team, Partners Project coordinators at sub national level	Docume nt review KII, Consulta tive meetings	linkages with SDG, Country program plan and priorities (response plan and Yemen cluster plans) Linkages Humanitarian - Development -Peace Nexus Linkages and achievement Project results Model (Goals, indicators, outcome,	Extended Desk review Document analysis, consultati on meeting Analysis of qualitative data of KII

		resilience and support of service delivery for communities	and district level, UNDPs implementation Partners		output, activities) Linkages to local priorities and funding priorities
	2. Was the project appropriate and strategic to the main development goals and challenges in the country at the time of the EU project's design? Did relevance continue throughout implementation?	1.3 to what extent is the project logframe is in line with sustainable development goals	Local councils, Committee communities Monitoring Reports, District plans(recovery / emergency Plan,		Districts plans priorities
	3. Was the project relevant to the needs and priorities of the target groups/beneficiaries?	2. Was the project appropriate and strategic to the main development goals and challenges in the country at the time of the EU project's design? Did relevance continue	situational) analysis, views from committees' community		Participatory approach in development of recovery plan / funds granted linkages to priorities.

	Were they consulted during design and implementation of the project?	throughout implementation?	Situation analysis, problem, and proposed strategies		Guideline	
		3.1 Are the project activities linked with the target groups problems and priorities in Yemen ?	Project proposal, logframe work,		Situations, need analysis, UN reports about Yemen context linkages to	
	4. Did the project's theory of change clearly articulate assumptions about why the project approach is expected to produce the desired change? Was the theory of change grounded in evidence?	3.2 How were projects according recovery plan selected /or identified / or beneficiaries selected	Progress and achievements, evidence

Linkages to proposed strategies, Results | | Theory of change to output, activities, and the field practices, evidence. | |
| | | 3.3 Were there any consultation with targeted groups / beneficiaries during the design | | | | |

		and implementation of project				
		4.1 Did the logic behind how the project's interventions are expected to bring about the desired change				
		4.2 Were project assumptions evidently realized in the ground through the outputs and activities implemented ?				

Coherence	5. To what extent did the EU project complement work among different entities, especially with other UN actors?	5.1 Is there any similar project that is funded by EU with similar scope in area of UNDP interventions?	Project documents	Docume nt review KII Consulta tive meetings	Coordination mechanisms Joint activities/ initiatives Joint funding	Extended Desk review Document analysis, consultati on meeting Analysis of qualitative data of KII
		5.2 Were there any exchange, discussions, or synergies, linkages to have complementary activities with other UN actors, NGOs/partners in relation to scope of this project				
	6. If the project was part of a broader package of the EU support, to what degree were the project's design, implementation, monitoring, and	6. If the project was part of a broader package of the EU support,				

	reporting aligned with that of other projects?	to what degree were the project's design, implementation, monitoring, and reporting aligned with that of other projects?				
Effectiveness	7. To what extent did the project achieve its intended objectives and contribute to the project's strategic vision?	7. 1 how was project design supporting the theory of change 7.2 To what extent did the project achieve its intended objectives and contribute to the project's strategic vision? 7.3 What are the areas of	Project documents Logframe, Indicators, outputs, and activities planned against achieved Monitoring reports Progress reports	Document review KII Consultative meetings	Situation analysis, problem, and needs Overall Results Framework Indicators Strength of Project design linkages to logic of theory of change	Extended Desk review Document analysis, consultation meeting Analysis of qualitative data of KII

	8. To what extent did the project substantively mainstream a gender and support gender-responsive planning?	interventions of more and less progress? 8.1 To what extent project incorporated gender considerations and promoted gender-responsive planning throughout its implementation? 8.2 Were their specific selection criteria to priorities women participation in community committees	Project team, stakeholders, and partners (NGOs, private network, Development community, committees)		intended results gender-related strategies or policies /or guidelines Participation of women in district planning / private sector activities	
	9. What factors have contributed to achieving or not achieving intended project outputs and outcomes?					
		9.1 What is the project/NGO staff partner structure			Meeting minutes, Project report,	

		and how were working mechanisms (cooperation, stakeholder engagement, coordination, technical expertise they have) ? 9.2 How were resources structured and allocated for the project in general and specifically grants for support of basic service delivery and those related to promotion private sector ? 9.3 What were most pressing economic, political, social, or environmental			Joint monitoring report, joint visits, communicati ons letters

	10. To what extent has the project succeeded in fulfilling female and male beneficiaries' practical and strategic needs including but not limited improved access to services, enhanced practical capacity, and gaining leadership skills?	that impacted the project's operations 9.2 What were key external factors most affected positively and negatively to the project? 10.1 What are the contributions of the project in the following: improving institutional capacities (enhancing ownership, improve targeted groups capacities in identification of needs/and priorities,			Management plans/ communicati on plans, proposals, district plans, initiatives, agreements, meeting minutes, community based funded activities. New market opportunities , synergies of similar projects, local development initiatives, new value chains analysis	

		planning, implementation (management of grants, development of local district plans), monitoring and evaluation, funding initiatives, advocacy)			Capacity development Ownership	
Efficiency	11. To what extent was the project management structure as outlined in the project document efficient in generating the expected results?	11.1 Was project's management structure well-designed in terms of roles/ responsibilities and area of interventions? 11.2 Were projects results achieved according to	Project Team project documents Monitoring reports Regular reporting Budget VS spending	KII Extended documen t review and analysis Consulta tive meetings	Results Framework Indicators Planned vs. Actual Budget Allocation & utilization	Extended Desk review Document analysis, consultati on meeting Analysis of qualitative data of KII

	12. To what extent have the project implementation strategy and execution been efficient and cost-effective?	logical framework?

11.1 To what extent have the project implementation strategy and execution been efficient and cost-effective?

11.2 Was there any alternative ways to implement the project activities in optimized way? | Project Team, stakeholders (CSOs, private Sectors, implementing partners) | | Project lesson learned

Trainings/ capacity development strategy/ plan

Adherence project management and monitoring system guideline

Monitoring system tracking data base | |
| | 13. To what extent has there been an economical use of financial and human resources? Have resources (funds, human resources, time, expertise, etc.) been allocated strategically to achieve outcomes?

14. To what extent have the M&E | | | | | |

		systems utilized by the UNDP enabled effective and efficient project management?	14.1 What is the monitoring & evaluation system used and how effective is feedback is reflected in project design, implementation? 14.2 How complaint mechanism is implemented in project management?			Regular visits/ observation/ monthly monitoring reports Complaint Mechanism tracker/ guideline	
Impact		15. What are the intended and	15.1 How did the project created	Project documents	KII	Community engagement	Extended Desk review

	unintended results of the project? What are the positive and negative results and how do they differ between both sexes?	social change in realization of project ownership, participatory approach, collaboration with local authorities, establishment of community funded initiatives? 15.2 Did the project created conflict or enhance dispute among communities, did the project increase level of participation of community in selection and obtaining projects by voicing their needs through semi - structured local council?	Progress reports Reports Monitoring and evaluation reports	Extended document review and analysis Consultative meetings	Social relation / participatory process Replication of the experience of this project local community committee's creation Disaster recovery/mitigation Empowerment (economically, institutional capacity to implement projects, increased funding	Document analysis, consultation meeting Analysis of qualitative data of KII

	16. To what extent did COVID-impact positively and negatively to the project implementation?	15.3 Did business grants increased level of revenue or maintained small business from falling down? 15.4 Were there any new business owners/enterprise access market 15.5 Where there any discussions/ exchange between business owners/ or developed more business networks? 15.6 What are the positive and negative results and how do they differ between both sexes?			opportunities) Value chains improvement and access to market Extension on basic services through community initiatives Income Job/employm ent	

		16. To what extent did COVID-impact positively and negatively to the project implementation?				
Sustainability	17. To what extent will financial and economic resources be available to sustain the benefits achieved by the project?	17.1 Has the project documented the most result-oriented activities that need to be continued? 17.2 Has the local community committees/ or local institutions/ or private sector partners / or NOGs NGO partners prepared any policies/ Plan	Project documents Plans Reports Project team and stakeholders	KII Extended document review Consultative meetings	Project strategies Project document management system/ Data base Local development plans	Extended Desk review Document analysis, consultation meeting Analysis of qualitative data of KII

		to sustain the activities / or initiatives ?			Meetings minutes, synergies, policies, guidelines, development plans, exit plan
		17.3 What were types of institutional capacity development trainings delivered to NOGs. CSOs, community targeted group, and local authorities that ensure future self-management ?			
	18. To what extent have relevant Ministries or national offices integrated project outcomes into ongoing policies and practices?	17.4 Were there any future opportunities or existing opportunities similar to local resilience fund to finance some priority projects identified by			Projects reports

	19. To what extent are lessons learned being documented by the project team on a continual basis and shared with appropriate parties who could learn from the project?	established community committees? How and where? 18.1 Were there any plans realized by respective line minister's office to address community development plans ?			Events / plans/ announceme nts/ agreement Curriculum/ plans / mechanism
	20. To what extent the interventions have well-designed and well-planned exit strategies?	19.1 Is there a project data base that includes templates, curriculum for capacity development and repository of plans to be exchange with any interested district /office or			

		community development communities to re-used? If yes, what is the mechanism ?			Agreement/ mechanism/ policy	
	21. Were the project's results sustained after the intervention? Did sustainability differ for female and male beneficiaries?	20.1 What are the project designed strategies in line with community needs to have change in relationship between local authority and community engagement in decision process, local development of institutions, organization of			Projects/ proposals/ funds/ plans// reports/ meetings	

		community in well trained structures, inclusiveness, and gender engagement ?				
		21.1 Is there any kind of exchange between NGOs / CSOs, partners, UN actors to replicate similar activities, specifically funding some districts recovery plans?				
		21.2 Did local authorities and local development community committees provided any plans after activities				

| | | completed / or engaged in any related local development events?

21.3 How was the project logic in line with most recent approaches that will ensure establishment of resilient community? | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Human rights** | 22. To what extent have poor, indigenous and physically challenged, women, men and other disadvantaged and marginalized groups benefited | 22.1 Were there any indigenous or marginalized groups/ or women been part of the project and what was their role? | project documents and reports

Project team and stakeholders | Extended document review | Reports, cases, events, plans, policy

Beneficiaries list | Extended Desk review

Document analysis, consultati on meeting |

					Grievance /complaint mechanism	Analysis of qualitative data of KII
	from the work of UNDP in the country?	22.2 Have the project targeted these disadvantages groups with empowerment funds or enable access to financial services?

22.3 Were there any promotion or advocacy or policy or plan to engage those disadvantages groups to more engagement into community through different activities? If yes mention? | | | | |
| **Gender equality and empowerment** | 23. To what extent have gender equality and the empowerment of women been | 23.1 Were there any participation of women and marginalized | Project team and project documents and reports | Extended document review | Beneficiaries list | Extended Desk review

Document analysis, |

	addressed in the design, implementation, and monitoring of the project? 24. To what extent has the project promoted positive changes in gender equality and the empowerment of women? Were there any unintended effects?	groups in any activities? 23.2 Are the participation of women and marginalized groups in planning, decision making and monitoring the project meaningful? 23.3 Are there any barriers to women and excluded groups in their participation? What types? 23.4 How the project addresses the barriers to women and excluded groups in their participation?			

Disability	25. Were persons with disabilities consulted and meaningfully involved in programme planning and implementation? 26. What proportion of the beneficiaries of a programme were persons with disabilities? What barriers did persons with disabilities face?	25. Were persons with disabilities consulted and meaningfully involved in project planning and implementation? 26. What proportion of the beneficiaries of a project were persons with disabilities? What barriers did persons with disabilities face?	Project document and project team	Extended document review Consultative meetings	Beneficiaries list	Document analysis

Local Authorities and local government stakeholders	**IF** the individual and organizational capacities of local authorities' actors (with focus on district authorities) will be strengthened to better respond to community needs (*expected output 1*), and **IF** the capacities of public service providers, local authorities' premises, logistics and support seminal actions are improved via the Local	**THEN (longer-term)** institutional and socio-economic resilience will be increased in 40 Districts in the country (*Specific Objective 1*) **BECAUSE** governorate and district authorities will be given a key role in stabilization and recovery; public

	Resilience and Recovery Fund so as to reach out to the most vulnerable (*expected output 2*), and **IF** central-local and horizontal relations between local governance stakeholders are strengthened about issues such as division of responsibilities, budgeting, revenue collection and management, human resources management (*expected output 3*),	service providers will be able to provide better basic and social services; horizontal alliances will be reinforced, and this will facilitate opportunities for a constructive and inclusive policy dialogue.
Private sectors and MSMEs	**IF** linkages between the MSMEs, private sector and MFIs involved in value-chains are strengthened (*expected output 4*), and **IF** opportunities for economic agents to access financial services are increased (*expected output 5*),	**THEN (longer-term)** a business environment for economy recovery will be improved together with new employment opportunities (*Specific Objective 2*), **BECAUSE** supporting MSMEs integrated in value chains provides the basis for boosting the creation of employment opportunities and for enabling a business environment for private sector development.
Communities	*If* communities and community members empowered to articulate and advocate for their own of basic services and creation of employment opportunities *And* participate and find solutions related to the problem related torelated to essential services delivery	**THEN (longer term)** Increased self-resilience of communities and promote more stable and peaceful environment in Yemen, with a special focus on the poorest and most vulnerable.

	Then enhance trust and confidence local authorities and local government stakeholders	

Annex 3: SIERY Results Chain

Project duration: 31 August 2020 to 30 August 2025

Impact: To ensure economic and social wellbeing for Yemeni, in particular for the poorest and most vulnerable		
Indicators: 1. Proportion of population below the international poverty line (SDG 1.1.1.) 2. Average annual household income in $	**Baselines**: 1. 18.3 2. 1,035	**Final Targets:** 1. 18.3 2. 1,035
Outcome 1: Increased institutional and socio-economic resilience in targeted districts in Yemen		
Indicators: 1.1 Proportion of population living in households with access to essential public services, disaggregated by sex, age, type of service (SDG 1.4.1) 1.2 Number of districts with increase of investment budget (actual) through funding of priority projects through L2RF 1.3 Primary school attendance rate, disaggregated by sex, age in target districts (overall)	**Baselines**: 1.1 61% 1.2 0 1.3 63%	**Final Targets**: 1.1 63% 1.2 45 1.3 66%
Output 1.1: Strengthened Local authorities' capacities to respond to community needs for services in an inclusive and accountable manner		

Indicators:	Baselines:	Final Targets:
1.1.1 Number of **gender-responsive District Capacity Development Plans** [developed/implemented] with support of District Facilitation Teams with support of the EU-funded intervention. 1.1.2 Number of **Community Structures or their members** in target areas that are connected to district authorities through arrangement for **supporting** service delivery and conflict resolution 1.1.3 Percentage of **women and youth** [18-35] among participants of training activities of the project with increased knowledge/skills, disaggregated by sex, age. 1.1.4. Percentage of District Authorities with **functional** Women's Affairs Units	1.1.1 0 1.1.2 0 1.1.3 women: 0; youth: 0 1.1.4 RLGD = 7	1.1.1 40 1.1.2 35 1.1.3 Women: 30%; Youth: 10% 1.1.4 60
Activity Result 1.1.1 : Governorate authorities have the capacities, tools, and incentives to provide better technical guidance and capacity development to district authorities.	1.1.1.1 Update and customize training and coaching materials on public expenditure management (from DSDLP)
	1.1.1.2 Establish and train District Facilitation Teams
	1.1.1.3 DFT training on gender-sensitive and youth-sensitive approaches
	1.1.1.4: Develop specialized curricula resources on promoting women and youth roles in decision-making

Activity Result 1.1.2: Linkages between district authorities and communities are strengthened through the activation of representative Sub-District Committees	1.1.2.1 Train Community Structures on participatory planning and service delivery monitoring.
	1.1.2.2 Train local CSOs on local governance system
	1.1.2.3 Train local actors on conflict-sensitive local governance
Activity Result 1.1.3 District authorities are more capable of performing regular public expenditure management functions in a participatory and transparent manner	1.1.3.1 Conduct district-level capacity assessments by DFTs and produce District Capacity Development Plans (CDPs)
	1.1.3.2 Establish and train District Core Teams
	1.1.3.3 Implement DCDPs (training, mentoring) by DFTs and DCTs
	1.1.3.4 Strengthening of data management systems (incl. ICT) in district authorities .
	1.1.3.5 Support (technical, financial) to CSOs to pilot social accountability initiatives in 24 districts on service delivery and revenue management (3 CSO per governorate * 7000 $)
	1.1.3.6 Institutional and capacity-building support to Women's Affairs Units and women staff in district Diwans
Activity Result 1.1.4 District	1.1.4.1 Diagnostics on public financial management and human resource management in district authorities.

authorities manage their human and financial resources more efficiently and accountably	1.1.4.2 Implementation of District Accountability Improvement Plans (DAIPs) (coaching)
	1.1.4.3 Assessment of local revenue potential
	1.1.4.4 Training and mentoring for higher collection rate, transparency, and acceptance of revenue collection, by DFTs & DCTs
	1.1.4.5 Technical / logistical support to Project Units @ governorate level to enhance project technical design and costing.
	1.1.4.6 Support governorate-based COCA branches to conduct regular audits of district accounts.
	1.1.4.7 Train local authorities on the identification of suitable funding mechanisms in the framework of local development

Output 1.2: Improved capacities of public services providers for scaling up the outreach to the most vulnerable

Indicators:	Baselines:	Final Targets:
1.2.1 Percentage of **women in representative structure** as part of SIERY intervention (Community Structures, District Recovery Platforms)	1.2.1 0	1.2.1 20
	1.2.2 a) 0;	1.2.2 a) 150
	b) 0	b) 18
1.2.2 Number of **gender-responsive recovery plan**s (a) for service delivery (district), (b) for **local economy (governorate),**	1.2.3 0	1.2.3 400 (120 women, 280 men)
	1.2.4 0	1.2.4 170
1.2.3 Number of local authorities' representatives trained on locally relevant educational topics with support of the EU-funded, disaggregated by sex and specific topic of the training.	1.2.5 0	1.2.5 250,000

1.2.4 Number of **district- and governorate-level projects** funded via the LR2F. 1.2.5 Number of **students benefiting from schools' rehabilitations,** disaggregated by sex		

Activity Result 1.2.1: **Pathways for resilience and recovery of basic and social services are identified by inclusive local platforms and reflected in annual plans**	1.2.1.1 Establishing and training District Recovery Platforms (DRPs)
	1.2.1.2 District service delivery audits for key sector areas with the participation of DRPs
	1.2.1.3 Planning for multi-year District Resilience & Recovery Plans (D2RPs)
	1.2.1.4 Technical support to regular district annual planning and budgeting aligned with D2RPs.
	1.2.1.5 Leadership and communications training for women & youth members of DRPs
	1.2.1.6 Coach local MoPIC units to semi-formalize and sustain the project implementation infrastructure of District Core Teams, District Facilitation TeamsTeams, and District Resilience Platforms
Activity Result 1.2.2.: **Key sustainable**	1.2.2.1 Raise awareness on SDG localization in 4 governorates
	1.2.2.2 LER: Establish & mentor Collaboration Platform for Local Economic Recovery (CP4LER) between Governorate Office and Private Sector

development dimensions (local economic recovery, resilient urbanization) are considered by local authorities and initial actions taken in line with the SDGs	1.2.2.3 LER: Diagnostics on local economy, business environment and productive sectors (in partnership with Pillar 3).
	1.2.2.4 LER: Support CP4LER to identify and formulate LER strategy and select and propose priority projects for funding by L2RF
	1.2.2.5 RU: Establish & mentor Urban Planning & Management Teams (UPMTs)
	1.2.2.6 RU: Support UPMTs to prepare Resilient Urbanization Strategy and select and propose priority projects for funding by L2RF
	1.2.2.7 RU: Technical support to medium-term urban planning
Activity Result 1.2.3: Multi-purpose local recovery supports the implementation of local priorities.	1.2.3.1: Establish the Local Resilience & Recovery Funds (L2RF) and finalize SOPs & allocation formulas
	1.2.3.2 Implement funds based on priorities identified through participatory planning exercises
	1.2.3.3 Strengthen the capacities of local authorities to coordinate donor interventions and support the authorities in pitching project ideas to potential funding entities
Activity Result 1.2.4: Integrated support to restoring education services in affected communities helps restore livelihoods,	1.2.4.1: Develop capacities on educational planning for local authorities
	1.2.4.2: Provide integrated support to restoring education services in affected communities
	1.2.4.3.1 Distribution of school supplies, training of school personnel on safety and risk management, and back-to-school campaigns for enrolment
	1.2.4.3.2 Rehabilitate classrooms, WASH facilities, school furniture

stabilitystability, and social cohesion	1.2.4.4: Support school children well-being through teacher training, child protection activities, psycho-social and rehabilitative support to children with special needs
	1.2.4.5 Support the education system: capacity building for local and national education stakeholders

Output 1.3: Strengthened central-local and horizontal relations between local governance stakeholder		
Indicators: 1.3.1: Number of **dialogue events between** local and central authorities producing policy recommendations; 1.3.2: Number of **women's affairs units** in targeted central administrations producing gender mainstreaming strategy notes, guidelines facilitation/support or tools; 1.3.3: Percentage of **Yemeni women among local governance representatives** at international peer exchange events	**Baselines:** 1.3.1: 0 1.3.2: 0 1.3.3: 0	**Final Targets:** 1.3.1: 1 1.3.2: 4 1.3.3: 20
Activity Result 1.3.1: Regulatory and administrative measures needed to restore functional central-local relations are taken	1.3.1.1 In-depth diagnostic on inter-governmental relations	
	1.3.1.2 Support central - local dialogue	
	1.3.1.3 Increase connectivity between local authorities and central government through appropriate e-solutions	

Activity Result 1.3.2: **Capacities of key central authorities to support the resilience of local governance system strengthened.**	1.3.2.1 Capacity development of MoLA, MoPIC & MoF + COCA
	1.3.2.2 Support to women's affairs units in key ministries
	1.3.2.4 Coordination and engagement with central authorities
Activity Result 1.3.3: **Platforms of local governance actors, including local authorities, are fostered, strengthened, and connected to international peer support networks**	1.3.3.1 Supporting and training sub-regional platforms
	1.3.3.3 South-South exchanges

Outcome 2: Improved business environment for economy recovery and employment opportunities

Indicators:		
2.1 Number of **people benefiting from jobs and improved livelihoods** in crisis or post-crisis settings, disaggregated by sex and other characteristics (Governorates) 2.2 Proportion of **women among beneficiaries of recovery programmes** (Governorates) 2.3 Number of **producers, retailers, buyers** etc benefitted from the market infrastructure rehabilitation 2.4 Number **existing business associations** with improved financial capacity at district level, **including funding for business advisory services through SIERY**	**Baselines:** 2.1 0 2.2 30 2.3 0 2.4 0	**Final Targets:** 2.1 48,000 2.2 33 2.3 20,000 2.4 6

Output 2.1: Strengthened linkages/cooperation opportunities between MSMEs, private sector and MFIs involved in the value chain

Indicators:		
2.1.1: Number of persons with **developed capacities on business and technical skills or applied skills** for income generation or employment prospects (disaggregated by sex, age) with support of the EU-funded intervention 2.1.2 Number of **local SMEs and producer group**s in priority sectors supported by the EU-funded intervention, disaggregated by sex of owner. 2.1.3 Number of **long-term jobs and employmen**t supported/sustained by the EU, disaggregated by age and sex of the employee (**EU RF 2.11**) 2.1. 4 Number of smallholders and SMEs that have **access to**	**Baselines:** 2.1.1 0 2.1.2 0 2.1.3 0 2.1.4 0	**Final Targets:** 2.1.1 3,000 (900 women; 300 youth) 2.1.2 900 (270 women; 630 men) 2.1.3 6,500 jobs and employment (1,950 women; 4,050 men; 650 youth, 5,850 adults) 2.1.4 1,200

business support services	
Activity Result 2.1.1: Enhanced business and life skill development on value chain approach for medium and long terms income generation and employment prospects	2.1.1.1 Review and update value chain analysis of promising sectors
	2.1.1.2 Identification of promising sectors for interventions.
	2.1.1.3 Need based business skills capacity building by SMEPs for targeted individuals and SME through certified trainers, with specific promotion of women and youth, including networking
	2.1.1.4 Coach women on processing/producing added value products, specifically branding, packaging, promotion, sales, outreach, marketing, networking, business links, etc.;
Activity Result 2.1.2: Improved networks of producers (MSMEs), private sectors and	2.1.2.1 Selection of existing business associations.
	2.1.2.3 Provision of financial and technical support (incl. networking) to smallholders, SMEs, incl. to business associations
	2.1.2.4 Networking events for smallholders, SMEsSMEs, and business associations for the income generation activities.

microfinance institutions to strengthen the existing value chain association at district level	2.1.2.5 Organization of exposure visits for cross exchange and learning for SMEs, MFIsMFIs, and private sectors
Activity Result 2.1.3: Enhanced business advisory support and assistance to MSMEs to improve business continuity, risk management, marketingmarketing, and expansion of business	2.1.3.1 Selection of technical consultants/ business advisors in each targeted district.
	2.1.3.2 Development of group of SMEs and smallholders and allocation of business advisors as per the value chain sector for mentoring, coaching and technical assistance.
	2.1.3.3 Explore the possibility to establish Business Advisory Resource Center (BARC).
	2.1.3.4 Coach local Chambers of Commerce to further strengthen the physical and online business services/advisory centres

Output 2.2: Increased and de-risked access to financial services for economic agents in promising value chains

Indicators:	Baselines:	Final Targets:
2.2.1: Number of a) g**ender sensitive market facilities** and b) related shops/stalls established with support of the EU-funded intervention 2.2.2: Number of b**eneficiaries a) individuals and b)**	2.2.1 a) 0; b) 0 2.2.2 0	2.2.1 a) 6; b) 100 2.2.2: 500 (individuals: 350; firms: 150)

SMEs/business associations receiving loans with support of the EU-funded intervention		
Activity Result 2.2.1 **Reconstruction of market facilities and infrastructures have improved access and services for MSMEs and private sectors to improve productivity**	2.2.1.1 Identification of market centres at sub-district, district, and governorate levels to be rehabilitated	
	2.2.1.2 Capacity building for key market stakeholders (such as market management, shop owners, buyers, suppliers) on Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) to ensure mitigation of any potential hazard incidence	
	2.2.1.3 Construction of identified markets through local contractors	
	2.2.1.4 Develop sector specific market operational guidelines and train respective stakeholder	
Activity Result 2.2.2 **Improved access to microfinance services (capital and grant) for the recovery of micro, small and medium enterprises with**	2.2.2.1 Identification of microfinance institutions (MFIs) in the targeted location.	
	2.2.2.2 Establishment of loan facility/approach	
	2.2.2.4 Selection of business proposals and provision of loan through existing system under output 2.1 to targeted individuals and SMEs	

| **good potential for job creation and income generation** | |
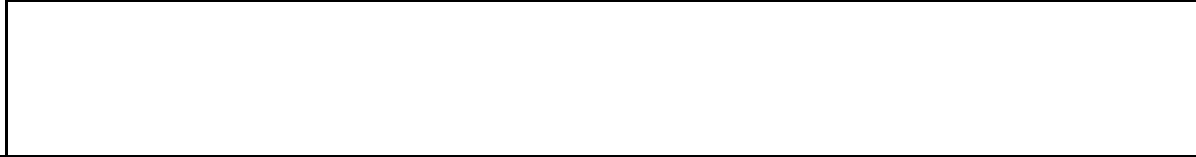
Annex 4: Data collection tools

4.1 Tool for Focus Group Discussion (FGD) with Women Beneficiaries of Entrepreneurship Training in Aden

Part 1: Introduction and Consent (10 minutes)

Good morning,

My name is [Name], and I am an evaluation consultant working on the mid-term evaluation of the SIRI project implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) with funding from the European Union. Your role as a project stakeholder is very important to us. We would like to hear from you about certain aspects of the project's progress and your personal experience. Your participation in this session will help us better understand the challenges and achievements.

Please note that:

- All the information you share with us will remain completely confidential. Your name or any identifying information will not be used in the final report.
- We will be recording this session to ensure that we don't miss any of your valuable responses. The recording will only be used for evaluation and analysis purposes.
- Our discussion will last about an hour or less.
- We want to emphasize the importance of your comfort and the freedom to share your thoughts and experiences. Your opinions are very important to us, and we are grateful for your time and contribution.

Can we begin?

Phone number:
Position:
Organization:
Name:

General Questions

- What has the project provided for you?
- What were you trained on?
- How long did the training last?
- What were the outcomes of the training?
- Who organized it?
- How were the courses selected?
- Were you consulted in the selection of activities, etc.?
- What was the mechanism for selecting participants in the project?

- To what extent was the mechanism applied? Were there any discrepancies?
- How was the training in general?
- Have you started implementing your own projects?
  - If yes, how? If no, why?

1. Relevance
- Objective: Assess the relevance of the training to the needs of the women beneficiaries and the local context.
  1. How were the training topics suited to your specific needs, daily challenges, and the area where you live?
  2. Did you feel that the training addressed the real challenges you face in starting or improving your own business?
  3. Were there other topics you wished to include in the training to better meet your needs?

2. Effectiveness
- Objective: Evaluate the effectiveness of the training in achieving the desired results.
  1. What new skills and knowledge did you acquire from the training?
  2. Were you able to apply the skills and knowledge you gained in your project or work?
  3. Was there anything specific in the training that particularly helped you make progress in your project?

3. Efficiency
- Objective: Assess the efficiency of the training in terms of resource use and implementation.
  1. How well-organized and coordinated were the training sessions? Was the time duration sufficient?
  2. Were the training materials and available resources useful and adequate?
  3. Did you face any logistical or organizational challenges during the training period?

4. Impact
- Objective: Measure the broader impact of the training on your life and the community.
  1. What significant changes or benefits have you noticed in your life after the training?
  2. How did the training affect your ability to start or improve your own business?
  3. Are there any success stories or personal experiences you would like to share about how you benefited from the training?

5. Sustainability
- Objective: Evaluate the sustainability of the training outcomes and the continued application of the acquired skills and knowledge.
  1. How confident are you in your ability to continue using the skills and knowledge you gained from the training in the future?
  2. Do you need any additional support or resources to ensure the sustainability of your project?
  3. Have you been able to share what you learned with other women in your community? How has that impacted them?

4.2 Tool for Focus Group Discussion: Facilitation and Coordination Teams

Part 1: Introduction and Consent (10-15 minutes)

Good morning,

My name is [Name], and I am an evaluation consultant working on the mid-term evaluation of the SIRI project implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) with funding from the European Union. Your role as a project stakeholder is very important to us. We would like to hear from you about certain aspects of the project's progress and your personal experience. Your participation in this session will help us better understand the challenges and achievements.

Please note that:

- All the information you share with us will remain completely confidential. Your name or any identifying information will not be used in the final report.

- We will be recording this session to ensure that we don't miss any of your valuable responses. The recording will only be used for evaluation and analysis purposes.

- Our discussion will last about an hour or less.

- We want to emphasize the importance of your comfort and the freedom to share your thoughts and experiences. Your opinions are very important to us, and we are grateful for your time and contribution.

Can we begin?

Phone number:
Position:
Organization:
Name:

Part 2: General Questions

- Which committees are you from? What is the team?
- How were you selected, nominated, and formed as teams from various offices?
- What training did you receive? How long did the training last?
- What were the outcomes of the training?
- How many participants were there? How many women and how many men?
- What were the training courses?
- How were the plans developed? Who reviewed and approved them?
- What is the current status of the project? What remains to be done?
- What is your initial assessment of the project? What succeeded and what failed?

Relevance

- To what extent was the SIRI project aligned with the development priorities of the governorate?
- What are the key national development priorities the project aims to address? Does the project still align with these priorities and contribute to them?

Effectiveness

- What has the project achieved so far? To what extent has the project met its intended goals and contributed to its strategic vision?
- How was women's participation in the project? What roles were assigned to women as participants and beneficiaries? What were the criteria for selecting women? Was there a priority given to women's participation in the committees? What is your overall assessment of the role of women?
- What factors contributed to the success or failure of the project's intended outcomes and results? What economic, political, social, or environmental factors affected the project's progress positively or negatively?

Efficiency

- Were the project results achieved as planned? Were there delays? What were the reasons?
- To what extent was the project implementation strategy and execution efficient and cost-effective?
- Were there any alternative ways to implement the project activities more effectively?

Impact

- What were the intended and unintended outcomes of the project, both positive and negative? How do these outcomes differ by gender?
- How has the project created social change in achieving project ownership, participatory approaches, collaboration with local authorities, and establishing community-funded initiatives?
- Did the project create conflict or enhance discord among communities? Did it increase community involvement in selecting and obtaining projects by expressing their needs through a semi-structured local council?

Sustainability

- To what extent will financial and economic resources be available to sustain the benefits achieved by the project?
- Have community committees, local institutions, private sector partners, or NGOs prepared any policies or plans to sustain the activities or initiatives? How?
- What types of institutional capacity-building training have been provided to NGOs, community-based organizations, and local authorities to ensure future self-management?

Human Rights

- To what extent have the poor, physically disabled, and marginalized groups benefited from the project? Were any groups or women from these categories part of the project, and what was their role? If not, why?

Gender Equality and Empowerment

- To what extent was gender equality and women's empowerment addressed in the project's design, implementation, and monitoring? Were women involved in planning, decision-making, and monitoring the project? Were there any barriers to women's and excluded groups' participation? What were they? How does the project address the barriers to women's and excluded groups' participation?

Disability

- How did people with disabilities benefit from the project? Were persons with disabilities meaningfully consulted and involved in the program planning and implementation?
- What percentage of the program's beneficiaries were people with disabilities? What barriers do people with disabilities face?

Recommendations

- What did you wish to find in the SIRI project that you didn't? Why? What are your suggestions for better interventions from UNDP?

4.3 Tool for RPs

First part: Introduction and Consent (10 minutes)

Good morning,

My name is [Name], and I am an evaluation consultant working on the mid-term evaluation of the SIERY project implemented by the UNDP, funded by the European Union. Your role as one of the stakeholders in the project is crucial to us. We would like to hear from you about certain aspects of the project's progress and your personal experience. Your participation in this session will help us better understand the challenges and achievements that have been made.

Please note that:
- All the information you share with us will remain completely confidential. Your name or any identifying information will not be used in the final report.
- We will record this session to ensure that none of your valuable responses are missed. The recording will only be used for evaluation and analysis purposes.
- Our discussion will take about an hour or less.
- We want to emphasize the importance of your comfort and your complete freedom to share your thoughts and experiences. Your opinions are very important to us, and we appreciate your time and contribution.

Can we start?

Name:
Position:
Phone Number:
Interview Location and Date:
Interview Facilitator/Executor:

General Questions
- What activities are you providing under this project? In which governorate/ district? Under which component?
- How did your involvement with the project begin?
- How were the facilitation and coordination teams (DCT & DFT) formed? Who nominated these committees? From which offices were these committees? How many members were there? How many women and how many men? How long did the training last? What were the training courses? How were the plans developed? Who reviewed and approved them?
- What is the current status of the project?
- What is your initial assessment of the project and your participation in it?

Relevance
1. To what extent did the project align with the development priorities of the governorate?

1.4 What are the main national development priorities that the project aimed to address? Is the project still relevant to these priorities and contributing to them?

3. Was the project relevant to the needs and priorities of local authorities? Were they consulted during the project's design and implementation? If yes, how? If not, why were they not consulted?

3.1 Are the project's activities related to the problems and priorities of the local authority in Yemen? How?

3.2 What trainings were conducted? For whom? How were the participants selected? To what extent was the selection mechanism applied? How was the training overall?

3.3 How were the development projects chosen? What is your opinion on the formulation method? Who reviewed or approved them? How involved was the Planning Office? How many plans were funded by the project, and how many plans are still seeking funding? What projects have been launched?

3.4 To what extent were the project's objectives, design, and implementation methods welcomed by the target community? Why?

4.3 How did the project contribute to supporting gender equality and women's empowerment?

Consistency

5.1 Is there any similar project with a similar scope? What is this project? What are the similarities and differences? Is there any coordination?

Effectiveness

7. What has the project achieved so far? To what extent has the project met its intended goals and contributed to the project's strategic vision?

7.1 How is the project progressing in achieving its goals, especially in terms of delivering outputs and pathways to results?

7.3 To what extent has the project achieved its intended goals and contributed to the project's strategic vision?

7.4 What areas of intervention have made more or less progress, and why?

8.2 How was women's participation in the project? What roles were assigned to women as participants and beneficiaries? What criteria were used for selecting women? Were women prioritized in participating in community committees? What measures were taken to ensure broad women's participation? What is your overall assessment of the role of women?

9. What factors contributed to achieving or not achieving the project's intended outputs and outcomes?

10. To what extent has the project met the operational and strategic needs of local authorities and beneficiaries in general, including, but not limited to, improving access to services, enhancing capacities, and acquiring leadership skills?

Efficiency

11. Were the project results achieved as planned? Delays? Reasons?

11.3 To what extent was the project's implementation strategy and execution efficient and cost-effective?

11.4 Were there any alternative methods for implementing the project's activities more effectively?

Impact

15. What were the intended and unintended results of the project? Whether positive or negative, and how do they differ by gender?

15.1 How has the project brought about social change in terms of project ownership, participatory approaches, collaboration with local authorities, and establishing community-funded initiatives?

15.2 Did the project create conflict or exacerbate divisions between communities? Did the project increase community involvement in selecting and acquiring projects through expressing their needs through a semi-organized local council?

Sustainability

17. To what extent will financial and economic resources be available to sustain the benefits achieved by the project?

17.2 Have local community committees / local institutions / private sector partners / or NGO partners developed any policies/plans for sustaining the activities or initiatives? How?

17.3 What types of institutional capacity-building training have been provided to NGOs, civil society organizations, targeted community groups, and local authorities to ensure future self-management?

Have there been any future or current similar opportunities for local resilience funds to finance some priority projects identified by the established community committees? How and where?

18. To what extent have ministries or their relevant offices integrated the project's outputs into existing policies and practices?

18.1 What plans have been implemented and what is your assessment of them?

19. What lessons have been learned from the project? How can these be applied to similar future projects?

20. How was the project designed to align with community needs to effect change in the relationship between local authorities and community engagement in decision-making processes, and local institutional development?

21. Do you expect the project's results to continue after the intervention? How? To what extent?

21.2 Did local authorities or local development committees provide any plans after the completion of activities / or participate in any relevant local development events?

Gender Equality and Empowerment

23. To what extent was gender equality and women's empowerment addressed in the design, implementation, and monitoring of the project? Was there participation of women in any activities? Was women's participation in planning, decision-making, and project monitoring effective? Were there any barriers to women's and excluded groups' participation? What are they? How does the project address these barriers?

24. Were there any unintended effects of women's participation and empowerment?

Disability

25. How did people with disabilities benefit from the project? Were they consulted and meaningfully involved in planning and implementing the programs?

Recommendations

27. What would you have liked to find in the project that you did not? Why? What are your suggestions for better interventions from UNDP?

4.4 Interview Tool for Key Informants: Business Forum of Hadhramaut / Hadhramaut Businesswomen's Union

Part one: Introduction and Consent (10 minutes)

Good morning,

My name is [Name], and I am an evaluation consultant working on the mid-term evaluation of the SIRI project implemented by the UNDP, funded by the European Union. Your role as one of the stakeholders in the project is crucial to us. We would like to hear from you about certain aspects of the project's progress and your personal experience. Your participation in this session will help us better understand the challenges and achievements that have been made.

Please note that:

- All the information you share with us will remain completely confidential. Your name or any identifying information will not be used in the final report.
- We will record this session to ensure that none of your valuable responses are missed. The recording will only be used for evaluation and analysis purposes.
- Our discussion will take about an hour or less.
- We want to emphasize the importance of your comfort and your complete freedom to share your thoughts and experiences. Your opinions are very important to us, and we appreciate your time and contribution.

Can we start?

Name:
Position:
Phone Number:
Interview Location and Date:
Interview Facilitator/Executor:

General Questions:

1. How did the initiative for the Hadhramaut Businesswomen's Union come about? How was it coordinated?
2. How did the project support it?
3. What activities have you conducted?
4. Who and how many participants have been targeted by these activities so far? How many are displaced and how many from the host community? How were they selected? What was the mechanism? How was fair selection ensured?

1. Relevance

Objective: To assess the relevance of the activities to the needs of women and the community in Hadhramaut.

1. How do the activities of the Business Forum of Hadhramaut / Hadhramaut Businesswomen's Union address the specific needs and challenges faced by women in Hadhramaut?

2. How were the training topics and business development activities chosen? Were they aligned with the local context and the skills and knowledge of the participants?

3. Are there any additional areas or topics you believe should be included to better meet the needs of women in the community?

2. Effectiveness

Objective: To assess the effectiveness of the activities in achieving the desired outcomes.

1. What specific skills and knowledge have women gained from the training and activities provided by the Business Forum of Hadhramaut / Hadhramaut Businesswomen's Union?

2. Can you provide examples of how these skills and knowledge have been applied by women in their businesses or communities?

3. What challenges did you face during the implementation of these activities, and how were they addressed?

3. Efficiency

Objective: To assess the efficiency of the activities in terms of resource use and implementation.

1. How well were resources (time, budget, materials) utilized in implementing these activities?

2. Were the activities executed as planned and on schedule?

3. Were there any logistical or administrative issues that affected the efficiency of the activities? How can these issues be improved in future implementations?

4. Impact

Objective: To measure the broader impact of the activities on the participants and the community.

1. What significant changes or benefits have you observed as a result of these activities in the lives of the participating women?

2. How have these activities impacted the community overall, particularly in terms of social cohesion and economic activities?

3. Are there any success stories or examples of positive impact that can be shared?

5. Sustainability

Objective: To assess the sustainability of the outcomes of the activities and the continued application of skills.

1. How confident are you that the skills and knowledge gained by the women will be sustained in the long term?

2. What mechanisms or support systems are in place to ensure the continued application of the skills and knowledge gained from these activities?

3. Have the women been able to share what they have learned with others in the community? What additional support or resources are needed to ensure the long-term sustainability of the benefits of these activities?

4.5 Local Authorities Tool

Part One: Introduction and Consent (10-15 minutes)

Good morning,

My name is [Name], and I am an evaluation consultant working on the mid-term evaluation of the SIERY Project, implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) with funding from the European Union. Your role as a stakeholder in the project is very important to us. We would like to hear from you about various aspects related to the progress of the project and your personal experience. Your participation in this session will help us better understand the challenges and achievements so far.

Please note that:

- All the information you share with us will be kept completely confidential. Your name or any identifying information will not be used in the final report.
- We will record this session to ensure we don't miss any of your valuable responses. The recording will only be used for evaluation and analysis purposes.
- Our discussion will last about an hour or less.
- We want to emphasize the importance of your comfort and freedom to share your thoughts and experiences. Your opinions are very important to us, and we are grateful for your time and contribution.

Can we begin?

Name:
Position:
Phone Number:
Location and Date of Interview:
Facilitator/Interviewer:

Part Two: General Questions
- What is your relationship with the Siri Project?
- How does the ministry, both centrally and at the provincial and district levels, oversee and follow up on the Siri Project?
- What has the project contributed at the national level?
- How was the project idea initially discussed with you? What changes did you suggest?
- How was the formation of women's affairs offices supported? Where was it implemented? How successful was it?
- What is the current status of the project? What remains to be done?
- What is your initial assessment of its successes and failures?
Relevance

1. To what extent was the project aligned with the country's overall development priorities?

1.4. What are the main national development priorities that the project aims to address? Is the project still relevant to these priorities and contributing to them?

3. Was the project relevant to the needs and priorities of local authorities? Were they consulted during the project's design and implementation? If yes, how? If not, why weren't they consulted?

3.1. Are the project's activities related to the issues and priorities of local authorities in Yemen? How?

3.2. What trainings were conducted? For whom? How were participants selected? What was the selection mechanism? To what extent was the mechanism applied? How was the training overall?

3.3. How were the development projects selected? What do you think of the formulation process? Who reviewed or approved it? How was the Planning Office involved? How many plans were funded by the project, and how many are still seeking funding? What projects were launched?

3.4. To what extent were the project's goals, design, and implementation methods welcomed by the target community? Why?

4.3. How did the project contribute to supporting gender equality and women's empowerment?

Coherence

5.1. Are there any similar projects with a comparable scope? What is this project? What are the similarities and differences?

5.2. Were there any exchanges, discussions, synergies, or links to carry out complementary activities with other UN actors, NGOs, or partners related to the scope of this project?

Effectiveness

7. What has the project achieved so far? To what extent has the project met its intended goals and contributed to the strategic vision of the project?

7.1. How is the project progressing in achieving its goals, particularly in terms of delivering outputs and pathways towards results?

7.3. To what extent has the project met its intended goals and contributed to the strategic vision of the project?

7.4. What areas of intervention have seen more or less progress?

8.2. How was women's participation in the project? What roles were assigned to women as participants and targets? What selection criteria were used for women? Were women given priority in participating in community committees? What is your overall assessment of the role of women?

9. What factors contributed to or hindered the achievement of the project's intended outputs and outcomes?

9.1. What economic, political, social, or environmental factors have positively or negatively affected the project's operations?

10. To what extent has the project succeeded in meeting the practical and strategic needs of local authorities and beneficiaries in general, including, but not limited to, improving access to services, enhancing capacities, and developing leadership skills?

10.1. What are the project's contributions to improving institutional capacities (strengthening ownership, improving target groups' abilities in need/priorities identification, planning and implementation (grant management, development of local area plans), monitoring and evaluation, and financing initiatives and advocacy)?

Efficiency

11. Were the project results achieved as planned? Any delays? The reasons?

11.3. To what extent was the project's implementation strategy and execution cost-effective and efficient?

11.4. Were there any alternative ways to implement project activities better?

Impact

15. What intended and unintended outcomes have been achieved by the project? Whether positive or negative, how do they differ by gender?

15.1. How has the project brought about social change in achieving project ownership, participatory approaches, cooperation with local authorities, and creating community-funded initiatives?

15.2. Did the project create conflict or exacerbate disagreements between communities? Did it increase community participation in selecting and accessing projects by expressing their needs through a semi-organized local council?

15.3. Did the grants increase revenue levels or prevent small projects from collapsing?

15.4. Were there any new market access opportunities for business owners/institutions?

15.5. Were there any discussions/exchanges between business owners, or were more business networks developed?

Sustainability

17. To what extent will financial and economic resources be available to maintain the benefits achieved by the project?

17.2. Have local community committees/institutions/private sector partners/NGO partners prepared any policies/plans to sustain activities/initiatives? How?

17.3. What types of capacity-building training were provided to NGOs, community-based organizations, target community groups, and local authorities to ensure future self-management?

Are there any current or future opportunities similar to the Local Resilience Fund to finance some of the priority projects identified by the established community committees? How and where?

18. To what extent have relevant ministries or their branches integrated the project's outcomes into ongoing policies and practices?

18.1. What plans have been implemented, and what is your assessment of them?

19. What lessons have been learned from the Siri Project? How can they be utilized in similar future projects?

20. How was the project designed to align with community needs to bring about change in the relationship between local authorities and community involvement in decision-making and local institution development?

21. Do you expect the project results to continue after the intervention? How? To what extent?

21.2. Have local authorities and local development community committees provided any plans after completing activities or participated in any relevant local development events?

Human Rights

22. To what extent have the poor, physically disabled, women, and disadvantaged and marginalized groups benefited from the project?

21.1. Were any groups/women from these categories part of the project, and what was their role?

22.2. Did the project target these disadvantaged groups with empowerment funds or enabled them to access financial services?

Gender Equality and Empowerment

23. To what extent were gender equality and women's empowerment addressed in the project's design, implementation, and monitoring? Were women involved in any activities? Was women's participation in planning, decision-making, and project monitoring meaningful? Were there any barriers to women's and excluded groups' participation? What are they? How does the project address the barriers to women's and excluded groups' participation?

24. Were there any unintended impacts of women's participation and empowerment?

Disability

25. How did people with disabilities benefit from the project? Were people with disabilities meaningfully consulted and involved in program planning and implementation?

26. What percentage of the program beneficiaries were people with disabilities? What obstacles do people with disabilities face?

Recommendations

27. What did you wish to find in SIERY that you didn't? Why? What are your suggestions for better interventions from UNDP?

4.6 Discussion Session – Education Office – Taiz

Focus Group Discussion (FGD) Tool with Educational Staff Beneficiaries of Crisis Management and Educational Planning Training, Back-to-School Campaign, Safety, and Risk Mitigation within the SIERY Project

My name is [Name], and I am an evaluation consultant working on the mid-term evaluation of the SIERY Project, implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and funded by the European Union. Your role as a stakeholder in the project is crucial to us. We would like to hear from you about some aspects related to the project's progress and your personal experience. Your participation in this session will help us gain a better understanding of the challenges and achievements made so far.

Please note that:
- All information shared with us will remain completely confidential. Your name or any identifying information will not be used in the final report.
- We will be recording this session to ensure we don't miss any of your valuable insights. The recording will only be used for evaluation and analysis purposes.
- Our discussion will take about an hour or less.
- We want to emphasize the importance of your comfort and feeling completely free to share your thoughts and experiences. Your opinions are very important to us, and we appreciate your time and contribution.

Shall we begin?

Participant Information:

No.	Name	Organization	Position	Phone Number
1	:			
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Questions:
- What training sessions have you attended?
- How were you nominated for them?
- How many participants were there? Male / Female?
- Where were they held?

- How long did they last?
- What is your overall evaluation of the training and its usefulness?
- How was the organization?

1. Relevance:

Objective: To assess the relevance of the training to the educational staff's needs and the local context.

- How well did the training topics align with your daily needs and challenges in the field of education?
- Did you feel that the training addressed the real challenges you face in crisis management or educational planning?
- Are there other topics or skills you think are necessary but were not covered in the training?
- How was the participation of women overall? What challenges did they face? How were these challenges overcome?

2. Effectiveness:

Objective: To evaluate the effectiveness of the training in achieving the desired outcomes.

- What new skills and knowledge did you gain from the training?
- Were you able to apply the skills and knowledge you gained in your educational work? How?
- Was there anything specific in the training that particularly helped you improve your job performance?

3. Efficiency:

Objective: To assess the efficiency of the training implementation in terms of resource use and execution.

- How would you rate the organization and coordination of the training sessions? Was the duration sufficient?
- Were the training materials and resources provided useful and adequate?
- Were there any logistical or organizational challenges you faced during the training period?

4. Impact:

Objective: To measure the broader impact of the training on your professional life and the educational community.

- What significant changes or benefits have you noticed in your work after the training?
- How has the training affected your ability to manage crises or improve educational planning in your institution?
- Have you noticed any positive impact on the educational community as a result of your improved performance or the application of what you learned?

5. Sustainability:

Objective: To evaluate the sustainability of the training outcomes and the continued application of acquired skills and knowledge.

- How confident are you in your ability to continue using the skills and knowledge you gained from the training in the future?

- Are there any additional support or resources you need to ensure the sustainability of the skills you learned?
- Have you been able to share what you learned with your colleagues? How has that impacted them?
Disability Inclusion:
- How has the SIERY project ensured the inclusion of people with disabilities? Were they among the beneficiaries? In which activities? If not, why were they not included? If yes, how many?
Suggestions:
- What are the strengths and weaknesses of the training program? What are your suggestions for the success of future projects?

4.7 Questions for Local Economic Development Ambassadors

- What are the tasks, responsibilities, and contributions of the Local Economic Development Ambassadors?
- How did the activity start? Where did the idea come from?
- How were the ambassadors selected?
- What training did they receive? Who provided the training? What were the main topics of the training? How do they evaluate the training?
- What tasks were assigned to the ambassadors?
- How do they evaluate what has been accomplished?
- Is the work voluntary or paid? How is their work evaluated?
Relevance:
1. Needs Assessment:
   - How do the activities carried out by the Local Economic Development Ambassadors meet the needs of local businesses and communities in Yemen?
   - Were the selected value chains suitable for the local economic context?
2. Stakeholder Engagement:
   - How were local businesses and community stakeholders involved in planning and implementing economic development activities?
   - To what extent were the activities aligned with the priorities of these stakeholders?
Effectiveness:
1. Achieved Results:
   - What specific results have been achieved through local economic development activities?
   - Can you provide examples of successful projects or businesses that have benefited from these activities?
2. Partnerships:
   - How effective were the partnerships with the private sector, microfinance institutions, and local authorities in promoting economic recovery?
   - What were the key factors contributing to the success of these partnerships?

Efficiency:
1. Resource Use:
   - How efficiently were resources (funding, time, expertise) used in implementing economic development activities?
   - Were there any major challenges or delays in the implementation process? If so, how were they addressed?
2. Coordination:
   - How were economic development activities coordinated with other components of the SIERY project and with other stakeholders?
Impact:
1. Long-term Benefits:

- What long-term economic benefits have been observed in the communities where economic development activities were implemented?
   - How have these activities contributed to improving the livelihoods and economic resilience of the targeted beneficiaries?
2. Unintended Outcomes:
   - Were there any unintended positive or negative impacts of the activities?
Sustainability:
1. Sustainability Measures:
   - What measures have been put in place to ensure the sustainability of the economic gains achieved through the economic development activities?
   - How prepared are local authorities and stakeholders to maintain and build upon the successes after the project ends?
2. Additional Support:
   - What additional support or resources are needed to ensure the long-term sustainability of the economic development activities?
Conclusion:
Final remarks about the project overall and recommendations for improvement in future projects.

4.8 Field Review Checklists

1. Observations and consultations with rehabilitated health facilities and local authority offices that have been equipped with solar energy

Governorate:	Directorate:
Facility:	Date of Visit:
Visit Team:	

Observation Point 1: Infrastructure and Facility Functions	
- Inspect the physical condition of the rehabilitated facilities.	
- Verify the effectiveness of the solar power system.	
- Check for any visible damages or deterioration in the infrastructure.	

Observation Point 2: Efficiency of the Solar Power System	
- Evaluate the efficiency and reliability of the solar power system.	
- Check that the solar panels are installed and maintained correctly.	
- Verify if the facility has experienced any power outages since installation.	

Observation Point 3: Impact on Services	
- Consult with facility staff about the impact of the solar power system on their operations.	
- Determine if there has been an improvement in service delivery due to the availability of solar energy.	
- Assess any changes in working hours and service availability.	

Observation Point 4: Community Feedback	
- Collect feedback from patients or service users regarding the quality of services.	
- Assess any noticeable improvements in facility operations since the rehabilitation and installation of solar power.	

Observation Point 5: Sustainability and Maintenance	
- Evaluate the sustainability plans for the solar power system.	
- Check for maintenance records or schedules.	
- Discuss the availability of technical support and spare parts for the solar power system with staff.	
- Address the disposal of batteries when they reach the end of their life.	
- General notes + Photos	

2. Observations and consultations with the directors of rehabilitated schools that have been equipped with solar energy.

Governorate:	Directorate:
Facility:	Date of Visit:
Visit Team:	

Observation Point 1: School Infrastructure and Environment	
- Inspect the condition of school buildings and facilities after rehabilitation. (What specifically was rehabilitated)	
- Verify the installation and effectiveness of the solar energy system.	
- Check for any signs of wear or damage in the infrastructure of the facility that was maintained in the school.	
Observation Point 2: Use of the Solar Energy System	
- Assess how the solar energy system is utilized within the school.	
- Verify if the system supports essential functions such as lighting, fans, and computer labs.	
- Check if the solar energy system has reduced the school's energy costs.	

Observation Point 3: Impact on Education	
- Consult with directors and teachers about the impact of the solar energy system on the educational environment.	
- Assess any improvements in student attendance and academic performance.	
- Determine if the availability of stable energy has extended school hours.	

Observation Point 4: Community and Parental Feedback	
- Collect feedback from parents and community members regarding school operations and improvements.	
- Assess any noticeable changes in the school's performance and reputation.	

Observation Point 5: Sustainability and Maintenance	
- Evaluate the sustainability plans for the solar energy system.	
- Check for records or maintenance schedules.	
- Discuss the availability of technical support and spare parts for the solar energy system with the directors.	
- Determine the disposal process for batteries when they reach the end of their life.	
- General observations + Photos	

3. Observations from Visits to Education Offices Equipped with Data Management Systems

Governorate:	Directorate:
Facility:	Date of Visit:
Visit Team:	

Observation Point 1: Infrastructure and Equipment	
- Inspect the physical condition of the office and the equipment related to the data management system.	

- Verify the installation and effectiveness of the data management systems.	
- Check for any signs of wear or damage in the equipment.	
Observation Point 2: Use of the Data Management System	
- Assess how the data management system is utilized within the office.	
- Verify if the system supports essential functions such as data storage, retrieval, and analysis.	
- Check if the staff are adequately trained to use the system.	
Observation Point 3: Impact on Operations	
- Consult with office staff about the impact of the data management system on their operations.	
- Assess any improvements in data accuracy, accessibility, and reporting.	
- Determine if the system has enhanced decision-making processes and service delivery.	
Observation Point 4: Staff Feedback	
- Collect feedback from office staff regarding the ease of use and efficiency of the system.	
- Assess any challenges or issues encountered by staff in using the system.	
Observation Point 5: Sustainability and Maintenance	
- Evaluate the sustainability plans for the data management system.	
- Check for records or maintenance schedules.	
- Discuss the availability of technical support and updates for the data management system with the staff.	
- General observations + Photos	

4.9 Tool for Focus Group Discussion (FGD) - Henna, Ghayl Bawazir

Part 1: Introduction and Consent (10-15 minutes)

Good morning,
My name is [Name], and I am an evaluation consultant working on the midterm evaluation of the Siri Project, implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and funded by the European Union. Your role as one of the stakeholders in this project is extremely important to us. We would like to hear from you about certain aspects of the project's progress and your personal experience. Your participation in this session will help us better understand the challenges and achievements that have been made.
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- Our discussion will last about an hour or less.
- We would like to emphasize the importance of your comfort and feeling completely free to share your thoughts and experiences. Your opinions are very important to us, and we are grateful for your time and contribution.
Shall we begin?

No.	Name	Phone Number
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General Questions
- How was the project selected?
- What was the situation before the construction of the irrigation channels?
- Why did the henna farm owners not construct the channels themselves?

- How was the implementation carried out?
- How long did the work take?
- When did you start benefiting from it?
- Do other farmers, besides henna producers, benefit from the project? Who are they?
- What is your overall evaluation of the project?

1. Relevance
Objective: Assess the relevance of constructing irrigation channels to the needs of smallholders and the local context.
1. How have the new irrigation channels been beneficial to your specific needs in henna farming?
2. Did the construction of the channels address the challenges you faced in irrigation before the project's implementation? How?
3. Are there any other improvements you think are necessary in the irrigation systems to better support henna farming? What are they?
2. Effectiveness
Objective: Assess the effectiveness of the irrigation channels in achieving the desired outcomes.
1. What are the main benefits you have noticed in your farming and production after the construction of the irrigation channels?
2. Have the irrigation channels increased the productivity of your henna crops? By what percentage?
3. Have you encountered any challenges in using the new irrigation channels?
3. Efficiency
Objective: Assess the efficiency of the irrigation channel construction in terms of resource use and implementation.
1. How do you evaluate the process of constructing the irrigation channels in terms of organization and execution?
2. Were there any problems or delays in the construction process?
3. Do you think resources (time, budget, materials) were used effectively in the construction of the channels?
4. Impact
Objective: Measure the broader impact of constructing irrigation channels on your life and community.
1. What major changes or benefits have you noticed in your life after the construction of the irrigation channels?
2. How has the construction of the channels affected your ability to grow and sell henna?
3. Have you noticed any positive impact on the local community as a result of this project?
5. Sustainability

Objective: Assess the sustainability of the benefits of the irrigation channels and their continued effective use.

1. How confident are you that the new irrigation channels will continue to support henna farming effectively in the long term?

2. Is there support or maintenance available to ensure the continued operation of the irrigation channels?

3. Are you sharing the knowledge or experiences you have gained from using the irrigation channels with other farmers in the community?

Women: How were they targeted and benefited from the project?

People with Disabilities, Marginalized Groups, and Displaced Persons: How were they included in the project?

Suggestions: What do you suggest for similar future interventions to ensure better success?

Photos of the rehabilitated channels are required, and listening to other farmers, besides henna producers, on how they benefited.

4.10 Tool for Focus Group Discussion with Beneficiaries of the Women's Local Governance Fellowship Project in Marib Governorate

Part 1: Introduction and Consent (10-15 minutes)

Good morning,
My name is [Name], and I am an evaluation consultant working on the midterm evaluation of the Siri Project, implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and funded by the European Union. Your role as one of the stakeholders in this project is extremely important to us. We would like to hear from you about certain aspects of the project's progress and your personal experience. Your participation in this session will help us better understand the challenges and achievements that have been made.
Please note that:
- All the information you share with us will remain completely confidential. Your name or any identifying information will not be used in the final report.
- We will record this session to ensure that none of your valuable responses are missed. The recording will only be used for evaluation and analysis purposes.
- Our discussion will last about an hour or less.
- We would like to emphasize the importance of your comfort and feeling completely free to share your thoughts and experiences. Your opinions are very important to us, and we are grateful for your time and contribution.
Shall we begin?

No.	Name	Organization	Position	Phone Number
1	:			
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General Questions
1. What training did the Marib Girls Foundation provide?
2. How many participants were there? How many were displaced, and how many were from the host community?
3. What was the goal of the training?

4. How were the participants selected? What was the mechanism? How was fair selection ensured?

5. How long was the training period?

6. What happened to the graduates after the training? How many were employed? Were they all unemployed before?

---

1. Relevance

Objective: Assess the relevance of the Fellowship in Local Governance for Women in Marib to the needs of the participants and the community.

1. How relevant was the Women's Fellowship initiative in Marib to the needs of women in Marib?

2. How did the initiative address the specific needs and challenges faced by women in this community? Were you involved in choosing the courses?

3. Were the training topics and activities aligned with the local context and the participants' current skills and knowledge? How? How were the courses chosen?

4. Are there any additional areas or topics you believe should have been included to make the initiative more relevant?

---

2. Coherence

Objective: Assess the coherence of the initiative with other similar programs.

1. Did you participate in a similar training program aimed at enhancing the capacity of local authorities? If yes, when, where, how, and who delivered it?

2. If they heard of but did not participate, ask for information about that program and the similarities and differences.

---

3. Effectiveness

Objective: Evaluate the effectiveness of the initiative in achieving the desired outcomes.

1. To what extent did the initiative improve the leadership skills of the targeted women? How?

2. Can you provide examples of how the skills and knowledge gained from the initiative were applied by the trainees in their communities or workplaces?

3. How effective were the methods and approaches used in the training sessions?

4. Were there any challenges you faced during and after the training? What were they, and how were they addressed?

---

4. Efficiency

Objective: Assess the efficiency of the initiative in terms of resource use and implementation.

1. How well were resources (time, budget, materials) used in the initiative?

2. How would you rate the trainers and the training materials?

3. Was the initiative implemented as planned and on time? If there were delays, what caused them, and how did they affect the project?

4. Were there any logistical issues (such as location, transportation, timing) with the training sessions?

5. How can the efficiency of the training program be improved in future implementations?

---

5. Impact

Objective: Measure the broader impact of the initiative on participants and the community.

1. What major changes or benefits have you noticed in the trained women?
2. How has the initiative impacted the community as a whole?
3. Are there any success stories or examples of positive impact that you can share?
4. What were the unexpected outcomes, positive or negative, that resulted from the initiative?

---

6. Sustainability

Objective: Evaluate the sustainability of the initiative's outcomes and the continued application of skills.

1. How confident are you that the skills and knowledge gained by the trained women will continue to be applied in the long term?
2. What mechanisms or support systems are in place to ensure the continued application of the skills and knowledge gained from the initiative?
3. Have the trained women been able to share what they learned with others in the community?
4. What additional support or resources are needed to ensure the long-term sustainability of the initiative's benefits?

Suggestions:

If we were to repeat a similar program, what would you suggest ensuring better outcomes?

4.11 Tool for Focus Group Discussion (FGD) with Small and Medium Enterprises that Received Partial Grants from the SIERY Project in Aden and Hadhramaut

Part 1: Introduction and Consent (10-15 minutes)

Good morning,

My name is [Name], and I am an evaluation consultant working on the midterm evaluation of the Siri Project, implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and funded by the European Union. Your role as one of the stakeholders in this project is extremely important to us. We would like to hear from you about certain aspects of the project's progress and your personal experience. Your participation in this session will help us better understand the challenges and achievements that have been made.

Please note that:

- All the information you share with us will remain completely confidential. Your name or any identifying information will not be used in the final report.
- We will record this session to ensure that none of your valuable responses are missed. The recording will only be used for evaluation and analysis purposes.
- Our discussion will last about an hour or less.
- We would like to emphasize the importance of your comfort and feeling completely free to share your thoughts and experiences. Your opinions are very important to us, and we are grateful for your time and contribution.

Shall we begin?

No.	Name:	Project:	Phone Number:	Notes
1	:			
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Questions
1. How did you hear about the project?
2. What are your activities/personal projects that received support?
3. When did you start the activity?
4. What were the conditions for receiving support?

5. How were you registered?

6. How much were you granted?

7. After how long from registration did you receive support?

8. Was the support appropriate?

9. Have you received similar support recently? From whom? How much? How does it compare to this project?

---

1. Relevance

Objective: Evaluate the relevance of partial grants to the needs of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and the local context.

1. What challenges were you facing before receiving the grant, and how did the grant help address these challenges?

2. Are there other supports or resources you believe are necessary to better meet your project's needs?

---

2. Effectiveness

Objective: Evaluate the effectiveness of partial grants in achieving the desired outcomes.

1. What are the main benefits you noticed in your work after receiving the partial grant?

2. Did the grant help you improve or expand your business? How?

3. Did you face any challenges in using the grant to achieve your goals?

---

3. Efficiency

Objective: Evaluate the efficiency of the partial grant process in terms of resource use and implementation.

1. How do you evaluate the grant process in terms of organization and execution?

2. Were there any problems or delays in the grant process?

---

4. Impact

Objective: Measure the broader impact of partial grants on your business and the community.

1. What significant changes or benefits have you noticed in your business after receiving the grant?

2. How did receiving the grant affect your ability to offer better services or products?

3. Have you noticed any positive impact on the local community as a result of expanding or improving your business?

---

5. Sustainability

Objective: Evaluate the sustainability of the benefits of partial grants and their continued effective use.

1. How confident are you that the benefits you achieved from the grant will continue in the long term?

2. Are there additional supports or resources you need to ensure the sustainability of your business after receiving the grant?

3. Are you sharing the knowledge or experiences you gained from using the grant with other businesses in the community?

Suggestions:

If we were to repeat a similar program, what would you suggest ensuring better outcomes?

4.12 Tool for Interviewing Local Authorities

Part 1: Introduction and Consent (10-15 minutes)

Good morning,

My name is [Name], and I am an evaluation consultant working on the mid-term evaluation of the SIRI project implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) with funding from the European Union. Your role as a project stakeholder is very important to us. We would like to hear from you about certain aspects of the project's progress and your personal experience. Your participation in this session will help us better understand the challenges and achievements.

Please note that:

- All the information you share with us will remain completely confidential. Your name or any identifying information will not be used in the final report.
- We will be recording this session to ensure that we don't miss any of your valuable responses. The recording will only be used for evaluation and analysis purposes.
- Our discussion will last about an hour or less.
- We want to emphasize the importance of your comfort and the freedom to share your thoughts and experiences. Your opinions are very important to us, and we are grateful for your time and contribution.

Can we begin?

Name:
Position:
Phone number:
Location and date of the interview:
Facilitator/Interviewer:

Part 2: Questions

- What is your relationship with the project? Since when?
- What has the project provided to the region/district/governorate?
- How did the project start? How were the facilitation and coordination teams formed? Who nominated the members of these committees? From which offices were these committees? How many members were there? How many women and how many men? How long did the training last? What were the training courses?
- How were the plans developed? Who reviewed and approved them?
- What is the current status of the project? What remains to be done?
- What is your initial assessment of the project? What succeeded and what failed?

Relevance

1. To what extent was the project aligned with the development priorities of the governorate?
2. What are the key national development priorities the project aims to address? Does the project still align with these priorities and contribute to them?

Effectiveness

- What has the project achieved so far? To what extent has the project met its intended goals and contributed to its strategic vision?
- How was women's participation in the project? What roles were assigned to women as participants and beneficiaries? What were the criteria for selecting women? Was there a priority given to women's participation in the committees? What is your overall assessment of the role of women?
- What factors contributed to the success or failure of the project's intended outcomes and results? What economic, political, social, or environmental factors affected the project's progress positively or negatively?

Efficiency

- Were the project results achieved as planned? Were there delays? What were the reasons?
- To what extent was the project implementation strategy and execution efficient and cost-effective?
- Were there any alternative ways to implement the project activities more effectively?

Impact

- What were the intended and unintended outcomes of the project, both positive and negative? How do these outcomes differ by gender?
- How has the project created social change in achieving project ownership, participatory approaches, collaboration with local authorities, and establishing community-funded initiatives?
- Did the project create conflict or enhance discord among communities? Did it increase community involvement in selecting and obtaining projects by expressing their needs through a semi-structured local council?

Sustainability

- To what extent will financial and economic resources be available to sustain the benefits achieved by the project?
- Have community committees, local institutions, private sector partners, or NGOs prepared any policies or plans to sustain the activities or initiatives? How?
- What types of institutional capacity-building training have been provided to NGOs, community-based organizations, and local authorities to ensure future self-management?

Human Rights

- To what extent have the poor, physically disabled, and marginalized groups benefited from the project? Were any groups or women from these categories part of the project, and what was their role? If not, why?

Gender Equality and Empowerment
- To what extent was gender equality and women's empowerment addressed in the project's design, implementation, and monitoring? Were women involved in planning, decision-making, and monitoring the project? Were there any barriers to women's and excluded groups' participation? What were they? How does the project address the barriers to women's and excluded groups' participation?

Disability
- How did people with disabilities benefit from the project? Were persons with disabilities meaningfully consulted and involved in the program planning and implementation?
- What percentage of the program's beneficiaries were people with disabilities? What barriers do people with disabilities face?

Recommendations
- What did you wish to find in the SIERY project that you didn't? Why? What are your suggestions for better interventions from UNDP?

4.13 Interview Tool with the Director of the Marib Girls Foundation

Good morning,

My name is [Name], and I am an evaluation consultant working on the mid-term evaluation of the SIRI project implemented by the UNDP, funded by the European Union. Your role as one of the stakeholders in the project is crucial to us. We would like to hear from you about certain aspects of the project's progress and your personal experience. Your participation in this session will help us better understand the challenges and achievements that have been made.

Please note that:

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- Our discussion will take about an hour or less.
- We want to emphasize the importance of your comfort and your complete freedom to share your thoughts and experiences. Your opinions are very important to us, and we appreciate your time and contribution.

Can we start?

Name:
Position:
Phone Number:
Interview Location and Date:
Interview Facilitator/Executor:

General Questions:

- How did the fellowship initiative come about? How was it coordinated?
- What training has the Marib Girls Foundation provided?
- How many participants were involved? How many were displaced, and how many were from the host community? How were they selected? What was the mechanism? How was fair selection ensured?
- How long was the training period?
- What were the training stipends (for both trainee and trainer)? Were they sufficient?

- What happened to the graduates after the training? Did they find employment? Receive promotions? Were they all previously unemployed?

1. Relevance

Objective: To assess the relevance of the Local Governance Fellowship Project for women in Marib to the needs of the participants and the community.

1. To what extent does the Women's Fellowship initiative in Marib meet the needs of women in Marib? How did the initiative address the specific needs and challenges faced by women in this community?

2. Were the training topics and activities aligned with the local context and the participants' current skills and knowledge? How? How were the courses selected?

3. Are there any additional areas or topics you think should have been included to make the initiative more relevant?

2. Effectiveness

Objective: To assess the effectiveness of the initiative in achieving the desired outcomes.

1. To what extent did the initiative improve the leadership skills of the targeted women?

2. Can you provide examples of how the skills and knowledge gained from the initiative have been applied by the trainees in their communities or workplaces?

3. How effective were the methods and techniques used in the training sessions?

4. Were there any challenges in implementing the initiative, and how were they addressed?

3. Efficiency

Objective: To assess the efficiency of the initiative in terms of resource use and implementation.

1. How well were resources (time, budget, materials) used in the initiative?

2. Was the initiative implemented as planned and on schedule?

3. Were there any logistical issues (such as venue, transportation, timing) for the training sessions?

4. How can the efficiency of the initiative be improved in future implementations?

4. Impact

Objective: To measure the broader impact of the initiative on the participants and the community.

1. What significant changes or benefits have you observed as a result of the initiative in the lives of the trained women?

2. How has the initiative impacted the community at large, particularly in terms of social cohesion and economic activities?

3. Are there any success stories or examples of positive impact that can be shared?

4. What unexpected outcomes, positive or negative, have resulted from the initiative?

5. Sustainability

Objective: To assess the sustainability of the initiative's outcomes and the continued application of skills.

1. How confident are you that the skills and knowledge gained by the trained women will be sustained in the long term?

2. What mechanisms or support systems are in place to ensure the continued application of the skills and knowledge gained from the initiative?

3. Have the trained women been able to share what they learned with others in the community?

4. What additional support or resources are needed to ensure the long-term sustainability of the initiative's benefits?

Human Rights: Were any groups or women from displaced or marginalized backgrounds part of the project, and what was their role? If not, why? If yes, how were they included?

Disability: Were any of the beneficiaries individuals with disabilities? If not, why were they not included? If yes, how many?

Suggestions: What are the positives and negatives of the training program, and what are your suggestions for the success of future projects?

Annex 5: Indicator achievements

DCDP   **District Capacity Development Plans**

DFC   **District Facilitation Teams**

CS   **Community Structures**

Output 1.1 — **Strengthened Local authorities' capacities to respond to community needs for services in an inclusive and accountable manner.**

#	Indicator	Final Target (2025)	Achieved	% of Comp.	Accumulative % of Comp.	Remark
1.1.1	# of gender-responsive District Capacity Development Plans (DCDPs) [developed/implemented] with support of DFTs	40	40	100.0%	100.0%	*DCDPs developed: 22 in IRG areas & 23 in DFA areas* *DCDPs Implemented: 22 districts in IRG area* ***23*** *districts in DFA area*
1.1.2	# of CSs or their members in target areas & **connected to district authorities** through arrangement for supporting service delivery and conflict resolution.	35	35	100.0%	100.0%	*(i) Nomination of CSs completed in 45 districts.* *(ii) Members of CSs trained* *(iii) Supporting service delivery and conflict resolution - underway*
1.1.3	% of women and youth among **participants** of training activities of the project with increased knowledge/skills.	40%	46%	115.0%	100.0%	*Achieved 30% women participants and 10% youth*
	Women: 30%	*30%*	*29%*	*96.7%*	*96.7%*	
	Youth: 10%	*10%*	*17%*	*170.0%*	*100.0%*	*youth [18-35] years old*
1.1.4	% of District Authorities with functional Women's Affairs Units.	60	44	73.3%	73.3%	*22 in IRG areas.*
Average percentage:				**97%**	**93.3%**	

RS   Representative Structure

LED   Local Economic Development

LAs   Local Authorities

LR2F   Local Resilience & Recovery Fund

Output 1.2   **Improved capacities of public services providers for scaling up the reach out to the most vulnerable.**

No	Indicator	Final Target (2025)	Achieved	% of Comp.	Accumulative % of Comp.	Remark
1.2.1	**Percentage of wome**n in representative structure as part of SIERY intervention (Community Structures, District Recovery Platforms)	20.0%	28.0%	140.0%	100.0%	*i) Community structures* *ii) District Recovery Platforms*
1.2.2	Number of Gender-Responsive Recovery Plans [developed/implemented]	142	140	98.6%	98.6%	
	(A) for service delivery (district)	*130*	*134*	*103.1%*	*100.0%*	*2022: 21 IRG, 23 DFA* *2023: 22 IRG, 23 DFA* *Three-years plan - DRPs 2024-2026: 22 IRG; DFA: 23*
	(B) for local economy (governorate)	*12*	*6*	*50.0%*	*50.0%*	*LED in IRG:* *6 platform established (Aden, Lajh, Hadramaut Coastal, Hadramaut Valley, Marib)* *All members of the platforms trained*
1.2.3	Number of LAs' representatives trained locally relevant educational topics.	400	400	100.0%	100.0%	*203 IRG, 70 DFA*
1.2.4	Number of district, and governorate-level projects funded via the LR2F.	170	141	82.9%	82.9%	*112 Selected.* *45 has Funded.* *60 ongoing funding (L2RF 2022)* *36 ongoing funding (L2RF 2023) (verification assessment)*
1.2.5	Number of students benefitting from schools' rehabilitations.	250,000	104,823	41.9%	41.9%	*Total: 50,436 (Girls: 38,196; Boys: 12,240): 36 schools+L2RF 2021;* *L2RF 2022: 54,387 (Girls: 26,702; boys: 27, 685)*

	Boys	125,000	39,925			
	Girls	125,000	64,898			
1.2.6	Number of districts with increase of investment budget (actual) through funding of priority projects through L2RF	45	38	84.4%	84.4%	<u>L2RF 2021</u>: 21 districts IRG; 4 districts DFA (Hajjah+Hodeidah+Ibb) <u>L2RF 2022</u>: 5 Hajjah, 2 districts in Hodeida, 4 Ibb, 3 Sana'a, 3 Taiz (<u>17 districts</u>)
	Total output achievement in percentage:			**91.3%**	**84.7%**	

WAUs **Women's Affairs Units**

Output 1.3 **Strengthened central-local and horizontal relations between local governance stakeholders.**

No	Indicator	Target	Achieved	% of Comp.	Accumulative % of Comp.	Remark
1.3.1	# of dialogue events between local and central authorities.	1	0	0.0%	0.0%	*We reported governorates and districts targeted workshop taking place in March 2023 as an achievement.*
1.3.2	# of Women Affairs' s Units in targeted <u>central administrations producing gender mainstreaming strategy notes,</u> guidelines facilitation/support or tools.	4	1	25.0%	25.0%	*We accomplished one gender strategic document of MoLA Aden.* *MoLA DFA - ongoing*
1.3.3	% of Yemeni women among local governance representatives at **international peer exchange** events organized.	20	9	45.0%	45.0%	*We accomplished one exchange visit to Rwanda. One out of 11 participants are from women department of Marib.*
	Total output achievement in percentage:			**23.3%**	**23.3%**	

| IG | Individual Group |
| SME | Small and Medium Enterprises |

Output 2.1   **Strengthened linkages/cooperation opportunities between MSMEs, private sector and MFIs involved in the value chains.**

No	Indicator	Target	Achieved	% of Comp.	Accumulative % of Comp.	Remark
2.1.1	# of persons with developed capacities on business and technical skills applied skills for income generation and employment prospects.	3,000	2,867	95.6%	**95.6%**	*2,294 on smallholders* *573 on SMEs (Data as of 30 June 2024)*
	Women	900	1,355	66.4%		
	Men	2,100	1,512	72.0%		
	Youth	300	848	282.7%		
	Adult	2,700	2,019	74.8%		
2.1.2	# of local SMEs and producer groups in priority sectors supported.	900	**623**	69.2%	**69.2%**	*We only included SMEs here so far:* *573 SMEs.* *Producer groups: 33* *Supply chains groups: 27*
	Women	270				
	Men	630				
2.1.3	# of long-term jobs and employment supported/sustained by the EU, disaggregated by age and gender of the employee (EU RF 2.12).	6,500	4,815	74.1%	**74.1%**	*Smallholders: 1,762 jobs* *SMEs: 3,053 jobs*
	Female jobs	1,950	1,040			
	Male jobs	4,550	1,162			
	Youth	650	1,275			
	Adult	5,850	927			

		Target	Achieved			
	Smallholders	0	2,009			
	SMEs	0	193			
2.1.4	# of **smallholders and SMEs** that have access to business support services	1,200	0	0.0%	**0.0%**	
	Smallholders	800				
	SMEs	400				

Total output achievement in percentage: **59.7%**   **59.7%**

IG	Income Generation
SME	Small and Medium Enterprises

Output 2.2   **Increased and de-risked access to financial services for economic agents in promising value chains.**

No	Indicator	Target	Achieved	% of Comp.	Accumulative % of Comp.	Remark
2.2.1	# of Gender sensitive market facilities, and Related shops/stalls established.	106	0	40.0%	**40.0%**	
	(A) Gender sensitive market facilities.	*6*	*0*	*20.0%*	**20.0%**	*The contractors will commence the works in end of August 2024.*
	(B) Related shops/stalls established.	*100*	*0*	*20.0%*	**20.0%**	
2.2.2	# of beneficiaries (individuals, and SMEs/business associations) receiving loans.	500	0	10.0%	**10.0%**	*Preparation works are underway*
	(A) individuals	*350*	*0*	*0.0%*	**0.0%**	

	(B) SMEs/business associations	150	0	0.0%	0.0%	
	Total output achievement in percentage:			**22.5%**	**22.5%**	

Total Indicators Achievement

No	Output	% of Comp.	Accumulative % of Comp.	Remark
1.1	Strengthened Local authorities' capacities to respond to community needs for services in an inclusive and accountable manner	93.3%	**93.3%**	
1.2	Improved capacities of public services providers for scaling up the outreach to the most vulnerable	91.3%	**84.7%**	
1.3	Strengthened central-local and horizontal relations between local governance stakeholder	23.3%	**23.3%**	
2.1	Strengthened linkages/cooperation opportunities between SMEs, private sector and MFIs involved in the value chain	59.7%	**59.7%**	
2.2	Increased and de-risked access to financial services for economic agents in promising value chains	22.5%	**22.5%**	
	Total outputs achievement in percentage:	**58.0%**	**56.7%**	

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ETHICAL GUIDELINES FOR EVALUATION

PLEDGE OF ETHICAL CONDUCT IN EVALUATION

UNEG
United Nations Evaluation Group

By signing this pledge, I hereby commit to discussing and applying the UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation and to adopting the associated ethical behaviours.

INTEGRITY
I will actively adhere to the moral values and professional standards of evaluation practice as outlined in the UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation and following the values of the United Nations. Specifically, I will be:

- **Honest and truthful** in my communication and actions.
- **Professional,** engaging in credible and trustworthy behaviour, alongside competence, commitment and ongoing reflective practice.
- **Independent, impartial and incorruptible.**

ACCOUNTABILITY
I will be answerable for all decisions made and actions taken and responsible for honouring commitments, without qualification or exception; I will report potential or actual harms observed. Specifically, I will be:

- **Transparent regarding evaluation** purpose and actions taken, establishing trust and increasing accountability for performance to the public, particularly those populations affected by the evaluation.
- **Responsive** as questions or events arise, adapting plans as required and referring to appropriate channels where corruption, fraud, sexual exploitation or abuse or other misconduct or waste of resources is identified.
- **Responsible** for meeting the evaluation purpose and for actions taken and for ensuring redress and recognition as needed.

RESPECT
I will engage with all stakeholders of an evaluation in a way that honours their dignity, well-being, personal agency and characteristics. Specifically, I will ensure:

- **Access to** the evaluation process and products by all relevant stakeholders – whether powerless or powerful – with due attention to factors that could impede access such as sex, gender, race, language, country of origin, LGBTQ status, age, background, religion, ethnicity and ability.
- **Meaningful participation and equitable treatment** of all relevant stakeholders in the evaluation processes, from design to dissemination. This includes engaging various stakeholders, particularly affected people, so they can actively inform the evaluation approach and products rather than being solely a subject of data collection.
- **Fair representation** of different voices and perspectives in evaluation products (reports, webinars, etc.).

BENEFICENCE
I will strive to do good for people and planet while minimizing harm arising from evaluation as an intervention. Specifically, I will ensure:

- **Explicit and ongoing consideration of risks and benefits** from evaluation processes.
- **Maximum benefits** at systemic (including environmental), organizational and programmatic levels.
- **No harm.** I will not proceed where harm cannot be mitigated.
- **Evaluation makes an overall positive contribution** to human and natural systems and the mission of the United Nations.

I commit to playing my part in ensuring that evaluations are conducted according to the Charter of the United Nations and the ethical requirements laid down above and contained within the UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation. When this is not possible, I will report the situation to my supervisor, designated focal points or channels and will actively seek an appropriate response.

André Kahlmeyer

Vienna, 28 August 2024

_____

_____ (Signature and Date)

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Mohammed Al Mussaabi _____ 28/08/2024 _____ (Signature and Date)