The background of the entire page is a light blue color with a faint, white line-art map of Marib, Yemen. The map shows a complex network of streets and building footprints, with a central area that is more densely packed. The lines are thin and delicate, creating a subtle texture behind the text.

Marib Urban Profile

*«a precarious model
of peaceful co-existence
under threat»*

March 2021

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This document presents the Marib Urban Profile. It has been prepared by UN-Habitat. Data collection and data analysis has been conducted in end 2019-2020. Some of the data related to population figures may be slightly outdated at time of publication.

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Urban Profiling

UN-Habitat seeks to provide up to date, holistic documentation and analysis of the impact of the crisis in key cities, through City Profiles, synthesising information and insight from existing sources and priority sectors, supplemented by direct field research by UN-Habitat teams based in each city. This profile is part of a regional urban profiling exercise that aims to develop urban profiles for the cities of Basra, Sinjar, Derna (Libya), Marib (Yemen) and Dara'a (Syria). UN-Habitat's experience in urban analysis, community approaches and crisis contexts have informed the development of the City Profiling process. All City Profiles are developed in close association with the concerned governorates and municipalities.

The structure of the City Profile provides a pre-crisis baseline and data from the current situation to understand the impact of the crisis accompanied by narrative description and analysis. Furthermore, City Profiles review the functionality of the city economy and services, understanding of capacities and coping mechanisms and the identification of humanitarian or development priorities. They do not provide comprehensive data on individual topics, but seek to provide a balanced overview. The City Profile affords an opportunity for a range of stakeholders to represent their diagnosis of the situation in their city, provides a basis for local discussions on actions to be taken and helps to make local information and voices accessible to external stakeholders seeking to assist in development responses.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

UNOCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
GCC	Gulf Cooperation Council
GPC	General People's Congress
HDI	Human Development Index
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IOM	International Office of Migration
IRG	Internationally Recognized Government (of Yemen)
NDC	National Dialogue Conference
NLF	National Liberation Front
OHCHR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
PDRY	People's Democratic Republic of Yemen STC Southern Transitional Council
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
STC	Southern Transitional Council
UAE	United Arab Emirates
UN	United Nations
UN-Habitat	United Nations Human Settlements Program
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
YAR	Yemen Arab Republic
YSP	Yemen Socialist Party

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Since Marib was first settled over three thousand years ago, it has seen its fortunes rise and fall with the cycles of history. Now, Marib City, the site of the Arab world's oldest kingdom has transformed into one of the fastest growing modern cities in the Arab region. In the past five years, Marib City's wartime growth in revenue and its 12-fold increase in population¹ has catapulted the city from the periphery to the very core of Yemen's political, economic and security dynamics. Marib has become a central hosting destination for communities primarily displaced by Yemen's civil war.

Much of the city's sudden growth has been credited to the strong stewardship of the governorate. Its success in preserving Marib as a safe haven for internally displaced persons (IDP)s and in negotiating natural resource revenue-sharing contracts with the central government² and neighboring countries that elevated Marib's status to the level of a quasi-microstate. This profile seeks to capture what this growth looks like from the ground; to look behind the statistics in order to better understand how it has been able to simultaneously rise above the devastation of Yemen's conflict while also being a product of it. The profile research process has been designed to identify the core factors and patterns for the city and the surrounding environs, to develop a clearer picture of how Marib's distinctive character and culture has turned it into a promising case study of how to address urban growth and displacement during conflict.

Oil revenue, along with public payments for Marib's natural

gas has enabled the governorate to resume paying public salaries when very few local governorates were able to do so.³ The revenue stream negotiated by the governor has enabled a basic level of public service provision for judges, which has ensured a degree of 'law' alongside the 'order' provided by the governorate's security forces.⁴ Marib Central Bank now operates independently from that in Aden, which has come with some challenges that are now being addressed.⁵ Marib's renegotiated oil revenue, along with investment support from Saudi Arabia⁶, and a growing tax base from many new businesses which have decided to relocate to Marib has given the municipality a rare liquidity and ability to pay public salaries in the context of Yemen's war. This virtuous cycle has enabled modest public sector growth and critical provision of basic services. With its central location Marib has become a hub once again of trade routes and is in a position to be proactive in investing in local electricity, water, and transportation infrastructure, local security, and established its first university. On the surface, the list of strategic advantages that have propelled Marib into a privileged position are largely tied to its natural resources and public services management, but there are other structural, cultural advantages which are more subtle though equally important to factor into urban development.

A major component of Marib's success is not just its oil wealth but also the distributed, decentralized nature of leadership mechanisms used by the tribes of Marib, which have enabled Marib to maintain a degree of autonomy. Marib's tribe-state hybrid and lack of prominence in the

¹ Marib City's population grew from an estimated 55,000 in 2014 to over 630,000 in 2020, per UN Habitat internal data triangulation and assessment, further analyzed in the Civil Society demography section.

² Ali Al Sakani and Casey Coombs, "Marib: A Yemeni Government Stronghold Increasingly Vulnerable to Houthi Advances", Sana'a Center for Strategic Studies, 22 October 2020, <https://sanaa-center.org/publications/analysis/11778>. The paper explains that Governor Arada has proved adept at negotiating with multiple administrations, though he is most closely allied with both the internationally recognized government of the ROYG aka "Legitimacy" transitional government of Abd Mansur Hadi (exiled Riyadh), Marib's contracts have been continued under the Houthi-led National Salvation Government (NSG) as well.

³ Adam Baron, The Marib Paradox: How One Province Succeeds in the Midst of Yemen's War, Policy Brief, No. ECFR/261 (London: European Council on Foreign Relations, 12 June 2018), www.ecfr.eu/publications/summary/the_marib_paradox_how_one_province_succeeds_in_the_midst_of_yemens_war

⁴ Joshua Rogers, Local Governance in Yemen: Theory, Practice, and Future Options (Berlin: Berghof Foundation Operations GmbH, 4 June 2019).

⁵ Final report of the Panel of Experts on Yemen, 25 January 2019 (S/2019/83).

⁶ Baron, The Marib Paradox, p. 11.

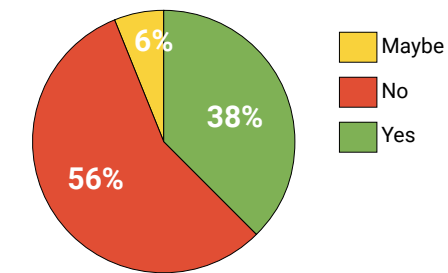


FIGURE 1. Marib Survey Measure of Public Interest in Participating in future Focal Group Discussions



FIGURE 2. Marib's orange harvest (<http://alsahwa-yemen.net/en/p-15237>)

past has enabled Marib to be better able to mostly preserve its neutral status⁷. Marib mostly stayed above the fray of struggles for central power, which has spared the area the worst of the wartime physical and economic destruction. As a model of what decentralization could look like in Yemen, part of Marib's key to success is its local autonomy which shielded it from challenges in other areas that were more closely tied to central seats of government. Therefore, the case is made that part of Marib's 'paradoxical' success is based on its degree of local autonomy and self-reliance. The question is whether this dynamic can be maintained as it expands its governance capacity in the face of continuing power struggles.

As a testament to the impact of its local mediation efforts and the symbol Marib represented for the country, in October 2020, the city was selected to be the site of the first major prisoner exchange negotiated between the ROYG and the NSG. As announced by the UN Special Envoy to Yemen, Marib's prisoner release marked one of the most significant international peacebuilding milestones towards reaching a Joint Declaration⁸ for a national ceasefire since the civil war broke out in 2015.⁹ Renowned Yemeni human rights lawyer and activist Huda al Sarari declared, "Marib is now the nucleus of the republic we all hope to have."¹⁰ The peace agreement represented a beacon of hope across the desperate frontlines of the conflict-fatigued Yemeni society. The choice of Marib to be the site of prisoner exchange and delivery signalled an alternative path for Marib beyond the fears many felt that it had been abandoned by its international allies and would face invasion by rebel militias. Instead, it reinforced Marib's role as a safe haven for the IDPs it hosted, providing shelter

for those who have fled the frontlines of the conflict in search of neutral territory. Marib's government is also seen as a relatively neutral political entity, helping it play the type of mediation role that Yemen needs to overcome north-south polarization. Marib's consultative processes, rooted in its tribal history, has also been reflected in the strong degree of civic engagement we saw in our polling of the city. 38% of the participants (576 individuals) committed to participating in future Focus Group Discussions concerning city affairs, with a total of 44% of survey respondents expressing interest and possible willingness to join public sessions. The majority of those who expressed this interest were males (70% of those who answered positively were males, 30% were females).

However, Marib's rapid growth, the significant level of informal or temporary housing, and looming risk of food and water shortages becoming more acute for Marib,¹¹ all underscore the urgency of an expansion of the city's governance capacity, including urban planning and service provision, to accommodate the city's growth in a sustainable way. Because Marib's growth and the current global transition that began in 2020 is so unprecedented, participatory planning is the best way to engage citizens and discover out-of-the-box solutions. In this vein, we have approached Marib's profile as an opportunity to facilitate the urban community's capacity to determine and address its own needs, goals, and solutions. All aspects of the profile were designed and intended to catalyze and mobilize Marib's residents to contribute to urban planning dialogue and initiatives.



FIGURE 3. Planned park 4 million dollar park in the desert outside of Marib.



FIGURE 4. Celebrations following peace progress in October 2020 (nashwannews.com/218526)

7 While Marib has been called a neutral "Switzerland", it is seen as the last stronghold of the Republic of Yemen Government (ROYG). (: A Yemeni Government Stronghold Increasingly Vulnerable to Houthi Advances | Sana'a Center For Strategic Studies <https://sanaacenter.org/publications/analysis/11778>)

8 <https://www.un.org/press/en/2020/sc14328.doc.htm>

9 <https://twitter.com/alhadath/status/1317085058675638272?s=24>; The celebrations in the streets of Marib following the prisoner exchange offered a rare moment of hope in the region's protracted conflict, signalling progress towards a peaceful and pragmatic resolution of various destabilizing factors which have kept Marib in limbo. It was a particularly cathartic moment for Marib as a city and region navigating a new phase of standing on its own and facing security threats without the backing of the Saudi-led Arab Coalition of Hadi supporters. This had made Marib the center of its fight to push back the Houthi-Saleh forces-Saleh forces towards their stated goal of "restoring the internationally recognized government" # of Yemen under Abed Rabbo Mansour Hadi, now based in Aden and Riyadh. While Marib's future security and the status of hundreds of detainees and prisoners is still not entirely resolved, a tangible step forward in the peace process further underscores the reasons why Marib has become the safe haven of choice for refugees and IDPs.

10 Huda Al-Sarari (h_alsarare), https://twitter.com/h_alsarare/status/1317129298025848833

11 <https://reports.unocha.org/en/country/yemen/>

2 METHODOLOGY

Overview

The methodology for the Marib Profile utilized research and analytic tools in alignment with the UN-Habitat Urban Recovery Framework Common Approach to urban profiling in the Arab States region and the mandate to support partners in implementing the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In particular, SDG 11 targets concerning improving the quality of life in cities and SDG 10 targets for reducing inequalities guided underlying indices of the research.

The research design was informed by the new Common Analysis framework's research questions¹ to support the development of an urban profile that examines: 1) How has conflict affected the city? 2) What relief phase challenges are present and how they will impact the development phase? 3) What strategic areas or projects require attention in the short-medium timespan? The research questions are derived from the core pillars of Housing, Economy, Infrastructure and Services, Governance, Civil Society, Environment, and Cultural Heritage.

Following an initial desk review and assessment of Marib's urban context, the profile adopted methodologies which best met the conditions and characteristics of the city and its current phase of growth. Cultural Heritage --current and historic-- emerged as the most salient local pillar we identified because it is the most unique and priceless quality of the city whose infrastructure and urban sectoral growth has been far outpaced by its rapid population growth. Cultural Heritage (tangible and intangible) therefore guided how we developed a picture of the relationship between the people and place of Marib and which research questions we emphasized to capture core trends in population dynamics, density, conflict dynamics and development

challenges. The profile research was designed to be anchored in ethnographic assessment conducted by a team of local researchers. Access constraints during the period of collection from May to December of 2020) led to modification of the approach for administering the survey of Marib residents (n=1,536). The following briefly describes the methodologies attempted and utilized to develop the Marib city profile in 2020. Further information on any of these methodologies and the data gathering process is available upon request.

The Approach

The research approach was designed around the URF pillars which aim to create a comprehensive snapshot at the city's evolution during the conflict, but with two dominant pre existing limitations that the profiling team had to adapt to: i) the absence of credible baseline information that can create a departure point for tailoring our profiling tool, including due to lack of local capacities, the absence of a geo-spatial information database, and the incomplete data that the humanitarian assessments were able to provide specifically at the city level. ii) we were aware of movement restrictions and the inability of the team to directly access the city and be physically present on the ground, given the military escalation around Marib in early 2020 when the profiling preparations began, which in turn was only exacerbated by the COVID 19 international travel restrictions.

To respond to these two innate limitations, the methodology approach followed an approach summarized herein:

1. Conduct an extensive, thorough and on-going secondary desk review, to capture all the relevant literature on the city and on the broader urban and conflict context, and open-source media materials in English and Arabic. The desk review also included the collation and archiving of all humanitarian information that was made available to

UN-Habitat.

2. Use the findings from the secondary desk review to narrow our research down to fundamental questions that this preliminary urban profile of Marib would need to address and baseline. These questions were:

- i) How will conflict likely affect the city and what are the power dynamics that we need to understand in order to forecast future security trends?
- ii) What is the governance model presiding in Yemen, and in which ways it evolved to create current stability factors, whether through inter-tribal collaboration or in terms of providing improved security situation? What does the semi-autonomous governance model in Marib tell us about the future of Yemen governance post-conflict?
- iii) Why did Marib become an IDP magnet, and which cultural, economic and political roots have featured into its hospitable hosting situation?
- iv) Is the demographic boom likely to reverse post-conflict, or will Marib retain a portion of the IDPs and integrate them in its socio-economic fabric?
- v) What are the key performance indicators to evaluate the living conditions in Marib today, and how to assist in building a better future for Marib using UN best practices and the will of non-humanitarian donors to invest in Marib as a stability asset?

3. Use mixed methods to address these questions along the URF pillars. The methods we used for information gathering were:

- i) Interviews with knowledgeable sources: known as key informants, mainly to understand supply-side dynamics (how well the services are functioning and identify the major gaps and bottlenecks). Using a semi-structured questionnaire with several open-ended and opinion questions, we conducted 32 interviews during the month of August 2020. The interviews mainly focused on public officials (the governorate level was more relevant for

¹ <https://unhabitat.org/urban-profiling-toolbox>

our research objectives), but we also interviewed several tribal and community leaders, intellectuals and social figures. We were able to conclude one interview with an activist in the area of gender equality and GBV.

ii) Collation and gathering of primary documents and evidence pertaining to the local authorities' functional plans and duties. We used this information to create a baseline understanding of the key services (such as schools and hospitals), city growth management (the master plan document and other expansion and ambitious urban infrastructure plans), as well as records of registries and displacement movement.

iii) Conduct an individual 'Urban Scorecard' survey with a representative sample of the current population: to understand demand-driven factors and to poll people's opinions regarding their urban experience. This survey was made possible by the transparent and responsive collaboration of the local authorities, and specifically the Governorate. Marib's government representatives expressed support and interest in polling public opinion despite the sensitive nature of some of our questions. Our sample included 1564 participants, who were personally interviewed by our field research team during the months of September and October. The samples was designed to target the population stratification we have concluded from our secondary desk review, split into four main groups: the muhamasheen (marginalized) and the African migrants, ordinary city residents who were present in the city pre-conflict, IDPs living in regular houses, IDPs living in camps and spontaneous slums (see "FIGURE 5. Respondents scorecard surveys" on page 12).

iv) Tallying survey data to a geo-spatial database, to generate neighbourhood-level functionality maps: as Marib never had official neighbourhood limits, we used spaghetti boundaries to identify approximate urban segments that people identify with. Each "neighbourhood" had a defining landmark like a government institution, a hospital or a

religious center (etc.). The results of the spatial analysis have been presented on page 16..

As UN-Habitat does not have a permanent presence in the city of Marib, the research depended on mobile teams supported and managed by our office in Sana'a. Additional monitoring and backstopping resources were mobilized by ROAS given the challenges that come with remote management. The smaller research unit that was established for this profile included:

1. Researcher on ethnographic and demographic analysis (international, team leader)
2. Researcher on urban dynamics in conflict situations, data analyst (international)
3. Two part-time researchers for literature review and archiving of existing information (international)
4. One GIS support officer
5. One field research team leader (local, investigative journalism background)
6. A team of four field researchers (2 males and 2 females) working under the local research team leader (college students and fresh graduates).

To ensure the quality of the field research component, capacity building and day-to-day monitoring was essential. Two urban research training sessions were conducted through Zoom to prepare the team for the key informant interviews and the individual survey. The team on the ground had access to mobile devices to ensure data entry happens directly (no paper forms were used).

Research Limitations:

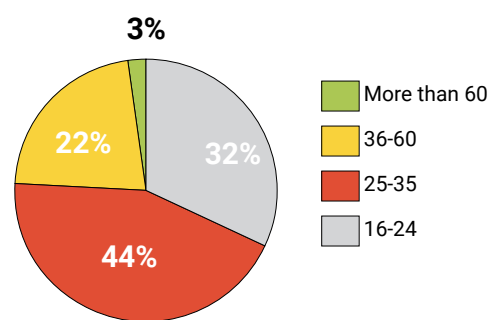
1. Absence of an urban geo-spatial database and the inability to generate one given the access restrictions.
2. Military escalation and two natural disasters that took place during the research period and directly affected the context and introduced sudden spikes.

3. Lack of access to original photographic materials.
4. Poor government data and records.
5. The inability to hold focus group discussions given the relatively short research period.
6. Lack of access to broadband internet connection, which prevented the survey team from providing accurate location information.
7. Key informants we interviewed were all male. Female perspective was only captured in our individual survey, as approximately 50% of our sample was females.

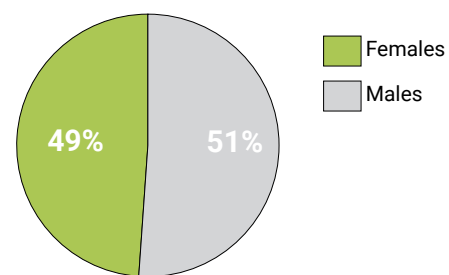
Marib Urban Scorecards - Making a Traditional Survey Instrument more Participatory

The urban scorecard polling was designed to capture residents' perspectives of and satisfaction with the quality, reliability and affordability of urban services. Because the city's post-conflict IDP population boom is at the top of all issues facing Marib, social and cultural dynamics are the anchor for all research and analysis for the urban profile. The scorecard was pursued as a participatory research tool which could potentially create opportunities for Marib residents to voice their own needs, perspectives and ideas for the new city they are co-creating. Also, as a city in which growth and decisionmaking have been generally tacit, informal and driven by relational ties (through tribal mechanisms), we seek to highlight what is working from processes which are less visible or clear than if administrative offices were at full capacity. Marib is succeeding where others have failed in a number of areas: IDP hosting, paying government salaries, new infrastructure development and construction.

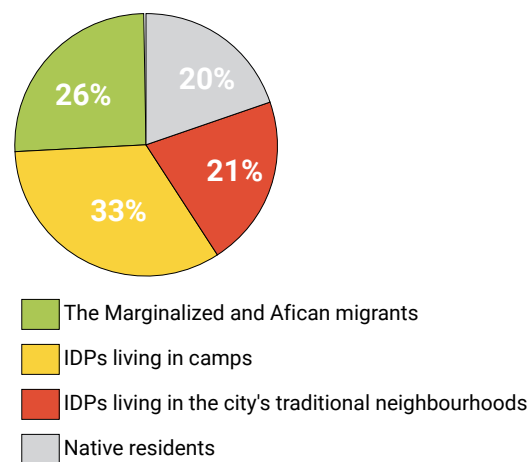
Respondents by age group



Respondents by gender



Respondents per target population group



Displacement status

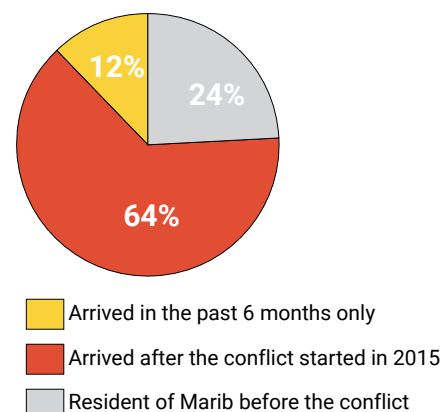


FIGURE 5. Respondents scorecard surveys

FIGURE 6. Key locations in Marib. Image: Google Earth





3 LOCATION AND URBAN INDICATORS

Marib's significance

Marib City is now the hub connecting its five neighboring governorates - all representing Yemen's different socio-political polarities: Sanaa, al Jawf, Shabwa, al-Bayda, and Hadramawt governorates. Marib City is located 173 km northeast of Yemen's capital, Sana'a, and the governorate border just 70 km east of the capital. ¹ The Governorate of Marib has an area of approximately 17,405 km²,² which includes 14 districts (mudiriya). According to the national administrative boundaries established in 2014, the Republic of Yemen is divided into six regions (aqaleem), and Marib Governorate is included in the Saba'a region, with Marib City as a center of the Governorate and the Region. This has elevated the administrative role of Marib, making it a competitor with the capital as a business and financial hub, due to its diverse natural wealth and relative stability. The combination of Marib's oil riches, its role in national electricity generation and distribution network as well as its solid tribal alliances have all contributed to Marib's increased status and influence during the conflict.

Approximately 630,000 residents (nearly half of the population) of Marib Governorate's population live in Marib City. Marib is located on the eastern N5 road which connects the capital with the eastern governorates. The N5 is presently insecure and linking connector roads are only permitted for military purposes, thus forcing travelers to take long detours to reach Sana'a (which requires over a day's

¹ This distance represents the on-road travel distance in normal travel times. Due to road blockages and required detours, specifically in the areas in Joaf past 2016 has nearly doubled the travel distance.

² Yemen National Information Center, "نبذة تعريفية عن محافظة مأرب", accessed on 23 February 2021, <https://yemen-nic.info/gover/mareb/brife/>

journey). As Marib is located between the populated areas to the west of the republic, and the sparsely populated plains and desert regions of the east, the N5 was a substandard national road viewed as low priority because it extended through sparsely populated regions. Now that Marib is critical to other national interests, upgrading roads and highway networks has become a top priority of local and international aid agencies.³

Geography

The Governorate of Marib has an area of approximately 17,405 km²,⁴ which includes 14 districts [mudiriya]. The mild temperature in Sana'a mountains above 2000 meters is a stark contrast to the intense heat and humidity that suffocate the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden coasts to the west and south, respectively. In the middle mountains south of Sana'a, the Haraaz region, and around the cities of Taiz, Ibb, and al-Bayda, one finds the most fertile farmlands in Yemen. The tropical green valleys of this midland region stand in complete contrast to the country's lifeless interior desert, which extends northward into the great al-Rub'e al-Khali (the vast "empty quarter" of Saudi Arabia). Moving east from Sana'a in the highlands, the land descends sharply to a desert floor at approximately one thousand meters above sea level. Yemeni interior desert lies west of the country's center line, so there are hundreds of thousands of kilometers east of Marib, separating today's densely populated highlands and western midland regions from the country's sparsely populated eastern half, further highlighting how Marib's location makes it a natural bridge between Yemen's highly diverse geographies and societies. The national road that connect Sana'a with Marib, and the other road that links Sana'a with Marib

through Sarwah have strategic military significance, as they represent two different approaches to the environs of both cities, giving an advantage to the Houthis especially as both roads descend into Marib.⁵

Historically, Marib's strategic significance has always been tied to its location at the crossroads between the coastal agricultural regions, the vast desert of the Rub al Khali "Empty Quarter", and mountain highland systems to the north (see figure 10). In recent decades, Marib has cemented its position as a pass-through for all traffic, goods, travel between the North and South. Furthermore, its role as a regional hub has been amplified by the efforts of Marib's tribes to serve as negotiators between the political, legal, and trade systems of the North and the South.

Within the context of Yemen's recent conflict, Marib is at the center of the Hadi force's line of defence flanked by Shabweh and Hadramout. These two neighboring governorates are not only rich with oil and gas resources, but also host the oil export ports, creating essential nodes on the national highways that link Yemen with supply lines to Saudi Arabia and Oman.

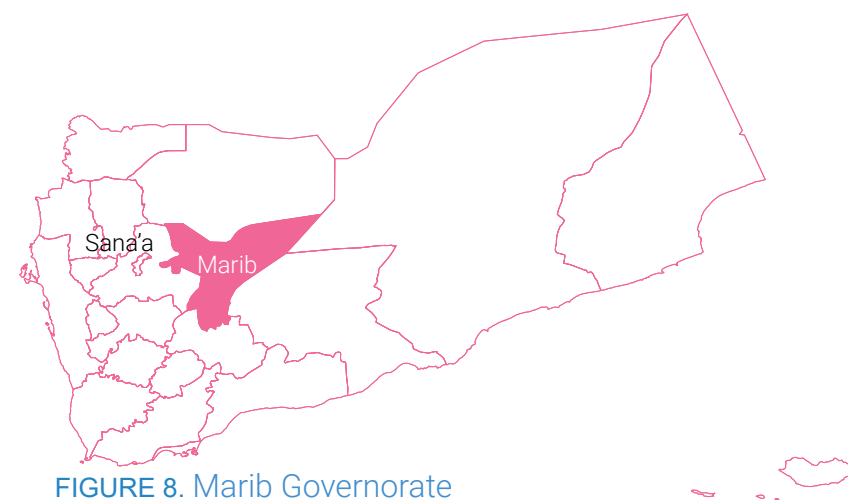


FIGURE 8. Marib Governorate



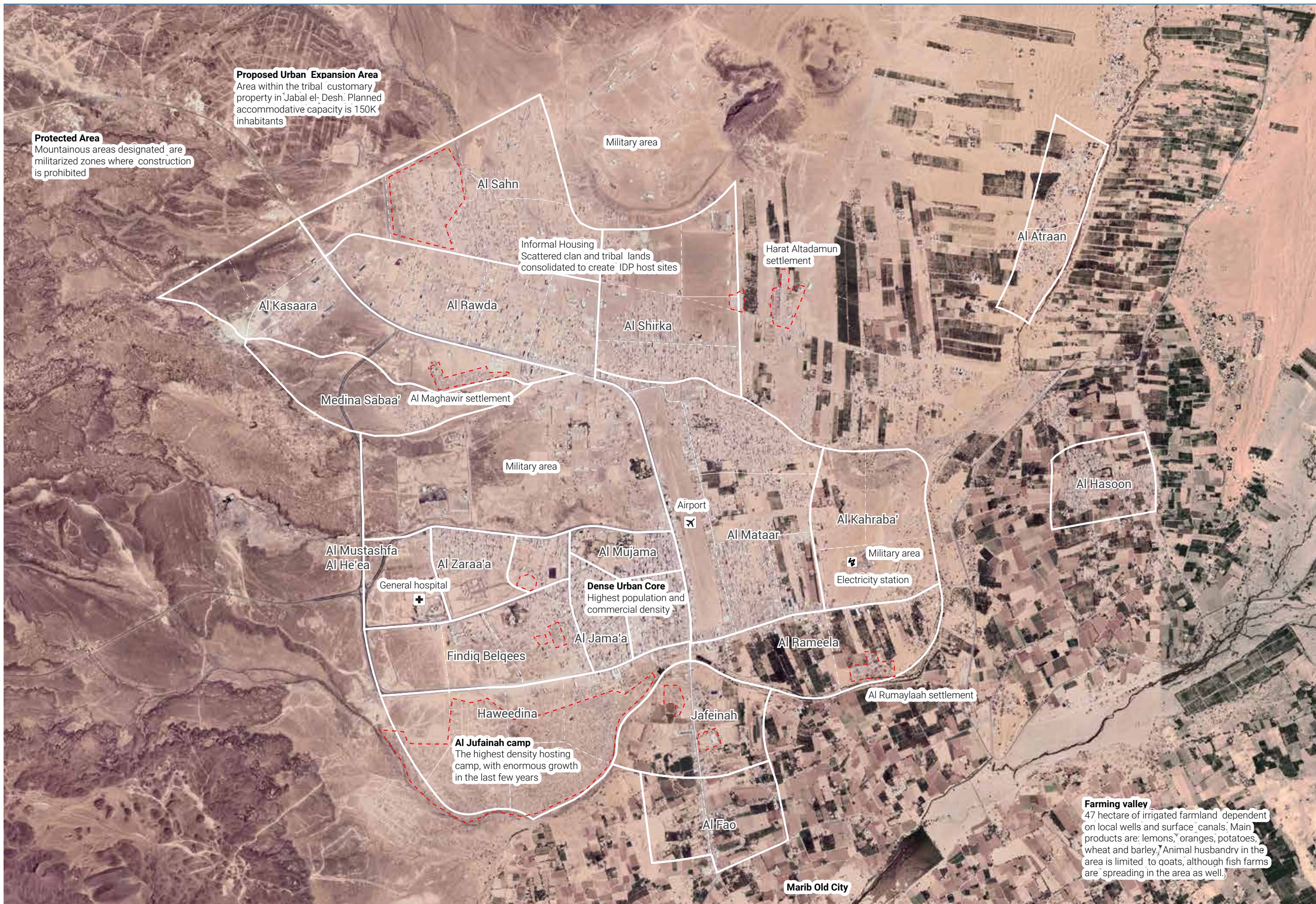
FIGURE 9. Districts in Marib

FIGURE 10. Image on the right: neighborhood names were identified by a representative of the GALSUP. Naming conflicts with other sources may appear in the map. Boundaries are based on masterplan divisions as provided by GALSUP.

³ An example is the Saudi Development and Reconstruction Program for Yemen (SDRPY).

⁴ Yemen, National Information centre. "نبذة تعريفية عن محافظة مأرب",

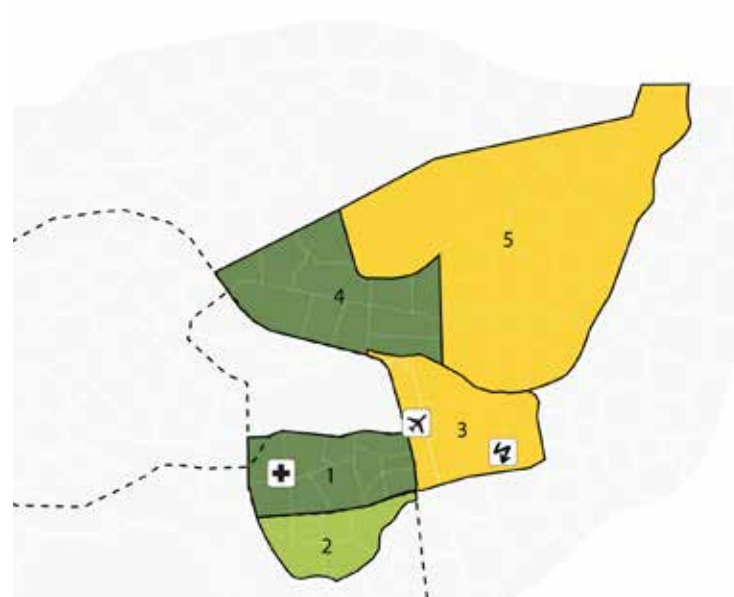
⁵ Perhaps this is what is making the reopening of both roads a recurring Houthi demand in their meetings with the UN Special Envoy, Martin Griffiths.



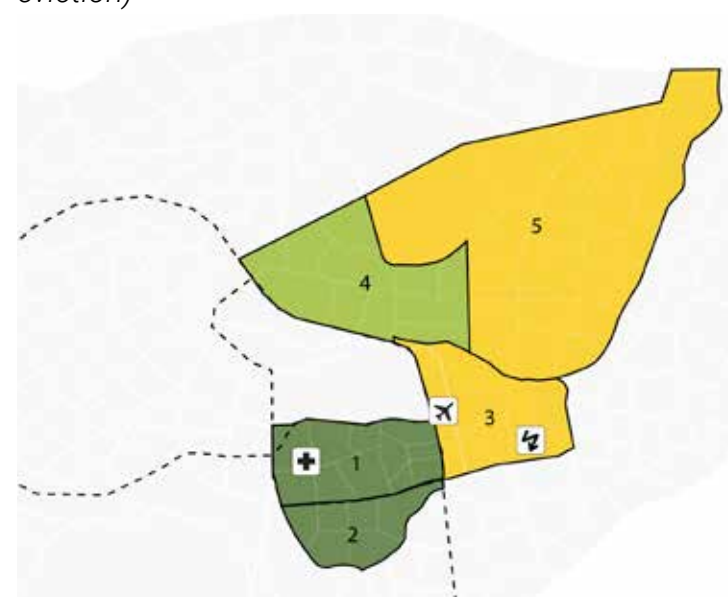
Spatial analysis scorecards

The scorecard data was spatialized to display trends in Marib's growth and how its rapid demographic turnover has impacted its ability to deliver goods and services. By selecting a few key indicators and the neighborhoods best represented by the scorecard survey, the following maps help clarify the often invisible trends of the city's "winners" and "losers" as Marib is marked by both rapid social mobility "gentrification" opportunities for IDPs establishing a local "middle class" along with equally rapid deteriorating conditions of vulnerable populations in need.

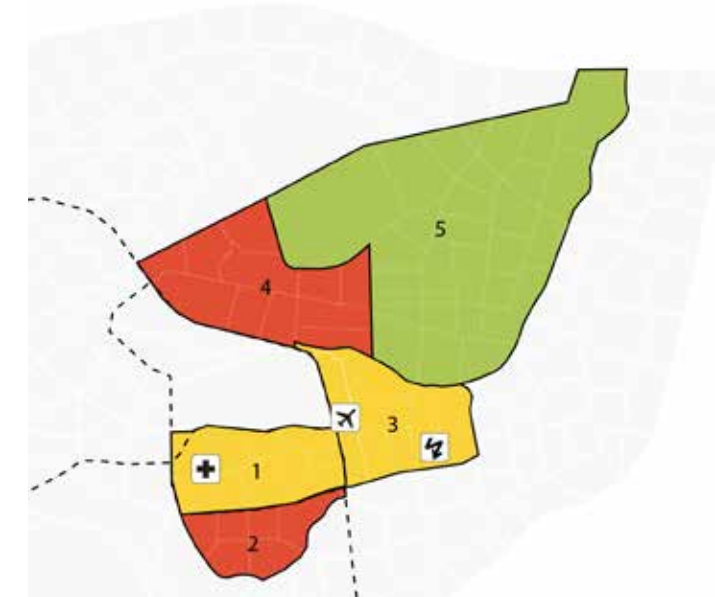
Level of Satisfaction with the Basic Services (mail, Internet, Real Estate Registration, Permits)



Perception of Safety in the Current Residence from all Kinds of Hazards (natural, man-made violence, risk of eviction)



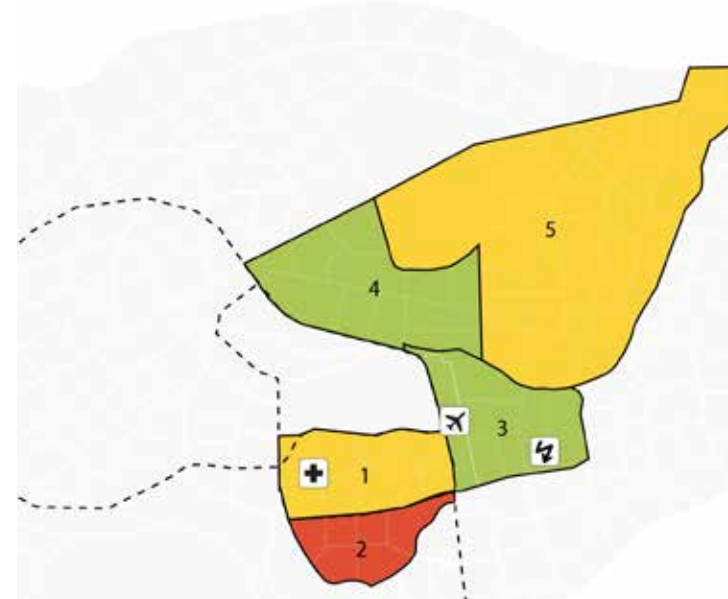
Access to Adequate Income Through Decent Means



Access to Job Opportunities for Women



Perception of Easiness of Starting New Business



Satisfaction with the Number of Electricity Supply Hours



- Electricity station
- Airport
- Main hospital

- 1 Marib city centre
- 2 South new development area
- 3 East Marib
- 4 North Marib
- 5 North-East Marib

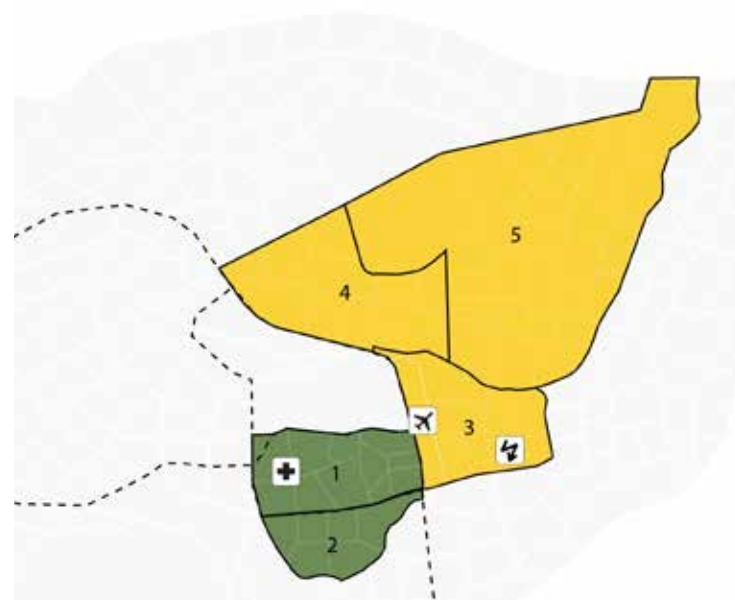
- Agree / Very satisfied
- Somewhat agree / Satisfied
- Somewhat disagree / Somewhat dissatisfied
- Strongly disagree / Strongly dissatisfied
- Masterplan area / No analysis

For example neighborhoods 1 and 2 of Marib's city center and southern new development area rate city services far more favorably than their counterparts in the northern and eastern neighborhoods of the city. This suggests that, even though southern plot of land in Jufeineh is largely a camp/ informal development area, its proximity to the commercial center still confers significant advantages in comparison to more remote areas.

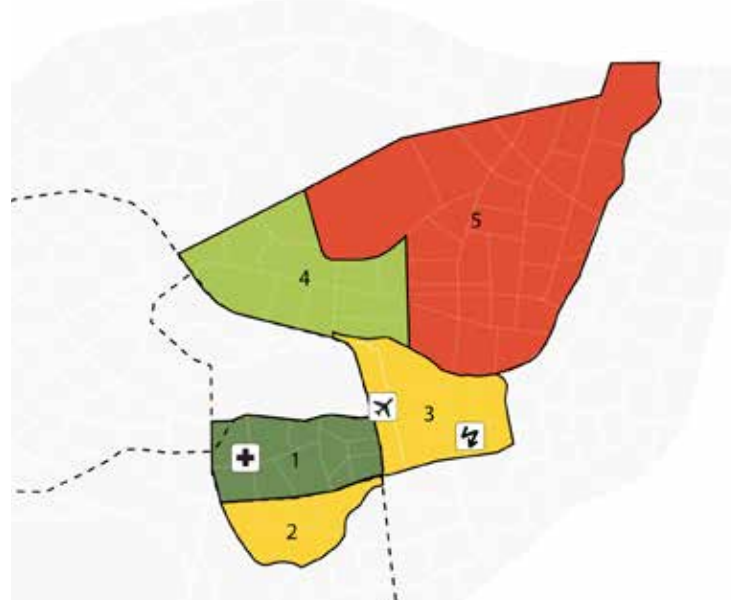
Methodology

Twelve key indicators were selected for the spatial variant analysis for five neighborhoods in which representative samples could be created. Each of these neighborhoods zone had four different classes by indicator. The analysis used standard deviation to qualify the most dominant one of the four classes. This ensured that the results could display one dominant answer, highlighted in a specific color on a map. This offers a baseline for future research into population disparities and trends in access and wealth between cities.

Access to Clean Drinking Water



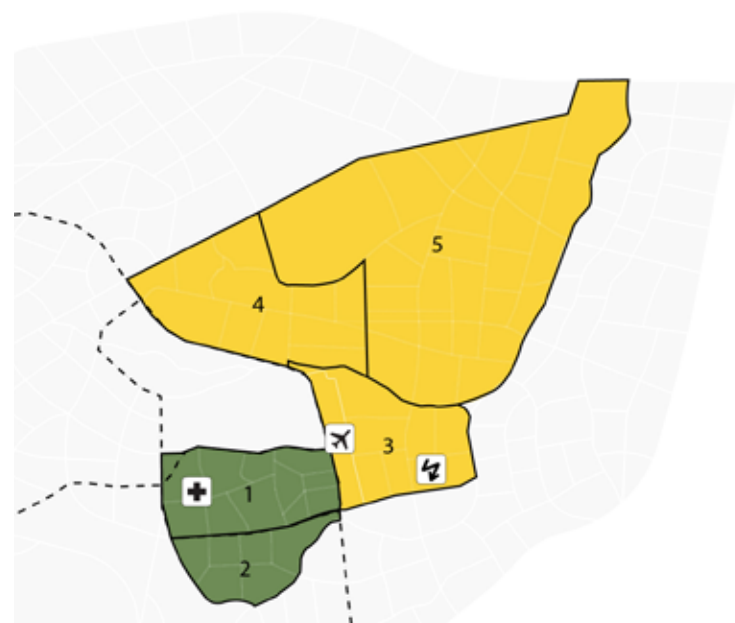
Satisfaction with the Quality of Education Services



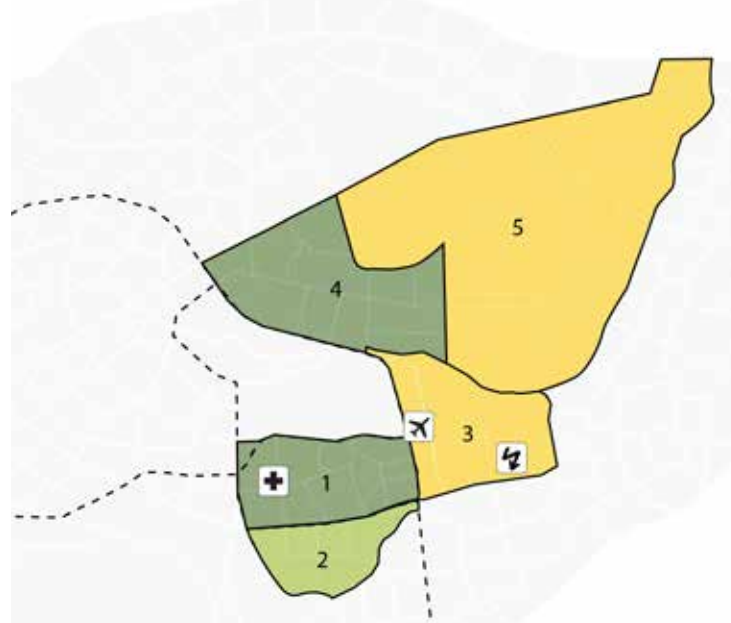
Access to Complaint Mechanisms



Perception of Respect as a Present Resident of Marib Compared to other Places



Perception of Safety and Welcome in Most Places in Marib



Environmental Situation Negatively Impacting the Wellbeing of Residents



4 CONFLICT CONTEXT TIMELINE

Marib has been dramatically transformed - and received many windfalls in terms of economic and population growth as a result of the past five years of conflict. It has become a strategic hub - politically, militarily and economically - and has been able to remain sufficiently independent to permit the IRG Government in exile to relocate most of its administrations to its new headquarters in Marib City. Marib City is able to operate relatively independently of the Houthi government occupying Sana'a, and the Southern Transitional Council (STC) in Aden. Marib's role in recent peace talks surrounding the prisoner exchange deal of October 2020 reveal the important roles that Marib will play in any peaceful settlement in Yemen. However, due to proximity of front lines and poor road quality, it took over 8 hours to reach by road from Sana'a at the time of writing.

Political Significance

Marib today is a key urban and administrative center in the war-torn republic, and it is that socio-economic renaissance that is inspiring the return of Marib to its historic glory as Yemen's capital. At the same time, the growth and rise in prestige makes the city increasingly vulnerable as a contested territory which could tip the balance of the conflict and have a significant effect on the outcome of Yemen's peace talks.¹ When Sana'a fell under the control of the Houthis on September 21, 2014, the Houthi's expanded the reach of their administration into the majority of Yemen's urban centers. Following their constitutional declaration in February of 2015, Marib quickly transformed into a hub for the political and military factions that remained loyal to the internationally-recognized authority. The political significance of Marib increased significantly following the control of the UAE-supported STC of Aden (August, 2019), placing Marib as the de-facto capital of the

"union" as the separatist discourse dominated north and south. Many commissions and administrative bodies that are normally attributed to central state functions also operate in Marib City as a quasi government-in-exile. While Marib benefits from its relative stability and income from natural resources and a growing middle class, the influx of population from other governorates and the movements within Marib since 2015 have also brought significant challenges for local authorities, who struggle to provide sufficient services to the growing population. According to IOM's Displacement Tracking Matrix, of the approximate 750,000 IDPs residing in the governorate, 16% are living in camp-like settlements with little to no humanitarian assistance.²

Military Flashpoints

Nearly 90% of the Governorate of Marib is controlled by the IRG "Legitimacy" Forces, and shares the longest administrative borders with the capital when compared to many other smaller governorates surrounding Sana'a. Along this administrative line, battles relentlessly erupt since the conflict started in 2015, especially in the districts of Nehm [Sana'a Governorate] and Serwah [Marib Governorate]. These two districts can be considered the most approachable entry points to the capital, unlike the territories in al-Jawf Governorate, which were mostly captured by the Houthis since 2014.³

Looking at the location of Marib, we can also include the administrative borders that Marib shares with al-Bayda Governorate as a key entry point that the IRG forces together with the Popular Resistance often use to approach Sana'a, passing through the district of Rudman and through Zamar Governorate. This third approach to Sana'a made these frontlines prone to constant escalation since 2015. The Houthis escalated regionally, by stepping up their drone attacks on strategic locations

inside the Saudi territory, such as the attacks on Bakeek and Kharees oil facilities to the east of the kingdom September 2019, and on another set of oil and military sites in Jazan and Najran. Following these attacks, the Houthis advanced with an initiative to stop hostilities in exchange of suspending Arab Coalition air attacks, and the reopening of Sana'a International Airport to international flights.⁴ The Houthis took advantage of several developments after the secession of the South led by the Southern Transition Council (STC) and their declaration of a self-autonomy in Aden.

Though Marib played a relatively peripheral role prior to the past decade, the historic patterns which have played out on the macro scale of national politics have significant bearing on Marib's political life today. The timeline on the next page contextualizes the recent events in Marib in light of past events of contention.



FIGURE 11. Soldiers on a road in Marib (UN-Habitat)

1 Reuters, "Yemen War Shifts Focus to Marib, Thousands of Displaced at Risk", 5 October 2020, www.reuters.com/article/us-yemen-security-marib-idUSKBN26Q0LC

2 United Nations, International Organization for Migration (IOM), "Marib Mission - March 2019", March 2019, <https://yemen.un.org/sites/default/files/2019-08/PU03.pdf>

3 Yemen, National Information centre, "تبذة تعريفية عن محافظة الجوف", accessed on 23 February 2021, <http://www.yemen-nic.info/gover/aljaoww/brife/>

4 CNN, "الحوثيون يعلنون 'وقف استهداف' الأراضي السعودية ويطلقون 'مبادرة سلام': ننتظر رد التحية", 20 September 2019, <https://arabic.cnn.com/middle-east/article/2019/09/20/yemen-houthis-saudi-arabia-uae-peace>

Conflict Timeline

- » **1962-1970** North Yemen Civil War A coup carried out by Commander Abdullah Al-Sallal in 1962 against the newly crowned Imam Muhammad al-Badr sparked a war in the kingdom that had ruled northern Yemen for decades. Al-Sallal declared Yemen a republic during his presidency, while al-Badr escaped to Saudi Arabia, from which he tried to reinstate his rule. A pattern that would repeat itself again with President Hadi of the IRG fleeing to Saudi Arabia. A Saudi-sponsored agreement determined terms of reconciliation and power-sharing.
- » **1963-1967** Southern War of Independence In the south, an armed struggle began against the British occupation in 1963. The conflict ended with an agreement calling for South Yemen's independence in November 1967.
- » **1972** North-South Yemen War Tension between the two neighbors led to a brief border conflict, but Arab mediation ended the war before either side was able to claim victory.
- » **1978** Ali Abdullah Saleh elected president, the beginning of what will be a three-decade long rule; Yemeni Socialist Party rule begins in South Yemen
- » **1979** Yemeni War Another conflict between north and south Yemen erupted seven years later, but this time southern troops managed to make major advances into the north. An Arab initiative also ended this war and brought the two sides to the negotiating table, which resulted in the withdrawal of southern forces.
- » **1986** Marib became a major oil producer with daily production around 80,000 barrels (Hunt Oil company of Texas)
- » **May 1990** The Republic of Yemen was founded as the first democratic country on the Arabian peninsula It was made up of two former states: the Arab Republic of Yemen to the north and the Democratic People's Republic of Yemen to the south. (Yemen's unification through a political deal reached between the presidents of the north and south. The deal was rushed because Yemen was facing an existential economic crisis as a result of the collapse and loss of its Soviet patrons. Saudi Arabia was against the unification, seeing it as too hastily negotiated and not backed by sufficient social ties. Both presidents also saw it as an opportunity to counter internal opposition.¹
- » **1994** Yemeni Civil War Difference quickly emerged between the north and south. Then-President Ali Abdullah Saleh and Vice-President Ali Salim al-Beidh, the last president of the former South Yemen, who accused Saleh of monopolizing power and marginalizing southerners in former Democratic People's Republic of Yemen southern areas as though they were being mistreated as they were not represented well in the upper echelons of the government or the military.²
- » **2004-2010** Six wars of Saada Between 2004 and 2010, six conflicts erupted between government troops and Shiite Houthi militants, who grew stronger in the northern province of Sadaa despite the death of group leader Hussein al-Houthi in the first conflict. Saleh, backed by several southern figures (including current President Abd Rabbu Mansour Hadi) managed to crush the southern forces and send al-Beidh and his entourage into exile. The deal was rejected by Houthis (emerged as an opposition political-military force in 2004 out of Zaidi Shi'a Muslim branch in northern Yemen, on the basis of concerns of economic discrimination and spread of Sunni ideology.
- » **2011** Arab Spring and anti-Saleh uprising (February); Saleh steps down and transferred power to his vice president Abd-Rabu Mansour Hadi (beginning of plan to divide Yemen into six regions under a new federal structure)
- » **Fall 2014** Governor Arada emerges as leader in Marib (Fall 2014)
- » Fearing that Marib would become the next domino to fall to the Houthis, Marib's governor mobilized powerful local and international tribal elites, including senior members of Saleh's party³. Houthi forces began battle with the internationally
- » **March 2015** Saudi-led coalition including the Gulf Cooperation states, Egypt and Sudan, with backing from the United States and the United Kingdom, launched military operations, promising swift defeat of the opposition but the conflict continues despite local and international outcry over indiscriminate air attacks and civilian casualties.⁴
- » **Early 2015** shortly before the Houthis pushed out President Hadi, Marib local political and security leaders convened an emergency meeting to discuss the future of the Governorate and their strategy.
- » **2018** Marib's Master Plan is ratified Marib's governor along with prime minister Mr. AbdulMalik officially ratified the master plan of Marib into a legal document the master plan covered a sprawling area of 20,750 hectares and was intended to address urban growth for the next 30 years (General Administration for Land, Survey and Urban Planning - GALSUP).
- » **2019** United Arab Emirates withdrew funding and KSA withdrew troops after having provided military aid to ROYG (Republic of Yemen Government) forces since 2014
- » **2019** The Houthis successfully implemented a sweeping offensive "Victory from God." They were mostly targeting irregular forces operating under the command of joint coalition (GCC-supported) fighters who they deemed as illegitimate because they were not part of the legitimate military forces or the Ministry of Defense.⁵
- » **January- August 2020** Houthis took advantage of the undeclared de-escalation with Saudi Arabia, and the reduced tensions along the borders, to focus their offensive on Nahem and Sarwah fronts, aiming to expand into Marib and Jawwf and eventually to control both governorates.
- » In parallel with intensified fighting, the Houthis renewed negotiation initiatives channeled through the UN Special Envoy to gain diplomatic ground as well as military.⁶
- » Conflict around Marib between the Houthis and local tribes supported by the internationally recognised Government of Yemen (IRG) and the Saudi-led coalition has increased since early 2020. Fighting intensified in August and September with the Houthis advancing in southern Marib governorate through Mahliyah and Al Rahbah districts. At the end of October, fighting was concentrated around Al Rahbah, Jabal Murad, and Al Joubah. From January to October, fighting displaced over 98,000 people into the governorate with 70% of IDPs located in Marib city and Marib Al Wadi.

¹ Europa Publications Limited, "Yemen", in The Middle East and North Africa, 41st edn. (London: Europa Publications Limited, 1995), p. 991.

² Owen Barron. "Things Fall Apart: Violence and Poverty in Yemen", Harvard International Review, vol. 30, No. 2 (2008), pp. 12-13. www.jstor.org/stable/42763186

³ Baron, The Marib Paradox, p. 8.

⁴ 90-97% of Yemen's fuel needs come from imports, and fuel is needed to both pump and transport water. Fuel prices had after only a few weeks of blockade doubled, and have continued to rise ever since. Food prices also increased dramatically, and for water delivered by truck, the price had increased by as much as 600% as a result of the rise in fuel prices. 60% of the population relied on agriculture as the main source of income. The price increase of fuel has put 85% of farmers in situations without capabilities to operate properly. See, "Missiles and Food: Yemen's Man-Made Food Security Crisis", n.d., accessed March 2, 2021, <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/bn-missiles-food-security-yemen-201217-en.pdf>.

⁵ BBC News, "28 الحوثيون يعرضون مقاطع مصورة لعملية استهدفت قوات سعودية في محور نجران", September 2019, www.bbc.com/arabic/middleeast-49865329

⁶ "Briefing Security Council on Yemen, Special Envoy Calls Upon ...", n.d., accessed March 2, 2021, <https://www.un.org/press/en/2020/sc14162.doc.html>.

Marib's descent from Safehaven to Epicenter of the War Sources of Conflict and Possible Consequences of the Current Escalation in Marib

In the few short months since Marib's residents poured into the streets in October 2020 to celebrate the prisoner release as a milestone in the peace process, Marib was besieged by the Houthi movement (Ansar Allah). The most recent escalations to gain control of Marib broke out on February 4. Since January, the Houthis renewed their intermittent offensive on Marib, abandoning the pretense of upholding commitments within the negotiated political settlement process in pursuit of an all-out military endgame strategy. Houthi actions signal a determination to secure a decisive victory, by capturing Marib as the government's final stronghold in the north.

The following summary is based on local media reports with some verification of local sources: after a month of the most deadly fighting seen in years, both sides have incurred significant casualties: hundreds of fighters have been killed as well as scores of senior command and control officers. The Houthis claimed some territorial gains against the government's defensive outposts, capturing Nofal Military Base to the east of Sirwah front, less than 20 km to the west of Marib city. The campaign then attempted to approach the city from Balak Mountain which overlooks Marib Dam, to secure a geographic advantage and to threaten vital water resources. This attack failed as a result of fierce resistance by the tribal factions of the Popular Resistance who were both assisted with numerous sorties by the Arab Coalition air forces. Now, local media and informant allege that there has been the indiscriminate firing of dozens of missiles on military and civilian targets inside Marib, including attacks on IDP camps. These missile strikes left dozens of civilians dead, and have reportedly led to the displacement of nearly 14 thousand people. KSA announced a ceasefire initiative in partnership with the UN Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen that included an invitation to a political dialogue to end the entire conflict, signaling some willingness to address several immediate humanitarian issues that the Houthis were demanding. The initiative

was met with a skeptical response, claiming that it brings nothing new to the table and circumvents the Houthis minimum requirements and prerequisites for a sustainable ceasefire.

The battle to control Marib is far from being over, even if a swift victory by the Houthis was largely halted. The diplomatic effort led by the UN Special Envoy is attempting to reach a containment strategy by addressing the key underlying factors that made Marib a priority target for the Houthis in the first place. The scope for diplomatic efforts is much broader than the limited frontline along Sirwah Mountains, and includes all the regional actors involved in this military standoff. Should Marib change hands and fall under Houthi control, the Yemen war would enter a new phase, and perhaps decisively turn the tide. Here is what is at stake for Marib:

1. Thwarting the Arab Coalition supplies

embargo: although the primary objective of the military siege around Marib is territorial gain, the immediate objective of the Houthi's assault, is to counter months of restriction of access to supplies coming from Iran to the North. For several months, the access of oil supplies coming through the Strait of Hormuz and Hodeida Port was stalled. No-fly-zone restrictions were also imposed, forbidding international flights from reaching Sana'a International Airport, and offering the possibility to allow international travel only under strict monitoring guidelines and from a certain set of destinations. This semi-siege situation has been suffocating the North and causing serious humanitarian consequences felt by the population under the Houthi control as supplies became in serious shortage in the market. A successful attack on Marib would mean that the governorate's possession of energy and water resources vital to the majority of the population of the Republic would fall under Houthi control, which in turn will improve the resilience and self-sustaining capacity of the group. Houthi control of Marib's natural resources and agriculture would make the

North less reliant on the external supplies and far more impervious to pro-government/Arab Coalition siege tactics.

2. Debilitating energy supply interruptions:

In the event that Houthi encroachments threaten the power station at Safer and Marib's strategic oil supply, the defensive battles and the fierce tribal resistance will likely leave these strategic sources of supplies nonfunctional. Moreover, even the supplies through the pipelines coming from Shabwa and Hadramout Governorates will be interrupted, and will struggle to access the consumers now that they have been deprived from refining and electricity thermal generation services located in eastern Marib. Such an outcome will completely change the humanitarian landscape, and will have severe consequences felt by every household in Yemen, including the North. This will in turn give the Houthis greater latitude in negotiating the lifting of siege over the ports on the west coast, and provide them with a source of liquidity in available cash reserves when the exchange of crude oil with consumption areas elsewhere can be restored.

3. Humanitarian

Crisis of a mass second displacement wave: The hosting situation in Marib is characterized by the fact that the majority of the IDP population in Marib has nowhere else to go. Although internal displacements have been ongoing throughout the Yemen conflict, large-scale displacement has not occurred since 2017 when the two dominant conflict parties consolidated the primary zones of control. Of the more than one million IDPs hosted in Marib governorate, almost all originated from Houthi controlled areas, and serious protection concerns will likely instigate a mass displacement and evacuation process from Marib further into the eastern provinces. The humanitarian implications will be enormous, and exacerbated by the UN's limited response capacity in the southeast. The UN only

recently established a humanitarian hub in Marib (mid-March) after years of lobbying, but the UN and the entire humanitarian response network are not prepared to deal with the shockwave of a displacement deep into the less-accessible eastern region of the Republic. Houthi battles in the South in al-Bayda have effectively cut off the access of future IDPs to leave to the areas under the Southern Transitional Council. Unless humanitarian corridors are quickly negotiated to ensure that vulnerable IDPs can access STC areas if the siege on Marib continues, displacement threatens to take place to areas under control of extremist groups. This push of civilians into less secure areas controlled will usher in a new logistical and humanitarian challenge on a scale beyond what the international community has faced in Yemen.

These combined factors highlight the high stakes of the immediate battle to control Marib, but the long term consequences and implications of the macro dimensions of the Marib conflict will have dire consequences for the republic.

a) Losing Marib as a political asset and model: the federal constitution of Yemen that was agreed upon in Riyadh in 2015 still represents Yemen's best hope for conflict transformation and future stability, allowing access to national wealth and economic opportunities to expand beyond the limits of the centralized state that the civil war produced in the 90s. Marib emerged as a significant center during the war, accepting the task of hosting some of the most essential functions of Hadi's government (including the Ministry of Defense), while distinguishing itself politically under Islah Party's local administration and the convention between the confederation of tribes. Maintaining Marib as a potentially successful economic pole and magnet for population relocation would mean that north/south checks-and-balances dynamic will be broken for the first time in the last century, promoting a multi-polar

governance model and diverse political inclinations to mutually coexist. Marib's successful tribe/state formula will also be undermined, further emphasizing the conflict narrative between the north and the south.

b) Disrupting the delicate tribal balance: Marib has been developing a balance of powers between the tribes to use their influence in positive ways such as gas, oil and food supply. Marib's loss would mean the loss of this crucial model for Yemen. The Abidah tribal confederation in Marib has been playing an essential stabilization role under dire conflict dynamics. They are a tribe of negotiators, preferring to avoid direct military confrontation inside the Popular Resistance, in order to focus on protecting the oil and energy interests for the entire Republic. In a division of labor within the tribal confederation, the Abidah focus on trade and lucrative business development while other tribes inside the alliance provide fighters and shoulder the security and defense responsibilities, which are subsidized by Abidah funds. The approach has afforded the Abidah tribe a level of neutrality which enables it to play the role of goodwill mediator on necessary supply deals directly with the Houthis, and to ensure that even oil-rich areas under al-Qaeda control in Shabwa and Hadramout would still have trade relations across the conflict zones. This trade model has allowed the tribes to present themselves as a credible caretaker of natural resources coming from their customarily-owned territories, something that the pre-conflict centralized authorities didn't thought was possible in the first place.

5 CIVIL SOCIETY & POPULATION DYNAMICS

Civil Society and Population Dynamics

i) Pre-conflict: sparse population

The modern historic record has little information on Marib until 1947 when a population estimate listed the number of inhabitants as 800,¹ living in approximately 100 houses (yielding an inhabitant to house ratio of 8 people).²

Marib had gained international attention for its historic sites, and was referred to by archeologists as a 'piggy-back tell'³ (mound) village of Old Marib Village; it was one of the rare examples of a contemporary settlement being located atop the ancient ruins from the pre-Islamic settlement.⁴ However, the first archaeological expedition to Awwam Temple and the throne of Queen Bilqis (Mahram Bilqis)⁵ was cut short due to the archaeologists' kidnapping by local tribesmen.⁶ Tell sites of pre-Islamic (Jahiliyya) ruins such as Marib's were generally avoided with the rise of political Islamism in the 1960s,⁷ but the main cause of Marib being abandoned was the outbreak of Yemen's Civil War in 1962 between the Royalist Mutawakkilite (Zaidi) Kingdom and supporters of the Yemen Arab Republic (allied with Nasser's Egyptian forces).

Another factor for Marib's sparse urban population prior to the dramatic change arising from the current conflict was that Marib was an agrarian economy. Tribal families preferred to either remain on their estates or move instead to the urban hub of Sana'a. Researchers noted only 15 families were living

there in 1981.⁸ In 1985 when oil was discovered in Marib, it was just a "dust-blown town of cinder block houses" that emerged next to the old Marib village.⁹ After the discovery of oil, the village's population increased to around 1,900 inhabitants, and the population may have also increased due to returnees coming home following the civil war of the 60s. In the mid-1990s the Saleh government backed the US-led counterterrorism operations against Salafi-jihadi extremists, leading to a backlash among the tribes, protesting civilian casualties and damages. As one mother in Marib recounted, "Every time the village children hear a drone, they run home from school...yelling "the Americans are coming to kill us!" Then, the village's inhabitants will get in their cars and evacuate into the desert."¹⁰ The fear and damages from the CT campaign created a security vacuum which further hampered Marib's growth.

ii) Population changes during the current war and current estimates

As of 2004, the census count for Marib Governorate was 238,522. By the year 2014 the total population was estimated to be around 360,000,¹¹ representing an average annual cumulative growth of 2.8%. Marib City itself had a marginal population of 16,794 residents. By the time Marib's current civil war broke out, Marib had shifted from a frontline for counterterrorism to being a safe haven for populations fleeing military operations west of Marib. As previously described,

” The (population) numbers do not account for several transient populations who fall outside of official counts such as African migrants, military forces, and undocumented laborers.

– Interview with local officials in August 2020

Marib's location off the main western roads connecting the conflict areas, protected by mountains and sparsely populated desert, give it a unique geographical attraction for a safe haven for IDPs, and others avoiding the conflict to the west. The current conflict led to the dramatic demographic transformation of Marib governorate, and its capital's emergence as a full-fledged city. The current conflict led to the dramatic demographic transformation of Marib governorate, and its capital's emergence as a full-fledged city. As of 2019,¹² Marib City's estimated population was approximately 630,000 inhabitants, of which 577,000 (or 91%) are IDPs.

1 Ahmed Fakhry and Gonzague Ryckmans, *An Archaeological Journey to Yemen: March-May, 1947* (Cairo: Service des Antiquités de l'Égypte, 1952).

2 The ratio of the original town of Marib before it was destroyed and abandoned during in the 1962 civil war, was 286 persons per hectare, with a density of 302 per hectare. See, Gus W. Van Beek, "A Population Estimate for Marib: A Contemporary Tell Village in North Yemen", *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research*, No. 248 (Autumn 1982), pp. 61–67. www.jstor.org/stable/1356674

3 Tell (or tel), "Arabic for "hill" or "small elevation", in Middle Eastern archaeology, a raised mound marking the site of an ancient city." "Tell", in *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, last revised 12 November 2004, www.britannica.com/science/tell-mound

4 For more on this topic, see R. Michael Feener, "Muslim Cultures and Pre-Islamic Pasts: Changing Perceptions of 'Heritage'", in *The Making of Islamic Heritage. Heritage Studies in the Muslim World*, Trinidad Rico, ed. (Singapore: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), pp. 23–45. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-10-4071-9_3

5 "The focus of this expedition was the Awwam Temple (Mahram Bilqis), the largest of its kind on the Arabian Peninsula. According to legend, Marib was the capital of the Sabaean kingdom, ruled by the biblical Queen of Sheba. Sabaean inscriptions refer to it as the Temple of Almaqah, the moon god who was the principal deity at Marib." National Museum of Asian Art, "Excavations: Awam Temple", accessed 23 February 2021, <https://asia.si.edu/exhibition/awam-temple/>

6 Max Kutner, "Unearthing America's Lawrence of Arabia, Wendell Phillips", 20 October 2014, www.smithsonianmag.com/smithsonian-institution/unearthing-americas-lawrence-arabia-wendell-phillips-180953059/

7 For more on this topic, see Feener, "Muslim Cultures and Pre-Islamic Pasts".

8 Rosalind Wade quoted in *ibid.*

9 Adam Baron, "The Marib Shaibani", 11 June 2020, <https://adambaron.com/2020/06/11/the-marib-shaibani/>

10 Camilla Molyneux, "Made in Marib: A Local Response to Instability and Violence", Oxford Research Group, 19 October 2020, www.oxfordresearchgroup.org.uk/made-in-marib-a-local-response-to-instability-and-violence

11 Ba-Haj (Ishar Muhammad), "The Demographic Developments in Yemen between 1900 and 2000, and the Forecasts for 2024", University of Koufa.

12 ACAPS, "Marib Governorate - Marib City and Marib Al Wadi District Profile", 19 November 2020, https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/20201119_acaps_yemen_marib_district_profile.pdf

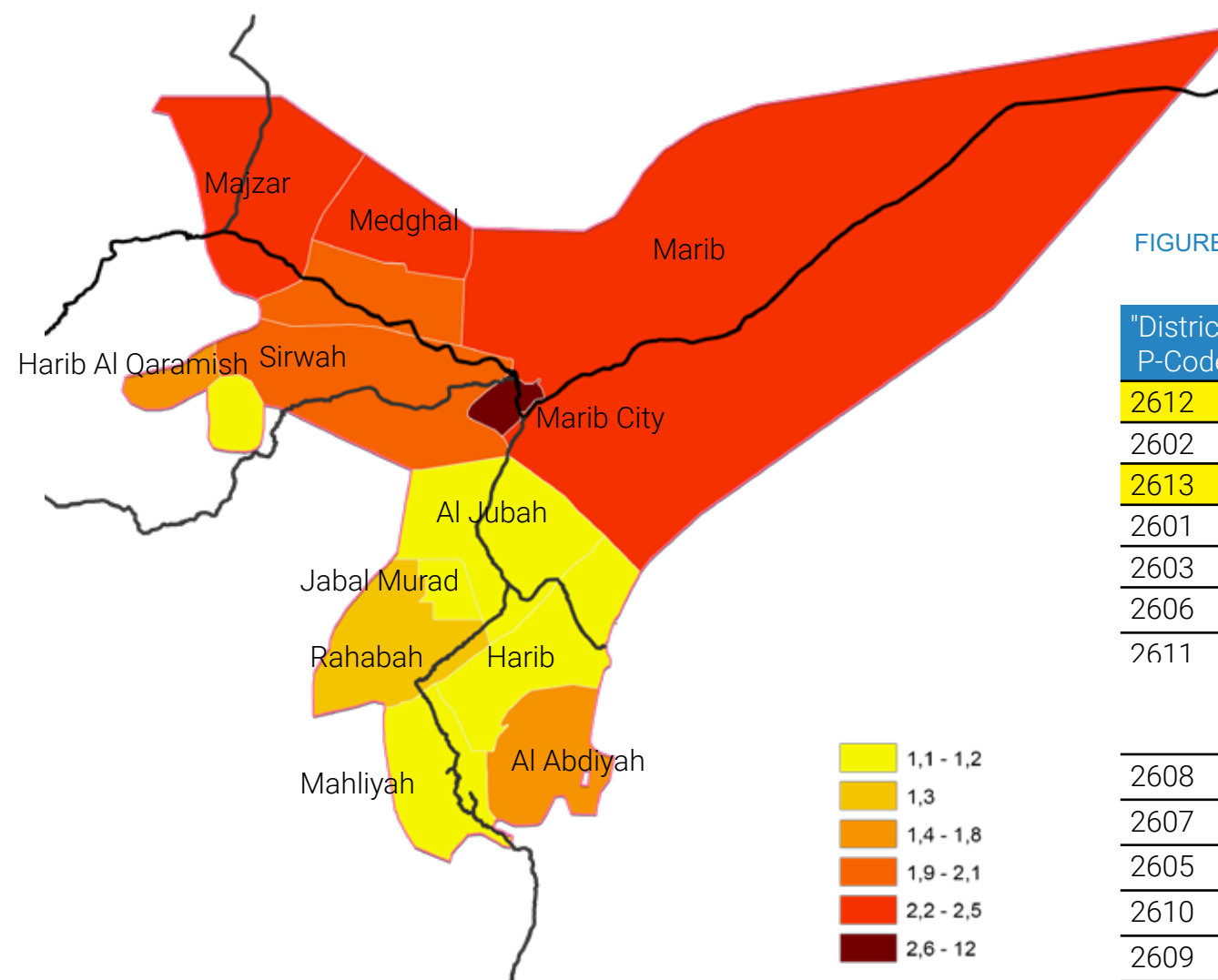


FIGURE 14. Multiplication of the population in sub-districts, calculated as the new population / old population.

Key Indicators	Marib City	Governorate
Estimated pre-crisis population (2014)	40,000	360,000
Current international community estimate (2019)	630,000	1.5 million
Official Government estimate (2020)	1.5 million	3 million

FIGURE 12. Comparison of key current indicators

Governorates of origin	Number	%
Sana'a	125,232	16%
Al Hudaydah	103,398	13%
Raymah	102,936	13%
Amanat Al Asimah	91,476	12%
Hajjah	65,328	8%
Marib	56,322	7%
Taizz	55,710	7%
Ibb	51,396	7%
Dhamar	40,794	5%
Amran	37,170	5%
Sum	770,028	

FIGURE 13. Governorates of origin (2019)

"District P-Code"	District Name	Population estimation 2017 (OCHA)	IDPS 2019 (IOM)	Total population	Multiplication
2612	Marib City	52,664	577,854	630,518	12.0
2602	Raghwan	5,819	8,484	14,303	2.5
2613	Marib	55,029	71,742	126,771	2.3
2601	Majzar	14,456	18,540	32,996	2.3
2603	Medghal	14,575	16,188	30,763	2.1
2606	Sirwah	26,782	29,154	55,936	2.1
2611	Al Abdiyah	18,017	14,826	32,843	1.8
	Harib Al Qaramish	11,237	6,858	18,095	1.6
2608	Rahabah	10,388	2,646	13,034	1.3
2607	Al Jubah	29,217	6,900	36,117	1.2
2605	Bidbadah	24,959	5,154	30,113	1.2
2610	Mahliyah	12,768	2,442	15,210	1.2
2609	Harib	46,721	7,386	54,107	1.2
2614	Jabal Murad	14,226	1,854	16,080	1.1
	Total	311,342	736,815	1,106,887	3.4

FIGURE 15. Population estimations of districts in Marib, taking into consideration 2017 population estimations and IDPs in 2019 (IOM DTM 2019)

Marib City's Growth Rate as Outlier

Marib City now comprises half of the governorate's 1.4 million inhabitants. These numbers indicate that Marib city alone has taken in nearly 82% of all the IDPs hosted in the entire Governorate. Other sub-districts in the Governorate also witnessed a significant increase, but the governorate's average 3.4-fold population increase of (i.e. above natural growth baseline estimates) is dwarfed when compared with the 12-fold increase of Marib City.

Challenges in Tracking Marib's Transient Populations

Population estimates in Marib are primarily based on displacement tracking from various UN and relief agencies¹³ but are contested by the governorate and local authorities. These estimates, based on displacement data from various UN Agencies, were challenged by the Governorate and the local authorities in the city. According to a local official interviewed by the profiling team mid-August, these numbers do not take into account several factors and transient populations who fall outside of tracking entities, notably migrants and irregular security forces. Additionally, Marib has seen an increase in return migration from Saudi Arabia of Yemenis working there. Lastly, the unpredictable presence of African migrants, which experienced an uptick as Marib became a passageway and a temporary station for thousands coming from Somalia¹⁴, Ethiopia, Mali and Djibouti¹⁵ further contributes to the erratic population picture.

Non-resident Security Forces

A key informant in Marib suggested that the city is a waystation for fighters and soldiers transiting to the frontlines, who are rarely considered as population or captured in population tracking. According to this source, some 20,000 fighters are considered permanent residents of Marib,¹⁶ and they consume and benefit from the city's utilities and services without contributing to the local tax revenue. This information and the final breakdown of formal/irregular security forces present in Marib was not verified by the security actors interviewed from the Ministry of Security in Marib City.

Challenging Population Estimates

The governorate's population estimates for Marib fluctuate widely and a lack of reliable data means assessments involve a significant margin of error. This unreliability of population data needs to be understood within Marib's context as a highly constrained data collection environment, with limited means for researchers to access and verify key data points. The Governorate's office responsible for statistics reported that an estimated three million individuals presently live in Marib,¹⁷ of which 2.5 million are IDPs.

As Marib has rapidly taken on the greatest hosting burden of any city in Yemen, skyrocketing population estimates must be approached with a degree of caution. There is no doubt that such speculative population projections are common in conflict-affected cities in the Middle East, as local authorities and service providers are incentivized to inflate their resident population numbers for intra-national negotiations and capital allocations. Another factor at play in inflation of Marib's population numbers is related to the demographic change aspects that are featured into Marib's displacement, which has given more political latitude to the Governorate that now "represents" a broader constituency-- at least on paper. These combined factors all contribute to Marib's population uptick narrative. For the purposes of this urban profile, several of these estimates are analyzed, and take away points proposed. The implications and considerations proposed are intended to support local planning development actors responsible for next steps in Marib, humanitarian actors responsible for relief planning, as well as Yemen researchers focused on post-conflict development and how the urban growth phenomena

¹³ Integrated Food Security Phase Classification, "Yemen", 20 December 2018, http://www.ipcinfo.org/fileadmin/user_upload/ipcinfo/docs/IPC_Yemen_AcuteFI_2018Dec2019Jan.pdf

¹⁴ The first major wave of migrants from the Horn of Africa came in the 1990s as a result of deteriorating security in Somalia and the civil war. According to Marina de Regt's (2010) research, Yemen's demographics (and subsequent muwalladeen population of mixed-descent children produced mostly by marriages between Yemeni men and Ethiopian women hundreds of thousands of refugees crossed the Gulf of Aden by boat but Yemen had the most permissive migration laws so more African migrants settled there. de Regt, "Ways to come, ways to leave: Gender, mobility, and il/legality among Ethiopian domestic workers in Yemen", *Gender & Society*, vol. 24, No. 2 (2010), pp. 237–260.

¹⁵ Marib's proximity to the border between Yemen and Saudi Arabia places it which has historically been identified by human trafficking researchers as "a transit node in a wider clandestine and criminal circuit." Run by large criminal syndicates on both sides of the border, "child trafficking has been found to mainly affect two distinct groups: Yemeni male and female minors from rural backgrounds and asylum-seeking minors from the Horn of Africa." Hélène Thiollot and Helen Lackner, "From Migration Hub to Asylum Crisis: The Changing Dynamics of Contemporary Migration in Yemen" in *Why Yemen Matters: A Society in Transition*, Helen Lackner, ed. (London: SOAS Middle East Issues, 2014), p. 278

¹⁶ UN Habitat Profiling Team Interview, June 2020.

¹⁷ UN Habitat Profiling Team Interview, August 2020.

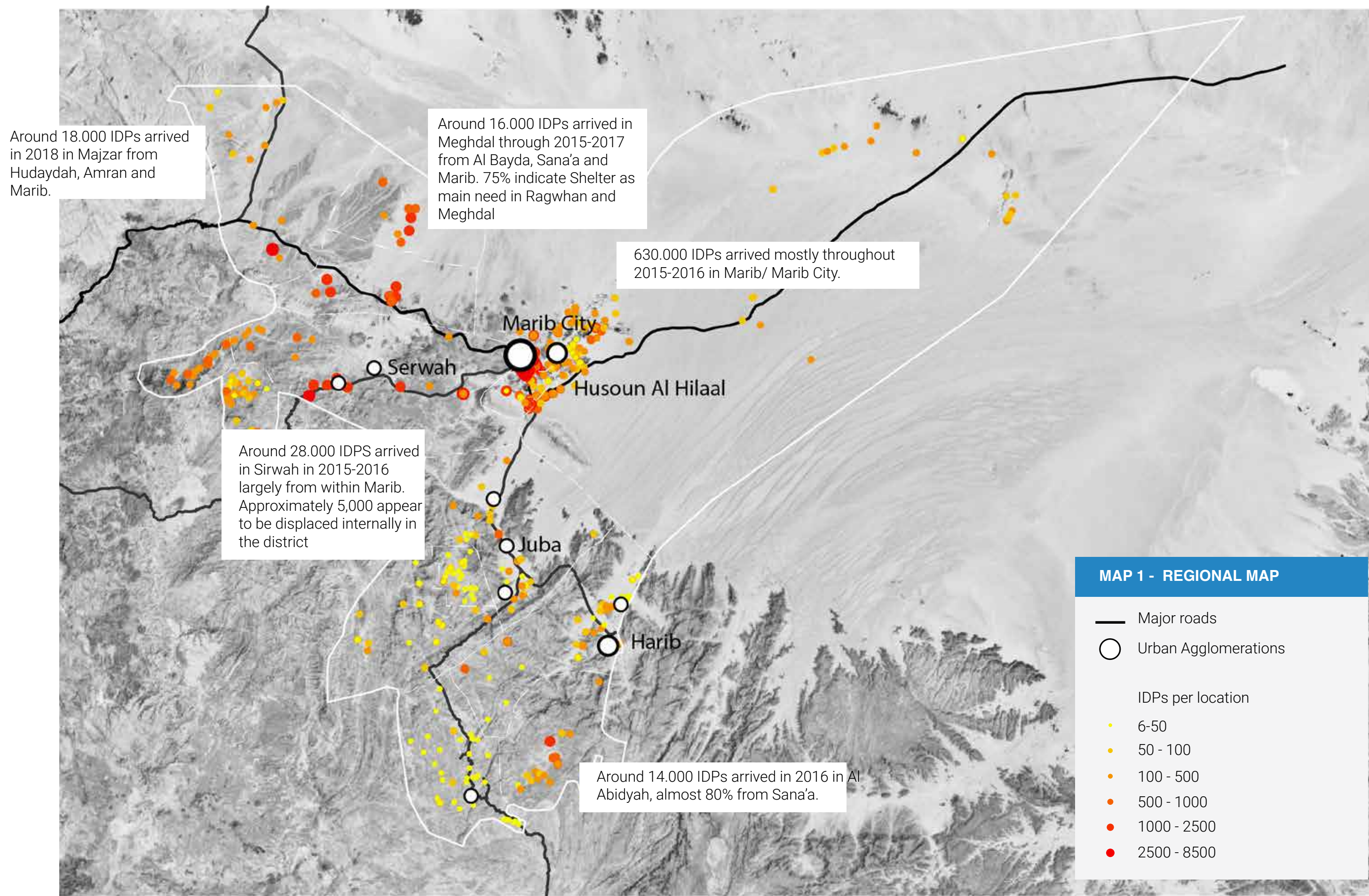


FIGURE 16. IDPs in Marib Governorate. Data based on IOM DTM 2019.

in Marib can serve as a case study of how the war will permanently alter both the physical space and political economy of Yemen.

In 2017 UNOCHA estimated the population of Marib Governorate based on natural growth projections to be 336,859, and Marib City to be 52,500. These estimates did not take into account the displacement factor, but were proposed as a “working number” for baseline residents. The Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) suggested in 2018-19 that 1.4 million inhabitants live in the Governorate. IPC data also suggests that most of the IDPs in Marib came from Sana’a (amanat al-asima) and from the other northern governorates, accounting for the additional ~1.1 million inhabitants. IPC says very little about the methodology used to make this estimate, but they cited that the “population estimates are based on official figures provided by the Central Statistical Organization based on a projection for 2019”, and added that “the accuracy of the estimation of population in need of urgent action in 2020 might be affected by these estimates.”¹⁸

As previously noted, the last national census in Yemen from 2004 listed the population of Marib governorate at about 240K inhabitants, of which 44K were reportedly living in Marib City, the second largest city in the Governorate of Marib at the time. The city-specific number from the statistics bureau was essentially a breakdown of the governorate figure by the sub-districts (mudeereiat), and thus at least part of this city population was conflated with the population in its rural countryside. This fact might have inflated the baseline estimate by at least 20%, but not more, as the vast area of Marib subdistrict is essentially a sparsely populated desert that extends to the east to merge with Hadramout, Yemen’s largest and least populated

Governorate of Yemen.

Lack of a Property Database

The Office of Cadastral Records stated that Marib doesn’t maintain an active database of properties, estate transactions/sales or lease registry,¹⁹ let alone an account of the largely random urban growth that underpins the present hosting situation. The lack of a baseline of formally recorded properties combined with a restrictive security environment for conducting informal housing services makes quantifying the haphazard and largely informal urban growth underpinning the present hosting situation a significant challenge.

Settlement Trends among Transient Groups

IDPs

This estimate is further verified through IOM’s DTM, which estimated in March 2019 that 770,000 IDPs were hosted in Marib Governorate. Added to the baseline estimates, the combined number of IDPs and full time residents using DTM data comprised a total of 1.1 million inhabitants, which is still 300K short of IPC estimate. A review of DTM’s progressive displacement tracking data suggests highly volatile displacement patterns within Marib itself, both as a result of movement within the governorate as the battle over Marib rages, and as a result of the recent flooding. According to the most recent DTM August update, some 9,404 families were displaced from Marib as a result of the flooding (some 65,000 people), but the update does not refer to the destination, and most probably those who lost their temporary shelters in camps created on steep mountainous areas around Marib city are still within the governorate, but are hard to track to decide their current situation. Such fluctuation in the displacement tracking is further exacerbated by a lack of information on return

patterns and incidents, which casts doubt on the reliability of population estimates.

IDPs by Origin

According to DTM database, 62% of the IDPs hosted in Marib come from just five governorates: Sana’a, Al-Hudaydah, Raymah, Amanat Al Asimah and Hajjah, which are all northern Governorates largely under the control of the Houthi militias. The fact that Marib received 21% of all Yemen IDPs raises the question of why was Marib specifically attractive to IDPs. While still a relatively smaller city, Marib City received many more IDPs when compared to the larger centers such as Adas, Ibb, Shabwa and al-Mukallah. The other dimension is that the increased population numbers help justify Marib’s higher share of the governorate’s oil revenue.

Marib’s ‘Social Infrastructure’

As rapidly as Marib’s population is growing it is also diversifying. Assessing the impact of social hierarchy and equity in Marib requires adopting a local frame of reference regarding how locals understand civil society and to what extent is civil society synonymous with tribalism, are they two parallel forces in society, or mutually antagonistic. Tribalism has been historically undermined by the modern state but attempts to replace tribal institutions with a rigid notion of the social contract failed in both north and south Yemen.

Tribes and the State Context for Civil Society in Yemen

Marib’s rapid demographic shifts have an inevitable bearing on the nature of the social contract in Marib. Marib’s government has the revenue to function, pay salaries,²⁰ and administer services when much of the country is unable to address protection needs in the context of the conflict

¹⁸ Integrated Food Security Phase Classification, “Yemen”, 20 December 2018, http://www.ipcinfo.org/fileadmin/user_upload/ipcinfo/docs/IPC_Yemen_AcuteFI_2018Dec2019Jan.pdf

¹⁹ UN Habitat Profiling Team Interview, August 2020.

²⁰ UNOCHA, “Yemen: 2019 Humanitarian Needs Overview”, December 2018, https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/2019_Yemen_HNO_FINAL.pdf

” When I first arrived in this town, although we can't call it a town anymore, I did not feel safe, which paralyzed me and my family for a while. Now, my daughter is in college, engaged to her colleague who is from al-Hudaydah, and I have started the same business I used to have in Sana'a. Alhamdulillah, this is my city and the city of my Children.

- Business owner who arrived from Sana'a in 2017

and political instability, currency crisis, and displacement. Therefore, Marib's leaders are in the unique position of having choices but also managing new volatilities of unpredictable currents within the quality of social relations at a horizontal level (between citizens) and vertically regarding the relationships between and amongst citizens with one another.

The North Yemen Civil War between royalists of the Mutawakkilite Kingdom of North Yemen supported by Saudi Arabia, but the major outcome was that the previous separation between the state and tribal institutions no longer existed as such. In fact, the state became virtually an embodiment of the tribes. During the civil war, some tribes aligned with the royalists against the republicans while others joined the other side. Members of the Bakil tribal confederation (Al-Jawf and Dahm) had initially rebelled against the Zaidiyya Imam Yahya in the tribal revolts of 1959 while the Madhaj confederation tribes (such as the Al-

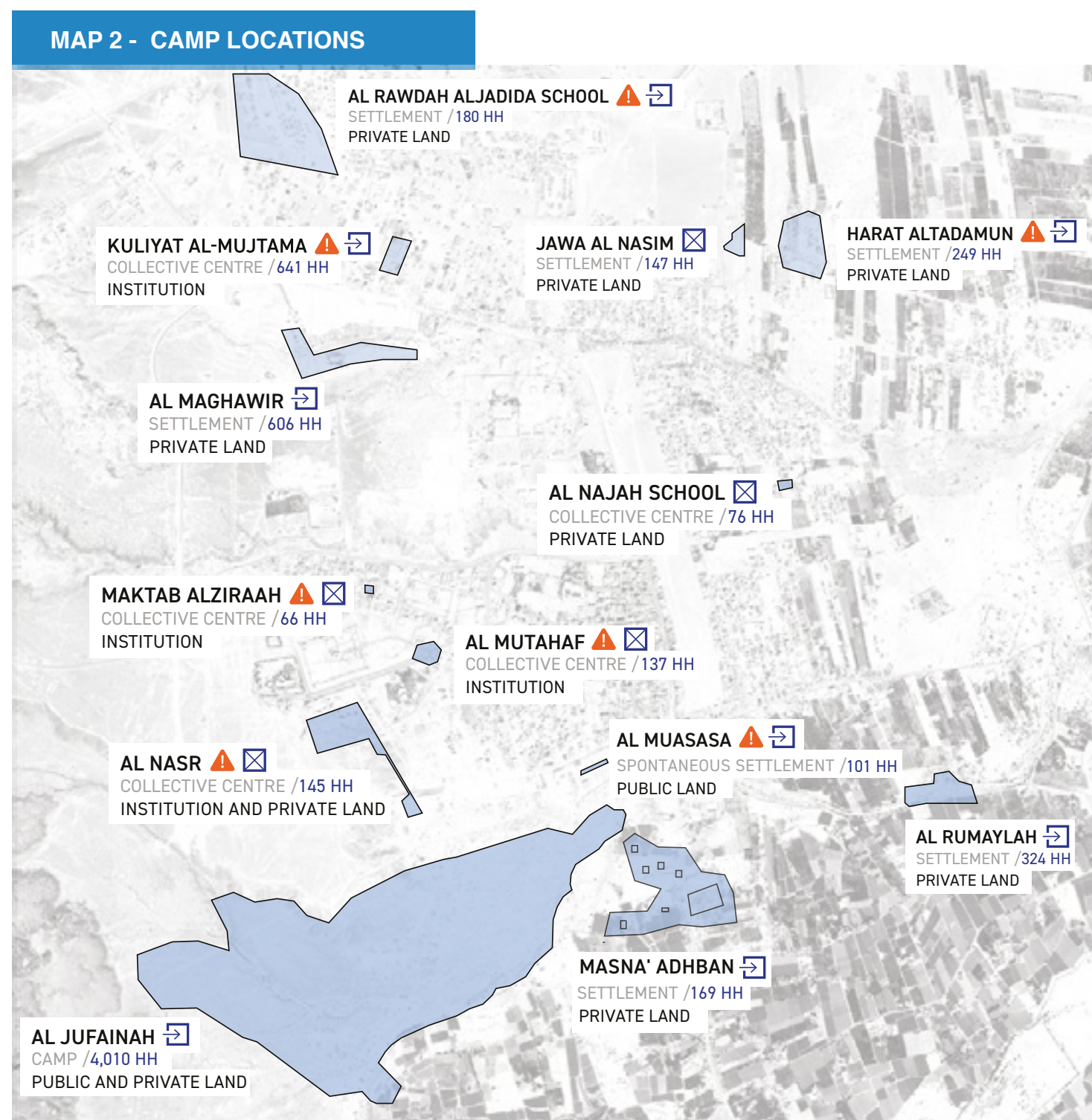


FIGURE 17. Camps in Marib (IOM 2019) https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/en_iom_yemen_marib_city_displacement_site_overview_aug_to_oct_2019.pdf

Bayda) remained loyal to the monarchy and its allies in Riyadh.²¹ The animus tribes had felt against Imam Yahya dissipated after his death and the Ashraf tribes rallied behind his son, the new Imam Muhammad (“Sayf al-Islam”) al-Badr, at the same time that war was seen primarily as a financial opportunity for the primary actors. As one sheik said of their realpolitik alliances and incentives, “The Imams have ruled us for a thousand years. Some were good and some were bad. We killed the bad ones sooner or later, and we prospered under the good ones.”

The tribal influence remains ubiquitous but there is still a question of whether a tribal is an entity or an adjective for certain types of behavior. As such, there is a lack of consensus among academics and local leaders in Yemen as to the role of tribes and their relationship to the state ranges widely between two extremes: some see tribes as entities which, by definition, oppose and compete with the state, while others see tribalism as a mechanism for supporting or complementing the state, as an intermediary institution between the state and village-level communities.

Tribal leaders and confederations have been on all sides of the struggle between decentralization (bottom-up, “periphery”) and centralization (top-down, “core”) forces in Yemen. While the dance between central authority and decentralized tribal rule has always shifted based on its context and key drivers, Marib and the eastern region of Yemen is unique because it rarely experienced the effects of strong central government rule.

Marib’s new Urbanite IDP Middle Class

In Marib’s IDP communities there is ample evidence of how people are spontaneously creating social solidarity networks in these contexts of state absence out of necessity, a natural adaptation to circumstances. While Marib’s success in establishing a nascent social contract for iets people in the midst of Yemen’s civil war is framed as bringing order into the chaos of a lawless, conflict-impacted society, Marib is populated by people from all corners of Yemen now, and the model represents something more significant as a hybrid experiment between tribal revival, local government, and the state. Some tribal leaders have noted that in Marib, this hybrid form of customary and formal governance is its winning formula. Much of Marib’s development has been determined by the lack of presence of the central state and being shielded from the political culture and the military figures (ghalaba) in politics, though Marib still suffered at the hands of unaccountable state violence in the form of drone campaigns and often being neglected from nationalized social services, as detailed elsewhere in the profile.

In Marib following the reforms opened up by the 2011 youth-led protests of the Arab Spring, a number of civil society groups emerged and continued to organize in Marib. To highlight examples of civil society merging with tribes, the Sheba Movement (al-Harak al-Saba’ie) emerged to address community issues and combined tribal gatherings with street protests to protest Saleh but continued to organize other events for Maribi local youth involving young leaders from Marib’s main tribes demanding a share of oil and gas revenues for local development projects. In the fall of 2020, the longtime

efforts of the Association of Abductees’ Mothers and other human rights activists were rewarded with the largest prisoner exchange in over five years of conflict between the Houthis and IRG forces.

Marib’s exceptionalism has often been reduced to some version of oil, decentralization and displacement. In order to go beyond what a local analyst in Marib has called the “monochromatic”²² narratives of the city’s rise, this profile emphasises the socio-cultural dimensions of tribes and cultural heritage as they influence urban sectors, and thereby explores the way that linkages between people and the built environment of Marib have taken shape. This social “landscape lens”²³ of geographical and archaeological perspectives can help reveal the “social determinants of state structures.”²⁴ to explain how the land and access to natural resources created a core DNA defining the patterns in relationships between individuals, communities and the state. Most importantly, this approach can offer a helpful lens for understanding the contradictions within Marib and what aspects of the Marib Model could inspire organisation in the rest of the country, and which are unique to its socio-political ecology. Marib is a compelling case for the assertion that tribal social structure can offer solutions as much as it presents problems for the state in Yemen.

Social Vulnerability and Protection—Marib’s Role as a ‘Sanctuary City’

Uniting against a Common Enemy

Marib’s community mobilization against Houthi military incursions in 2015 appears to have deepened the resolve

21 Fouad Mused, “Six decades of instability in Yemen—politics (sic) conflict and proxy war”, May 2020, <https://abaadstudies.org/news-59840.html>

22 Al Sakani and Coombs, “Marib”.

23 Applying the research’ methodolog of examining “linkages between people and the environment in landscapes... can help (utilize) knowledge about past and current landscape patterns, process and dynamics guidance for developing visions to support the sustainable stewardship of social-ecological systems under future conditions.” Tobias Plieninger and others, “Exploring Ecosystem-Change and Society Through a Landscape Lens: Recent Progress in European Landscape Research”, *Ecology and Society*, vol. 20, No. 2 (2015), pp. 1–5. <https://doi.org/10.5751/ES-07443-200205>

24 Catherine Boone, *Property and political order in Africa: Land rights and the structure of politics*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014).

of its leadership to coalesce to form a unified front to keep Marib strong and protected. Political unity was established between rival parties and factions within the local authority, political parties and tribes against a common enemy.²⁵ Marib's governor is credited with leading a concerted effort to focus on governance and civil society following Marib's liberation. The governorate committed to focusing on restoring stability,²⁶ strengthening relations with the central government and also designing the foundation of a social welfare program (supported by Marib's natural resource wealth) which established the unique form of social contract still prevalent in Marib today.

Complexities and Contradictions of Social Infrastructure and Marib's Tribes

Marib's social programs and efforts that make up the sum of its complex civil society picture can only be understood through the lens of its tribes to the extent that they represent the embodiment of community power structures most influential in shaping Marib's social values, norms, and priorities. Identifying how Marib's most vulnerable groups are faring reveals a range of contextual factors that indicate Marib is a place which offers certain classically vulnerable groups such as IDPs, women and, to a certain extent, Marib's Muhamasheen unique opportunities and liberties compared to other areas in Yemen while, at the same time, containing all of the challenges of representation and inequality characteristic of hierarchical orders of haves and have-nots reinforced by Yemen's tribalism. While this profile examines the influence of tribalism from multiple dimensions, with respect to Marib's civil society, tribes are viewed as the core DNA of Marib's 'Social Infrastructure'²⁷



FIGURE 18. Women wearing abayas working in a fruit processing plant in Marib, 2020.

²⁵ According to Al Sakani and Coombs, In January of 2015, Marib's two rival political parties

(Islah and GPC) having fled to Marib from Houthi controlled areas, many as members of the armed resistance and national army, issued a joint declaration of their support for Marib's tribes in repelling the Houthi offensive and resolve to prevent Houthis from taking over the governorate (Al Sakani and Coombs, "Marib"). Recently, there are increasing reports of the breakdown between Saudi Arabia and the Islah Party, with the Saudi Council of Senior Scholars listing the Muslim Brotherhood as a terrorist group in November of 2020, along with other rifts that have hindered the anti-Houthi coalition. Karim Al-Yemani, "A Widening Schism between Saudi Arabia and the Islah Party Prolongs Yemen's War," Washington Institute Fikra Forum, December 18, 2020, www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/widening-schism-between-saudi-arabia-and-islah-party-prolongs-yemens-war.

²⁶ Baron, Adam, "The Marib Paradox" European Council on Foreign Relations, June 2018, https://www.ecfr.eu/publications/summary/the_marib_paradox_how_one_province_succeeds_in_the_midst_of_yemens_war

²⁷ Social infrastructure is defined in contrast to "hard infrastructure" as the "soft services which encompasses services that support the social environment, to include schools, health centres, leisure and recreation facilities, libraries, community centres, religious facilities, local shops, open spaces, transport and utility services and emergency services which promote new and existing residents by bringing them together and reinforcing a sense of community, as defined by Brown and Barber (2012) and Williams and Pocock (2010). Julie Brown and Austin Barber. "Social infrastructure and sustainable urban communities." *Proceedings of the Institution of Civil Engineers-Engineering Sustainability*, vol. 165. No. 1 (2012), pp. 99–110; Philippa Williams and Barbara Pocock, "Building 'Community' for Different Stages of Life: Physical and Social Infrastructure in Master Planned Communities", *Community, Work & Family*, vol. 13, No. 1 (2010), pp. 71–87, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13668800902903300>.

(Civil Society, Education, Governance) and intangible category (social cohesion, trust, mutual respect, sense of belonging, safety).

Though Marib is just 173 km northeast of Yemen's capital, Sana'a, its political and social realities seem to be a world away. Much of its distinct social and urban trends are attributed to Marib's population has a strong tribal identity which has filled the vacuum of the absent state and helped shelter Marib from corrosive central state politics.²⁸ As a whole, the tribal influence is a mix of progressive and conservative tendencies which has a historic precedent for generations in which tribes of the north and east exert a more laissez-faire, light touch governance approach to social but emphasized social influence instead. The tribes of Marib were described as "indirectly regulating social behavior"²⁹ in lieu of establishing sophisticated institutions with a modernizing agenda. Tribes are credited with backing and facilitating various social policies--being supportive of reforms which benefit vulnerable groups and working with the government to enable space for civil society groups to emerge. Research in other regions of Yemen has shown that development programs are often in competition with local hierarchies and social norms. (See Cultural Heritage section on Asabiyya and Social Cohesion).

IPDs in Tented Settlement

The wave of displacement in Marib started in 2014, but expanded rapidly following a joint declaration made by tribal leaders in 2016 permitting the opening of more lands for settlements.³⁰ There are now 28 IDP sites in Marib City and a total of 38 sites in Marib Al Wadi surrounding region. The governorate does not officially permit IDPs to build permanent stone or concrete structures but IDPs in Yemen tend to relocate to areas near communities where they have established tribal ties and some degree of social affinity or trust, which seems to influence choices in shelter arrangements.³¹ This pattern can be seen in the way that Marib's tribes have helped IDPs by sharing their unused (less valuable land) to support temporary settlements and shelters and other resources needed. IDPs who came from outside the governorate are reportedly viewed by host communities as competitors for jobs, housing, education and health facilities³² though our survey revealed that this may be shifting to a less contentious relationship. There is a strong social media advocacy base of support for IDPs, as represented by the hashtag created by activists in Marib to raise awareness for IDPs in Marib as it fell under increasing Houthi attacks last spring. To convey and the criticality of maintaining Marib as the last safe haven for those who have experienced multiple displacements there was an extensive campaign for #Yemen_IDP_Lives Matter.³³

” There were no places for women to gather comfortably, no places belonging to the female community: where the team from administration to the youngest employee is female. Traditional, conservative attitudes held by many locally against women working outside the home mean this project is new and strange for some people...the word 'cafe' can be associated with negative ideas and convictions ... every new idea will have its supporters and opponents,”

- Um feras, founder of the morning icon cafe

2. Women And Shifting Gender Norms In The Conflict

On the one hand, women in Marib are bound by stricter gender norms typically associated with conservatism which is more prevalent in rural areas of Yemen.³⁴ This meant that women were subject to early marriage (considered a problem "among IDPs") and were considered unable to protect themselves against harassment in public due to

28 The tribes in Marib still maintain their old patriarchal system of earned leadership and respect of kinship-based hierarchical authority. Years of neglect in their areas left them with limited economic options, and successive governments dealt with them as a pariah and land of lawlessness. Employing the "weapons of the weak" of protest, road closures, kidnappings and sabotage (as with Safer pipelines and siding with AQ elements in the 1990s could be seen as primitive behavior justifying its stigmatization but logically, when Marib's tribes received almost none of the revenue from its oil and gas wealth from Sanaa prior to 2011, and had limited access to political means of recourse. When presented with new policies and incentives, Marib's tribal system snapped into quite a different mode taking on a huge volume of IDPs, and making halting steps toward gender equity.

29 UN Habitat Profiling Team Interview, June 2020

30 UN Habitat Profiling Team Interview, June 2020

31 Sana'a Center and Oxford Research Group, "Local Visions for Peace in Marib", 1 August 2019, <https://sanaacenter.org/publications/mainpublications/7903>

32 Sana'a Center, January 2019, quoted in ACAPS, "Marib Governorate".

33 Mareb Press, "5 حملة الكترونية للضغط على الأمم المتحدة والمنظمات الدولية لإيقاف الهجوم على مأرب على غرار ما حدث في الحديدة وتساؤلات عن سر الصمت الدولي", September 2020, https://marebpress.org/news_details.php?sid=166962

34 Nathalie Peutz, Islands of Heritage: Conservation and Transformation in Yemen. Yemen (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2018).

traditional “seclusion” roles enforced in society. But, on the other hand, women are more involved in public institutions and more involved in the workforce. As noted in focus groups conducted³⁵, women were generally positive about new economic roles and opportunities, and more women are going to university than before.

The greatest source of tension residents mentioned was increased tension between husbands and wives due to women becoming breadwinners in Marib, there is a high proportion of female-headed households among the displaced.³⁶ Women are more included in public roles but still generally excluded from decision making or positions of authority. The flip side of that was that women were becoming increasingly important in conflict resolution at various levels of society. Participants in the discussions also discussed increased incidents of gender-based violence, early marriage and women’s mobility being restricted by heightened insecurity. Many women have taken on new roles and responsibilities, primarily due to the injury or the absence of men. And while these changes for some women have been empowering, for others they are an additional burden.³⁷ Women and children make up three-quarters of the displaced. And one-fifth of households of IDPs and host communities are headed by girls younger than 18 years of age.³⁸

Elderly and People with Disabilities

A breakdown of the number of elderly residents of Marib is not known at this time. However, Recent research has demonstrated that the elderly remain uniquely vulnerable and challenging for services to access. The mental health and psycho-social well-being of the elderly has notably deteriorated with ongoing conflict.³⁹ Advocacy groups have identified approximately 1.65 million older people in Yemen as being in need of humanitarian assistance. Of these, 50% are older women and over 60% of the older men surveyed are unable to access healthcare. The situation is further worsened by more than 95% not having access to healthcare, struggling to access information sources.

Data on the number of people living with a disability is not available. There are currently no disability-focused response initiatives in Marib. Some people with disabilities reportedly must rent apartments in Marib city because the displacement sites are dangerous are “unsuitable for them.”⁴⁰

The Muhamasheen are most visibly marginalized of all of Marib’s social groups are the Muhamasheen. These Yemenis of mixed African and Arab origin are distinguished by their relatively darker skin color and shared heritage which dates back to the (Ethiopian) Aksum Kingdom (around 550AD). The Muhamasheen are “virtually segregated” throughout Yemen and the subject of systemic discrimination, though Marib’s

Marib Outreach to Local Muhamasheen

Marib was included in ethnographic research (2015-2017) of Muhamasheen communities which identified the same trends in discrimination (noted to be worst in Marib in the areas of education, housing,) seen on a national level. Marib’s strong tribal identity may help somewhat mitigate the discrimination. According to tribal urf policies, it is an obligation to protect weaker and more vulnerable people from violence. There are numerous inherent contradictions as tribal leadership are also obligated to ensure the needs of their members are met first.

Most recently, Marib’s governor launched a project to house over 100 Muhamasheen families in Al-Jufaynah camp. Some houses have already been completed and families have begun to move into the new houses and received food and financial assistance, while construction of other units is ongoing. The project includes the provision of water tanks, power supply and sanitation for the housing complex.

The Governor said these housing units provided by the local authority Marib’s framework to address the welfare needs of the most vulnerable for citizens, and to provide the necessary living conditions to facilitate their social integration into society.¹

35 Heinze and Stevens conducted interviews and discussion sessions in Marib, Taizz and Lahj. . Marie-Christine Heinze and Sophie Stevens, Women as Peacebuilders in Yemen (Sana’a: Yemen Polling Center and Social Development Direct, 2018), http://www.sddirect.org.uk/media/1571/sdd_yemenreport_full_v5.pdf

36 ACAPS, “Marib Governorate - Marib city and Marib Al Wadi District profile (19 November 2020)” <https://reliefweb.int/report/yemen/marib-governorate-marib-city-and-marib-al-wadi-district-profile-19-november-2020>

37 Heinze and Stevens, “Women as Peacebuilders in Yemen”.

38 United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, “Yemenis displaced by conflict now face threats of looming famine”, 11 December 2020, www.unhcr.org/en-us/news/briefing/2020/12/5fd337994/yemenis-displaced-conflict-face-threats-looming-famine.html

39 Relief and Development Peer Foundation, “Children Are Hungry for Education”, 2020, <https://reliefweb.int/report/yemen/yemen-mental-health-and-psychosocial-support-monthly-report-july-2020>

40 ACAPS, “Marib Governorate - Marib city and Marib Al Wadi District profile (19 November 2020)” <https://reliefweb.int/report/yemen/marib-governorate-marib-city-and-marib-al-wadi-district-profile-19-november-2020>

1 <http://marib-gov.com/nprint.php?lng=english&sid=2833>

government appears to be taking initial steps to address their welfare needs, such as with the governor's opening of a new Muhamasheen housing project.⁴¹ According to law all Yemeni citizens are considered equal, but the institutional discrimination against this group remains systemic. The status of the Muhamasheen demonstrates how informal mechanisms continue that exclude those deemed to be of "low status" from accessing the protection of the police and the law, agricultural land, as well as attending school and running for public office.⁴² Through these exclusionary mechanisms, low status groups are rendered invisible to service providers, employers, judges, politicians, as well as international donors and development agents. Many negative, racially motivated stereotypes have been used to justify institutional exclusion and even violence against the Mohamasheen.⁴³

Those of darker skin color who fall outside of the tribal federations have been relegated to a "caste-like" status known as al-Muhamasheen (the marginalized), more akin to Dalit (untouchables) than to a classic apartheid society. This is why IDPs are technically ascribed more rights within Marib than al Muhamasheen and this also means that IDPs are relatively far less vulnerable than the Muhamasheen. Comparatively, IDPs have been able to carve out privileged roles for themselves, especially those who come with

knowledge, experience, or social status.

Although the Muhamasheen are well integrated in terms of language and social habits and they remain distinct from African migrants. They were deprived historically from accessing land ownership, and thus remained outside any tribal affiliation. They also rarely socialized or intermarried with Yemenis of lighter skin color which perpetuated their descent-based marginalization. As a result, a de facto apartheid system of exclusion and property 'red lining' of Mohamasheen communities are relegated to informal settlements scattered around Yemeni urban areas, surrounded with fences and locked gates. These gated communities on the fringe of town further entrench the marginalization and drove recent generations to Yemen's major urban areas such as Sana'a, where they can access low paying jobs and have greater personal freedom than in more provincial communities. The caste-based discrimination of the al-Muhamasheen is so normalized and institutionalized that it has rarely featured into public debates or political dialogues, and is rarely championed by many local advocacy groups through there has been growing international mobilization⁴⁴ to redress the significant welfare gap between average Yemenis and the excluded al Akhdam.⁴⁵ The Mohamasheen number as many as 3 million according to some estimates. Salih's

Muhamasheen Man's Employment Experience in Marib

"I was transported through Yemen by smugglers I had paid to help me reach the UAE or KSA. I was initially offered work as a mercenary, but feared for my life. Once I ended up in Marib, I finally felt safe. I started working in Marib to save the 1200 dollars needed to be smuggled over the border. Work is available and pays well, as long as you don't mind living in a shed with dozens of other migrants.

I do not know of any other migrants fighting now. In any case, those Muhamasheen who have been recruited by the tribes in Taz and Mukalla end up working as servants for the tribal fighters, or at best they use them as workers to fortify or dig trenches.

Working as a laborer in Marib pays less yet it's safer. I have given up on going to the Gulf. I have seen many of our friends who went there get deported and brought back to Marib after a few months. Many also died on the way or the smugglers took advantage of them then never helped them cross. My hope now is to work for a company that serves an oil field. There, you can earn 150 dollars a month. They cover all meals, plus they offer sleeping space and bathing facilities as if you are living in your home. I also know how to drive but these types of jobs are not usually offered to Muhamasheen. My current employer in a construction site has worked in Saudi for decades and he hires a lot of Africans and Muhamasheen who speak the same language which is very good. Given the risks on the way for us and the many stories of death and youths being taken advantage of, I thank God I am lucky enough to be in Marib with a good boss."

41 Yemen, Marib Governorate, "Marib Governor Launches Accommodation Project for 102 IDPs Families", 28 December 2020, <http://marib-gov.com/nprint.php?Ing=english&sid=2833>

42 Before the establishment of the Yemen Arab Republic and the PDRY in the early 1960s, marginalized groups included members of low status groups mazayina (barbers, musicians, healers, heralds), ahl al-Suq (people of the market), atraf (the marginal), nuqas (the deficient), and khadam (servants) were not permitted to own land, bear arms, or marry with tribesmen and the sada. Elham Manea, "Yemen, the Tribe and the State", paper presented to the International Colloquium on Islam and Social Change at the University of Lausanne, 10–11 October 1996.

43 Equal Rights Trust, From Night to Darker Night Addressing Discrimination and Inequality in Yemen, The Equal Rights Trust Country Report Series: 9 (London: Stroma Ltd, 2018), pp. 21–29, www.equalrightstrust.org/ertdocumentbank/Yemen_EN_online%20version.pdf. Afra Nasser, Yemen researcher at Human Rights Watch, recently stated that "Yemen's caste system put Al-Muhamasheen at the very bottom of the social hierarchy... Their suffering has only worsened since war broke out. It's like hell on Earth." AFP, "Black Yemenis Remain in Shadows, Far from Global Protests", France24, 16 July 2020, www.france24.com/en/20200716-black-yemenis-remain-in-shadows-far-from-global-protests.

44 The International Dalit Solidarity Network has worked in coordination with UN treaty bodies to combat de facto discrimination against the Muhamasheen community and drafted the following letter calling for national abolition of the apartheid system to the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, "General Recommendation on Descent-Based Discrimination", International Dalit Solidarity Network, 22 August 2002, https://idsn.org/wp-content/uploads/user_folder/pdf/New_files/UN/CERD_GR29.pdf

45 From 2015-2017 the largest field research of the Muhamasheen (N=6,143) was conducted by the Equal Rights Trust, finding that discrimination occurred across multiple different domains and confirming that Afro-Arab communities self-identifying as Muhamasheen remain the lowest ranking group in Yemen's social hierarchy and bear all characteristics of a caste system perpetuated by the relative colour of their skin impacting the following areas: Discriminatory violence, Freedom of residence and movement; Fair trials and access to justice; Right to privacy; Freedom of opinion and expression; Freedom of association; Freedom of Assembly, Marriage and family life; Education; Employment; Social security and social services, and so forth.

SCORECARD - Social Cohesion

In the Marib Urban Scorecard survey when participants were asked whether they feel their voices heard and they matter for the future of the city. Echoing findings from fieldwork conducted in 2018 by various researchers¹, respondents who felt mostly disenfranchised were adult females (age 36 to 60), as well as junior females (age 16 to 24). The sense of representation also featured strongly into the responses of the males who are native residents of Marib, perhaps as a result of the strong role of the tribes in decision-making and wealth distribution rules. The marginalized groups and African migrants felt the most disenfranchised (both males and females) followed by the IDPs living in camps.

Due to access limitations and working within the parameters approved by the local government, our the Marib Urban Scorecard Survey focused on urban sectors and functionality. We approached the question of shifting gender by seeking to first establish a baseline of trust through ongoing relationship and recurring interaction or the creation of a “safe space” setting for exchange of sensitive personal and familial information.

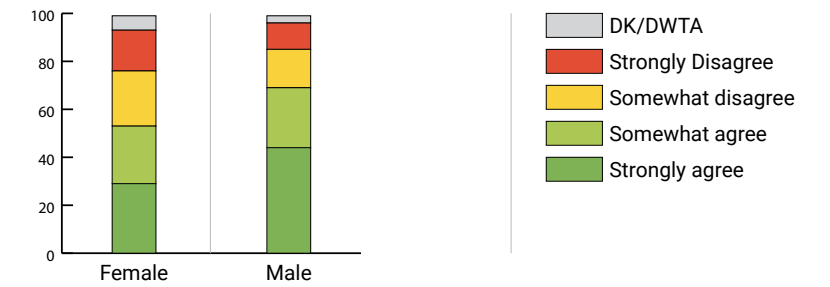
Local understandings of peace could be understood through a broad human security framework emphasizing basic services and jobs. Efforts by women to address poor living conditions, livelihoods and humanitarian needs are understood as contributions to peace and stability.

As a hosting city with a high number of potentially vulnerable female IDPs (one in four displaced families is a women-headed household), the Marib urban scorecard questions focused on shedding light on public perceptions of whether or not the city was a safe and welcoming place. Respondents to our survey generally reflected on the positive security situation in the city which has been progressively improving since the beginning of 2020. Women over 60 reported feeling the least safe, however, in contrast with their male peers who had the opposite feeling. Overall, female and male adolescents (age

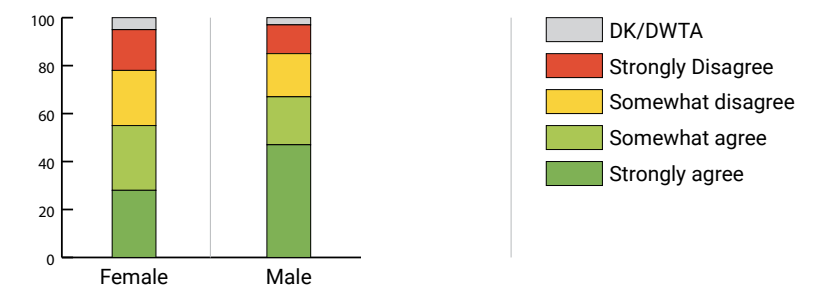
between 16 and 24) had the lowest sense of security and freedom of movement.

When asked about the sense of respect residents feel in Marib compared to other places in Yemen, respondents expressed agreement with this notion (36% strongly agreed, and only 14% strongly disagreed), with the males in the different age groups leaning to a positive perception than females. Respondents were split in half however in their evaluation of access to equal opportunity (regardless of cultural or tribal affiliation, or displacement status), with the marginalized demographic group and African migrants having the lowest perception of access to opportunity. Native residents and IDPs in camps were the most satisfied demographic groups with the access to opportunity.

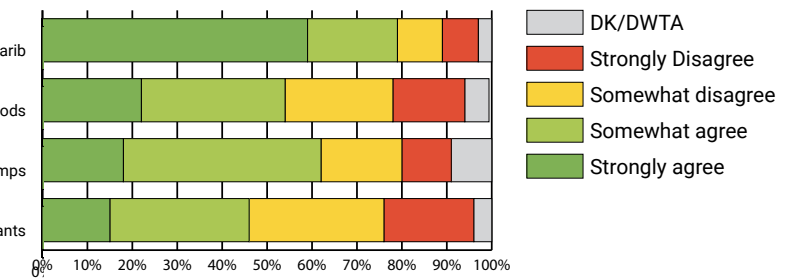
I feel more respected in Marib than the area I came from or other places I visit



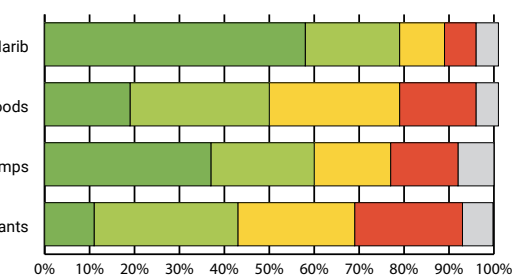
I feel safe and welcomed in most places in Marib



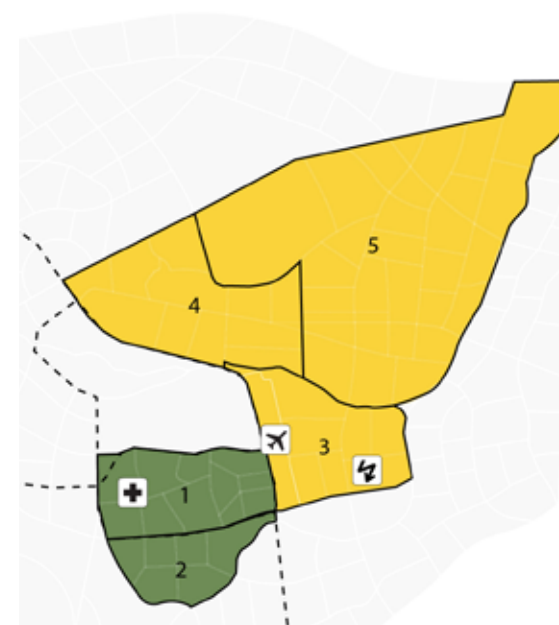
I feel I can access different opportunities in Marib, regardless of my appearances (such as the color of my skin or my social status)



As a citizen in the city, I think my voice matters



Perception of Respect as a Present Resident of Marib Compared to other Places



IDPs living in the city's traditional neighbourhoods
IDPs living in slums, informal settlements or camps

FIGURE 19. Perception of fairness, respect and opportunity in Mareb

¹ Marie-Christine Heinze and Sophie Stevens, "Women as Peacebuilders in Yemen" (Yemen Polling Center and Social Development Direct, 2018), http://www.sddirect.org.uk/media/1571/sdd_yemenreport_full_v5.pdf

on many governorates during August.

In Yemen and the Arabian Peninsula more broadly, the tribe (qabila) is the fundamental building block of social structures.⁵¹ Tribes adhere to the Sunni (Shafii) Islam or Shiite (Zaidi) Islam. have been described as representing the “best” and the “worst” of Yemen’s political revolutions, but, in many respects the same can be said of governments in Yemen and it is just a question of whether it is the state or tribes who wield the local monopoly of force or violence.⁵² The case of Marib demonstrates the many generative and constructive ways that tribes can function under the right conditions.

While most tribal identities have been subject to massive changes and upheavals, family-based networks of pre-modern societies naturally morph and adapt when grafted into urban, modern contexts, the fundamental socio-cultural aspects of tribal structures persist. In daily life, the lines between tribal affiliation, trade cartels, militias, and the state are semi-permeable but remain rooted in common shared stories and references to past lineage, such as the Qahtan, who claim to be descendants of the family of Noah.⁵³ These confederations of tribes mostly sought to settle in certain areas and almost completely abandoned the nomadic lifestyle. This feature allowed these tribes to create early agricultural civilizations in South Arabia, centuries before any other part of Arabia took measures to statehood.

Social Inclusion and Vulnerable Groups

Marib has demonstrated the art of the possible for reconciliation, NDC-guided decentralization paired with long-term efforts to support state-building through natural resource revenue sharing agreement, as well as a degree of stability between government, civil society and the tribes. This responsiveness of local leadership to public needs and civil society mobilization seems to have emerged from Marib’s own process of integrating lessons learned from past conflicts. This makes the city a singular case study of how urban recovery can model ways to interrupt the violence and conflict cycles that have plagued Yemen’s modern history.

It has been a long journey for Marib. Previously lacking either agricultural wealth or political clout, the way that Marib progressed, the primary grievances voiced by Marib’s population in the early 2000s were rooted in the lack of stability, security, and representative civil society and governance. Because of the accountability mechanisms of tribes, the relative local peace on the ground points to underlying levels of equality and justice (though measuring and quantifying evidence of these categories in income disparity and discriminatory practices is outside of the scope of this profile’s research) there are multiple signs that point to promising trends in Marib’s current baseline. Despite the increasing threat of the conflict engulfing Marib, many report evidence of goodwill, mutual aid networks,

” (Displaced households) from the northern governorates feared that they would not be accepted in the southern governorates. Despite Marib’s reputation as a lawless, vindictive and uncivilized territory, they found our doors open. After all, we are nomads, proud Arab tribes, and we cherish our generosity and tradition of offering refuge to fugitives.

– UN Habitat Profiling Team Interview with regional tribal leader, June 2020

cross-community support and trust, consensus-seeking policymaking accountable to the people.⁵⁴

As the scorecard responses reflected, Marib has made noteworthy progress in overcoming patriarchal gender barriers in support of women’s advancement. It is laudable but not without its own potential risks. As Marib’s policymakers walk the fine line of being progressive while

⁵¹ To address the semantics and politics of representation in the fraught and loaded term ‘tribe’, for the purposes of this profile we distinguish between family and state. The usage of the term ‘tribe’ in literature of the Middle East is a loaded and contentious topic within the field of social anthropology. The discipline has sought to distance itself from colonial origins, in particular the social evolutionary concept of ‘tribal’ as a primitive or less advanced stage in the teleological progress of civilization. Many scholars influenced the move of anthropology to abandon use of the term ‘tribe’ altogether. By discontinuing the use of the terms, tribe and tribalism, we assert that previous research into the influence of tribalism in the form of kinship network in social and political life of Yemen (and the broader Middle East) must still be of value. With these caveats in place, the authors of this profile attempt to bridge the gap in have found the term ‘tribe’ has been misapplied and used as such a broad brush to describe various cultures and geographies as to be rendered nearly contexts throughout the world that the word has been rendered nearly meaningless as an analytical term. However, for anthropologists in the Middle East, there is no way to avoid the phenomenon of tribalism. From, Peter Ekeh, “Social anthropology and two contrasting uses of tribalism in Africa.” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 32, no. 4 (1990): 660-700 and Talal Asad, “The idea of an anthropology of Islam.” *Qui parle?* 17, no. 2 (2009): 1-30.

⁵² For example, both the state and tribes have used violence to coerce the other into acting in their interests. In the case of the Mutawakili Kingdom (1911-1961), the state used its legitimacy over tribal “subjects” by creating hierarchical divisions between al-Ashraf and non-Ashraf families, and Imam Yahya kept a brother or head of the tribe (Sheikh) hostage in Sana’a as leverage on the issues of taxation, tribal rebellions, and so forth. The tribal relative would be assassinated if the tribes did not comply with the wishes of the kingdom. Tribes, in turn, sabotaged pipelines, blocked roads or kidnapped foreigners to extort funds from the government.

⁵³ Helen Chapin Metz. *Persian Gulf States: Country Studies*, 3rd edn. (London: Library of Congress-Federal Research Division, 1994) pp. 37-38; Fathel Abu Ghanem and Ali Ahmed, *The Tribal Structure in Yemen: Between Continuance and Change*, In Arabic, 2nd ed., Sana’a: Dar Al-Hikmah Al Yemania, 1991, p. 89.

⁵⁴ Molyneux, Camilla. “Made in Marib: A Local Response to Instability and Violence,” Oxford Research Group, October 2020, <https://www.oxfordresearchgroup.org.uk/made-in-marib-a-local-response-to-instability-and-violence>; Nagi, Ahmed, “Rising Above the Conflict,” Carnegie Middle East Center, July 31, 2020, <https://carnegie-mec.org/2019/07/31/marib-yemen-rising-above-conflict-pub-79593>; Nagi, Ahmed, “Marib, Yemen: Rising Above the Conflict” July 31, 2019, <https://carnegie-mec.org/2019/07/31/marib-yemen-rising-above-conflict-pub-79593>; Salisbury, Peter, “Behind the Frontlines in

also not violating values and beliefs defining norms for Marib's traditional social values held by key stakeholders. It is important to factor sensitivities and potential cultural landmines of identity politics into the social infrastructure aspect of planning within the city. This will require a careful appraisal of where Marib is today and the attitudes people feel towards its more progressive social reforms. How can Marib's civil society-tribe hybrid serve to create a community inoculation to cycles of violence reveal the positive social contract the government and the tribes can maintain within the context of Marib's relative autonomy.

Shifting Tribal and Social Norms

Intangible but consequential attitudes and choices, feelings of trust and optimism in the midst of a devastating conflict are an invisible driving force behind Marib's unparalleled growth. The ways that Marib's customary codes, political influence, and dispute resolution mechanisms influence social protection and various groups in Marib is further detailed in the Cultural Heritage section, with the caveat that this only captures the superficial contours of embedded social and cultural dynamics influencing the city's growth and development which merit further exploration and research due to the significant role of Marib's strong tribal and civil society traditions in influencing government policy and planning.⁵⁵ Marib's tribal precedent in the form of tribal councils and consultative conflict resolution also played an important role in Marib's recent social developments, but how the community defines vulnerability remains an open question as it seems to be a persistent gap in conflict research of Yemen.⁵⁶

In Marib, the hosting situation seems to have relaxed

gender norms in ways that the tribes may not directly support but are also not actively protesting. There is growing evidence of women wearing recognizable tribal abayas attending events in public, attending school, visiting Marib's amusement park, shopping mall, and even making fledgling inroads into the workforce. It is also important to note that Marib's tribes have maintained close relationships with Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, but the degree to which this has influenced social policy requires further exploration. Findings thus far reflect the prevailing attitudes shaping social capital and in-group/out-group categorization in Marib reflects numerous anomalies and inherent contradictions.

Yemen's Marib," International Crisis Group, April 17, 2020, <https://www.crisisgroup.org/middle-east-north-africa/gulf-and-arabian-peninsula/yemen/behind-front-lines-yemens-marib>

⁵⁵ This adapts the idea of tribal norms influencing government decision making as a "pre-given set of rules or codes... that need to be unearthed (if not explicit) and identified as key mechanisms of the urban landscape which shape how governance and civil society emerge in parallel. (Witteck, Rafael, Uwe Schimank, and Thomas Groß. "Governance—A sociological perspective." *New forms of governance in research organizations*. Springer, Dordrecht, 2007. 71-106.)

⁵⁶ Mohammad al Sabahi and Fausto Aarya De Santis, "The Role of Cultural Norms and Local Power Structures in Yemen," October, 2016 www.fmreview.org/community-protection; Reuters, "A Cafe in Yemen Run by Women, for Women", 1 November 2020, www.reuters.com/article/us-yemen-security-cafe/a-cafe-in-yemen-run-by-women-for-women-idUSKBN27H1KN; [1] UTV Pakistan, "A Cafe in Yemen Run by Women, for Women", 3 November 2020, <https://utv.com.pk/a-cafe-in-yemen-run-by-women-for-women/>

Adapted from qualitative research conducted with women in civil society or community organizing roles by Heinze and Stevens in Marib, Ta'iz and Lahij: Marie-Christine Heinze and Sophie Stevens, "Women as Peacebuilders in Yemen" (Yemen Polling Center and Social Development Direct, 2018), http://www.sddirect.org.uk/media/1571/sdd_yemenreport_full_v5.pdf; UNOCHA, "Yemen: 2018 Humanitarian Needs Overview" (United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, December 2017), https://www.unocha.org/sites/unocha/files/dms/yemen_humanitarian_needs_overview_hno_2018_20171204.pdf; Gressmann, "From the Ground up: Gender and Conflict Analysis in Yemen."§

FIGURE 20. Impact of the Conflict on Women's Lives - comparison national trends with Marib

Sector	National Trends	Women in Marib
Economy	Women are more economically active than they were before the war, as men have been injured, killed or lost their jobs. This has brought a sense of empowerment for women but has also caused tensions between men and women, leading to more domestic violence. There is a risk that positive changes will be reversed once conflict ends if not proactively supported.	Women are in a number of industries, including the police.
Religion	Changes in the religious environment have had particular effects on women, especially a rise in radical religious rhetoric and greater influence of Islamist actors.	In Marib women do not report as many threats or violence as women do in other areas (such as Ta'iz and Lahj) but still report that changes in the religious environment and rises in radical religious rhetoric and greater influence of Islamist actors has an impact on their lives in terms of influencing their dress, increase in Qur'an education sessions and lectures discussing what is and is not permissible for women. Increase in radical rhetoric opposing women working, style of dress or going out without a guardian. (Many attributed this to Islah Party control and influence on imams).
Humanitarian response	Women are playing an essential role in delivering an impressive local humanitarian response and sustaining community services and structures, even under direct threat and with extremely limited resources. This is considered an acceptable, "natural" role for women in public life across Yemen, although the significance of their contributions is not always recognised nor sufficiently supported, which women activists perceive as an obstacle.	Greater focus on longer-term development work and in rebuilding basic services. Many women in Marib are involved in assessing needs in the community and collaborating with local authorities to deliver services and aid. Particular discussion of supporting IDPs who have entered the area. Culture of competition between NGOs described.
Conflict Resolution	Women are engaged in resolving conflicts, promoting peace, and providing security in a limited way in some areas. This includes directly mediating inter-tribal conflicts and conflicts over public resources, working as police officers (a few in urban centres), screening women at checkpoints, and supporting resistance fighters with food, money and moral support.	In Marib the strongest positive impact of the war was the role for women in conflict mediation. Many positive stories of women influencing or negotiating agreements between tribal groups, sometimes over resources (e.g. water). Women capitalising on local norms through symbolic acts to call for cease-fires/peace. Women helping at local checkpoints and fighting highway robbery. Women police reported to be present in Marib city.
Participation in Government	Women activists are often cooperating effectively with local governance structures and local leaders are receptive to women's involvement in public institutions, although women are still generally excluded from formal decision-making and political structures.	In Marib there was generally a positive picture of local government continuing to operate and cooperate with women activists. Some women presented in provincial government offices and there is a proposal to move to a gender quota for women in government.

6 URBAN HERITAGE AND SOCIAL COHESION

Culture as the entry point for urban planning

Marib's ability to rise from devastation of Yemen's war has been studied from political, military and economic angles, but not from a cultural perspective in the limited literature available. This profile explores the growing evidence base that sustainable development policies responsibly rooted within the specific characteristics of their cultural contexts will yield more sustainable outcomes, and will improve inclusion and reconciliation.¹ For a city with roots in one of the oldest civilizations on earth, it is important to base the city's future planning and development on its unique cultural resources. This rich historic heritage can inspire opportunities for creativity in future planning. Marib has many advantages in terms of natural resource wealth, a growing middle class and a baseline of law and order. Marib's most difficult urban challenges lie ahead and will require creative planning and coordination to leverage the city's cultural and historic legacies to address looming urban growth problems.² The following section attempts to tease out some of these strands to spark discussion for Marib residents to build upon.

As the site of the legendary Throne of Bilqis, historically linked to the Queen of Sheba and the iconic Baran and Awwam Temple ruins, Marib is considered one of the engineering wonders of the ancient world. Marib has been nominated as a future UNESCO World Heritage Site.³

Marib's tangible cultural heritage

Ancient Ecology and Social Origins

Marib is considered the cradle of the oldest Arabian civilization, the Kingdom of Saba (between 1200 BCE and 275 CE), with territory extending into northern Yemen. The Sabaeans built their capital near present-day Marib City, whose remains can still be seen in the Awwam and Barran temple ruins.⁴ Marib's status in its former era as the cultural capital of Yemen and the center of the kingdom of Saba was directly tied to its location at a geographic crossroads home to highly prized incense. The kingdom controlled the export of frankincense, which was used in temples from the far east to Rome. The area rose to regional prominence as a storage area for aromatic resins gathered from the bark of myrrh and incense trees gathered from nearby valleys.⁵ The dynamism and international interest in the incense trade as a commodity is even tied to expansionist drives from the Assyrian, Babylonian and Persian empires as goods made the long journey to the Levant's Mediterranean coast for distribution to Egypt and beyond.⁶

Marib's central role in the incense trade so significant to pagan belief systems may have also been the reason for it being the site of one of the major temples of the region. The Awwam temple of Marib, (Arabic: Haram Bilqis or Mahram Bilqis) was reportedly built by Mukarrib Yada'il Dharih I between the 7th and 5th century BCE. The largest part of the temple is occupied by an unguarded yard that is enclosed by a massive stone wall with an irregular oval ground plan. On the inner wall of the hall were multiple inscriptions from the late period of

لكل منا مأرب والمأرب الأرب والأرب الحاجة أو الحاجة
الشديدة والبغية والأمنية يقال بلغ أربه ونال أربه أما مأرب
فهي جمع مأرب وفيها أكثر من مأرب أنها مجتمع الغايات
والأهداف أما مأرب بكسر الراء فهي مدينة كانت باليمن اقيم
بها السد المشهور وهو: سد مأرب

” They say when a man has reached his goal, that is Marib. Marib is the meaning of where all purposes converge, all interests and aspirations. It is the city in Yemen where the famous dam was built, the Marib dam.

- anonymous

the Sabaeans kingdom. The temple was apparently dedicated to the moon god Almaqah, and is considered the finest architectural achievement of the ancient Arab peoples. It was partially excavated by the American archaeologist Wendell Phillips and his expedition in the 1950s until tribal conflicts abruptly halted the excavation.⁷ Today, the Awwam Temples' eight symmetrical pillars that have become the iconic symbol of Marib Governorate, seen on insignias and advertisements.

1 United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), "Culture as Source of Sustainable Development and Social Cohesion", accessed 23 February 2021, <https://en.unesco.org/news/culture-source-sustainable-development-and-social-cohesion-0>

2 Charles Landry, *The Creative City – A Toolkit For Urban Innovators* (London: Earthscan, 2012); Richard Florida, *The Rise of the Creative Class, and How It's Transforming Work, Leisure, Community and Everyday Life* (New York, Basic Books, 2002)

3 According to sources inside UNESCO, the archeological tel mound site of Marib including ruins in and around the city of Marib are on the tentative list since 2002 and is still considered for nomination.

4 In fieldwork conducted in 2019 by Ahmed Nagi of the Carnegie Middle East Center, the historic site was found in sad disrepair. Nagi noted: "Queen of Sheba, the Awam temple, and the old Marib Dam, which are the most famous monuments to ancient Yemeni civilizations...(were) abandoned because of weak governance and tribal disputes over ownership, the sites are in bad condition. I could not even get close to the Awam temple because the road was buried by desert sand". Nagi, Ahmed, "Marib, Yemen: Rising Above the Conflict".

5 Miranda Morris, "The Harvesting of Frankincense in Dhofar, Oman", in *Profumi d'Arabia*, Alessandra Avanzini, ed. (Rome: L'Erma Bretschneider, 1997), pp. 231–247. The growth in early settlements in southern Arabian peninsula was directly tied to the scarcity of incense found only in the Arabian peninsula and isolated pockets of the western coast of Africa (van Beek, 1960).

6 Michaël Jasmin, "The Emergence and First Development of the Arabian Trade across the Wadi Arabah", in *Crossing the Rift. Resources, Routes, Settlement Patterns and Interaction in the Wadi Arabah*, Levant Supplementary Series 3, P. Bienkowski and K. Galor, eds. (London: Oxbow Books, 2006), pp. 143–150.

7 In their haste to leave, Phillips and his colleagues had to abandon all their equipment and archaeological discoveries. The team's written records were later incorporated into scholarly publications, including an archaeological report published by Johns Hopkins University Press. Phillips died before he was able to return but almost a half-century later, in 1998, the government of Yemen invited Marilyn Phillips Hodgson to continue her brother's work in Marib. National Museum of Asian Art, "Excavations".

SCORECARD - Significance of Marib's cultural heritage and its preservation

UNESCO describes culture as "the set of distinctive, spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features of a society or a social group that encompasses art and literature, lifestyles, ways of living together, value systems, traditions and beliefs." Marib's urban heritage can be viewed as the sum of socio-cultural and historical values that have been interpreted and passed on by successive generations. Marib's historic sites are in a dialogue with its present realities and both are exceptional and worth appreciating so the best can be preserved and not lost in the fog of war, like so many other antiquities and traditional cultures that have often been lost in conflict zones. Urban heritage in the context of this profile is broken down into two categories:

1) Tangible Cultural Heritage

Urban elements (infrastructure, morphology and built form, open and green spaces); Architectural elements (buildings, monuments) and intangible elements.

2) Intangible Cultural Heritage

The sum of what cultural traits make a people who they are and helps keep the heartbeat of community. A defining part of culture: the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills – as well as the instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces associated therewith – that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage. This intangible cultural heritage, transmitted from generation to generation, is constantly recreated by communities and groups in response to their environment, their interaction with nature and their history, and provides them with a sense of identity and continuity, thus promoting respect for cultural diversity and human creativity.

As the city's cultural heritage and natural assets are falling under pressures that the war generated (expansion of

urban uses over farming lands, gentrification, densification and building violations, degradation of tourist attractions), the Urban Scorecard suggests that public support for preservation policies is likely, if framed around the preservation of cultural heritage. With such aspirations comes the greater ability to commit to making improvements to quality of life, but also with an eye on long-term recovery of the tourism sector.

The Marib Urban Scorecard Poll revealed highly supportive the public placed high value on cultural heritage. An overwhelming majority (72%) of the respondents expressed in support for Marib's cultural heritage. This same majority of those surveyed expressed their appreciation of public spaces.. A majority of all social groups polled unanimously valued green spaces, parks, and public cultural events. There was only marginal divergence of opinion among migrants and IDPs (10% or less) who did not value these as highly as other, more essential urban services.

I consider the preservation of Marib's cultural heritage an important issue

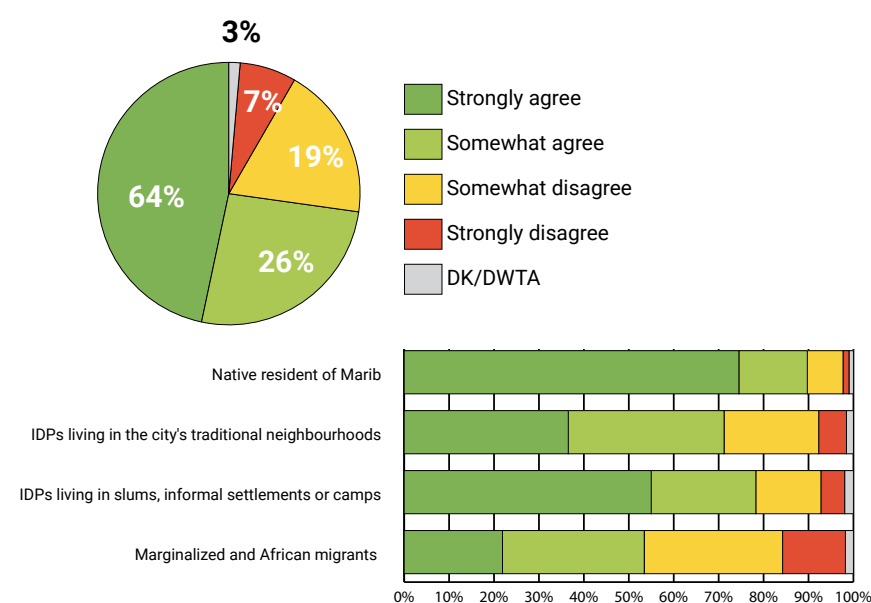


FIGURE 21. Perception of value of heritage

The temple has a pure abstraction and geometric forms which can be seen even in contemporary Yemeni structures.

The vast wealth of Saba funded engineering marvels, among them was the Marib Dam in the ~8th Century BC. It is claimed by some as the world's oldest dam, and was one of the engineering feats of the ancient world. The end of Marib's founding civilization was inextricably tied to the great dam, as illustrated by the apocryphal story of the disintegration of the dam marking the flight of its prominent families throughout the Arabian peninsula.⁸

Three thousand years ago the former inhabitants of Marib used the dam to create irrigated agriculture. They famously made the edges of the Yemeni desert bloom with beautiful gardens until the dam burst centuries later. The dam was the centerpiece of an irrigation system which archaeologists estimate went as far back as 1750 and 1700 BC to collect water from the Balaq Hills by the Wadi Adanah that would later become built up into the full dam structure in late 7th Century BC. According to legend and Quranic sources,⁹ a large mouse burrowed under the Marib dam, loosening its foundations and causing the dam to collapse in the late sixth century C.E, near the birth date of Islam's prophet, Muhammad.¹⁰ Prophet Muhammad referred to Marib as the center of an early higher

⁸ Some historians postulate that it was the cataclysmic collapse of the Marib Dam led these peoples to migrate north (and spread their hydro, administrative and defense technologies throughout the Arabian peninsula. As Islamic source Ibn Katheer recounted, the dam's collapse may have been attributed to rats burrowing in it. The collapse precipitated the migration of legendary Adnan tribal patriarch Amr bin Amer on to Saudi Arabia (Yathrib), Jordan and Oman. Other families left in the direction of Oman.

⁹ <http://mquran.org/content/view/full/8350/2/>

¹⁰ Ibn Katheer story of the Marib dam: According to Ibn Katheer's book "The Beginning of the End", when mice burrowed in the structure, the dam started to collapse and the Arabs' oldest kingdoms in Sheba started to crumble. They tried to restore it over several hundred years, but the dam kept crumbling. According to the myth, the patriarch of all Arabs: Kahtan (founder of the al Azd Tribe from which the Bani Shehr Tribe branches, full name: Shehr Ibn Rabi'a Ibn Aws Ibn Hinu Ibn Al-Azd Ibn Al-Ghoth Ibn Nabit Ibn Malik bin Zaid Ibn Kahlan Ibn Saba'a (Sheba) Ibn Yashjub Ibn Yarab Ibn Qahtan Ibn Hud (prophet) (Eber). He said a mouse going in and out of the body of the great dam, and he knew it was a sign he had to migrate north and leave Marib. The collapse of the dam led to the patriarch of the Qahtan ultimately meeting Hajar in Mecca.

civilization that was more advanced than the Bedouin tribal regions around Mecca (Yathrib). Historic references however record that the dam was damaged and rebuilt several times during the Sabaeen Kingdom. Early damages to the dam reportedly brought about the first Arab migration from Yemen to Levant and Mesopotamia (led by the Adnan tribal patriarch Amr bin Amer), while the complete collapse of the dam nearly 200 years later instigated the second migration of the other major tribe (Qahtan) from Yemen, who settled in the desert region of Hijaz, and reportedly intermarried with returning migrants from Adnan in Mecca.¹¹ Some historians postulate that it was the migrations brought about by the cataclysmic collapse of the Marib Dam that led to the spread Marib's hydro, administrative and defense technologies throughout the Arabian Peninsula.

The complex hydrological engineering involved made the dam's restoration a formidable task. The hydrological system of the dam was designed to increase the level of trapped water, so that a cluster of several large, near and remote valleys will be filled with water and become summer reservoirs. Attempts to restore the dam resumed only in 1982 following a devastating flood that ravaged the country. Sheikh Zayed bin-Sultan al-Nahyan of the United Arab Emirates financed the construction of a new dam for Marib in 1984¹², but the modern dam was less hydrologically sophisticated. The Sheikh himself is reportedly a descendent from the tribes who migrated from the area of Marib to territories now included in modern UAE borders. All Arabs historically trace their lineage to those two migrations, and the blood lines from these ancient migrations are kept as a matter of pride and reference by tribal leaders to date. In October of 2020, Yemen's Minister of Culture and Director of Culture and Tourism visited sites in Marib in conjunction with

the announcement of a new cultural center and museum.¹³ They called for stricter measures to prevent attacks on cultural heritage and ancient archaeological sites, as well as stopping looting of national treasures. A Marib Museum has been proposed in the past as it would be a significant tourist draw and way to incentivize preservation and recovery of local antiquities. The Marib museum did not have a chance to advance beyond the conceptual stage but a proposal from 2010 made a strong case for a regional museum's multiple benefits - both culturally and economically (creating jobs and aiding in poverty alleviation).¹⁴ But, eyewitnesses reported¹⁵ that a Saudi airstrike profoundly damaged the historic site in the spring of 2015. Bombs left a deep gash in the well-preserved northern sluice gate. Advocacy groups began to raise awareness of the war destroying Yemen's special heritage.

From Prosperity to Scarcity

Historically, the establishment of Marib's irrigation system had compelled the dominant tribes to adopt the stable, feudal-settler system. This enabled the tribal confederations from this region to preside over a strong state of Yemen during the Sabeen and Himyarite kingdoms. Marib dam was a formidable engineering achievement, as it controlled seasonal rainfall in a complex watershed network of valleys, and created a chain of artificial lakes that provided stable irrigation during the long desert summer. The collapse of the dam and failure to restore it until the late 20th century also destroyed the paradigm of social stability and prosperity that had dominated Marib's first chapter. The following years saw the society shift towards political-military models based more on scarcity. Over the following centuries Marib transitioned into the model tribal raids more typical of Yemen's northern tribes. This model entailed



FIGURE 22. First Independence Day Horse Races on Main Street in Marib City Source: Soliman Al Nowab



FIGURE 23. "Displaced but creative" Band from the IDP community

small-scale tribal wars to acquire resources needed for survival. The relative remoteness of Marib from the main trade routes, and the relatively limited agricultural resources without the benefit of the dam meant that the security capability of Marib's tribes was weaker compared to other northern tribes, since they were more segmented and had not established large tribal confederations.

11 <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A2002.02.0006%3Aasura%3D34%3Averse%3D15>

12 UN-H Profiling Team interview with Marib KII, June 2020e

13 <https://www.arabnews.com/node/1743631/middle-east>

14 <https://www.archnet.org/en/2018/10/25/ayda-a-digital-register-of-heritage-monuments-for-yemen-interview-with-dr-iris-gerlach/>

15 Citing the organization Mwatana for Human Rights, lists 34 sites—some up to 3,000 years old—that have suffered severe damage in apparent violation of the 1954 Hague Convention treaty for the protection of cultural property during armed conflict. Titled "The Degradation of History," Kate Brown, A War on 'Collective Memory': A Sober Report Reveals the Extent of the Damage to War-Torn Cultural Sites in Yemen, Nov 21, 2018, <https://news.artnet.com/art-world/yemen-war-cultural-sites-1399402>

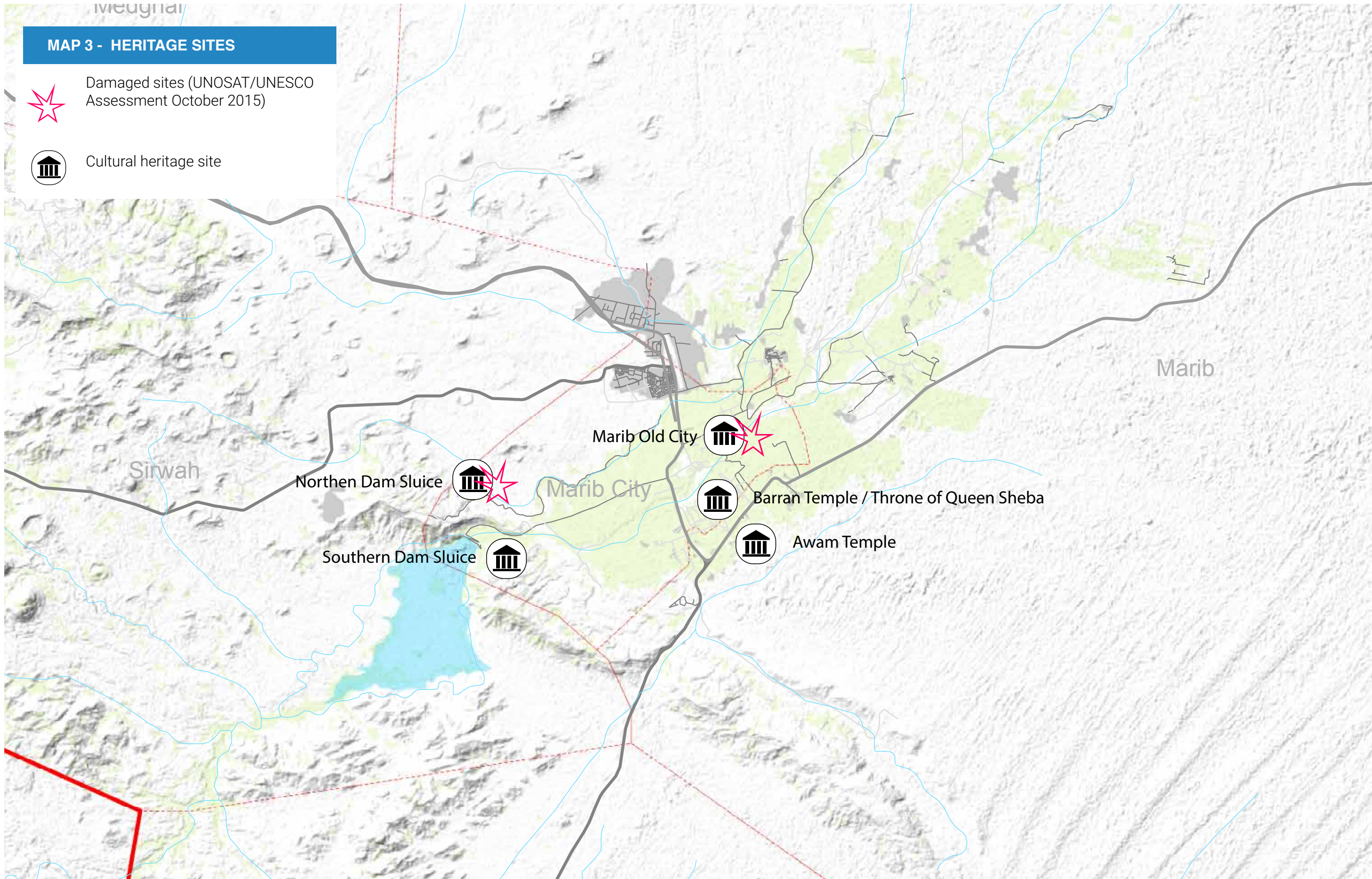




FIGURE 24. Marib Northern Old Dam Sluice, Digital Globe 2015, through UNOSAT / UNESCO



FIGURE 25. Damage to the Northern Old Dam Sluice. Source: UNOSAT / UNESCO

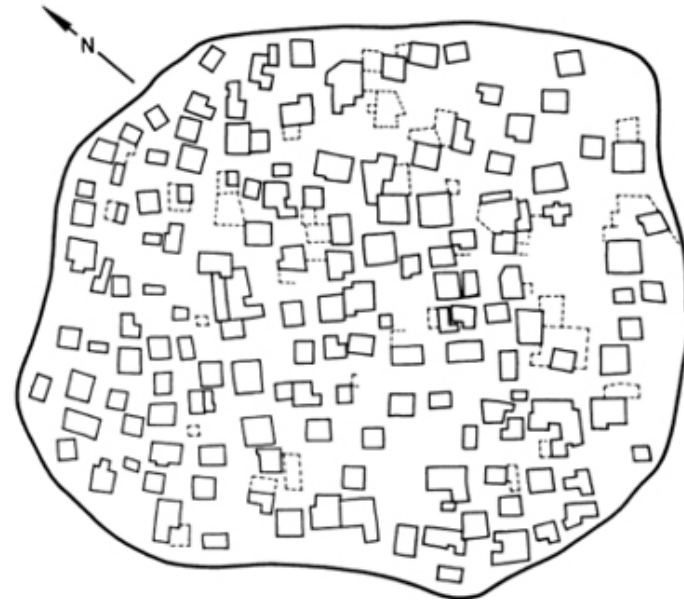


FIGURE 27. Old Marib's Tell Area, Plan of buildings are represented with solid lines and both courtyards and small structures with broken lines, Source: van Beek, Gus W. 1982. "A population Estimate for Marib: A Contemporary Tell village in North Yemen." Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research 248(1): 61-67.



FIGURE 26. Plot divisions in the near vicinity of the Old City indicating planned new constructions around the Old City area. Digital Globe 2018



FIGURE 28. Marib Old City. (Digital Globe, 2015). Some areas have been damaged, and some new constructions have been observed in a UNESCO / UNOSAT damage assessment in 2018.



It is important to note that cultural heritage techniques diffused through social networks and family ties have a strong evidence base of success compared to more top-down, institutional approaches to community development¹⁶ in Yemen—whether from the central state or external development actors. Yemeni people have had a strong cultural heritage of inherited building skills since ancient times. Apart from some demonstration projects, most new house construction is carried along traditional lines, by private individuals. The result is the achievement of a functional and harmonious architecture suited to the life of the Yemeni people. Urbanization, urban planning and land management, however, have often been disproportionately shaped by outside actors.

Another important observation about the current impact of development interventions on more traditional and sustainable cultural practices, and the related local economic ripple effects, is that with the introduction of new building materials, a large proportion of the profits goes into the pockets of a few contractors, with only about 25% remaining in the district. If local communities are to benefit from construction, money must be spent locally, on local materials and labor. Furthermore, imported building methods usually prove to be unsuited to the climate, as insufficient mass reduces the ability of buildings to regulate temperatures.¹⁷ As concrete and building permits were introduced, the ‘usta’— master masons, designers, and builders— were replaced by ‘muqqawal’—contractors skilled in the “assembly of industrial components”, marking one of the ways that vital traditions are erased from public memory by homogenized built forms even though traditional

buildings were generally more cost-effective.¹⁸ Yemen and Marib, in particular, have been uniquely shielded from various modernizing initiatives associated with neoliberal development reforms in the Arab region. Heritage building techniques and locally situated knowledge has not been lost entirely at a time when ‘Cradle to Cradle’ sustainable building techniques are making the brick and mortar construction models of the late 20th Century increasingly obsolescent as well as being cost-prohibitive in a place like the IDP camps surrounding Marib city.

Agricultural heritage is another important aspect of intangible cultural heritage. According to some social scientists and agronomists, current food insecurity, increased impoverishment and desertification are in part attributable to development policies. In retrospect, food security analysts note that Yemen’s abandonment and destruction of rain-fed terrace agriculture was a mistake as it was more resource-efficient in the Yemeni context.¹⁹ As arid, mountainous terrain such as the surrounding regions of Marib City were viewed as incapable of producing high quality grain for the international market so they were less penetrated by these green revolution agriculture technologies to scale policies.²⁰ Understanding what agricultural practices work best in Marib is critical as it still makes up 60% of Marib’s economy and has far-ranging implications for how Marib’s Master Plan balances urban, built space with agricultural territory. At one time Marib was one of the key breadbaskets for Yemen, helping support the country’s food sovereignty in which it only imported 18% of its food products in 1978 (when Saleh came to power). Yemen is now



FIGURE 29. Examples of a traditional family home near Marib. Source: <https://www.voyagevirtuel.info/yemen-photo/displayimage-15-619.html>



FIGURE 30. Granary on the outskirts of Marib, date unknown. Source: <https://www.voyagevirtuel.info/yemen-photo/displayimage-15-618.html>

¹⁶ As anthropological research by Peutz (2018) conducted in Yemen both imported western (“neoliberal”) endogenous and non-western (primarily examining the implementation of a Government of Yemen and UNDP-led Integrated Conservation and Development Project (ICDP) on the Soqatra Archipelago) between 2004 and 2011, various development projects focused on “opening” (Ar.: infitah) and Western models of social transformation failed when they did not incorporate “relational matrices” of how familial relations and kin-based networks operated within decisions impacting social development.

¹⁷ Matthews, Derek, *Journal of the British Yemeni Society*, November 1996 (accessed at: <https://al-bab.com/commentary-yemeni-traditional-architecture>)

¹⁸ Varananda, Fernando. 1998. “Twenty years of Change in the Built Environment of Yemen.” *Traditional Dwellings and Settlements Review* 9 (2): 63-78, p. 69.

¹⁹ Mundy, Martha, al-Hakimi, Amin, and Pelat, Frédéric (2014), ‘Neither security nor sovereignty: the political economy of food in Yemen’. (p. 105); The authors lay out the implications of shifting food sovereignty for food security and famine risk in Yemen discussing how the change in food sovereignty is clearly visible in the fact that the country imported 18% of its consumption of staple cereals in the 1970s, whereas this number had risen to 75% in 2014. Staple foods generally consist of 90% imports today.¹² Food prices have risen, poverty has spread and Yemen’s population has increased by 350% since the 1980s, putting further pressure on resource use.^{13, 14, 15} For these reasons, control over water and food resources is important for both sides of the conflict - it is even a tactic employed by them.

²⁰ Ibid.

up to 75% as a net importer of food and the current conditions surrounding rapidly declining food security in Yemen make it even more important to recognize local opportunities for reversing the trend. 21 Agricultural heritage awareness can help policymakers move away from devaluing indigenous knowledge of farming as “static”, “inefficient” and “backward” - without sufficient knowledge of how some of the traditions had evolved and adapted within the unique context of Yemen in conditions of resource scarcity and environmental variability.

Intangible Cultural Heritage

Leadership and conflict resolution approaches have been a key intangible asset in the transformation of the fate of Marib, and is widely acknowledged as key to ushering in Marib’s latest positive chapter. It has contributed to trust among residents and a sense of being welcome and safe. In the context of the “tribe” (framed in this profile as an example of salient living cultural heritage), it may help explain certain trends in the city which have contributed to urban management and governance. Even while Marib City municipal capacity is notably thin and operating through a hybrid cooperation of humanitarian/development actors with governorate and informal tribal decision-making processes, nevertheless it is evident that certain patterns of tribal culture and collective decision making have influenced positive trends in the city, and can be viewed as cultural assets which merit the consideration of city planners . This is especially true as Marib’s City attempts to ensure its influx of new residents does not lead instigate future conflict cycles and social cleavages. Therefore, it is important for planners to articulate core aspects of the city on a cultural level where the intangible qualities of effective decentralized government can be found. For example, tribal mechanisms for hosting asylum seekers have contributed to the political economic fabric of the city.

MAP 4 - TRIBES IN MARIB

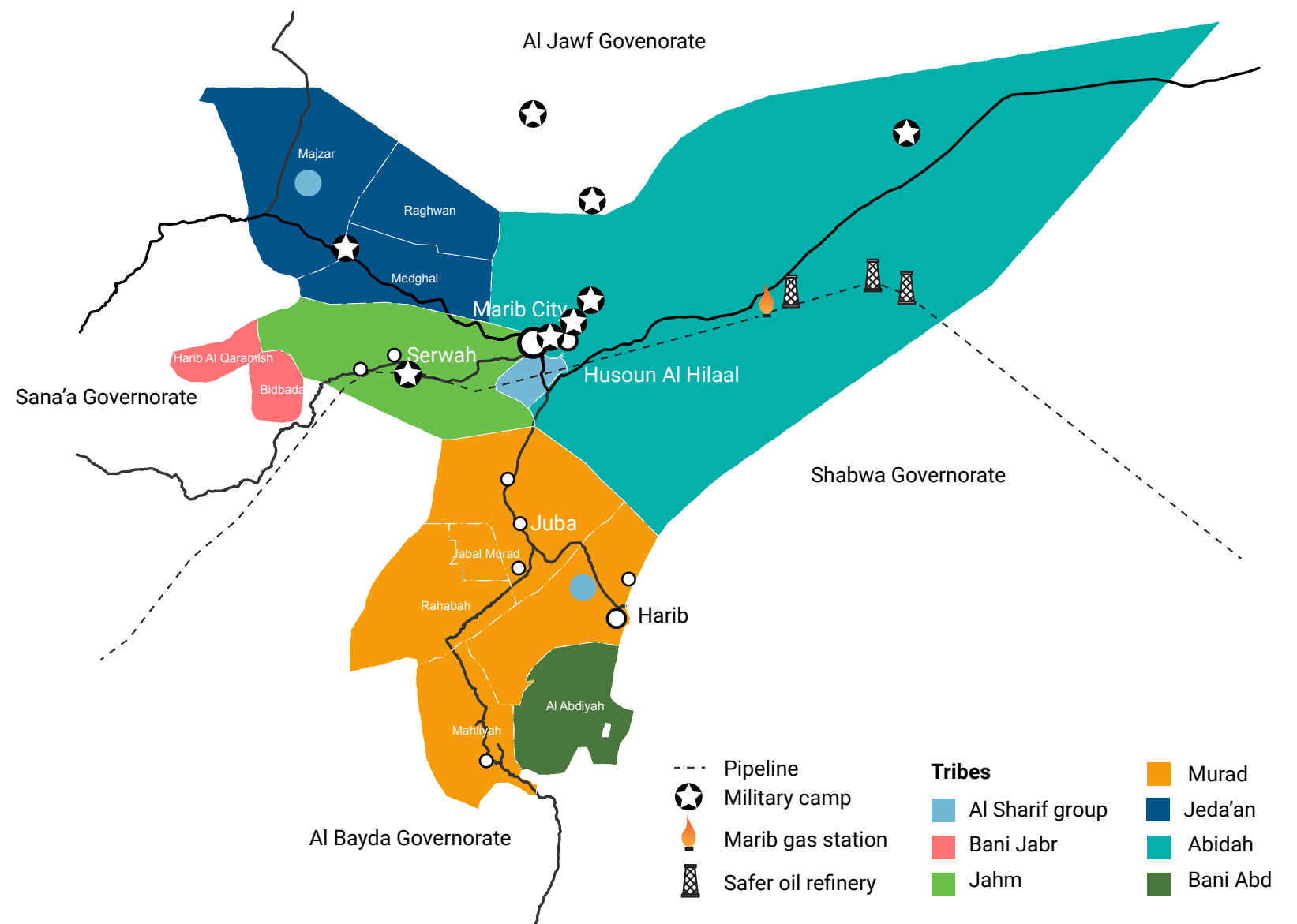


FIGURE 31. Tribes in Marib. Redrawn from Sana'a Center for Strategic Studies (2020)

21 RIKO, "Food as a weapon in Yemen," The Council for International Conflict Resolution, December 2020, https://uploads-ssl.webflow.com/5f22849d8d2ee9c5bf758a91/5f4dc890a65657e424e61fe45_FoodAsAWeaponLayout2.pdf

Merging Past with Present Heritage

The local authorities have prioritized opportunities to connect the next generation of Marib with their heritage while also providing opportunities for camaraderie and recreation. In November 2020, Marib had its first equestrian championship in the governorate, organized by the Youth and Sports Office of the City Directorate. The sporting events in the governorate and the diversity in tournaments and youth and cultural events organized for national holidays in September, October and November for Yemen's Independence Day. Marib spokespeople organized the event as a way to celebrate the living cultural heritage of Marib's forefathers along with strengthening a sense of national identity. Events like this are organized by Marib's government to support vulnerable youth and provide a good outlet for youth expression and development. As an example of how Marib's history and symbolism is used as a healing space, its archaeological heritage site has been incorporated into a rehabilitation program for former child soldiers in the Houthi militias from different areas in Yemen.²²

Tribes and Social Cohesion

Seeing Social Cohesion in Marib through lens of Asabiyya Marib's social patterns indicate that, at least at the local meso- and micro-levels of society, tribal influence appears to have a positive impact on social cohesion thus far through the value of extending hospitality in the context of Marib, supporting theories of trust, cohesion and social capital. The patterns evident in Marib seem to conform to many of the traits described in Ibn Khaldun's foundational sociological theory of Asabiyya from the Arabic root word *asab* meaning "to bind together." Supporting Ibn Khaldun's theory of *Elm Al Umran* (the science of social life) of Muqaddimah and, the concept of social solidarity emphasizing unity, group consciousness, and

a sense of shared purpose²³ and social cohesion was originally used in the context of tribalism and 'clan'-ism but presented a prescriptive model for all social orders and governments.²⁴ As the first major social cohesion meta-analysis conducted for the Arab world concluded,²⁵ social cohesion is a moving target and can be used to describe patterns of relationship and social ties that relate to social cohesion can include a range of positive and negative associations; "asabiyya, cooption, friendship, kinship, partisanship, and partnership".²⁶ In the context of Marib, its urban experiment of exercising sovereignty along the lines of a 'city-state' makes identifying the "formula" for maintaining positive social cohesion in this dynamic context is increasingly critical and may be the differentiator determining whether Marib's growth could be either an engine driving the emergence of the fastest growing emerging Arab city or it could prove to be a ticking time bomb of an unsustainable growth bubble leading to inevitable strain and implosion. Because much of Marib's capital at this stage is "human capital" on the edge of making its first major capital investments in infrastructure, there is tremendous opportunity to demonstrate how Marib's cultural strengths can help the city's growth continue to defy the odds.

The tribe-state dynamic which has operated throughout Yemen, took a unique form in Marib. Notably, the governorate leadership was successful in matching short-term military victories with longer-term efforts at governing and community building. This included responding to the humanitarian crisis by negotiating hosting sites for the IDPs, many of which were established on tribally administered land. Furthermore, as Marib has become the pass-through for all traffic, goods, travel between North and South, its tribes are positioning themselves to become central mediators between the North and the South. All this has created the perception within the



FIGURE 32. KSR relief have rehabilitated 161 child soldiers as part of the initiative of rehabilitating 2,000 Yemeni children. (Al Arabiya.net)

city that the tribes were better able to preserve their neutral status, sparing Marib from destruction and providing a safe haven (albeit, intermittently amidst intermittent attacks). This safety created the context for an economic explosion as IDPs have brought new wealth and jobs to the region. However, the advantage is fragile, and it is contingent on many factors beyond Marib's control. It may be compromised if the attacks on Marib's mountain ranges continue.

22 <https://english.alarabiya.net/en/features/2018/07/12/IN-PICTURES-KSR-relief-takes-27-ex-child-soldiers-in-a-tour-in-Yemen-s-Marib-.html>

23 Manoochehri, Abbas, "Ibn Khaldun on 'Political Change,'" *International Journal of History and Cultural Studies*, Volume 2, Issue 4, 2016, PP 1-9., <https://www.arcjournals.org/pdfs/ijhcs/v2-i4/1.pdf>

24 Ibn Khaldun's Asabiyya is applied within his conceptual reality of the Umran. The Umran represents a psycho-social dynamic character of social reality in which "sociology" is inseparable from "history", and also from "politics". He has linked his umran to Aristotle's notion of Eudaimonia. As such umran is the core of an interdisciplinary approach to understanding the complexity of human experience. Sumer, Beyza. "Ibn Khaldun's Asabiyya for Social Cohesion", *Elektronik Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi* 11, no. 41 (2012)

25 Harb, Charles, "Developing a Social Cohesion Index for the Arab Region" UNDP, January 2018, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/322570041_Developing_a_Social_Cohesion_Index_for_the_Arab_Region.

26 de Elvira, Laura Ruiz, Christoph H. Schwarz, and Irene Weipert-Fenner, eds. *Clientelism and patronage in the Middle East and North Africa: Networks of dependency*. Routledge, 2018.

7 CURRENT GOVERNANCE

This section presents key facts surrounding the local administration system and progressive “leaps” it has made to increase its capacity throughout the conflict, specifically since 2015. These leaps were happening against the backdrop of several factors, which primarily include:

- » The massive population growth, which also brought administrative, bureaucratic and technical skills to the formerly marginalized governorate. This population growth required parallel growth in the capacity of institutions. Marib’s urban and population growth required new services to keep up with the demand, also fostered by its presentation as a safe haven for capital investments from across the Republic;
- » The pattern of de-facto decentralization, which empowered the provincial level, but at the same time helped the governorate consolidate powers from the lower administrative levels such as the districts and the municipalities;
- » The last local elections under the Local Authority Law (LAL) no. 4 of 2000 happened in 2008¹, so that elected district and provincial councils since 2011 are performing under mandate extension terms, which in turn reduced their legitimacy, helping the governorate rule through executive powers. And finally;
- » The financial autonomy that Marib started in the Republic, and has since become its defining modus operandi, enabling the governorate to use its natural wealth to outperform other governorates possessing comparatively more advanced administrative experience.

These factors combined require thorough analysis of the administrative system to address the dynamics at the different local administration levels, in which the governorate

level plays a dominant role.

Four Levels of Local Administration

The profiling team interviewed several local administration officials, both at the municipal and the provincial (governorate) levels to understand the practical operation of the governance system. The interviews point to a gap between what is in LAL No. 4 (issued in August 2000) and the actual operational reality, suggesting that more administrative and financial powers than formally intended have been decentralized and practiced through executive powers and tribal privilege norms at the following four levels:

1. The central state oversight and budgetary role

The Ministry of Local Administration (MoLA) is supposed to manage the local administrative units at all levels, and provide the necessary oversight as to how the budget allocated through the Ministry of Finance is being spent. Increasingly since 2017, Marib began to sever its financial ties with the central government, reducing the transfers of financial revenues both from tax collection and more importantly from the oil revenues to the Central Bank in Aden. Not only did this mean that the role of MoLA became rather performative (the governorate still needs the stamp of MoLA on certain executive decrees), but much needed monetary oversight is now missing. MoLA is still invited to some opening ceremonies and inaugural events, such as at the announcement of new plans for the international airport, or the ratification of the master plan, but in practice the Ministry is no longer acting as a capacity that can overrule executive orders or endorse local budgets.

2. Autonomy of Governorate-level Decision Making

The governorate system has played the key regulatory role when it comes to oil and gas contracts. Because the governorate system is intimately linked to the local tribal confederation alliance in Marib, as well as to the security setup that safeguards the oil and gas operations, all the key decisions are now taking place within the governor’s office. A thin layer of bureaucratic oversight, enabling a more streamlined decision-making process also made the governorate more attractive to investors. For example, the investment decisions are supposed to be taken by the central state through the General Investment Commission² which operates under the Prime Minister’s Office. This commission issues the decision for land uses, and has tremendous executive powers that supersede the local level authority, or even legal documents such as master plans. However, all investment decisions in Marib are now processed through the Governorate’s Department of Trade and Industry, with the Governor’s Office retaining the final authority on investment approvals. The governorate level, through the Department of Finance also has the powers to allocate budgets for the different district councils and to the municipalities of the larger cities, and to manage the revenues and local taxes with no functioning system of checks and balances from central state authorities. Finally, the governorate has replaced the elected provincial council with a smaller ‘Executive Bureau’ (maktab tanfeezi), which performs some level of oversight and veto authority over the different provincial departments (mudeeriyat) which hold the power for provincial decisions. These eleven executive bureau members are also a reflection of a state-tribe alliance that stands behind the sustainability of Marib’s model and stability. Although the provincial system clearly lacks independent monitoring and oversight, and has almost entirely severed its meaningful ties with the central state, it

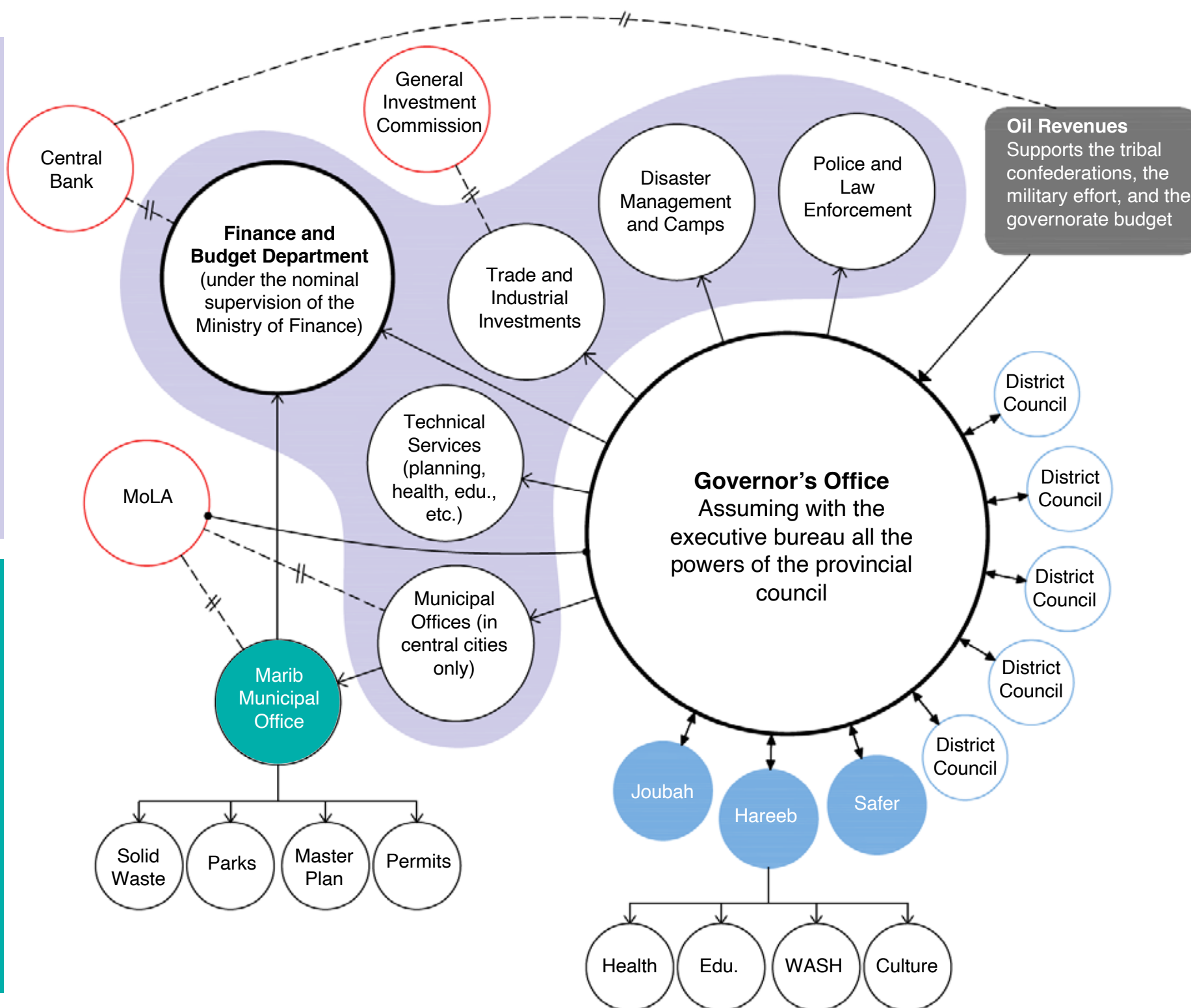
¹ As noted by Stadnicki (2014) Yemen’s LAL of 2000 was the culmination of decentralization reforms begun under the “auspices of the World Bank.” This law focused on reducing the size of central government by delegating planning and administrative responsibilities to municipal and district councils. In 2008 Yemen held its first elections for governors by council members. Despite the fact that most seats were won by the ruling party, Yemen’s decentralization effort was still one of the most ambitious in the Arab world. Roman Stadnicki, “The Challenges of Urban Transition in Yemen: Sana’a and Other Major Cities”, *Journal of Arabian Studies*, vol. 4, No. 1 (2014), pp. 115–133.

Provincial Departments

- Coordinate the entire local administration system through the Office of the Governor.
- The Finance Department manages resources allocated in the Central Bank's branch in Marib, and collect local taxes.
- The technical Services Departments manages construction and maintenance contracts with private sector providers in all the districts and the cities.

Marib Municipal Office

- Non-elected body with limited jurisdictions, operates under the provincial department of Municipal Offices.
- Manages basic urban services, including WASH, parks, and maintenance.
- Collects municipal taxes.
- Recently increased its planning role through the Master Plan office.
- Issues building permits.



Oil and Gas Revenues

- Revenues are collected by the central bank branch in Marib, but some revenues go directly to the war effort and the tribal confederations in Safer.
- The generated fuel helps operate the Safer Thermal plant that supplies the national electricity grid.
- Remaining resources are used by the governorate through the finance and budget department

14 District Councils

- Extending their mandate since 2016.
- Coordinate basic services with the provincial departments.
- Most of their service offices only exist on paper, and those that do exist are under capacitated and have no financial powers.
- Structure reflect strict tribal confederation dominance within the district.

FIGURE 33. Governance influence diagram. Based on interviews with local government officials.

arguably has a track record of performing as a governing body that is capable of making decisions on the spot, perform with agility and responsiveness to a tough reality, and to also lessen the administrative procedures that investors always complained about when dealing with the central state's Commission and the Office of the Prime Minister.

3. The District Councils as the lowest elected governing bodies in Marib

Even though each of the 14 districts in Marib have an elected council, as of 2020, it has been nearly 15 years since the last local elections were organized in Yemen (in 2006). The District Councils have since been operating under an executive order extension. Each district is supposed to manage District Offices, which are in turn supposed to coordinate the provision of services and the planning responsibilities with the mirroring departments at the provincial level. However, most of these offices only exist on paper, and only in few of the 14 districts, one can find semblance of a functioning District Administration office. While the councils themselves continue to exist as a reflection of tribal confederations with the largest manpower in the different district locales, these councils do not have actual powers so long as they are not capacitated with professional bureaucracy or sufficient budgets. This lack of empowerment is not a product of deliberate provincial consolidation of power as such, but merely reflects the reality in remote and sparsely populated regions such as Marib. Both the central state and the provincial authority in Marib did not move to staff and activate all the de jure bureaucratic structures that exist at the district level. Instead, bureaucratic resources were directed to where the demands were greatest. The operational district councils have staffed offices in the more densely populated districts such as Hareeb and Jobah, as well as Safer (Sector 18) where the presence of wealth and presence of international corporations requires the district level to play a role.²

4. The municipality of Marib

Like all other central cities in Yemen, the larger cities in Mareb have a municipality headed by the City Manager, a career official appointed by the governor. Furthermore, the municipality itself has no elected council, and performs as a Provincial Department. In recent years, the municipality of Marib became a key department due to the massive population growth, the need to coordinate humanitarian response and to manage camps. Within the past few years, the municipality grew from few staff who manage minor duties to a fully-staffed department with tens of engineers, planners, operations managers, contracts and fiscal officers, as well as full-time inter-departmental coordination staff.

Public perceptions of accountability and government services

Another factor to consider when assessing the effectiveness of Marib's administrative system is the nascent social contract the governorate appears to have begun to establish with the population, regardless of their origin or how long they have resided in Marib. The foundation of this civic relationship is that Marib's residents currently benefit from the best electricity supply nationwide with the lowest cost. Many households in the city report not being charged a power bill to access the public grid. They also have access to the cheapest energy sources such as gas for their cars and cooking. Our survey suggests that this basic level of access to services drives local satisfaction about the administration. This could partially explain the generally tolerant-to-favorable view of taxation expressed by residents polled in Marib.

Despite the limited municipal capacity noted above and the strong tribal nature of Marib's socio-political identity, in the urban scorecard survey residents generally displayed a favorable attitude towards government performance and a desire for expanded government services. They also expressed support for a robust local government law enforcement capacity. On the question of whether citizens preferred a civil state system of government over customary, tribal models, respondents overwhelmingly supported a central state system (with a total of 65% voicing some level of agreement). It may be that Marib's residents do not see state and tribal governance systems as mutually exclusive but as a whole package that addresses a wide range of different needs depending on the context.

The one consistent finding across all secondary research and residents' perceptions was that public satisfaction with the government seemed to be closely tied to peoples' sense of its

² According to the Berghof Foundation, "The local council in Marib did have 14 councilors at one time. Two seats have remained vacant since the 2006 elections, as no elections could be held in the districts in question. Two councilors have passed away. One of them was the secretary general; the other was the head of the services committee of the local council. This leaves the actual composition of the governorate's local council at 10 councilors (as of January of 2020). However, they do not meet regularly and have been largely stripped of their function." This further confirms why the governor and his executive bureau retains most of the local governance authority. Berghof Foundation, "Mapping of Local Governance in Yemeni Governorates", 30 January 2020, <https://berghof-foundation.org/library/mapping-of-local-governance-in-yemeni-governorates>

SCORECARD - Satisfaction related to dispute resolution mechanisms

A significant majority of respondents strongly agreed that they prefer to resort to law enforcement rather than any other alternative dispute resolution option, such as local leaders, armed groups or notables and heads of families. Only a narrow minority disagreed (12%). A majority of 43% however strongly agreed, with the native residents having the strongest preference to the civil state model.

If I face any problem, I prefer to resort to law enforcement or an official entity rather than to a local leader or mediators

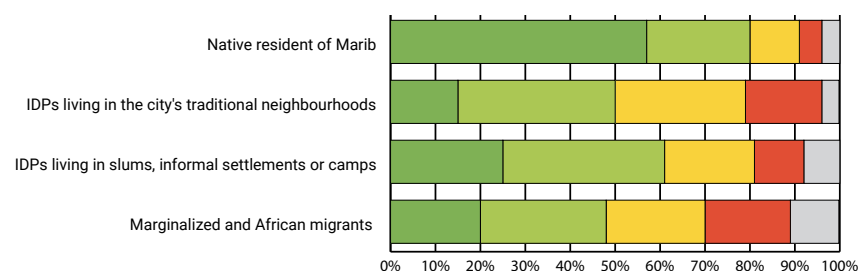
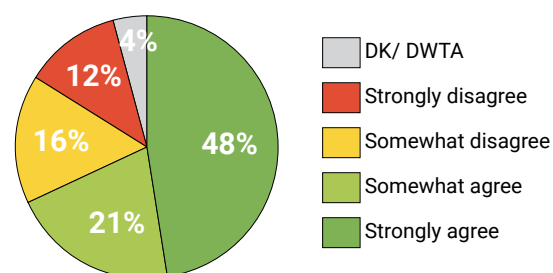


FIGURE 34. Performance and preferences regarding dispute resolution

Public commitment to paying taxes and utility bills

The commitment to paying taxes and utility bills shows strong differences across the demographic groups. Native residents seem to have the highest level of commitment. The marginalized community and the IDPs living in the neighbourhoods voiced the most opposition to taxes. 54% of the respondents strongly or somewhat agreed that the public is committed to paying their taxes to the state, as well as the utility bills to the local authorities who provide the services. A remaining relatively high proportion of the respondents strongly disagreed (15%) or somewhat disagreed (18%), and as many as 13% did not have a view on this matter or did not want to answer.

People in the city pay their taxes and utility bills

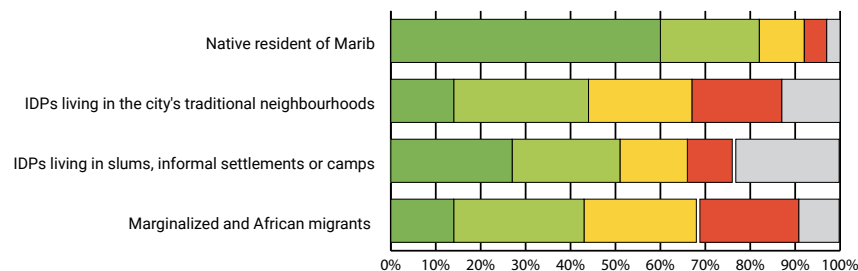
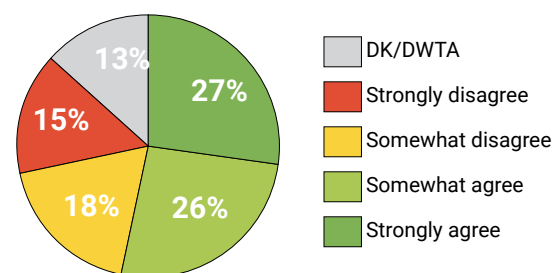
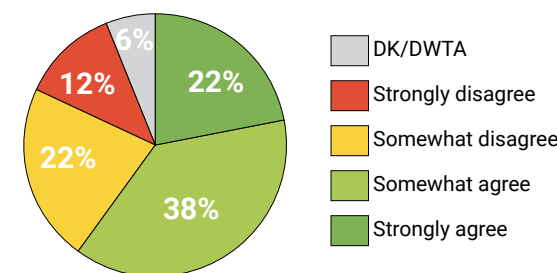


FIGURE 35. Commitment to paying taxes and utilities per demographic group

Challenges facing the state in providing services

Majority of the respondents across demographic groups expressed the ability to access information on the status of services from various information sources, with the native residents having the highest level of information access. Specialized Facebook pages were volunteer and random contributions from subscribers frequently publish updates on service provision, or sudden interruption, might have contributed to these results. Respondents to our survey expressed their satisfaction in the quality of municipal services they are getting: 23% were very satisfied, 34% were satisfied, and only 15% expressed strong dissatisfaction. Respondents generally expressed a very high level of acknowledgement when it comes to the challenges faced by the state authorities in providing decent services, while only 12% thought that these challenges were completely unjustified.

The state is facing significant challenges in providing decent quality of services for all



Satisfaction with the basic state services (mail, internet, real estate registration, permits, etc.)

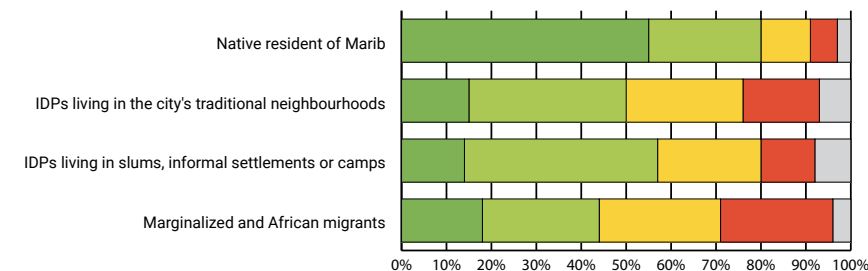


FIGURE 36. Satisfaction with the city municipal services (mail, real estate and civil registration, permits)

responsiveness.

When asked about the facility to make a complaint in the city today about all sorts of issues, residents generally expressed content with the access to complaints that they have, with even the marginalized and African migrants as the most vulnerable group feeling that they had channels they could access to submit formal complaints and needs for services. Still, critical basic services for the growing population are in shortage, most important of which are sewage networks, clean and affordable drinking water, and health services. These sectors need substantial improvements, which in turn requires a coherent approach to taxation and public investments, as well as capable institutions that can lead the planning, construction and operational responsibilities of such utilities.

Tribal and Non-Tribal representation

A key area where tribes have taken the lead over the government in Marib is their role in brokering Marib's transformation into Yemen's largest IDP sanctuary city. The tribes appear to have approached the IDP influx from a combination of customary hospitality and pragmatism. According to tribesmen in government and the business community,³ most of Marib's prominent tribal elders and their community members preferred to remain based on their rural land holdings and Marib did not experience a significant rural-urban migration, which is also why there was minimal resistance to IDPs establishing residences in Marib City. Marib's tribes made a conscious decision to open their doors to IDPs, unlike Ta'az, Aden or Ibb,

which overtly rejected northerners fleeing Houthi control. IDPs were initially reluctant because Marib had a bad reputation as a place with a weak economy and poor security conditions. Once IDPs started arriving and the government's strategy for growth proved effective, a virtuous circle was set in motion that has continued to drive Marib's transition from a small town to a significant city.

The strong Yemeni tribal social structure derives its legitimacy by meeting the needs of its fellow tribesmen, but tribal influence was deepened in Marib by the inter tribal alliances forged through the intense fighting to repel the first major Houthi offensive in 2015.⁴ These tribes (notably the dominant Abayda tribe-, followed by Murad, Al Jadaan, Bani Jabr and Bani Abd) effectively transitioned the military alliance they had formed during the Houthi siege into civilian affairs. Whereas other tribal confederations in other regions of Yemen seemed unable to transition from fighting to governing, Marib's tribes have been relatively effective at functioning as the unified front to fill the vacuum of absent state functions to meet the immediate needs of the region's conflict-affected population.⁵

The tribes employ different strategies for participation in the war economy and IDP influx. The Abayda tribe have prioritized investments and new ventures and dominate the "landlord" class in Marib City either directly or through real estate corporate holdings while the second largest tribe of the Murad prefer to focus on fighting. One unifying trait is that all fall under the 'al-Urf' legal, social, and political code, the tribes' responsibilities primarily involve the settlement of disputes and ensuring

provisions of goods and services.⁶

In Marib, this has increasingly meant serving as an intermediary between aid agencies and/or the government and tribal beneficiaries. The fact that many of Marib's local qabila leaders such as the current governor have alternated between serving in a formal government capacity and a non formal tribal capacity, appears to have helped them better lobby for more strategic resource allocations.⁷ Previous research (conducted by Oxfam in 2016) found that 65% of IDPs within Yemen turned to their local tribal leaders for safety or conflict resolution,⁸ and that number is likely far higher in Marib as of 2020, considering that roughly 90% of the urban population of Marib City is categorized as IDPs. The rise of the tribes in Marib indirectly benefited from the previous government neglect so that in the post-2011 groundswell of popular disenchantment and "loss of faith" with government institutions across Yemen created a natural niche for the tribes to feel on a local level. However, now the tribal role in Marib faces questions of sustainability, scalability (with a population that has grown 12-fold) as well as equitability.

The flip side of the tribal advocacy role is that it has been shown to create challenges of access for vulnerable communities. This is particularly true for the elderly and the Muhamasheen. Because of the tribes' role in brokering aid, for those who are not part of the qabila order, they can become further marginalized. When international aid organizations intervene to provide resources or services to these displaced populations, these groups often rely on the regional social structure through "approval

³ UN Habitat Profiling Team Virtual interview with prominent regional sheikh, May 2020; UN Habitat Profiling Team Focus Group Discussion with Security officials, June, 2020.

⁴ UN Habitat Profiling Team Virtual Interview with prominent regional sheikh May 2020; Baron, *The Marib Paradox*.

⁵ As Camilla Molyneux pointed out in "Made in Marib: A Local Response to Instability and Violence, October 2020, the tribes of Marib have demonstrated unique motivation to govern and apply civilian as well as military leadership. She speculates that this may have partly been a product of the community-oriented concern that arose from witnessing the way community grievances drove jihadist recruitment and the devastation of being ground zero for the devastation of terrorism and counterterrorism campaigns, which led to antipathy both towards the Saleh government coordinating drone strikes with the Americans and the AQAP elements controlling territory without providing essential services. As Nadwa Dawsari's fieldwork documented ("Foe not Friend: Yemeni Tribes and Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula" February 2018, https://en.eipss-eg.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/Dawsari_FINAL_180201.pdf) key AQAP leaders were killed and conflict fatigue set in, Marib experienced its own form of DDR in which the tribes absorbed former fighters and focusing on a common cause of being "Yemenis concerned about issues that matter to their communities, such as defending their region from Houthi incursion or improving and delivering more just governance."

⁶ Abaad Studies and Research Center, *Tribe and Oil in Yemen's War: The Battle of Marib*, November 18, 2020 Casey Coombs & Ali Al-Sakani, *Marib: A Yemeni Government Stronghold Increasingly Vulnerable to Houthi Advances*

⁷ As research conducted by Baron found, Marib governor's role in amending the pre-2011 terms of natural energy revenues to secure a sizable 20% share of oil and gas revenues for Marib was a major achievement for both local government and the tribes (most prominently, the Abida tribe on whose tribal lands Safer Sector 18 is located). Through establishing this revenue stream and its own independent Marib Central Bank, the tribal federation has helped engineer the evolution of Marib into a full-fledged microstate. Baron, *The Marib Paradox*.

⁸ Al-Sabahi and De Santis, "The Role of Cultural Norms", pp. 55–56.

of sheikhs " before intervening in the local communities. However, this can lead to an uneven distribution of resources, as illuminated by a study undertaken by Oxfam and published by the Yemen Community Engagement Working Group.⁹ In the study, "48% of respondents felt that humanitarian aid in Yemen was not reaching the most vulnerable populations. Arguably the most vulnerable or marginalized populations, such as the elderly, disabled, or illiterate people, have difficulties accessing information about humanitarian assistance and consequently accessing the direct assistance. Marginalized groups, which often do not belong to a more organized "tribe" or have a sheikh, are overlooked when aid organizations come into the country to offer humanitarian assistance.

Marib's context, therefore, requires a context-based assessment of vulnerability due to its unique anomalies. Unlike other hosting communities, IDPs in Marib report relatively little discrimination and as they now constitute 70% of the population of Marib City, many are themselves fully integrated into the host community (as owners of homes and businesses), many women are heads of household with full decisionmaking authority, it appears that a key determining factor of vulnerability is tribal membership.

Recommendations for stakeholders seeking to understand and engage the formal and informal governance system in Marib:

- » Recognize the challenge of representation: A long time elapsed since the last election, undermining the legitimacy of the existing representation councils. Even if local elections are to be held in Marib tomorrow, there are major hurdles that impede substantial improvement in representation. Women, who have become much more visible in key bureaucratic positions in the decision-making structure are less likely to have access to elected councils. The political order that governs local elections relies on delicate tribal

balances, and female participation such order is still not tolerated. The recently increased participation of women in the bureaucratic structure is at least partly a product of surplus administrative capacity that the displacement movement brought into Marib, and it will take years to see this translating to political representation in local councils within the community of Marib itself. Moreover, the electoral map will not enable the participation of the IDP community due to Yemeni election laws, and will thus exclude the voice of the majority of the current population which represents the bulk of the potential tax base. This means that the progressive dynamics that the displacement brought to Marib as a "demographic gift" will not necessarily translate into new state-tribe relations that Marib's future depends on in the near term.

- » The bureaucracy in the administrative system creates a realistic entry point for technical support: good governance relies on capable and empowered administrations that do their job on a day-to-day basis, and recent steps taken by Marib municipality need to be celebrated and supported. For instance, the growth in the Solid Waste and Parks Offices in Marib has been astonishing, and the capacity of such offices to build, maintain and operate such basic services has been improving in earnest. Expanding the bureaucracy, while improving the technical skills for the technical departments to manage other key services that are lagging behind is essential for the future of the city. Some key sectors include traffic management and road maintenance, sewage network construction and maintenance, drinking water supply, as well as departments that provide electronic services and registration.
- » Limits of local law enforcement: the municipality does not operate its own police force, which reduces its capacity to exercise its mandate. For instance, a municipality manager reported to us frequent cases where his staff were unable to

enforce building regulations as his staff aren't accompanied by a policing force. Despite the massive growth in traffic and traffic violations, the municipality is unable to organize a trained policing force to manage such basic management and security functions necessary for urban sector growth at the scale Marib now requires.

- » Lack of Master plan oversight: the municipality does not have the mandate to enforce the master plan, and still does not possess the legal documents and authorization to ensure compliance with its building codes. The master plan to date functions as a guidance document providing unspecific directives, and housing expansion specifically on private properties only gets generic guidance from the master plan to obtain a building permit. Investments and large-scale housing projects only get the permit from the governorate, and little to no regard is usually given to the master plan itself, which the provincial authorities recently ratified. A coherent approach to implementing and managing urban growth needs to be prioritized in one of the fastest growing cities in Yemen, and linking the municipal system with technical bodies such as the syndicate of engineers will be essential.
- » Need to improve risk and disaster management: as the city is growing rapidly, little attention is being given to the management of new construction, including in transitional shelter and camp projects. The recent flood incidents provided yet another illustration of the need to have emergency management and response capacity in the city. As conflict and is still unfortunately a factor in the near future, Marib will also need to be prepared for sudden sparks of violence and security incidences, which the security actors alone are incapable of handling. Fire departments, emergency first responders and civil defense organizations in Marib virtually do not exist, even though the municipal level is best positioned to cater for these essential functions.

8 HOUSING, LAND, PROPERTY

If we assume that the most practical estimate of the current population in Marib is 650K inhabitants, this represents a 12-fold increase of the population within a few years while the country is in conflict as we have stated earlier.

Historic Trajectory: Land Tenure, Development, Management

Tribal Land Rights: Grandfathered Clauses from British Mandate

The tribal families of the northern and eastern areas of Yemen (to include Marib) did not consolidate as much power as those in the south, due to the absence of extensive agricultural production holdings and other economic resources. Tribal leaders in these northern and eastern areas were an essential buffer zone for British interests: maintaining access to the feudal south and securing coastal trade. These tribal leaders were offered treaties by the British in return for their role in safeguarding trade security.¹ These treaties kept the peace but would also create conditions which led to the unique status and influence of Yemen's tribes in two ways:

- 1) **The colonial land "documentation"** counterintuitively reduced conflicts between tribes and helped maintain some degree of a balance of power between the tribes.²
- 2) **By ensuring a mutually beneficial arrangement for both sides:** the colonial authority introduced the foreign concept of property rights, and formal declarations of the tribes' right to autonomy in governing their own regions, along with entitlements to all its land through binding agreements. Although property ownership of land did not

exist in the form of freeholdings, the customary land use agreements between the tribes in Marib were documented by the British, giving them a form of lasting land use documentation to prevent inter-tribal attacks. This brief moment in history which was a transactional means to an end for the British introduced a strategic advantage for the tribes which no authority in Yemen had the power to revoke. With the discovery of oil and natural resources these once relatively insignificant treaties (both to the British and the tribes) became increasingly valuable and pivotal in creating a form of checks and balances between Yemeni central government and tribal authorities.

New population pressures

The arrival of nearly 640K IDPs since 2015 to the Governorate has put tremendous pressure on the city, which alone has hosted 82% of all IDPs according to our analysis of DTM data. With an added 108K households to the city's residents, Marib's hosting situation remains dire, and housing and shelter conditions are vastly underreported. UN-Habitat attempted to portray the hosting situation by analyzing DTM-supported shelter data. While information on current occupants of camps and collective shelters are easier to track, the majority of IDP households reside in private homes and rented shelters which are more challenging to monitor and leave many data gaps. Through approximation from data linkages, and by analyzing the urban expansion trends through satellite imagery forensics, the following IDP housing trends were observed:

- a) **Camps and Transient Rural Settlements host up to 24% of all residents in Marib (roughly 140k IDPs or 26K households).** Some of these camps were placed on tribal

lands (pastoral lands claimed by specific tribes through customary entitlements) and are quite remote from the city, but hosted IDPs rely primarily on the city, its services and markets for their basic needs and livelihoods. Activists in the city counted over 90 of these settlements in the immediate surrounding of Marib.³ These camps evolved over a very short period of time from small gatherings hosting tents for a few dozen households, to major settlements that are constantly evolving into permanent structures, although they lack all the essential services and still depend on collective service points (such as communal water reservoirs). The fact that many of these settlements were created on steep mountainsides, and not serviced by asphalt roads or drainage networks made them susceptible to various natural hazards, and they were the areas most devastated by seasonal floods.

- b) **Nearly 10,500 households still live in public buildings turned into collective shelters (approximately 63K IDPs, making nearly 10% of all households).** They have been identified in the locations of Kuliya, Al Najah School, Al Mutahaf, Al Nasr and Maktab Alziraah. Although occupants of these collective centers move there for comparatively better housing conditions than the camps in terms of basic WASH and protection from the elements, they offer a mix of advantages and risks. While they are categorized by humanitarian actors as "IDP hosting sites" which means occupants access to some of the welfare assistance and services that the local authorities and the relief actors continue to provide, they often lack suitable privacy and proper sanitation conditions. An IDP occupant of one of these centers reported to the profiling team that while he stays with his family in a separate classroom changed into

¹ Europa Publications Limited, "Yemen", p. 982.

² Ali Al Sarraf, South Yemen: From Colonization to Unification, in Arabic (London: Riad El-Rayyes Books Ltd, 1992), pp. 36–37, 52; Ahmed Al Siad, Salih, Authority and Opposition in Contemporary Yemen, in Arabic (Beirut: Dar Al Sada QAH, 1992), pp. 38, 48; Ahmed Al Massry, Attiah, The Red Star Over Yemen, in Arabic, 3rd edn. (Beirut: The Institute for Arabic Research, 1988), pp. 24, 30, 36, 38; Europa Publications Limited, "Yemen", pp. 982–985.

³ Mareb Press, "حملة الكترونية للضغط على الأمم المتحدة"

MAP 5 - NEW CONSTRUCTIONS

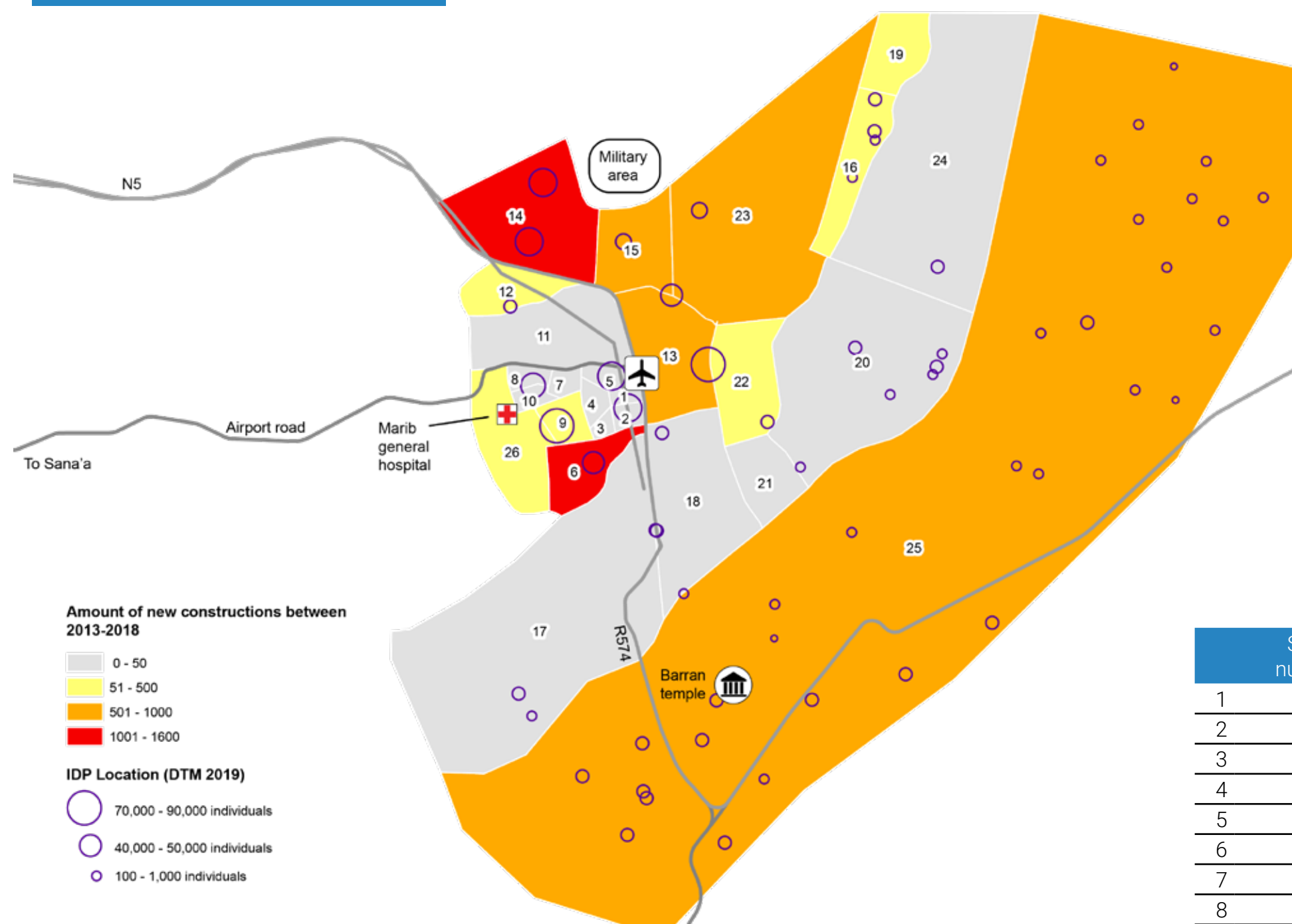


FIGURE 37. Increase in construction in urban sectors. Urban sectors were defined based on the aggregation of various neighborhood boundaries expressly for the purpose of this analysis.

	Sector number	Structures in 2013	Increase 2018	% growth	Total IDPs	IDP Housholds
1	14	889	1,542	173%	113,628	22,726
2	6	98	1,217	1242%	37,572	7,514
3	23	473	689	146%	11,502	2,300
4	15	556	684	123%	52,560	10,512
5	25	7,528	601	8%	41,574	8,315
6	13	1,096	572	52%	78,786	15,757
7	12	78	195	250%	4,008	802
8	22	112	195	174%	3,000	600
9	9	296	138	47%	82,134	16,427
10	26	66	116	176%	-	-

FIGURE 38. Top 10 of sectors' increase of structures 2013-2018 and IDPs in 2019 (IOM DTM 2019) sorted by absolute increase of amount of structures.

a temporary accommodation, most of his fellow occupants are individuals who are either African migrants, or males that deserted the military service in Houthi-controlled areas. This is why the collective centers have reportedly begun to differentiate their centers to offer special facilities for select groups: migrants centers, women-headed households and female-only centers, family centers, and male-only centers and so on, although they all represent a key challenge to the city's capacity to afford other essential services in those occupied spaces.

c) The remaining IDPs (71K) live in the urban areas, either in "inner Marib" (i.e. the small town and the city center area), or in "outer Marib" (which is a minor city expansion in the north that has seen a massive growth over the past five years). A staggering 71K households live inside the urban areas of Marib (approximately 430K IDPs, making nearly 67% of all households). To put that growth in perspective, for every 5 people currently live in Marib city, only one is a resident originally from Marib, and that does not include the remaining IDPs that are living outside the urban center as we have previously shown.

Marib's nearly twelve-fold increase in growth has led an informality boom that requires immediate action. Housing numbers were further broken down by shelter type as per the percentages shown in the table on the right, but the urban growth to accommodate 57K households in rented accommodations for instance challenges common-sense and urban densification possibilities. The key question here is how Marib in the course of only a few years was able to accommodate a five-fold population increase if we leave aside those IDPs hosted in public spaces and improvised camps? Even more importantly, what kind of services and shelter conditions the IDPs are living under even in privately rented accommodations?

Settlement Type	People	Households	%
Rented Accomodation	343,386	57,231	53%
Settlements Urban and Rural	94,938	15,823	15%
Other Public buildings	61,902	10,317	10%
Dispersed Settlements	58,206	9,701	9%
Other private buildings	46,644	7,774	7%
Host Families	24,864	4,144	4%
Host Families (rent free)	17,070	2,845	3%
Second home	1,068	178	0%
School	876	146	0%
Health Facilities	366	61	0%
Religious buildings	252	42	0%
Total	649,572	108,262	100%

FIGURE 39. Settlement Type of IDPs in Marib/ Marib City

Our ability to understand the shelter conditions through direct observation was limited, as the profiling team's access to the city was restricted by many factors (see the methodology section for more information). Secondary information, witnesses and key informant interviews led us to believe that at least three families live in each rented accommodation, and households have taken measures to subdivide each unit they are collectively renting and share WASH facilities in order to ensure minimum standards of privacy. Despite these efforts, overcrowding was still considered by many of the key informants we interviewed as a serious protection concern. As noted in recent nationwide assessments in Yemen, housing supply and affordability are viewed as the most critical problems facing urban areas in Yemen.

These are all speculations merit further research in a comprehensive shelter profile, but the bottom line is that all

Despite the subsidized, low-cost electricity for residents of Marib City and reality for those living 'off-grid' in camps struggling to cobble together utility solutions. As one IDP camp official stated:

” “We have more than 1,500 families in this camp and they have already moved three times ... because the fighting keeps following them. They don't have water, electricity, a hospital and the nearest town is 10 km away. Just bringing water is enough hardship.”

~ Director of al-Sowaida camp, October 2020

the significant urban expansion and growth in the city is still short to provide decent and adequate shelter conditions for the IDPs, regardless of the legal arrangements and the rent costs.

The Office of Cadastral Records stated that most rental agreements are not documented: both landlord-to-occupant arrangements, as well as the occupant-to-occupant arrangements (in a unit occupied by more than one household) remain undocumented, which can be considered a major source of protection concern. As the rental market is highly competitive, increase in rents has been a source of household income instability, and many evictions happen on a regular basis.

New Master Plan

Urban Growth and the New Master Plan on Marib

The urban profiling team has relied on remote sensing techniques to observe the urban growth that took place in the city. For purely analytical purposes, we have subdivided Marib city and its setting into 26 “sectors” (see: FIGURE 37 on page 53), aligning with the neighbourhood boundaries in the new Master Plan of the city as we shall see. The initial quantitative assessment was then triangulated by the qualitative information we have gathered through key informant interviews to understand urban growth dynamics, and to evaluate the Master Plan proposals against the supply/ demand trends.

Marib’s urban growth can broadly be defined under three functional categories:

- residential and shelter growth which includes both the slums and the improvised settlements and camps, as well as the rather regular urban densification and expansion
- Services, businesses and markets growing to accommodate the new demand and population increase such as the remarkable healthcare sector growth;
- Public and government administration centers.

Jobah and Rawdah: Examples of Secondary City Growth

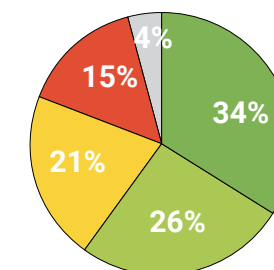
Driven by the displacement crisis and coping needs, the residential and shelter growth mostly occurred on relatively cheap land, sometimes several kilometers away from the city. For instance, areas such as Jufaineh have grown significantly during the war, and evolved from farm lands with sporadic residences near Marib Dam, to a densely populated area, co-existing with farming activities. Secondary cities such as Jobah also grew significantly, and as residents made daily commutes into Marib center, the two cities came to function almost as one urban conglomeration. However, the most substantial growth actually occurred in the areas on the city outskirts such as

Rawdah.

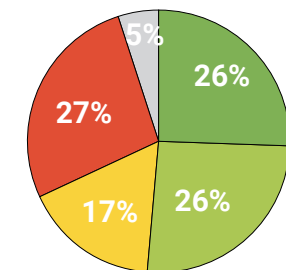
Before the war and up until 2015, Rawdah was a remote suburb of Marib that was less attractive for people to live in. Although it included some 800 housing units, it remained underserved and was only sparsely populated (most housing units were vacant). Moreover, Rawdah was initially an informal housing expansion, taking place outside the city’s master plan and away from the attention of the local authorities, though construction was only loosely regulated at best anywhere in Marib City. This suburb became a major attraction for IDP communities, who wanted to invest in a permanent residence and sought affordability when they compared rental or purchase prices in the inner Marib area. Land was randomly subdivided by a handful of owners, who come from the major tribes that continue to protect the city and form its cohesive social alliance, and construction accelerated as a result of displacement waves. Over 1500 new building units were added in Rawdah up until 2018, and construction continues to date in spite of the regulatory framework of the new Master Plan. Rawdah introduced Marib to previously unseen transport modalities. Before the war, any land or residence that is not walking distance or reachable fairly easily on a motorbike was considered unlivable for most of Marib’s residents. To date, 80% of Rawdah occupants are IDPs who are renting small housing units (averaging 60 square meters) from locals who found an opportunity in the new market. Most of the units in the area are built from rammed earth and mud, but the area also hosts multi-story concrete apartment units. The occupants rely on the city center or inner Marib for jobs and markets, commuting by car

SCORECARD - Housing

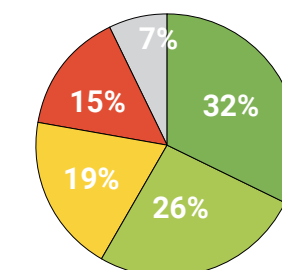
I feel safe in my current residence from all kinds of hazards (natural, man-made violence, risk of eviction)



Providing for my current residence cost over 50% of my average income



It is harder to find an adequate and an affordable residence for my household this year compared to last year



Strongly disagree
Somewhat disagree
Somewhat agree
Strongly agree

I feel that I can rent a house anywhere in the city

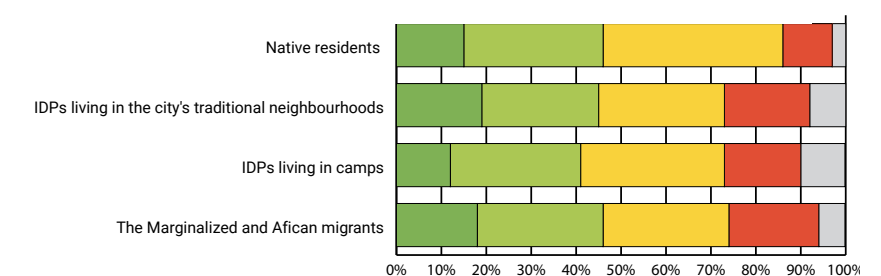


FIGURE 40. Availability, risks and costs of shelter

and by locally-initiated collective transport modes such as minibuses.

Rising Property Values

During the conflict, land prices skyrocketed (according to an interview with a real estate dealer, prices for a piece of land to build a small residential unit had risen to YR 12 million, from only YR 500K before 2015). The State of Yemeni Cities Report assessed that property values had risen by 300% from 2015-2019.⁴ Services are also gradually coming, and the area is now accessible by road, although inner streets and footpaths are not asphalted. The area does not have a water or a sanitation network, and relies completely on water trucking from nearby wells, and on domestic septic tanks, while electricity has recently reached the area through private providers. Residents of Rawdah were estimated to be about 113K inhabitants,

⁴ UN Habitat State of Yemeni Cities Report

FIGURE 44. Drone image of al-Rawdah Camp. The outskirts of the main city center appears in the background of the image to give a sense of the distance. Source: Ebraheem al-Theefah



FIGURE 41. Urban pattern - Al Rawdah

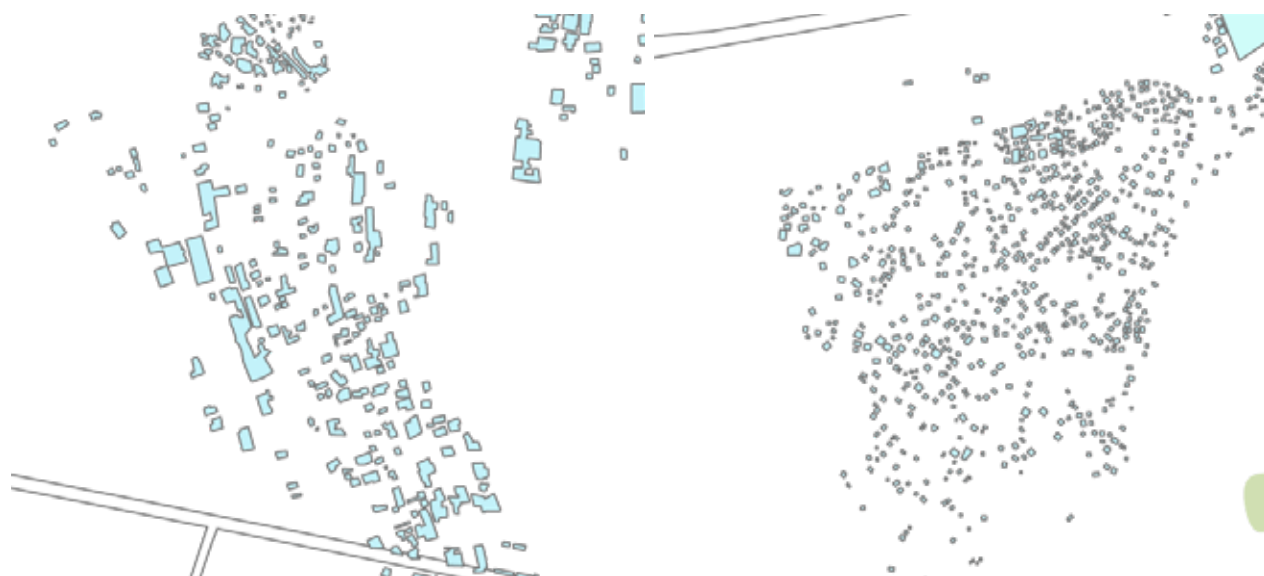


FIGURE 42. Urban pattern - Al Jufeinah camp (mapped in 2018, growth has increased significantly since)

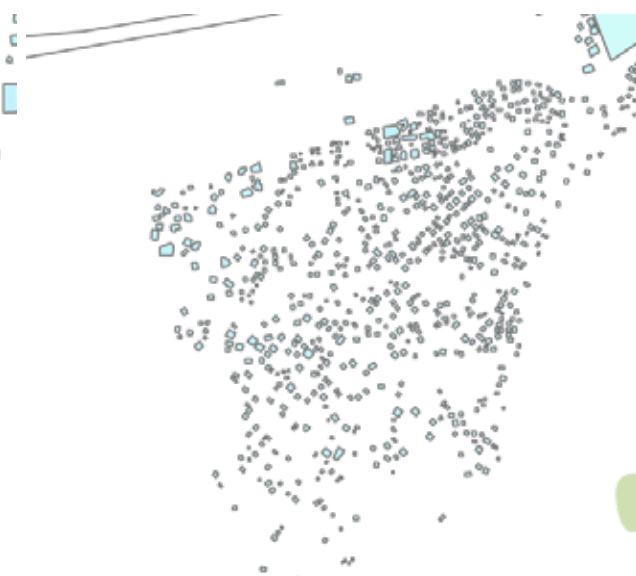


FIGURE 43. Urban pattern - Al Mataar. Growth follows relatively straight pattern parallel to existing roads.



which highlights how rapid this urban expansion happened in Marib over the past few years. Similar to Raqdah, areas such as Shuraika and Jufaineh have seen a massive urban expansion, and the key statistics for this growth (structures and IDP population) are provided in figure 38.

The new Master Plan of Marib

The new Master Plan is supposed to accommodate the city's growth for the next 30 years according to the General Administration for Land, Survey and Urban Planning, which also stated in June 2019 that up to 30% of the Master Plan demarcations on land features and road network have been implemented.⁵ Through our interviews with local officials, as well as with several real estate developers and regular residents, we have come up with an initial list of issues that might improve the context for implementing the Master Plan, keeping in mind that we fully understand the motives, the practical necessity and the ambitions that are involved in this grand scheme. But perhaps the most substantial announcement in that regard came in November 2018, when the Governor, along with the Prime Minister, Mr. Abdulmalek, officially ratifying the Master Plan of Marib into a legal document. The Master Plan had a staggering area of 20,750 hectare (the built-up city up until 2015 was only 630 hectare)⁶.



FIGURE 46. A farming area included in the new Master Plan of Marib.

Prioritizing Transportation Investments and Question of the "Marib International Airport"

As stated earlier, the city has plans to invest in a new international airport to serve Marib and central Yemen. According to local sources, the only work that has been done so far is the construction of a 30km-long fence around the airport plot. While an airport would provide access to a much needed transportation option for many in the region, upgrading road networks will remain the primary need for millions of users in Yemen.

In a recent interview on al-Arabiya news network, the Saudi Ambassador to Yemen, focusing on the "development and reconstruction" explained the steps that have been taken to commence the construction of Marib's International Airport. The new airport will presumably have an annual passenger capacity of 2 million, and will provide 1,000 permanent jobs according to the Ambassador.¹ Such announcements for major infrastructure projects in Marib are happening against the backdrop of looming risks, especially that the city of Marib is now effectively surrounded on three sides by Houthi forces.



FIGURE 45. New planned airport

5 Yemen Shabab, 20, "ألف هكتار" ٠٢ الف هكتار, July 2020, www.yemen-shabab.com/news/48216

6 Office of Cadastral Records in Marib Governorate

1 <https://www.alarabiya.net/ar/arab-and-world/yemen/2018/11/10/العربية-تعرض-مخططات-مشروع-مطار-مارب-الجديد>

Type of issues	Details	Ways to address them
Limited publicization	Although the Master Plan itself was made public through the municipal billboard, several information gaps lessen the amount of knowledge that observers, investors and the public can access, which weakens its utility and the public trust and buy-in.	Greater information on the Master Plan key assumptions (such as the population growth projections, market demand, guidelines for subdivisions, implementation period, etc.) need to be publicized, including through the municipal webpage and other social media outlets. Local officials can organize public displays and hearings, so that residents, businesses and investors can get to hear directly from the local officials about the different aspects of the Master Plan.
Pacing of growth	The vast area included in the Master Plan can only be justified if the city could sustain the unnatural annual growth brought about by the conflict. We might see in the future some growth as a result of further displacement, but we might also see returns and population drop happening in the city despite the protracted nature of the hosting situation, and in any case, the assumption that the growth from 2015 to 2018 will be sustained is unrealistic and can't be used as a baseline for planning.	We frequently see how excessively ambitious local plans can become counterproductive when they fail to predict future trends, specifically in terms of population growth and the business environment. It is always possible for the local authorities to partner with academia and research centers to revisit the population projections, IDPs plans for the future, and introduce amendments or phasing to physical plans so that they are more compatible with needs.
Proposed population density	According to GALSUP, the average density of the master plan is 55 capita per hectare. This assumes that another 930K inhabitants will live in Marib (on top of the existing population assuming that none of the IDPs will leave the city). Regardless of the growth estimate underpinning such low density proposes many challenges: it increases cost of a residence, as well as the cost of the basic infrastructure and networks, it complicates services and maintenance requirements, and it increases reliance on private vehicles and cost of operating a public transport system.	A phased approach, coupled with housing typology studies and prototypes can examine ways to increase the urban density by at least a double fold. Studies have shown that densities between 120 to 170 capita per hectare can reduce initial and operational costs quite substantially. Yemen has a long standing tradition of building high-rise residences even when traditional building materials are used, and some of this traditional experience can be featured in modernized prototypes that fit Marib's cultural and market requirements.
Complementary planning work requirements	The Master Plan as a document does not deal with relevant and related issues that are pressing on Marib, such as the housing demand and supply dynamics. The number one issue facing most residents of Marib (including the IDPs) is how the future growth will provide accessible and affordable housing for all.	The Master Plan merely provides the key development and spatial guidelines for urban growth. Housing typology, detailed neighbourhood designs, and building codes can all be informed through a housing action plan, which considers the market demand and supply forces, purchase and income capacity, predominant options for renting, minimum living space requirements, and optimal building materials to lessen dependency on energy sources. Moreover, several prototypes and models in partnership with different private sector providers can help local authorities determine the best housing options for the different income groups in the city.

Biting valuable land	Growth of concrete over farmland is an environmental misfortune and may cause irreversible damage, given the scarcity of arable and cultivated lands in Marib. This expansion will have consequences on the food security and affordability in Marib's markets. The urban planning law (Law 20, 1995) clearly requires the preservation of agricultural and other natural assets under all circumstances.	The master plan needs to avoid the encroachment on farming areas and protect them from the direct, as well as the indirect impacts of urban growth. Farming areas can be incorporated in the master plan as protected lands, with strict building codes (and other land use restrictions) to prevent illegal building, transformation of land for recreational and tourism purposes, and to service them to maintain their links to growing markets. Avoiding indirect consequences of urban growth involves waste water management, allowing the passage of service roads only (not bypasses), preventing the transformation of accommodations to villas that alternates the use of the land (for instance, by preventing fencing up to a certain height, and protecting perennial trees, etc.).
Reality undermining plans on paper	As the Master Plan was being prepared, large urban slums, spontaneous settlements and camps have grown inside the planning area, which will complicate implementation. Marib now has an informal settlement problem to deal with similar to most major cities in the Middle East, as informality occupies roughly a quarter of the new Master Plan area, and specifically in the immediate expansion areas close to existing inner city core.	Because Marib is now functioning as a city, with no previous experience in managing massive growth and planning requirements, it is realistic to assume that significant capacity building efforts must go to managing the informal housing problem, including the informal building activities over agricultural lands. Existing informal housing can be used to analyze the supply and demand of the housing market and to enhance an inclusive housing strategy. Measures to protect the Master Plan from further illegal expansion can only realistically succeed if access to equitable housing and land uses is provided to all residents.
City growth needs to consider operational challenges and requirements	Bigger cities require greater resources to manage, to serve and to sustain. Specific shortages in the system development in Marib such as the poor taxation system, lack of monitoring and building regulations enforcement capacity, poor record in enforcing construction regulations, and lack of capacity and experience to manage large infrastructure and networks operations will hamper the outcome.	Phased approach to implementation can look at ways to improve and increase administrative, monitoring and maintenance capacity as the master plan gets gradually implemented. Starting where demand on new urban land is the highest, where current transport systems can possibly accommodate, and focusing on municipal capacity building and institutional arrangements are the key elements of a successful phased approach.
Expansion over private lands	According to sources in GALSUP, the urban expansion as planned will mostly take place over privately owned land. Regardless of the expropriation measures (mainly taking the form of land deductions for public right of way), expansion over privately-owned land often reduces the capacity of government authorities to intervene in the market and to ensure different groups and income levels' access to the urban expansion areas.	The local authority's capacity to include publicly owned land (even if remote from the city core) can enable affordable housing programmes to compete in the market, and gives the local authorities a bargaining power they need to ensure equitable urban growth. The centrality of the Master Plan as it stands can cause increased strain on the inner city core, while a multi-polar model that develops suburbs on public lands can reduce the demand on centralized services and provide more equitable opportunities to all residents.



FIGURE 48. Masterplan roads projected on Al Jufaineh camp. The masterplan has proved to be irrelevant in these rapid urban developments (Google Earth 2021)

9 WATER AND SANITATION

Marib's government provides municipal services such as water, sanitation, health, electricity, and education. Marib's basic service provision has been transformed in the past six years by its increased financial resources and investment budget enabling the governorate to pay salaries and staff to operate independently of central government support since late 2015.¹ The influx of IDPs into Marib has put pressure on these services. The variable flows of the population count has led to an unpredictable demand for basic service provision. In an effort to compensate for the shifting context on the ground, and the general absence of reliable data, the Marib City urban scorecard survey helped provide insight into public perceptions of basic services in Marib. The scorecard gives a needs assessment for essential services that can help planning stakeholders:

- 1) Highlight pain points which can guide follow up focus groups addressing service needs, support local knowledge exchange and participatory planning.
- 2) Obtain atmospheric on the range of perceptions of a dynamic population in flux, including highly vulnerable individuals are often not easy to locate or for municipal and government authorities to engage at this time.
- 3) Integrate traditional/customary knowledge into municipal planning, documentation, and laws, particularly regarding the use of traditional water use and access rules (of surface, subsurface flow and groundwater).
- 4) Raise awareness on the formal water use regulations, impact of water consumption practices, and implications for human settlements, agriculture, and the economy.

¹ At the end of 2015, the governorate's conflict with the Houthi-led authorities in Sana'a led Marib to cease depositing income from gas in the Central Bank, keeping the revenue in its Marib branch. In 2016, Marib signed an agreement with President Hadi granting Marib 20% of the total revenues from gas extracted in the governorate, in addition to the revenue granted by Local Authorities Law. According to the local authority's 2014 budget, grants and central subsidies constituted 96% of the total general revenue for Marib, while local revenues covered only 4%. The most significant sources of local revenue were local shared revenues, selling goods and services, and levying fines, penalties, and taxes, Republic of Yemen, Ministry of Finance, Budget Sector: estimated local authority budget for the 2014 fiscal year. See, Berghof Foundation, "Mapping of Local Governance in Yemeni Governorates," January 2020.

² Ingrid Hehmeyer, "Irrigation Farming in the Ancient Oasis of Mārib", Proceedings of the Seminar for Arabian Studies, vol. 19, no. 33 (1989), pp. 33–44.

³ As Najwa Adra stated, "Although Yemen is economically the poorest country in the Middle East, it may be the wealthiest in social capital. Yemen's limited experience with colonialism has left largely intact important tribal institutions that still prioritise mediation, egalitarian ethics, cooperation and respect for women, all of which can be effectively harnessed in rebuilding the nation. (<https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/173204/ca9106951a2408f79cdadbf30fc9c244.pdf>); Meta Analysis of the formal and informal political economy of water disputes found that most rules derived from five major legal sources: 1) Islamic Law (Shariah); 2) Customary Law ('urf), 3) The Constitution 4) The Water Law and 5) The Civil Code <https://www.thehagueinstituteforglobaljustice.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/Water-Management-in-Yemen.pdf>, p. 91

SERVICES - WATER AND SANITATION

Overview of Pre-Conflict Impact of National Water Sector Policies

Marib has an arid climate but Marib City's proximity to the mountains give it the benefit of water runoff. According to a visiting archaeologist², rain-fed farming was not an option in Marib. Irrigation was necessary for agriculture at a scale that would sustain a city. The ancient dam of Marib functioned as a diversion barrage rather than as a proper dam (as in an artificial lake for water storage). The main source of water came from Wadi Dhana, which is a dry stream beds that contain water only when rain falls on higher ground in its catchment area.

The background of water and sanitation service provision in Marib is particularly complex and fragmented involving multiple authorities with blurred boundaries between government, tribal customary law (Urf), and International Humanitarian Organizations.³ Marib's recent history of being neglected by the government prior to the current conflict had left it outside of any central system without a local water corporation or autonomous utility or local National Water and Sanitation Authority (NWSA). Instead, the activities that would usually be executed under NWSA's planning capacity was transitioned to independent water authorities such as the local water corporation that was established in Marib. Prior to 2015, Marib did not have infrastructure for a piped potable water network. Furthermore, local institutions did



FIGURE 49. Water tower under construction by the Marib



FIGURE 50. Traditional well Dam Charity for Community Development

Scorecard - Access to water

While a majority of the respondents to our survey expressed ability to access clean drinking water (30% strongly agreed, 32% somewhat agreed, and only 17% strongly disagreed), disparity along the demographic groups shows that this generally positive perception is mostly true for the native residents. Displacement and place of residence in the city seem to strongly influence the degrees by which residents are accessing clean drinking water. Nearly 80% of the native residents

either strongly agreed or somewhat agreed that clean drinking water was accessible. Some 20% of the city IDPs and marginalized groups strongly disagreed with the notion that clean drinking water was accessible.

I can access sufficient drinking water

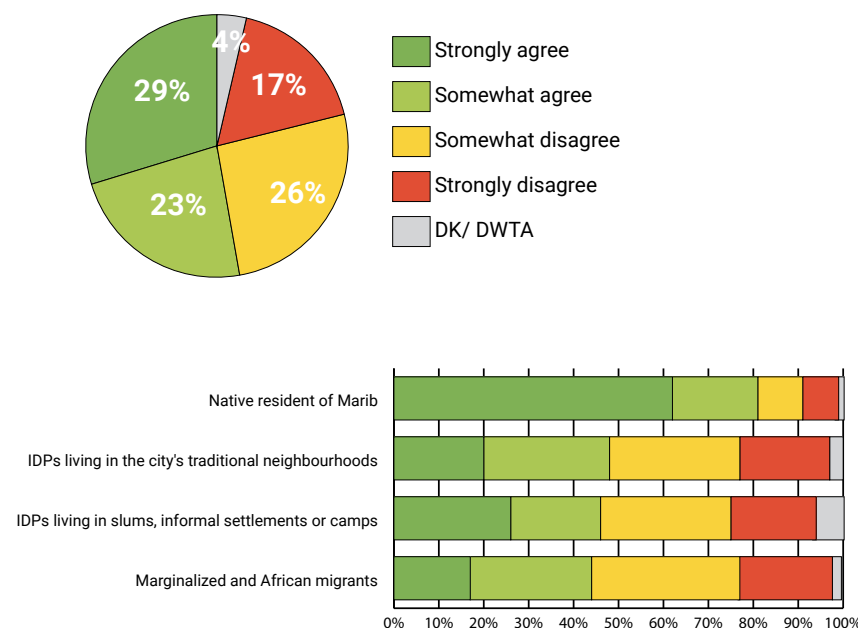
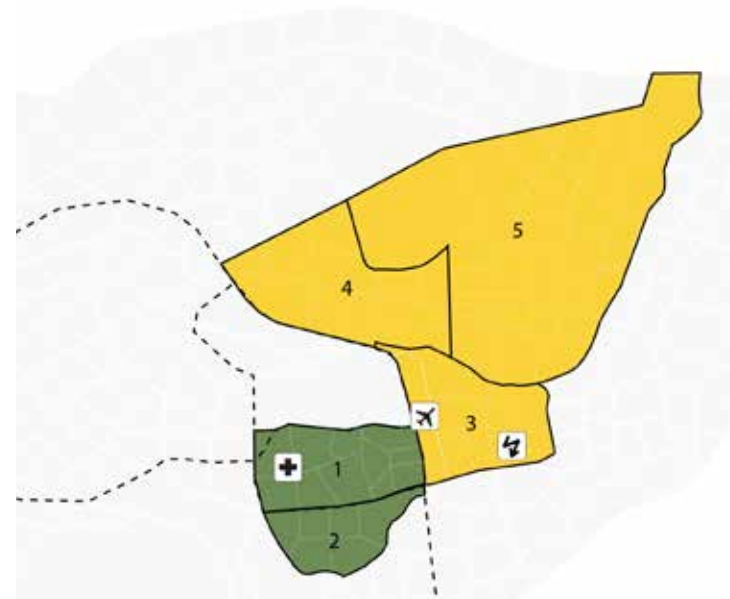


FIGURE 51. Access to drinking water all interviewees and per demographic group

Access to Clean Drinking Water



not have a role in the provision, monitoring or quality control of the drinking water, and could not collect taxes or fees on water supply and distribution. The current coverage rate for water services is 24.7%, of which 19% is a governmental network. However, as the city's rapid growth has increased the demand for drinking water, the municipality has become dependent on privately supplied delivery trucks. According to a World Bank assessment in 2020, private water supply, which was already meeting about half of Yemen's urban demand before the conflict, has expanded to fill the gap left by the inability of the public utilities to deliver water services. Private tanker prices vary widely. Tankers operate in an informal and unregulated market, leaving local authorities at city and neighborhood levels with little control over the quality, pricing, or usage of the water.

There have been conflicting reports on Marib city's ability to maintain its public water supply prior to the conflict. Some interviewees working in the water sector indicated that Marib's water supply meets the needs of 600K families in the city and governorate⁴ under the supervision of the Marib Local Water and Sanitation Corporation (LWSC). One common challenge noted for all the LWSCs is the unavailability of skilled staff needed to run and operate critical infrastructure. Because Marib has been able to pay salaries, there is the possibility that it has benefitted from "brain gain" as qualified and experienced staff who had to leave their homes of origin have settled in Marib.

On one level, Marib's local stakeholder complexity mirrors the national level of 'hybrid-sovereignty' of state and tribal entities coexisting in a symbiotic relationship.⁵ Marib, like many other rural areas suffered as a result of national laissez faire policies ranging from benign neglect of under-resourced bureaucratic entities to systematic

⁴ UN Habitat Profiling Team Interview, August 2020.

⁵ Eric Jeunot, "Why Do We Keep Misunderstanding Yemen?", Diplosphere, 15 February 2021, <https://www.diplosphere.org/post/yemen>



FIGURE 52. (Top and bottom image) Current Marib dam

The modern dam that was built in the 1980s, about 3 KM from the ancient Great Dam site. The 100-million dollar project was personally funded by UAE's Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan. As an example of the symbolic significance Marib holds within the region, the Sheikh claims to have sponsored the dam project because his al-Nahyan clan traced its origins back to Ma'rib. (https://almashareq.com/en_GB/articles/cnmi_am/features/2018/02/28/feature-02) The new dam is 38 m (125 ft) high, 763 m (2,503 ft) long, spanning the Wadi Dhana at 15°23'47"N 45°14'36"E, creating a storage capacity of 398 million cubic meters but recent floods have The dam site is located 3 km (1.9 mi) upstream of the ruins of the Great Dam. The new dam, like the old, was designed to store water for irrigating the Ma'rib plains. However, the wadi bed at the new dam site consists of alluvial sand and gravel material 30–50 m thick. Seepage that emanates from this dam does not threaten its structure, but results in the loss of water. As a way of capturing the seepage, some are calling for rebuilding the ancient Marib Dam, both to serve as a functioning structure as it contains hydrological solutions even more sophisticated than the current, and as a historic monument and tourist attraction. (Al-Qalisi, M.; Vela, J. (2015-09-30). "The dam that Sheikh Zayed built". The National)

privatization.⁶ This decentralization trend added another layer of complexity to the pre-existing customary system of patchwork water governance of multiple actors and parallel structures⁷ including strategic involvement of international donors in policy design at the ministerial level to aid implementation on the ground.⁸

Customary Water Governance

A combination of tribal codes, Islamic and Yemeni state law governed an estimated 90% of water supply from individual wells and water catchment areas.⁹ This effectively meant that residents of the city depended entirely on privately owned water sources, relying on a local network of domestic wells, transporting and storing water in jerry cans or medium-size containers, at little cost. Some local sources attributed the guarantee of access to water to the tradition of *sikhaya*, or the offering of water for the thirsty, which is considered a moral duty and part of the path to God's blessings, just as *karam* or "hospitality", as an obligatory part of offering refuge.¹⁰ Before the conflict, buying water meant that a household would pay a minimal charge for the

cost that a well-owner would incur to pump the water up, but not for the water itself (from aquifers), as it was seen as a universal right to access under Islamic and customary laws of *ala'ala-fa-ala'ala*¹¹ which guided water management in terms of upstream and downstream land and water rights. As of late 2016, approximately 69% of households in Marib had access to potable water in Marib.¹² Now, the local authority is actively working with donors to provide drinking water for the population, expand the sanitation treatment plant in the city of Marib, and provide sanitation projects for IDP camps, such as Al-Khaniq and Al-Jafinah.¹³ According to local water authorities, in the past Marib's tribes had equitably managed water in the eyes of the general public as there were relatively few disputes or complaints over pre-war water issues, as local interviewees recalled.¹⁴

Water Disputes as a microcosm of the broader conflict

Other secondary research within areas in and near Marib suggested a more nuanced and contentious picture, indicating that water disputes over the ownership or control of springs and wells are common. According to one

⁶ Yemen Observer, "Supply of Urban Water and Sanitation to Be Decentralized", 4 December 2007, <http://www.yobserver.com/environment/10013378.html>

⁷ The internationalization of Yemen's water policy began in the late 1990s there was a concerted effort led by an international Donor Core Group to decentralize water governance under the umbrella of the National Water Sector Strategy and Investment Program (NWSSIP) and shift to a commercial model of local water corporation as ultimately formalized in the Water Resources Management 2002 Water Law.

⁸ According to the Republic of Yemen's Water Sector Support Program "Sector Wide Environmental and Social Assessment" report, in 2003, the government invited international advisors to supplement its limited capacity to address the severe water and sanitation service challenges. Through a \$436 million Water Sector Support Program facilitated by Yemen's Donor Core Group (World Bank/IDA, Germany, the Netherlands and the UK) "the Ministry of Water and Environment (MWE) initiated a multi-stakeholder participatory process of preparing and launching a consolidated strategy, action plan and investment program for the water sector as a whole—the National Water Sector Strategy and Investment Program 2005-9 (later extended to 2015). See Republic of Yemen Ministry of Water and Environment and Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation, Sector Wide Environmental and Social Assessment (SwESA) (Sana'a: Consulting Engineering Services, December 2008), https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5eb18d627d53aa0e85b60c65/t/5eeb6a99ed5aad22f6a7ae42/1592486572828/SwESA_Report.pdf

⁹ World Bank, "Dire Straits: The Crisis Surrounding Poverty, Conflict, and Water in ...", n.d., accessed March 4, 2021, <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/27531>.

¹⁰ UNH Profiling Team interview, May 2020.

¹¹ World Bank, 1996; Herzberg, "Urban Water Scarcity in Sana'a, Yemen". However, due to Yemen's arid physical geography and climate, Yemen relies on groundwater aquifers for 70% of the water supply, in which cases *ala'ala-fa-ala'ala* would not apply (Al-Weshali and others, "Diesel Subsidies and Yemen Politics: Post-2011 Crises and Their Impact on Groundwater Use and Agriculture", *Water Alternatives*, vol. 8, No. 2, p. 216). According to these customary laws, groundwater is an equally distributed resource because it is below ground and any successful well can reach the aquifer, whereas surface water makes access unequally distributed due to geographic proximity near the water source. "Islamic principles treat [groundwater] as a communal property with a possibility of private ownership under special circumstances," according to Yemen water expert al-Hamdi (2000) based on research conducted near Marib (Mohammed I. Al-Hamdi, *Competition for Scarce Groundwater in the Sana'a Plain, Yemen. A Study of the Incentive Systems for Urban and Agricultural Water Use* (London: CRC Press, 2000)). Water management remains a contested issue of overlapping local, national, and tribal governance authorities and will remain a critical determining factor of whether future urban planning in Marib's growth becomes a catastrophic bubble or can be sustained.

¹² UNOCHA, "Humanitarian Needs Overview 2018: Yemen", December 2017.

¹³ Yemen, Marib Governorate, "15 مليون و ٢١٦ ألف خدمة طبية وعلاجية قدمتها مستشفيات مأرب خلال ٢٠١٩", January 2019, http://marib-gov.com/news_details.php?sid=1250; UNICEF, "A Report on the Humanitarian Situation in Yemen", October 2018, p. 7. See Berghof Foundation, "Mapping of Local Governance in Yemeni Governorates".

¹⁴ The "tribal social structure" was seen as integral to public water law and management in Yemen, responsibility and power is considered a region-specific issue following a system, "based on the collective responsibility and accountability of tribal leaders (sheikhs) to their communities". Al-Sabahi and De Santis, "The role of cultural norms", p. 56.

ethnographic assessment in 2017¹⁵:

“...some conflicts that appear to be tribal or due to other causes may well have water shortages as their fundamental underlying reason for conflicts. They include a wide range of incidents, of varying degrees of seriousness. These range from women and children squabbling over pipes, irrigation pumps and other sources, after waiting long hours in the hot sun.”

In addition to the severe water access challenges for IDPs in Marib’s 13 camps, conflicts over payment of fees to a management group for domestic water do occur, even when these are ‘community-based’. Conflicts between smallholders dependent on shallow wells and large landowners who have drilled boreholes that have depleted the shallow wells are also common, and have further disadvantaged smallholders who depend on them for their livelihoods.¹⁶

Overall, it is unclear whether the decentralization of water governance has led to more or less effective water management. One challenge in Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) needed to properly manage water resources in Marib is that tribal authorities have only recently stepped into more inter-tribal coordination¹⁷ which may have forced by the necessity springing from the city’s rapid growth over the past few years, which created a great demand for the delivery of drinking water, and highlighted an immediate need to enhance and monitor the clean water supply as a critical aspect of ensuring a minimal level of basic hygiene. Just as in the early days of the Marib dam, human settlements in Marib are inextricably tied to water management, which is again under pressure to rapidly evolve to meet the challenge of the conflict-driven population boom. As a sector, water management is now a

largely market-driven system characterized by the following trends:

- » Informal well proliferation: As wells multiplied, an entire business of water trucking and distribution emerged in response to the demand, operated by local residents. When asked about the number of wells in the city and the nearby farming areas, the Water Department in Marib Governorate stated that there is no active record for the number of wells, but they can state with confidence that “every land, whether urban or rural, has its own well now.”¹⁸
- » Large reservoirs of water were built in the temporary settlements and camps housing the refugees, and water is pumped either from wells or brought by trucks to these reservoirs, which create a distribution point for households which is nominally free of charge. These temporary systems are usually operated by charities, such as the Marib Dam Charity for Community Development, but often rely on market vendors and truck owners for supplies. Most houses also have small plastic tanks to store 500 liters of water, while IDP camp residents rely on jerry cans and kitchen containers for water storage.
- » Local institutions started to collect minor tariffs from owners of wells, but only inside the city core, and especially from the wells that supply businesses, such as hotels and shopping centers. However, the marginal tariff is in most cases not linked to the amount of consumption, and wells are still not equipped with counters to monitor the amounts of pumped water. Water has increasingly become a costly commodity for private individuals and businesses alike, unless subsidized by a charity. To illustrate this, the cost of 50

barrels of water in Marib today is roughly USD 30, which is significantly higher than the cost for a similar amount of water in Sana’a for example (around USD 14).

Water quality

According to our key informant interviews, the authorities also currently do not systematically monitor the quality of the drinking water, or the hygiene standards followed by the system operators such as the trucks and the large water containers put in the markets and next to shopping centres. Even during cholera season, the spread of waterborne diseases from flooding or during the COVID-19 pandemic response, the role of the local authorities in terms of water quality monitoring was largely absent, even though local health officials have year-round public health awareness campaigns to promote best practices for water storing and domestic treatment. Following a spike of illnesses and diarrhea cases received in Marib hospitals January 2019, inspectors attributed the contamination to a distribution network that is connected to Al-Kawthar Commercial Well. Al-Kawthar commercial well supplies many tanks that are used in the markets, as well as unmonitored bottled water businesses. According to health officials interviewed by the profiling team, the conditions for trucking and distributing water are substandard, and containers are often left uncovered and in the sun in plastic bottles for days. A minimal response that has been reported was that local authorities, through the Office of Trade and Consumer Protection, started to inspect the hygiene condition of the trucks and the large reservoirs installed in the markets. Dozens of these assets were seized, and owners were asked to sign a certificate of compliance to guarantee the quality and hygiene standards if they want to continue their business.

15 Helen Lackner, “Extreme Environmental Challenges in the Context of Lasting Political Crisis: The Case of Yemen”, in *Environmental Challenges in the MENA Region*, Hamid Pouran and Hassan Hakimian, eds. (London: Gingko, 2018), pp. 108–126.

16 Ibid, Lackner, p. 178

17 Louise van Loon, et al, and others, “An analytical frameworkAnalytical Framework for capacity developmentCapacity Development in EIA—The cCase of Yemen”, *Environmental Impact Assessment Review* (2009). , vol. 30, No. 2 (2010), pp. 100–107.

18 Interview local official by UN-Habitat 2020

Sanitation

Another dimension of Marib's rapid urban growth in Marib is the widespread adoption of lavatories. Initially, most houses, especially in the family gatherings outside the city core, rarely had private lavatories or bathrooms, and some informants state that "plumbing as such did not even exist as a profession". New housing units, even those built from makeshift materials in the new settlements now often have private lavatory spaces despite the tiny space they occupy. However, the city does not have a sufficient sanitary network (the coverage by sanitation services is 33.0%) to support these lavatories, and instead largely depends on pit latrines through holes bored in the ground locally known as "bayarat."

Marib Treatment Plant- 2030 Plan¹⁹

At the time of writing, there was neither a wastewater collection system nor wastewater treatment plant in Marib Center. All the houses drain wastewater into privately managed cesspits. However, a sewage system has been planned, the general layout and the pipe sizing of which has been determined according to the population distribution in the project area, anticipated for the year 2030. The construction includes one Pump Station with a maximum capacity of 50 m³/h, and work to include all related Civil, Mechanical and Electrical Works. The Wastewater Treatment Plant (Wastewater Stabilization Pond System) aims to create an inflow handling capacity of 1224 m³/d including all associated Civil, Mechanical and Electrical Works. The selection of the treatment plan was determined so as to:

- » Maintain the "flow by gravity" in all parts of the collection system to the treatment plant.
- » Locate the treatment site far from residential, agricultural

and human activities.

- » Minimize negative environmental impacts.
- » Avoid and mitigate effects of land development around the selected location.
- » Allow for a buffer zone to absorb possible future expansion
- » Ensure close coordination with the officials of Local Water Corporation in Marib

Nevertheless, progress on finalization of plant location has been hampered by 'Not in My Backyard' (NIMBY)



FIGURE 55. Sewage system plan (Provided by local government)



FIGURE 53. An example of the large water catchments used to collect flood water. It is the traditional way Marib farmers captured ground water. They also cover these pools to reduce evaporation and pump when they need irrigation for crops.(alarabiya.net)



FIGURE 54. Charity distributing plastic water reservoirs to households

¹⁹ UN-Habitat State of Yemeni Cities 2020

disputes over the location of the station and will require continued coordination between the concerned authorities to end deliberations and launch the project.

Challenge of expanding sewerage and water networks with urban expansion.

According to our interviews with local officials , there is no realistic outlook on the expansion of potable water and sanitation networks, even though some plans are on the table for sewerage. In particular in light of the ongoing city expansion, this is a challenge and an opportunity. For example, the streets that are presently being developed in the northern expansion area do not feature underground networks, which could be planned from the onset to prevent the significantly higher costs of retrofitting networks after road implementation. Unfortunately, the adherence to a diligent planning process is challenged by the clear incentive to prioritize fast development of roads and housing units over a 'future-proofing' of the water and sewerage system.

10 HEALTH SECTOR

One of the most dramatic changes Marib has witnessed is the rapid transformation from the essentially nonexistent healthcare sector in the city only a few years ago, to an entire system of supplies, along with nascent efforts to establish regulations, management and human resources.

Although Marib is one of Yemen's largest governorates whose rich natural resources make it one of the most significant contributors to Yemen's GDP¹, Marib's health system has historically been relatively weak. Before the war, local sources reported that less than 50 health-related services were available for the entire governorate of Marib. This included medical dispensaries (clinics) and primary health care units, as well as a limited number of home-based private general practice clinics. Residents reminisced that as late as 2014, people who needed any level of health care intervention beyond basic care for communicable diseases had to travel for seven hours to Sai'oon, or even go as far as Sana'a.² A combination of factors undermined Marib's health system, including:

- » Brain drain of local medical professionals: the low population density in the years before 2014 meant local medical professionals who left to pursue their medical studies in Sana'a or Aden did not have local jobs to draw them back.³
- » A lack of national funding in Marib's healthcare sector.

Expansion of healthcare capacity post 2011

Political changes around 2014 accelerated the transformation of Marib's healthcare system. In March, 2014, Marib secured infrastructure and capacity financing from LNG Yemen (a natural gas liquefaction company) to provide YR 1.4 billion in financing for 40 community development projects, including ambulances and 8 health-related projects, including the construction of a cardiology center within Marib General Hospital, training programs for health workers, provision of medical equipment and ambulances.⁴

The arrival of hundreds of thousands of IDPs elevated the health care needs to a new level, driving local authorities to act with greater local autonomy to improve health sector capacity, under the management of the Governorate's Office of Health and Population (OHP). Several new hospitals were established in 2014 along with a Hospital Administrative unit, the Commission of Marib Hospital (CMH).⁵

However, arguably the largest increase in local healthcare capacity is attributable to the significant expansion of private healthcare staff and services, made possible by professionals within the IDP community in Marib. According to the OHP Deputy Manager⁶ over 200 new health care facilities were opened in Marib between 2018 and August 2020.⁷ These new services include 8 new private hospitals, and a network of private clinics and dispensaries distributed across the Governorate. A majority of these services are located in the larger cities including Marib in the center of the governorate. A medical training center visited by the

” Many doctors who are originally from Marib (abna'a Marib or “children of the tribes”) had seldom considered coming back to their small towns after finishing medical school in Sana'a, for example, but we now see many of them choosing to return and opening their medical practice closer to their homes and communities.

– Prominent local physician who has been practicing medicine for over a decade in Marib.

profiling team (operating under the administration of Marib University) has recently celebrated the graduation of the first nursing class in Marib (32 graduates, 21 of whom were females).

This new cohort of healthcare workers has proved to be essential in staffing the surge of frontline healthcare workers as part of the city's coronavirus preparedness plan. There are multiple social dimensions of the emergence of the healthcare sector in the local workforce. A prominent local figure explained how this increased sector capacity has meant the community has access to affordable local

¹ In the aftermath of Arab coalition efforts to drive out Houthi-Saleh forces from southern territory under their control, many of the liberated provinces mirror microstates, including the Al-Mahra and Marib provinces, which refuse to supply revenue to the government. Muneer Binwaber, “Oil's Impact on Tensions in Southern Yemen”, The Washington Institute, 9 August 2019, <https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/fikraforum/view/oils-impact-on-tensions-in-southern-yemen>

² Interviews with various community members in Marib, 2020.

³ Adel Aulaji, *On the Edge: The Challenges of Yemen's Healthcare System*. (London: Saqi Books, 2014).

⁴ LNG Industry, “Yemen LNG Helps Community Development Projects”, 5 March 2014, https://www.lngindustry.com/liquid-natural-gas/05032014/yemen_lng_helps_community_projects_247/

⁵ CMH currently has 107 staff, of which 42 are healthcare professionals (including 18 specialist care physicians and 24 nurses). CMH also has 105 hospital beds, six ICUs, and 2 operating rooms.

⁶ UN Habitat Profiling Team Interview with the Health Administrator for Marib Governorate.

⁷ WHO noted there are 88 operational health care centers throughout Marib as of August 2018, WHO, “Statistics and Themes”, accessed 23 February 2021, <https://rho.emro.who.int/Set-of-themes>.



FIGURE 56. Hospitals and health facilities in Marib (google maps)

healthcare services. These recently arrived “migrant” doctors have attained a respected status in the community and are welcomed as “key assets, lifesavers and helpers during this time of great adversity.”⁸ These new healthcare workers have helped reduce the exceptionally long wait times Marib locals had to endure just a few years ago for even the most routine doctor’s visit. To a large degree, the health care system in Marib now relies on the medical expertise and the specialization that the IDPs brought with them, and the treatment protocols offered by the dispensaries that they staff.

By late fall, 2020, survey respondents reported that fears of contracting the coronavirus were increasing as cases rose in Yemen. A majority of those interviewed expressed some degree of fear of catching COVID-19 (58%), while only 16% expressed that they’re not worried at all. Respondents generally expressed approval of the measures taken in their communities in response to COVID-19, although the measures that the local authorities have taken are limited to curfew in the afternoon hours (which in turn lasted for a short period of time), restrictions in places of worship, and several public awareness campaigns. However, a majority (33%) strongly agreed that the local authorities in the city should be doing more to

fight the spread of the virus. A smaller group (15%) of the respondents who were also critical of other urban conditions, expressed less worry about the pandemic and strong disagreement with the idea that more measures should be taken by the local authority in response.

Access and Affordability

Another key aspect to the healthcare system is affordability: while health insurance options do not yet exist in Marib, even for health care workers or other public government employees, the overall costs are low for public as well as private health options. Wait times are longer for public health care as is the case in other nationalized healthcare systems. Public costs were compared with inpatient or outpatient services offered at a private hospital visited by the profiling team in Hareeb city (see box above).

The disparity in affordability between private and public healthcare provider options shows the degree to which the public option is subsidized, and the popularity of this option despite its longer wait-times, limited intake capacity, and dependence on humanitarian supply chains that are often outside of the control of local medical authorities.

Alternative Medicine

Some local residents as well as many rural societies in Marib still rely on alternative therapies and herbal medicine (al-teb el-shaabi) for most illnesses. These therapies are administered from the homes by well known “healers” and sheikhs. However, the expanding prescription drug market and the cultural cross pollination between the residents and the incoming IDP communities are now shifting the norms of how they see their healthcare options. Modern medicine and treatments are now becoming the preferred method of choice. One local leader mentioned for instance that a few years back, a little boy with a bone fracture “would be taken

⁸ UN Habitat Profiling Team Interview (virtual), August 2020

Healthcare cost comparison

Private Healthcare Costs

Outpatient doctor's visit/medical consultation:
300 YR (approx. 1.2 USD),
Lab work: Blood or urine analysis test 1500 YR
(approx. 5.99 USD)

Outpatient doctor's visit/medical consultation:

2,000 YR (approx. 8 USD)
Lab Work: Blood or urine analysis test 3,000 YR
(approx. 12 USD)

to a reputable sheikh in Safer who would have operated on the broken leg, masterfully repositioning the bones if dislocated, and set the injury with a homemade mixed cast. Instead, people today rush to get an X-Ray and to see an orthopedist, and to put one of those pleasantly-looking plaster casts.”

Issues and Challenges

A number of emerging issues in the evolving healthcare landscape need to be incorporated into humanitarian programming to complement current initiatives to support the system that is now coping with tremendous stressors. Challenges that were identified include:

a) **Gap between official data and current capacity on the ground.**

Many assessments of capacity are based on the reported capacity rather than accurate surveys of the “informal health care marketplace” that is barely regulated or monitored by the local health care authorities. For example, according to WHO’s HeRAMS dashboard (last published in 2018), Marib had 7 doctors for each 10,000 habitants in the governorate. According to the health experts interviewed in the governorate’s office and CMH, this reported figure only includes the physicians operating under the official capacity of CMH, which implies that there is no way to evaluate the accuracy of this ratio given the large number of unregulated/unregistered medical service providers currently in practice.

b) **Lack of healthcare administration capacity.**

When asked about the lack of legal guidelines regulating the private health care system, the OHP informant indicated that officials had prioritized building capacity⁹ to meet exponentially increasing healthcare demand at the expense of developing a healthcare administrative capacity. The absence of updated data on the sector outside CMH was noted to also undermine the capacity of OHP to plan and prioritize, as they are missing critical data on existing services which further challenges administrators’ ability to manage the coordination between the public and the private service provision.

c) **Medical services are under-regulated.**

The lack of healthcare regulation and oversight undermines coordination between the government,

donors, and private sector: an interview with a local doctor that operates a private clinic demonstrated that these clinics are not formally registered at the health office (OHP) and are still untaxed.¹⁰ Despite the fact that most private commercial businesses in Marib pay taxes, health care offices are either exempted or allowed to operate under the radar, which results in an informal healthcare subsidy for patients as providers are able to keep the costs of services lower. However, the unregulated nature of the Marib healthcare marketplace often results in dire shortages of medicine and medical supplies, with life threatening consequences.¹¹

d) Harmonize local programming with the UN Health Cluster. Donors need to mobilize for long-term humanitarian health sector presence on the ground.

- » The Health cluster has improved its coordination with Marib health authorities especially during COVID-19 response.
- » Authorities are hopeful that the current health sector coordination for the crisis will continue and carry over into ongoing health coordination, so that Marib is treated as a health priority given the strain on its services, its medical needs for vulnerable displaced households, and the unpredictability of humanitarian supplies.
- » The ongoing security situation adds further pressure. For example, in February 2020, Houthi forces violated international humanitarian law by attacking two hospitals about 75 kilometers north west of Marib City (Al Jafra Hospital and Al Saudi Field Hospital) that serve about 15,000 people - mostly displaced - in Majzer District, causing severe damage to the intensive care

⁹ In particular, they are focused on building capacity in areas of burn treatment, dialysis, and oncology.

¹⁰ Process for registering as a service provider: the doctor interviewed by the profiling team mentioned that he was required to sign a few papers at the municipality before he could start his office, and he had to submit authorized versions of his diploma degrees along with the application.

¹¹ According to OHP, CMH often suffers from shortages of medical supplies, and despite its overland access to border crossings (such as with KSA). When probed about the reason for these interruptions, CMH official attributed this situation to lack of coordination, and the unpredictability of assistance coming from the two main donors to the health care system: UAE Red Cross and Muhammad Ibn-Salman Humanitarian Centre. CMH is often uncertain when to place procurement orders for supplies and medications leading to frequent gaps in supplies, while private market suppliers already ignore many subsidized medicines leading to serious interruptions (specifically for cancer patients and diabetes).

unit, among other facilities. The challenges will likely further strain the health system and demand better coordination to weather the challenges.



FIGURE 57. Kidney Dialysis Center funded by KSA



FIGURE 58. The Inauguration of Marib's first Medical School in 2019



FIGURE 59. Marib General Hospital

Marib's Coronavirus Conundrum

The response to the coronavirus pandemic consisted of a patchwork of piecemeal preparations and preventative measures and an overall lack of social responsiveness. Since March 2020, news of the global pandemic became a headline story in major Arab media outlets and began to occupy a large part of the public discourse. Following the lead of other Arab countries in adopting measures to counter the virus, the Legitimacy Government initiated a National Committee for the Coronavirus Response, which remotely monitored the spread of the virus and issued recommendations virtually, although with limited enforcement capabilities. Because Marib, like other governorates, was proactive in taking early action to limit the spread of the virus by enforcing several measures they were able to keep their curve relatively low.

Efforts to contain the virus

- » A partial curfew was declared by the Governorate on April 3, 2020.
- » Public and religious gatherings, including weddings and other social events were banned.
- » Markets were shuttered except for a few core hours each day and businesses permitted to remain open were restricted to those selling essential items (mainly fresh foods and basic groceries and pharmacies).
- » To date, reported COVID-19 cases in Marib are still very limited despite the high population density. The official reports speak of 32 cases, and 10 deaths as of August 21, 2020.¹² This may indicate that Marib is beginning to show signs of epidemic spike, but such speculation is hard to verify amidst the absence of adequate testing measures. The profiling team learned that CMH has

recently received PCR testing equipment and thousands of testing kits through WHO.

However, despite the restrictions, the response amounted to a half-hearted lockdown, as it was accompanied by inept enforcement measures outside of city centers. The net result of four weeks of the first lockdown and curfew measures were not taken seriously by the public. Due to the limited spread of the virus or reported deaths, people's frustration mounted and few members of the public heeded the social distancing requirements or wore face masks.

According to law enforcement officials and other community notables, a limited curfew was still being enforced in Marib as of November, 2020, strictly banning the entry to and the exit from the city between 8 pm and 6 am. The curfew also restricts movement inside the city, and enforces the closure of all businesses and markets with the exception of dispensaries and pharmacies.

2020 Flooding

During the past months of the COVID-19 response, other communicable and water-borne diseases such as cholera have claimed many more lives than the pandemic. The two recent flooding events around Marib City have claimed the lives of 103 people (July-August 2020), and displaced over 5400 people including 2300 from collective IDP camps.¹³ Under these dire shelter and weather conditions, the risk of COVID-19 is viewed as just one crisis among many. The COVID-19 preparedness added pressure to an already stretched medical infrastructure in Marib now dealing with a surge in intensive care cases, which is beyond the capacity of the Marib health system. The worsening health conditions are beyond the resources available in the governorate's current operational, administrative, and financial capacities.

” These (Coronavirus) measures came too early to follow the models in more connected societies in the West and in the Arab Gulf. They did not seem justified for Marib's context and people did not relate to them.”

- Local leader

” The city curfew reminds me of how calm and simple life was in Marib before the war.”

- Longtime resident of Marib

” This curfew has nothing to do with the coronavirus, but more with the security fears as the battles with the Houthi-Saleh forces are only a few miles to the west of the city.”

- Marib resident



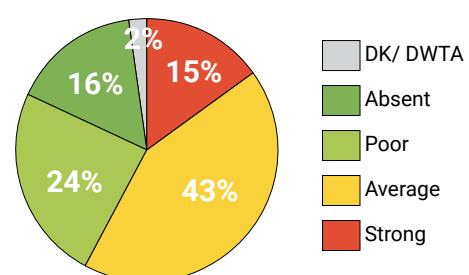
FIGURE 60. COVID-19 Public Health Volunteers in Training

¹² National Committee for the Coronavirus Response, on their Facebook news feed.

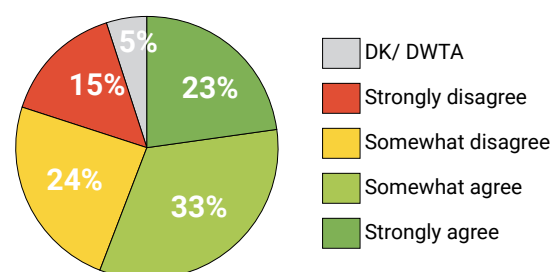
¹³ <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/08/killed-yemen-floods-200805083059633.html>

SCORECARD / COVID-19

I don't leave my house often due to fear of COVID-19



The COVID-19 crisis made it harder to generate income



The city has done a lot to find the resources needed to help protect the people from the coronavirus (provision of masks, social distancing measures, awareness campaigns)

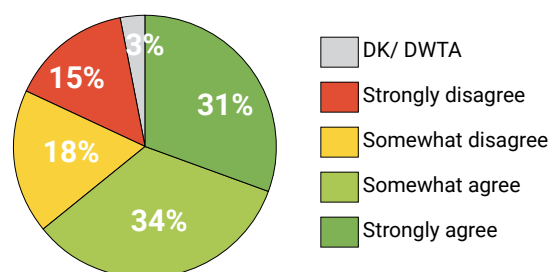


FIGURE 61. City response to COVID-19

FIGURE 62. Flooding in the city in 2020. (www.independentarabia.com/)



FIGURE 63. Informal housing surrounding the hospital which makes parking or further site expansion impossible. The hospital needed to create a quarantine ward during the COVID-19 response but was unable to find space due to local resident crowding.



11 TRANSPORT SECTOR

Because Marib was long viewed as a marginal governorate - both demographically and economically - Marib's infrastructure has historically been neglected by Yemen's successive governments. Upgrading Marib's transport infrastructure was not considered a priority at the national level until its recent economic growth and vital role as a domestic and international shipping hub with coastal ports closed raised the stakes, and needs for an upgrade in the road infrastructure in order to accommodate the transport of goods and individuals became apparent. Presently however, the isolated governorate still suffers from poor road connections and disorganized mass transport solutions. According to a senior governorate transportation official, the governorate has prioritized expansion of the roads and highways network, as this infrastructure upgrade "will pave the way for Marib's future image as a city and economic hub, ensuring it goes beyond being seen as just a big temporary camp in the middle of the nowhere."

Transportation network

The network of Yemen's main roads is concentrated along the north-south N1 corridor, linking the capital Sana'a with Aden through Ibb, and is moving closer to the western, more populated governorates. Marib is located on the eastern N5 road which connects the capital with the eastern governorates. The N5 is presently insecure and its linking connector roads are only permitted to be used for military purposes, thus forcing travelers to take long detours to reach Sana'a. As Marib is located between the populated areas to the west of the republic, and the sparsely populated plains and desert regions of the east, the N5 was always a substandard national road viewed as low priority. Due to years of lack of maintenance, flooding has washed away most of its surfaces. Presently, most primary and regional road connections are not asphalted though some efforts are underway to resurface.

Public and private transportation

Private transportation dominates the options available to locals. There are limited regional transportation options as Marib does not have public bus terminals. A few private bus companies offer small minibuses that shuttle passengers between main roads and unpaved roads. Big coaches no longer operate on the national highways and regional roads, because the current road conditions are not favorable to heavy transport vehicles.

Locals have begun to rent out 4WD cars to take passengers through rough terrain to destinations such as Sana'a and Shabweh. Because these routes require long detours, with high security risks on most roads, the cost of a regional trip per passenger has increased significantly. For instance, the trip between Marib and Sana'a (the most common destination for Marib City residents) now takes up to 12 hours (increased three-fold from the previous four hours before the conflict), passing through over 29 checkpoints which include two major personal property searches and individual inspection, where men are frisked and women often harassed. The cost of this trip per passenger increased from 2000 YR (~USD 10) up to 15000 YR (~USD 30). While Marib residents continue to require key services that do not exist in the city (such as emergency and critical health care), the trip to the capital, Sana'a, and the closest nearby city is overwhelming and highly costly for the average Yemeni.

The problems and hazards of degraded and poorly maintained roads is a critical issue. Hundreds lose their lives every year on these roads, as roads are not clearly marked in many sections, and fallen rocks and craters fill the paths. The road to Hadramawt is specifically deteriorated, infamously dubbed the "Road of Death" by locals. Locals often organize demonstrations following major automobile accidents and deaths to protest current road conditions and call for repairing specific sections of the road and filling



FIGURE 64. Microbuses on "Sana'a" the main through the city



FIGURE 65. Asphaltting in progress (yemen-press.net)

dangerous potholes. Several social media campaigns were organized to protest road conditions, as students coming from Hareeb for instance need two hours to get to Saba'a University, a trip that should normally take just 50 minutes.

Such demonstrations only underscore the need to mobilize massive government investments.

The national road that connects Sana'a with Marib, and the other road that links Sana'a with Marib through Sarwah have strategic military significance, as they represent two different approaches to the environs of both cities, giving an advantage to the Houthis especially as both roads descend into Marib. Perhaps this is what is making the reopening of both roads a constant demand by the Houthis in all their meetings with the UN Special Envoy, Martin Griffiths. Looking at the location of Marib, we can also include the administrative borders that Marib shares with al-Bayda Governorate as a key entry point that the Legitimacy Forces together with the Popular Resistance often use to approach Sana'a, passing through the district of Rudman and through Zamar Governorate. This third approach to Sana'a made these frontlines prone to constant escalation since 2015.

Even though the governorate has made significant allocations to improve the road conditions, it focused primarily on energy and security imperatives by prioritizing the link between SAFER Exploration and Production Operations Company oil field in Marib and where the most strategic outpost of the Coalition Forces some 20 km east of Marib is located, the coastal ports in the south, and the Saudi borders in the north. The other roads that serve civilians and goods' transport are still largely degraded. Moreover, the implementation of several contracts to improve the road conditions on regional connections has either been slow or nonexistent. This highlights that the construction capacity of the local authorities to manage road construction and maintenance contracts is currently limited even if the financial resources were allocated.

Transport in and around the City Center - Post-Conflict Status

Public transportation within the city of Marib also faces significant constraints. Despite the significant expansion in the city, and the creation of new businesses and jobs, the city is still lagging behind in terms of transport upgrading. The city has no asphalted streets except for the three main roads, no paved sidewalks, and no street lighting. This is specifically problematic in high-density IDP settlements, which are particularly vulnerable to security risks and the impacts of natural disasters such as flooding, particularly on sewer systems. Government management of urban growth in Marib has focused more on building and construction and supporting private sector initiatives, and less on managing basic public infrastructure and network - specifically upgrading public street networks.

Motorcycle Restrictions and Minibuses

Scrutiny and regulation of the use of motorcycles in Marib City has increased following several security incidents involving motorcycles. The use of this vital means of transportation is now restricted to soldiers and policemen. As the city expanded, the IDPs coming from larger cities began to operate minor minibuses routes, and the municipality regulated their work and collected small taxes from the private operators. These minibuses only operate on the few asphalted routes, but they serve residents who need to reach the government administrative center, the university, and the market areas. This is especially important for those who live far from the city centre.



FIGURE 66. Flooding was particularly devastating in Jafeenah Camp, Marib's largest informal settlement (almasdaronline.com)



FIGURE 67. Gas Station lines are a major source of grievances, only exacerbated by the lack of public transportation options and impacts of fuel shortages on both water supply and agriculture.

12 ELECTRICITY SECTOR

A Vital Service and a Social Contract

For decades prior to the conflict, Marib's electricity was supplied by a chain of diesel-powered electricity generation stations that spread across the republic, providing power to major cities. Diesel was trucked to the stations by road, and resource constraints led to fuel rationing which often prioritized the larger centers and the economic hubs at the expense of smaller and less significant municipalities such as Marib. This meant that the city used to get only a few hours of daily electricity supply. Residents of Marib primarily used electricity as a non-essential commodity. As a result, Marib's residents carefully limited their consumption and limited their lifestyle needs to energy efficient options - from the way they conducted business, operated health and education facilities, to the way they used televisions and refrigerators in their homes.

In 1986, Marib became an oil producer [sector 18]¹ after making significant discoveries² three years earlier, and the daily production was around 80K barrels.³ When the conflict started in 2015, the same sector was only producing 8K barrels daily, a 90% decrease in production.⁴ As the war raged, oil production completely stopped, and it was until 2019 that some 20K barrels daily were back to production. Most of Yemen's oil is exported as crude, and only 8K to

¹ Sector 18 also includes the largest natural gas field in Yemen, with reserves estimated at 9.15 trillion ft³. Other estimates put the gas reserves in the larger Marib area at 15 trillion ft³.# Present production is processed through a central unit, at As'ad Kamel station, with a daily production capacity of 1.8 billion ft³. Balhaf LNG port receives 1.140 million ft³ daily, while another 1 trillion ft³ were reserved for local consumption.# In terms of transportation of gas, there are two pipelines that start in Marib, one leads to As'ad Kamel station and to the liquefaction facility in Balhaf [320 km, reaching Shabweh governorate], and the other is only used for the distribution in the local market, linking Marib with Ma'abar city in Zemar governorate.

² 1980s: Discovery of oil deposits by a local subsidiary of Texas based Hunt Oil. Subsidiary soon bought out by Exxon and a South Korean Consortium (Sheila Carapico, "Yemen between revolution and counter-terrorism", in Lackner, Why Yemen Matters: A Society in Transition). Large-scale re-cultivation of the ancient oasis (Hehmeyer, "Irrigation Farming in the Ancient Oasis of Mārib"). Contemporary Mārib dates to this period.

³ Yemen Ministry of Oil and Minerals, "نبذة تاريخية عن استكشاف النفط في اليمن", March 2020, <https://bit.ly/2Je1qUv>

⁴ Yemen Marib Governorate, "مأرب .. نبتة الفطر التي تنمو سرّاً و بهدوء في ركن الصحراء", 31 March 2018, https://marib-gov.com/news_details.php?sid=345

SCORECARD / Acces to Electricity

A majority of 64% of the respondents to our survey expressed satisfaction with the level of electricity supply they're presently getting, including 36% of the respondents who were very satisfied. Only 13% were unsatisfied with the supply rate. Most of the respondents also reported they are receiving more than 12 hours of electricity supply per day, which is true across the different demographic groups, with 72% of the native residents reporting such satisfactory evaluation. The supply of electricity in the marginalized and African migrant communities seem to be the worst, with more than 57% reporting less than 12 hours of daily supply.

These results reflect both the fact that current rates of grid supplies in the city were among the best throughout Yemen, and that households mostly get

the electricity for their homes free of charge. These results are also expected to improve, as the local authorities in Marib recently reported a significant procurement of new equipment that will be used for a major expansion in Safer Thermal Station.

According to a December 15 report, the new expansion of the thermal station will increase the electricity supply in the Governorate from 126 MV to 166 MV. As the needs in the entire governorate were estimated to be around 130 MV, a surplus of nearly 36 MV will be generated, which if exported to other regions, can provide new source of financial revenues to the governorate, or even be used for future economic and residential expansion.

You only have access to 12 hours or less of electricity supply

You are satisfied with the number of hours during which you are receiving electricity

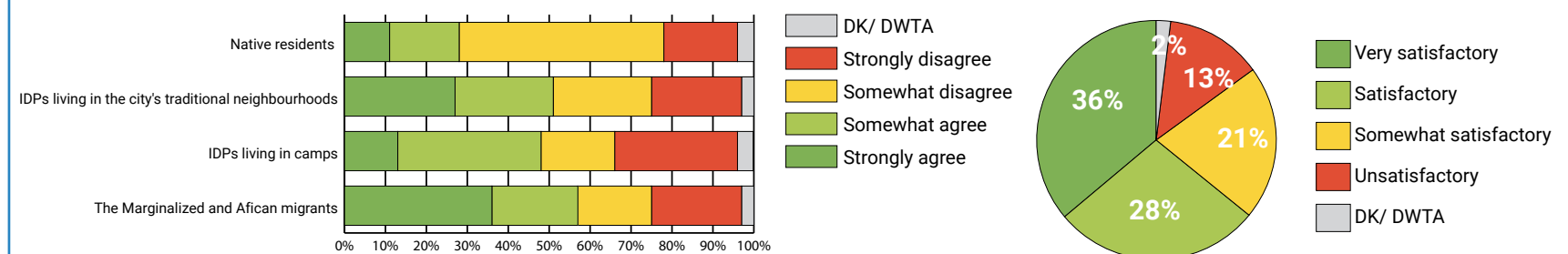


FIGURE 68. Satisfaction with present level of electricity supply and access to electricity

Cost of electricity per kilowatt hour

Average price in Yemen: 300 YR.

In Marib, supply for industrial users is priced at 70 YR (the local exchange rate is averaging 800 YR for 1 US dollar), and for commerce at 30 YR. As for households, the price is only 12 YR. It was also reported that most households do not pay their electricity bills, a practice condoned by the local authorities for various reasons including the limited bill collection capacity, and the revenue insignificance, but this can also be viewed from the perspective of its significance in assuring public satisfaction.



FIGURE 69. Ceremony to unload new power transformers to upgrade Marib's gas-fired power station, December 2020, source: <https://www.sabanew.net/viewstory/69585>

10k barrels daily are refined for local consumption. An oil pipeline with an approximate length of 430 km links Marib with the port of Ras Issa.⁵ Other strategic natural gas discoveries and a rapid upgrade of production led to a shift in the electricity production modality nationwide. The Safer Exploration & Productions (SEPOC) thermal station, Yemen's largest electricity source, began production in 2008, mainly to serve the capital and the northern, densely populated governorates. Safer TS is only a few kilometers away from Marib, and had a production capacity of nearly 250 megawatts, but neither the city, nor the entire governorate of Marib had access to the thermal-generated electricity generated by the plant. Locals viewed this large industrial installation in their area, along with mega pipelines to bring the natural gas and rising transmission towers passing through their city to transport power to the west, with resentment as it did not benefit local households who had a few hours of power each day. These grievances might have factored into the destruction of both the fuel station and power grid which occurred a few years later.⁶

Energy consumption increase with rapid urbanization

This significant loss did not have a direct impact on Marib per se, but the city's population and economic boom that happened also around that period increased the demand, and electricity became a crucial necessity. The much-touted urban renaissance is best exemplified by the sharp increase in electricity consumption in the city. Prior to 2014, Marib City literally had just one main street covered with a thin layer of asphalt. A traveler approaching the city from Sana'a could cross the entire city by car in just 7 minutes. Visitors to Marib today can clearly recognize they are visiting a crowded and thriving urban center, with many streets and numerous businesses. When asking for directions, people would point to neighbourhoods, university campus

and even suburban areas with new accommodations and street names, traffic signage and traffic lights. This new vocabulary, which was alien to the locals only a few years ago, is a by-product of the demographic gift, the flip side of the displacement coin and the underlying story of Marib within Yemen's protracted social conflict.

To accommodate the economic growth that the new arrivals brought into the city, Marib needed a quick fix to its endemic electricity deprivation. The fact that the fossil-fuel-rich governorate and its tribes were essential to the thwarting of Houthi-Saleh forces since 2015 enabled the ambitious local authority to obtain special treatment when it comes to sharing of oil products, and the Governor has been able to use the oil revenues to build the governorate's water, electricity, and transport infrastructure, and to use it for local economic development. However, operating the damaged Safer TS was an overwhelming task that the governorate officials weren't prepared to take on its own, and they needed a tactical solution they could manage on their own without heavy involvement in national politics. The local government signed a concessionary deal with a private company that pledged electricity generation to most locales by importing and operating a mesh of small generation units distributed across the vast governorate.

Jerico

A group of Yemeni businessmen with ties to the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation launched an electric utility generation company by the name Jerico. The company however needed secure diesel supplies, which had been provided by the local authorities since 2016. Through this production agreement, the company was able to provide a flexible generation solution that was also quick to evolve and expand to accommodate any new urban expansion or

⁵ Ras Issa is primarily an oil export port, located 60 km north of Hudaida commercial port on the Red Sea

⁶ The first acts of sabotage targeting Safer TS began in 2011, and ultimately brought TS to a complete production halt in 2016.

rise of demand on the spot. Although sub-optimal in net economic terms and less durable, this solution proved to be appropriate for both the unique pattern of economic growth and security in Marib. The central government had been pushing to restore Safer TS since 2016, which led to its re-operation in 2020 at 40% capacity proved to be less durable, as immediate sabotage attacks came after to cripple the production again. By contrast, Jericho's model of smaller-scale, distributed power generation closer to urban locales was much easier to secure and made the supply less susceptible to damage and production interruptions. Jericho's privately owned infrastructure fell under the protection of the locals who decided local power generation was worth safeguarding.

We have seen similar models of generation emerging across the republic, although less common in Houthi-held areas, who favored centralized solutions and attempted to repurpose the old diesel stations to supply the northern governorates. Marib's example is unique in that electricity as a utility is heavily subsidized, specifically for domestic consumption, in what constitutes a major component of the social contract struck between the local authority and the newly arrived society that the war brought to Marib. The Marib government decided that it was in their interest to provide free diesel to Jerico as a subsidy for Marib residents of roughly 10% of the cost of service compared to other Yemeni governorates. Jerico relied on the existing network but expanded it when necessary, and on the increased operational capacity of the Fee Collection office at the governorate, to operate a full system.

Due to the perceived party affiliation of Jerico and its business partnerships, the company fell under increased scrutiny and political pressures, and the local authority decided to call for proposals to seek more neutral alternatives. Intrac company inherited the operation from Jerico and won the

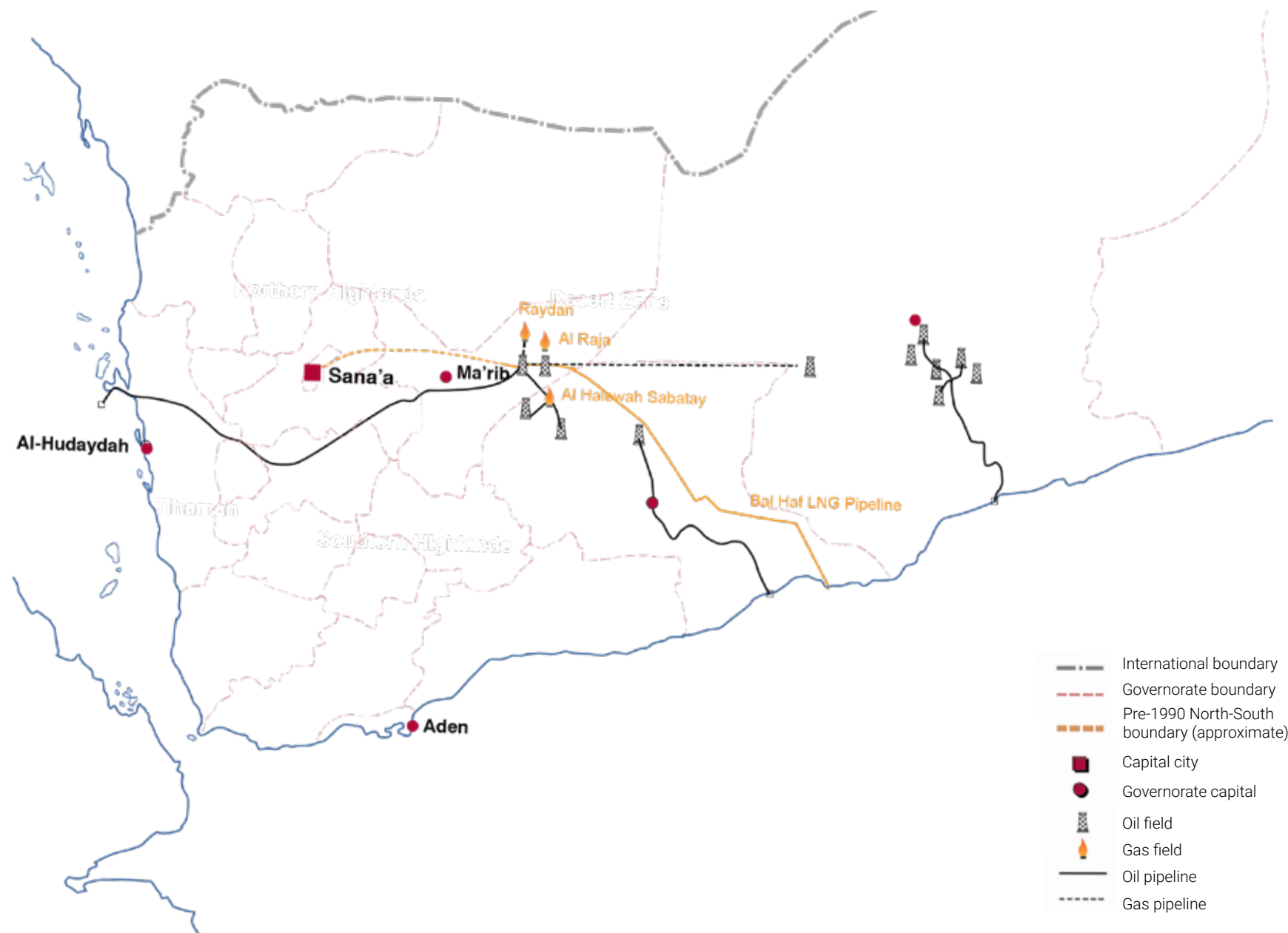
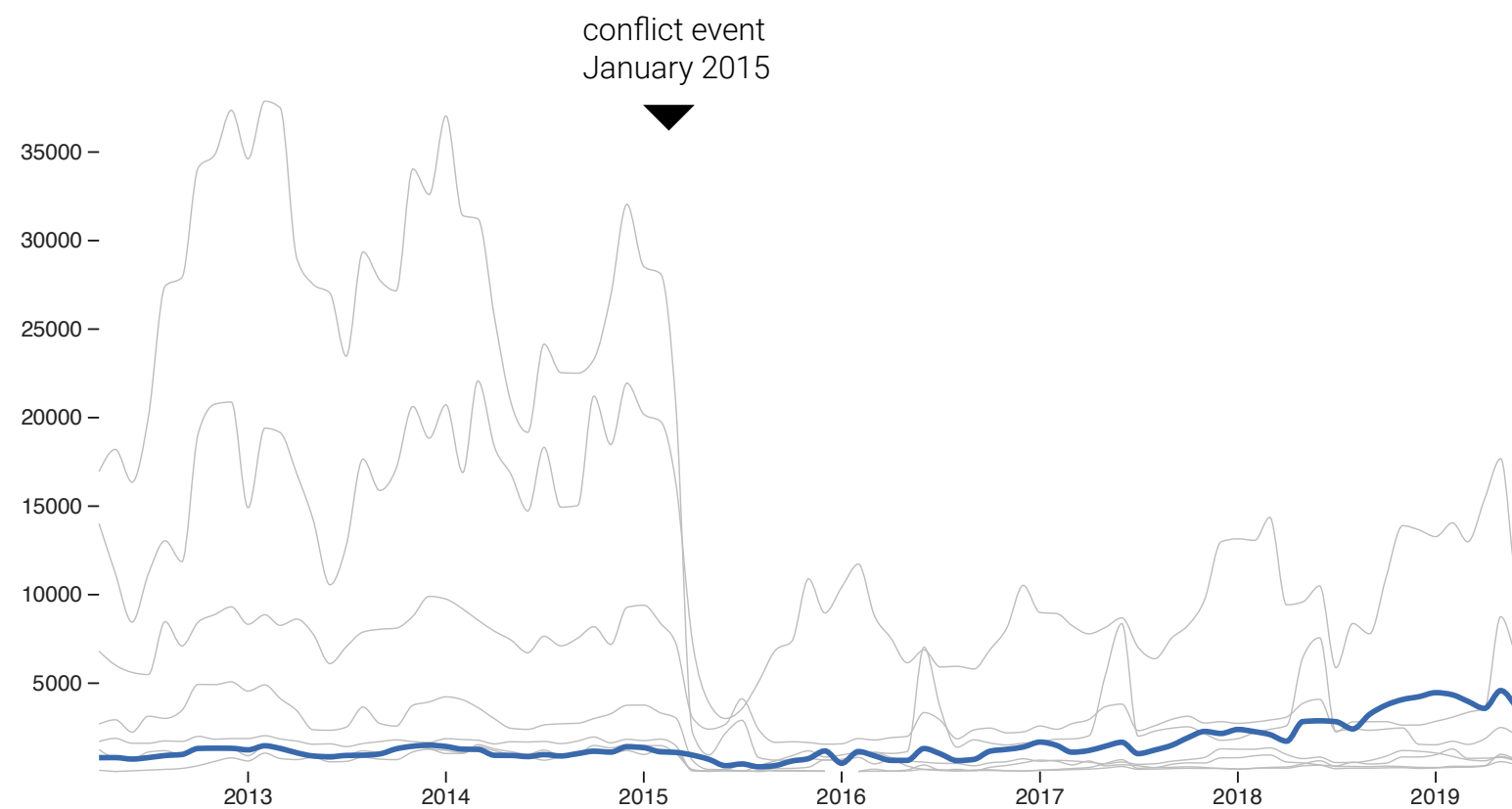


FIGURE 70. Oil fields in the region.
Map adapted from Small Arms Survey, with updated information of US Energy Information Administration.

new government contract. This competition over generation benefits did not affect the consumers, as the management of distribution was completely removed to the Commercial Office within the Department of Electricity.⁷ As stated earlier, the supply to citizens is heavily subsidized, especially for consumption, and less so for commercial and industrial users that are easy to monitor and to enforce tariffs on. But even for industrial and commercial users, electricity in Marib is much more affordable as compared to other major and small centers across the republic, which could be considered a major factor behind the competitiveness and the business-appeal of the economy of Marib.⁸



City	Light value	Change from January 2015
Aden	9,429	- 53.3%
Zinjibar	438	- 55.1%
Hodeidah	1,491	- 84.1%
Sana'a	3,756	-86.8%
Taiz	180	- 95.2%
Sa'dah	418	- 76.2%
Al Hawtah	735	- 50.2%
Marib	2,221	+63.5%

FIGURE 71. Nightlight in Marib in 2020 comparison to 2015.

⁷ Interview with the Head of the Commercial Office.

⁸ Across most Yemen governorates, the price of one Kilowatt of electricity averages 300 YR. In Marib, supply for industrial users is priced at 70 YR [the local exchange rate is averaging 800 YR for 1 US dollar], and for commerce at 30 YR. As for households, the price is only 12 YR. It was also reported that most households do not pay their electricity bills, a practice condoned by the local authorities for various reasons including the limited bill collection capacity, and the revenue insignificance, but this can also be viewed from the perspective of its significance in assuring public satisfaction.

13 EDUCATION SECTOR

Information about education in Marib is limited and incomplete. Developing a comprehensive picture for the education sector in Marib requires additional research and dedicated resources which exceeded the scope of the urban profile. The information we have was gathered from interviews with the head of the Marib Governorate Department of Education, several KIs with school principals, and through visits to three schools in the city itself.

Two annual exams are supervised directly by the ministry of education, the rest are run by the local department in the city. Both the preparatory and the secondary degrees rely on national supervision to receive certificates. As schools had to close down last year due to the pandemic measures, exams for the preparatory and secondary degrees were canceled, and schools used previous year's records to give students their scores, a process that wasn't properly supervised by the ministry.

Through our conversation with local authority officials, community leaders, business owners, and average parents of Marib, the following issues and concerns were raised:

- » **Female drop-out** is a major problem, prompted both by social habits allowing early marriages, and tribal traditions, but also poverty and lack of female participation in the labor force. Female education in primary school is slightly better but drop-out in secondary education is a serious problem. In the words of one key informant who participated in the interviews, his main wish for Marib was to "wake up tomorrow and find all women in Marib are educated."
- » **Overcrowding**, lack of school equipment including basic lavatory and sanitary facilities, as well as the

shortage in schoolbooks are the major logistical challenges, and resources that are annually allocated for the education system can't meet these needs, while aid from humanitarian institutions has been extremely limited.

- » **The need to make the education system more attractive to young people and to their parents**, which requires new methods to link the education and certification process with the market demand. Although the technical institutes in the city are expanding to fit the youth in the labor market, secondary education in Marib (and Yemen in general) does not offer technical and skill education to students, who see less interest in continuing in any academic path following the preparatory level.
- » **Teachers receive their salaries** from the Marib local administration instead of the Ministry of Education.
- » **Gender:** There are no official school enrollment statistics breaking down numbers by gender. Our field inquiry helped us locate only two all-girls' secondary schools and identify that in local schools 49,372 of the students are females (46% of the registered students) and 57,263 are males (54% of the registered students).
- » **Dropout Rate:** To estimate the school drop-out rate in Marib, we have used the 2004 national census data and age pyramid,¹ and estimated that 269,297 school-aged children presently reside in the city alone. This means that nearly 79,279 school-aged children are not registered in school (roughly 41% of children in Marib City), and the rate increases even more when the low attendance rates (mainly in public schools) are also taken into account. Drop-out is specifically problematic for the secondary school-aged students, and for female

Education in Marib

The Ministry of Education¹ provided the following data:

Schools: 41 public schools in the city, up from 18 schools as of 2014.

19 new Private schools (private education institutions did not receive authorization to operate until 2017 when local authorities began issuing permits)

Total School enrollment: 190,000 students enrolled in K-12 public and private schools
Public schools: 106,635 students are currently registered in public schools.

Teachers: There are 2,016 teachers currently in Marib City, employed by the governorate's education department in the public schools alone. The teacher/ student ratio is now 1:52, which represents a huge increase from the decline in teachers in the early years of the conflict when the city's human resources were under pressure.

Salary: The local minimum salary is YR 50K per month (roughly USD 60) and salaries progressively increase based on the number of years of experience up to YR 120K. By comparison, the minimum teacher's salary in Sana'a and Houthi-Saleh controlled areas is about USD 90 per month.

¹ United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, Population Bulletin Of The United Nations Economic Commission 15, 15 October 2012, sec. 1, https://www.unescwa.org/sites/www.unescwa.org/files/uploads/bulletin15-section1-population_15_10_2012.xlsx

¹ UN Habitat Profiling Team Interview, August 2020.

students according to our key informant interviews, although we could not identify the exact attendance/drop-out rates for this education year.

- » Teacher Training: Intensive professional development courses were arranged for uncredentialed paraeducators and teachers who mostly did not hold university degrees in order to surge the capacity as of 2017. :
- » Overcrowding in classes was also reportedly a significant concern. The average number of primary students per class is 56 students. The majority of primary schools have been forced to operate on two-shifts, including private schools.
- » Lack of Standardized School curricula: in Marib the national curriculum of the republic from the pre-conflict period is currently still being used. The administration reportedly introduced several amendments in the current educational year, but Marib schools still deliver education using the school books used elsewhere in the 'Legitimacy' areas and there has been a shortage of textbooks according to the Marib Department of Education.
- » Textbooks: This year alone, the local authority had to procure the printing of over 1 million books. Books are reportedly to be used by students for at least three consecutive years, and are kept in the property of the governorate. During this year's seasonal floods, many books warehouses were affected, and losses were massive. However, as COVID-19 caused an early closure of schools, it provided the department of education with enough lead time to recover the number of books it needed for this educational year.

Higher Education Development

A public college was opened in Marib in 2006, and as of 2015, a single School of Education (Teachers College) was

SCORECARD / Education

Of all of the services surveyed, there was the most dissatisfaction expressed with current education in Marib. Nearly half of the respondents to our survey (49%) were not satisfied with the quality of education services in the city. Only 11% were very satisfied, and another 34% were somewhat satisfied.

When looking at the same indicator by demographic group and gender type, the male native residents of Marib had the highest level of satisfaction with the quality of the education services, whereas the males from the IDP community groups who live in camps and informal shelters expressed the strongest level of dissatisfaction.

You are satisfied with the quality of education services in the city

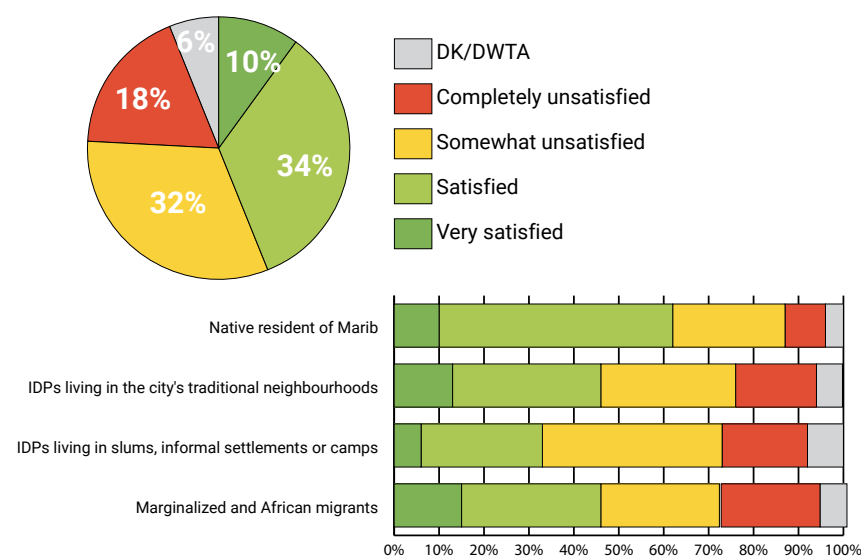


FIGURE 73. Satisfaction with the quality of education services



FIGURE 72. New school in Mareb (UN Habitat)

Satisfaction with the Quality of Education Services



delivering a limited offering of classes (Arabic literature, Islamic and Quranic Studies) to 298 students 28 of which are females.² In 2016, President Hadi issued a decree to authorize the development of the Sab'a Regional college to be based in Marib city, as the central city of the region. Since the decree was issued in 2016, 17 different schools within the regional college network have opened in Marib, offering higher education programs for engineering, humanities, science, and the newly added medical school as well as pharmaceutical studies. Existing school infrastructure was also expanded.

A huge expansion of Sab'a regional college was possible due to the local authority's initiative and substantial budget allocations annually, while the higher education administration capacity remains underdeveloped. To date, the Ministry of Higher Education hasn't authorized an office in the region to issue certified degrees or to regulate private higher-education. According to local business leaders interviewed for this profile, investment in private higher education is an area of potential growth, but remains restricted due to regulations only permitting public institutions.

Vocational Education

Despite the rapid expansion of the vocational training sector throughout the republic during Saleh's years in office, Marib was not regarded as a priority for this public funding. As of 2015, only one technical institute was opened in Marib, providing male students with basic training to become computer maintenance technicians and electricians.

Another project was intended to build the first "community college" in Marib. As community colleges were

trending across the republic, students became more interested in this type of education when compared to more conventional education institutes. The new legal framework that reflected the government's interest in expanding the trained labour force in the society was coupled with serious investments and government budget allocations.³ A student in any of these colleges would get free education for 2 to 4 years, graduating as building and construction professionals, land surveyors, nurses and health care delivery professionals, as well as human resources needed for office duties. As of the time when the conflict started in 2015, the society college in Marib was still under construction.

Since 2016, new steps were taken to support vocational training, this time under direct influence and buy-in from the provincial authorities, prompted by real needs in the market for new human resources. The vocational training center reopened in 2017 after minor repairs, and later expanded to include an industrial vocational training section fully equipped to receive 250 students yearly. Demand also pushed the vocational training department at the Governorate to open classes for commerce-related capacity development, as the labor market started to demand cashiers and staff to place orders and importation inventories, etc. During the educational year 2019-2020, over 750 students graduated from the vocational training center.

When asked about the female participation in vocational skill development, the head of the department in the governorate did not have a clear idea, for instance about the number of female students currently attending. When the profiling team checked directly with the vocational training center management, they pointed out that they

Sab'a Regional College

11,000 students enrolled (of which 3,000 are female students, many of which are Maribi locals)
234 professors and teachers offer courses at this public university, 92 of which have fixed tenure.
57 new lecture halls were added in the last two years.



FIGURE 74. New girls school students lining up for class. (UN Habitat)

² UN Habitat Profiling Team Interview with Education Sector Expert, June 2020

³ For more on the legal framework that governs the vocational training and society colleges in Yemen, see the link: https://yemen-nic.info/db/laws_ye/detail.php?ID=11474

had a successful nursing training course in the past year.

Budget shortfalls meant that not enough funding was allocated to the nursing center this year, new expenses were directed to COVID-19 preparedness. Only a handful of women joined the inaugural classes of this first program offering female-only courses. The classes are usually limited in time and scope, and strictly focused on traditionally accepted vocations such as nursing and sewing. According to a trainer we interviewed, females “are hardly allowed to go to primary school, and while the openness to female education brought about by the IDPs is improving female access to primary education, vocational training is still looked at unfavorably among the tribes as an unacceptable breach of gender norms, even if it is just catering to outsiders.” The community college remained under construction, but the profiling team observed that it was almost finished, but it is still occupied by displaced families who introduced many changes to the internal partitions and other facilities. New temporary structures were also added to accommodate for the needs of hosted IDPs around the main center, transforming the facility plot into a small informal settlement, and restoring it to its original educational use will probably require substantial resources. Several other training facilities in the city were also occupied by temporary hospitals to rescue soldiers wounded in combat, and others by command-and-control posts for the military or the tribal factions.⁴



FIGURE 75. Schools in Marib (google maps)

” Girls in Marib are determined to become active participants in all fields, and I am proud that three of the outstanding students in my department are from Harib district.¹

– Eman Mohamed, a mathematics student

¹ On traveling over 2 and a half hours from Harib district to Saba University, one students said that attending university every day is a statement – a response to the negative perception many hold toward rural, tribal girls and their capabilities. <https://al-masdaronline.net/national/430>



FIGURE 76. Bilqis Girls School, source: UN-Habitat Profiling team

⁴ For more on this, see the recent study by Musaala Organization for Human Rights <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Cu3eCWvX6GBpt9sv5VXKXSuWmB042ZD-/view?usp=drivesdk>

14 ECONOMY

Contextual Overview

Marib has become the pass-through for all traffic, goods, travel between North and South to the degree that Marib's tribes are negotiating to become central mediators between the North and the South. In Marib, there is the perception that the tribes were better able to preserve their neutral status, sparing their area from destruction and protecting them economically, while trade and IDPs have brought new wealth and jobs to the region. These factors enabled the region to benefit from both the wartime and humanitarian economies. However, this advantage is fragile and contingent on many factors beyond Marib's control and will be compromised if the attacks on Marib's mountain ranges continue. Despite suffering from its own internal population displacement due to ongoing attacks from Houthi-Saleh forces and from recent flood events, while other municipal governments are struggling to survive and sustain monthly salaries, Marib was able to secure a budget surplus from oil and gas revenues. The city is now in a position of making strategic investments and updating the previous city plans to accommodate a five-fold increase in population.

Since the 1980s, the oil industry has dominated Yemen as well as Marib governorate's local economy. After the 2011 protests, Marib secured 20% of all oil and gas revenues. Previously the entire amount went to the central government. Discussions on Marib's economy have focused on how it has diversified as a result of its population boom and the impact of its urban conditions on socio-economic inclusion. The interdependence between urbanization's challenges and opportunities have created unique conditions within Marib which include: large and rapid increases in the number of IDPs in the midst of a war; pressure on existing insufficient services but also bottom-up creation of new economic opportunities; particularly within healthcare and

professional services, as new opportunities have been created by new businesses started by professionals from the IDP community. This has been particularly true for the healthcare sector (as further detailed in the profile's health section).

Everyday customs and means of livelihoods in Marib have been analyzed under the four broad categories of:

- » Employment Sectors;
- » Perceptions of Economic Opportunity;
- » Gender disparities, and
- » Urban Growth

From an economic standpoint, the fragile stability achieved in Marib serves as a prototype for how a functional decentralized system can evolve into a modern, heterogeneous society, specifically in Marib City. The city itself is almost entirely run by members of the IDP community, including members of the IRG government, internal security and the majority of those serving public functions.¹ The tribes themselves seem to be less keen to work in the bureaucratic institutions, and perhaps lack the interest and the training required for functional roles in state affairs. They have willingly accepted that the rising urban class of average Yemeni IDPs will fulfill these roles, who, as discussed earlier, find it less relevant to define themselves by their tribe. This rise of an urban class of unaffiliated citizens virtually did not exist a few years ago.

While the tribes have effectively decentralized the economy of Yemen by controlling local natural wealth, the bureaucratic middle class is leading the administrative decentralization.



FIGURE 77. UN Habitat Profiling Team Photo of the Wholesale market, October 2020



FIGURE 78. Qat Market in Marib: As of May, 2020, the Ministry of Health in Marib and other IRG-held governorates ordered the closure of all Qat markets as a COVID-19 precaution. (<https://www.news-yemen.net/new/53264>)

¹ UN-Habitat profiling team observation: According to one of the field research team members, while visiting a security administration in Marib, when the researcher met dozens of law enforcement officers, policemen, and emergency first responders inside the centre, and only one or two individuals were originally from Marib governorate.

SCORECARD / Economy

The Marib scorecard survey data shows that the majority of those who identify themselves as employed work in unidentified sectors (51%), mostly as daily labourers (moyawem) or in simple and random occupations depending on market demand (fawael). Other key employment sectors include education (12%), building and construction (8%), public services and local state employees (9%), and commerce and finance, insurance, real estate (FIRE) jobs (6%).

A majority of those interviewed identified themselves as unemployed (61%), in addition to students (8%), while only 31% of the respondents identified themselves as employed. This can help us estimate a dependency rate of 6.56 among the city residents (every income generating individual in Marib is providing for at least 5 other dependents).

By looking at other aspects of the employment status, the data suggests that 30% of the employed are females, indicating an increased level of female participation in the labour force despite the low employment rate across all groups. Moreover, the employment status is directly

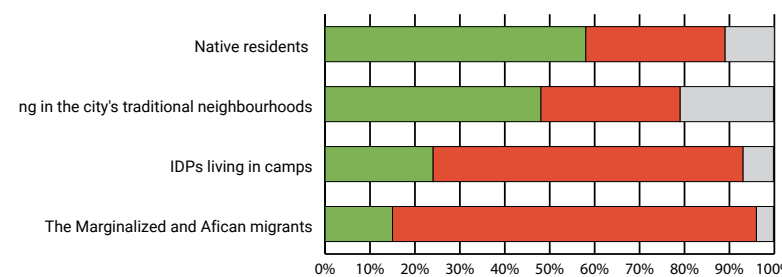
affected by the displacement status as per the survey's key demographic groups. Some 83% of the marginalized groups and African migrants are unemployed, which speaks to the reality of IDPs in camps as 76% of which group identified themselves as unemployed, compared to 42% among native residents, 50% among IDPs hosted in the city's neighbourhoods.

- 51% of the respondents to our survey expressed their dissatisfaction with the economic situation, of which 21% strongly disagree with the general perception that the

economy of Marib is improving. Only 14% of respondents expressed optimism.

- 15% of the respondents also expressed dissatisfaction with markets accessibility and the affordability of their household needs, while 23% expressed satisfaction. As the business environment was worsening due to COVID-19 impacts, prices of goods were climbing while the value of the currency was dipping. It is still difficult for 55% of the residents to start a business, while only 15% thought it was easy to start a business at the time when the survey was conducted.

Are you currently employed?



Are you currently employed?

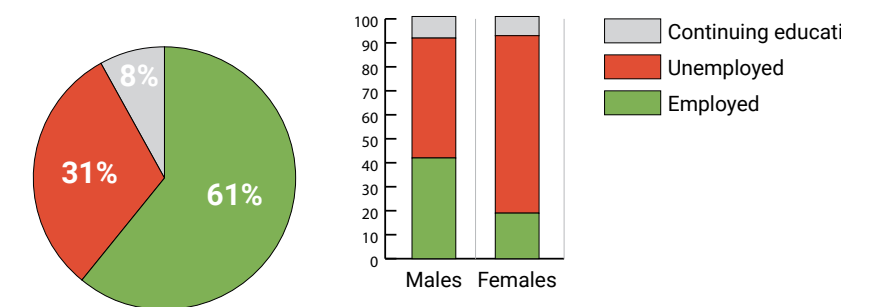


FIGURE 79. Employment status by vulnerability group, gender and total.

Field	%
Other	51%
Education	12%
Public services	9%
Building and construction	8%
Intellectual professions	6%
Commerce and FIRE	5%
Agriculture, livestock and fishery	4%
Transport	4%
Communications	1%
Mining and energy	1%

FIGURE 80. Employment by economic sector

You can access enough income through decent means to provide for yourself and your family

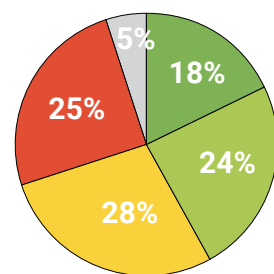


FIGURE 81. Household income

The economy is improving and I am optimistic about the future

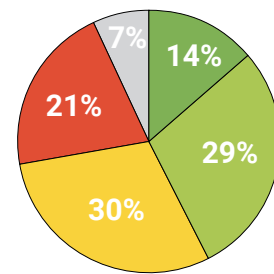


FIGURE 82. Optimism due to improving economy

It is easy for me to start a new business

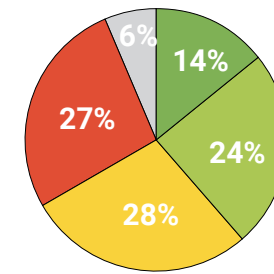


FIGURE 83. Perception as to how easy it is to start a business

Markets are accessible in my area and most of the households needs are available

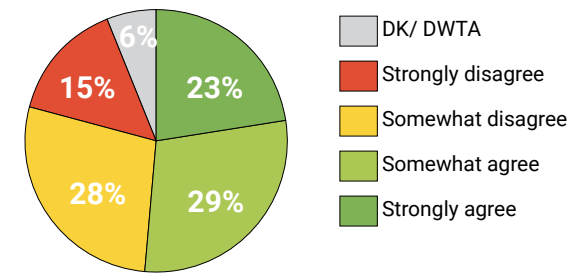


FIGURE 84. Market accessibility and availability of households needs

The tribes, on their part, are also increasingly worried about the increased authority in the hands of newcomers.

Post-Conflict Economic Changes

Changes to Marib's economy since 2015 include the establishment of a large number of small and medium sized business enterprises. Fuel and gas prices have risen considerably since 2015 throughout Yemen but have remained significantly lower in Marib due to the proximity of Safer sector 18.

During the past five years, the economic activity in Marib massively expanded, and capital and businesses moved to take advantage of the fairly stable business environment, specifically due to the rapidly expanding real estate and trade sectors to keep up with the population increase.² According to a local group observing economic activity in Marib reporting to the profiling team, over 800 new businesses opened up in Marib between March and May 2020, despite fears of COVID 19 and the few lockdown measures taken. Confidence in the local authority was also a driving factor to this boom, despite security setbacks and frequent rocket and drone attacks on the surrounding military settings.

Smaller investments expanded into new markets in the city, mainly through makeshift and temporary structures as revealed by the profiling team's interviews with several of them, to "increase supply but to minimize investments in fixed assets at the same time." Whether these businesses will permanently become part of Marib's urban rise or be forced to relocate will determine the fate of this unlikely economic gift the war presented.

The oil industry and hotels are primarily staffed by expatriates, despite Yemeni laws requiring employment

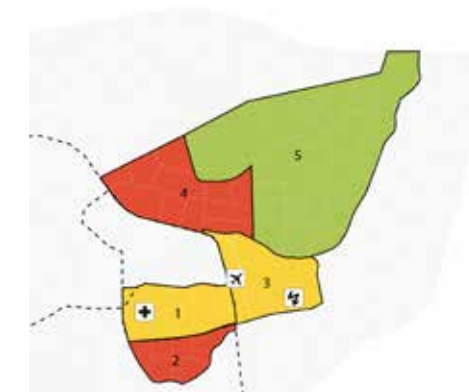
and training of Yemeni nationals. Prior to 2015, Marib's inhabitants were primarily tribesmen working in the agricultural sector. The oil refinery does not appear to have been a source of direct livelihoods, as local labor was not considered to possess the necessary capacity and skills.

According to research conducted on informal commercial activities in Sanaa leading up to 2010³ qat trade in urban areas is controlled by large producers or regional investors who belong to prominent tribes. They have been able to invest large sums in developing transportation networks from the countryside where qat is grown, to urban markets where it is sold.

With an increase in women-headed households witnessed due to male heads having experienced death, disappearance or migration without remittances, women have been placed with a double burden according to recent research by international development agencies. In addition to becoming the primary provider, they remain primary caregivers. These conditions appear to have facilitated increased openness to women working outside of the home in factory jobs, food production, education, and even in police jobs in Marib and beyond.

SCORECARD / SPATIAL ANALYSIS

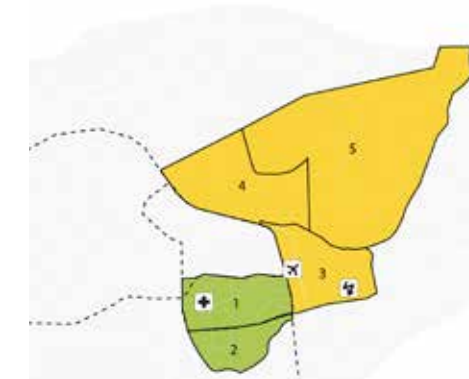
Access to Adequate Income Through Decent Means



Perception of Easiness of Starting New Business



Access to Job Opportunities for Women



- Electricity station
- Airport
- Main hospital
- Agree /
- Somewhat agree
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Masterplan area

- 1 Marib city centre
- 2 South new development area
- 3 East Marib
- 4 North Marib
- 5 North-East Marib

² Qantara, "أرض سد مأرب وملكة سبأ - المدينة الملجأ في حرب اليمن", April 2020, <https://ar.qantara.de/content/حرب-اليمن-أرض-سد-مأرب-وملكة-سبأ-المدينة-الملجأ-في-حرب-اليمن>
³ Roman Stadnicki. 2014. "The Challenges of Urban Transition in Yemen: Sana'a and Other Major Cities." Journal of Arabian Studies 4(1): 115-133.



FIGURE 85. New girls school students lining up for class. (UN Habitat Profiling Team)

15 ENVIRONMENT

The environmental challenges in Marib are a microcosm of the severe ecological risks in the country, as Yemen's ecological degradation has become even more acute on farms and natural resources. The combination of population growth and displacement, climate change, and the inability to respond to or mitigate natural disasters in an active conflict may pose greater risks than the current military conflict. The environment has been described as a "silent victim" of armed conflicts;¹ analysts in Yemen now predict that the looming environmental crisis poses an even greater risk than the current civil war.² Marib is no exception to this environmental tragedy, with limited entry points for programming solutions in the midst of deteriorating conflict and the need to give more attention to short-term humanitarian responses (as of late 2020).

The year 2019 was a turning point for Marib, in which it went from a hosting city success story to a city with a hosting crisis. The environmental factors underlying the fragility of the city have become serious priorities for future government and international organizations recognizing that food and water shortages, floods, locusts, and other climate change-related disasters will require top-level coordination and response in 2021 and beyond. This is especially relevant as Marib city is the only city within the governorate of Marib with significant agricultural resources, and an important reliance the Marib dam. There is now a growing sense of crisis and strain as a result of shrinking water bodies and the rapid decline in agricultural output seen by Marib's farmers. Furthermore, as a primary destination for IDPs, the adverse effects of climate will continue to put destabilizing pressures Marib and its capacity to manage the displacement crisis on its hands.

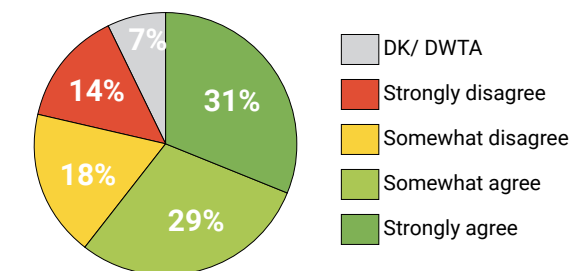
Agriculture

Marib has historically been one of the top-five producing governorates in Yemen for fruit and cash crops but its agricultural regions are exhibiting signs of distress and lost crops and livelihoods,³ with about 41% of croplands in Marib in distress. To understand the changes in agriculture areas pre- and post-crisis, a Normalized Difference Vegetation Index (NDVI) analysis conducted by UNH (2013-1019) revealed that the total agricultural area decreased in Marib over the past 6 years by almost 40% for a total of 30km² lost. Imagery also suggested a significant shrinking of water bodies, indicating an increasing trend of draught.

Climactic stressors notwithstanding, Marib's agricultural production has increased relative to the other major producing governorates, possibly as a result of Marib being outside of the active conflict frontlines prior to the escalation of Houthi attacks around Marib in 2020.⁴ This is also reflected in the urban scorecards, where 62% of respondents somewhat or strongly agree with the statement that agriculture is currently thriving. Nevertheless, agricultural production remains an area of grave concern, as food insecurity remains an acute risk in the governorate, with the IDP community being particularly vulnerable. In the governorate as a whole, the food insecurity has progressively worsened; where in 2019 outright famine was averted by high levels of international support, a projection for 2021 by the Integrated Phase Classification for food insecurity is that over 60% of the population in Marib will fall under "Phase 3" (crisis) or higher (See FIGURE 88 on page 90). As Yemen now enters into the worst famine conditions yet⁵ seen, ensuring the sustainability of the agricultural production will be critical for programming

SCORECARD - Agricultural prospects

Agriculture and livestock activities are improving in and around Marib due to market demand



To my knowledge, agriculture is presently thriving

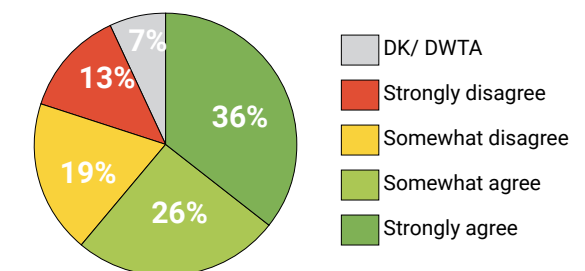


FIGURE 87. Perceptions of prospects of agriculture

related to food insecurity.

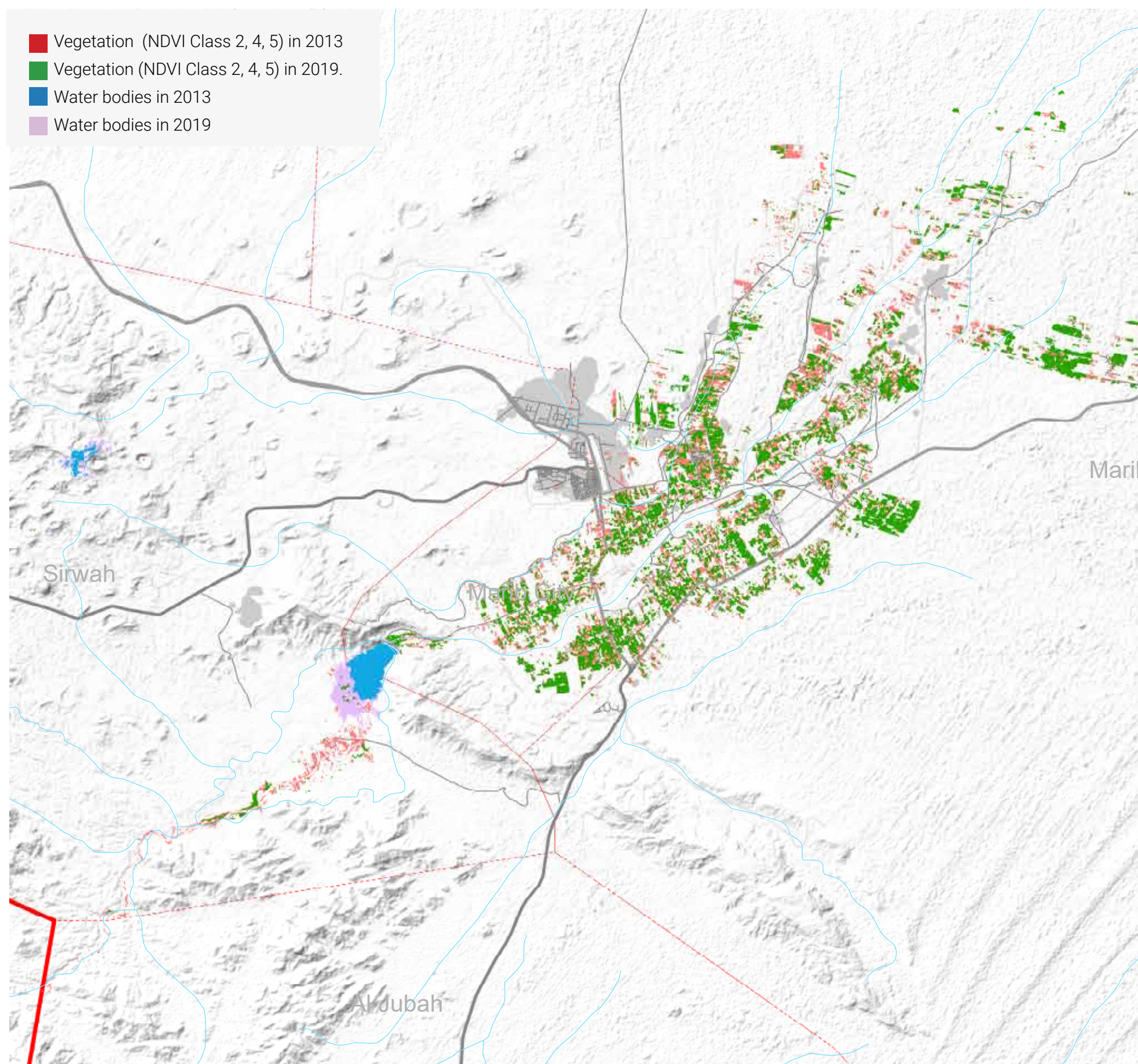
¹ UNEP, Protecting the environment during armed conflict. An inventory and analysis of international law. United Nations Environment Programme, Nairobi, 2009.

² Helen Lackner, Abdulrahman Al-Eryani, "Yemen's environmental crisis is the biggest risk for its future", The Century Foundation, <https://tcf.org/content/report/yemens-environmental-crisis-biggest-risk-future/?session=1>

³ Darbyshire, Eoghan, (2020) Yemen's agriculture in distress. Conflict and Environment Observatory. Available from: <https://ceobs.org/yemens-agriculture-in-distress/>

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ IOM Concerned about Impact of Yemen Famine Predictions on Displaced Persons, Migrants.* 2020. International Organization for Migration. December 4, 2020. <https://www.iom.int/news/iom-concerned-about-impact-yemen-famine-predictions-displaced-persons-migrants>.<https://www.iom.int/news/iom-concerned-about-impact-yemen-famine-predictions-displaced-persons-migrants>



MAP 10 - AGRICULTURE IN MARIB

To understand the changes in agricultural areas pre- and post the crisis, a Normalized Difference Vegetation Index (NDVI) analysis was done for Marib region for March 2013 and March 2019 with Landsat-8 imagery 2013 and 2019. The analysis results showed differences in agricultural areas both in area size and crop type.

The analysis illustrated 5 classes:

Class 1 (-1 – 0): Water Bodies

Class 3 (0.18 – 0.3): Vegetables, the NDVI is less than 0.20.

Class 4 (0.3 – 0.6): Olives or Fruit trees as they have a stable profile with nearly constant value (>0.50) while new farms of olives will have a stable NDVI that is in the range of 0.20 to 0.30

The initial analysis suggests that the total agricultural area decreased from 2013 on 2019 by almost 40% for a total 30 km².

Furthermore, the imagery suggests a significant shrinking of the water bodies from 2013 to 2019 with almost 47%, likely indicating an increasing trend in drought. This could cause major challenges to food security in the region.

Over the last thirty years, Yemen experienced four periods of drought, 1979-1981, 1983- 1984, 1990-1991, 2007-2009 which have caused severe damage to the Yemeni economy, which largely relies on agricultural resources.

Yemeni researcher Dhaifallah (Dhaifallah, 2018), has earlier shown that there is a gradual transition of agricultural areas from mild to moderate drought by 64% and from moderate to severe drought by 26% from 1985 to 2015, and suggests that this will cause a major threat and challenges to both food security and overall development of the country. (https://www.researchgate.net/publication/326727607_Drought_Risk_Assessment_Using_Remote_Sensing_and_GIS_in_Yemen)

The loss of agricultural land is attributed in large part to the rising temperatures in Marib’s desert regions, combined with decreased sunlight in the uplands. In response, Marib’s local planners must recognize the city faces some of the greatest vulnerabilities to climate change,⁶ and in addition to voicing determination to make the environment a priority, they will also have to take the lead in adjust local plans to protect its own natural and agricultural resources.

Water resources

Water scarcity has been identified as one of the most critical threats to Marib, and is exacerbated by the higher population

and irrigation density.⁷ Marib is also increasingly vulnerable to flooding. Analysis of the past twenty years reveals that of the environmental crises facing Marib, flooding now far outweighs the other environmental risks. 2020 was marked by unprecedented flooding and downpours causing significant damage. Furthermore, the swelling of the reservoir of the Marib dam, built in 1986, have raised concerns it might collapse and requires “quick solutions to face potential dangers.”⁸ Flooding is a crisis that also can present an opportunity for Marib, supporting an argument that the area is not necessarily “running out of water” but in need of better systems to manage its water.⁹

6 <https://gain-new.crc.nd.edu/country/yemen>
 7 UN Habitat, Rapid City and Neighborhood Profiling for Yemen - State of Yemen Cities , 2020
 8 “Several Killed in Yemen Floods | Climate News | Al Jazeera”, n.d., accessed March 4, 2021, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/8/5/several-killed-in-yemen-floods>.
 9 Stephen Caton, “The paradox of Qat”, Al Jazeera, <https://www.aljazeera.com/opinions/2010/9/20/the-paradox-of-qat>

	Phase 1 Minimal	Phase 2 Stressed	Phase 3 Crisis	Phase 4 Emergency	Higher than Phase 3
2019	27%	29%	27%	17%	44%
2020	15%	35%	35%	14%	49%
2021	10%	29%	42%	19%	61%

FIGURE 88. IPC Classification 2019 - 2021. 2021 is a projection.

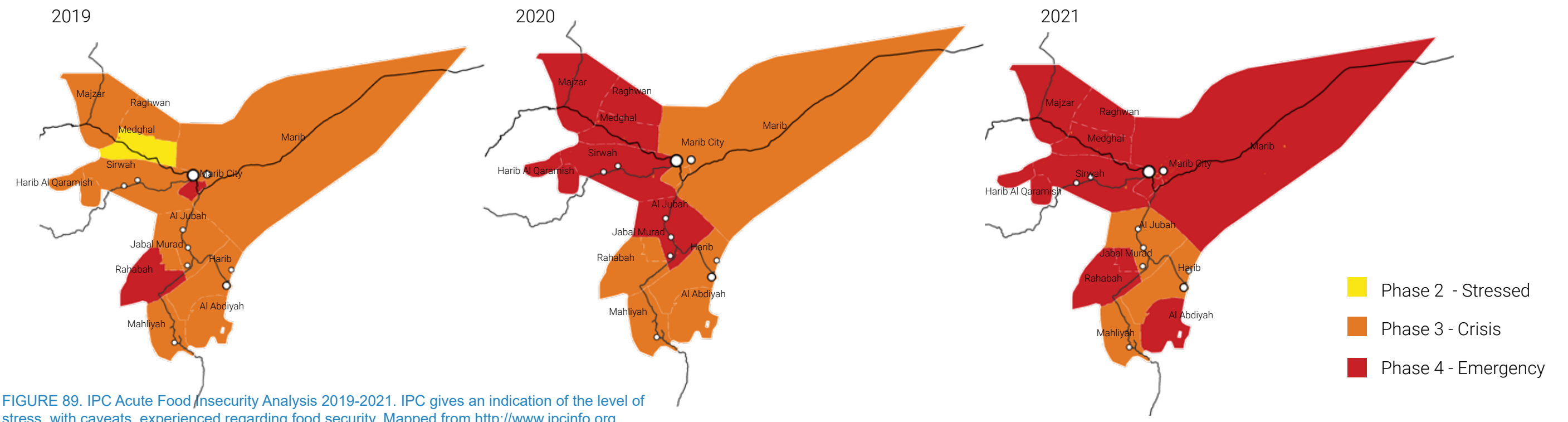


FIGURE 89. IPC Acute Food Insecurity Analysis 2019-2021. IPC gives an indication of the level of stress, with caveats, experienced regarding food security. Mapped from <http://www.ipcinfo.org>

Environment and stress on human health.

Water-borne diseases such as cholera have been on the rise¹⁰ due to a number of factors contributing to groundwater contamination. These include the lack of consistent WASH services-- particularly sewage networks-- as well as the lack of solid waste removal and recycling programs. In addition to water pollution, Marib residents are also at greater risk of air pollution due to living in proximity to hydrocarbon extraction areas.¹¹ People in nearby settlements complain of unusually high rates of cancer and other previously unknown or rare diseases.¹² Additionally, widespread use of pesticides increases a wide range of documented health risks--from type 2 diabetes¹³, childhood poisonings¹⁴ to other comorbidities that put communities at risk of worsening COVID-19 effects . Prior to the conflict, there were renewed efforts to tackle the problem – for example in discussions at the National Dialogue Conference. However, in 2019 it was reported in Yemen's sixth national report to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) that 'weak law enforcement related to pesticides and fertilizers use' remains one of the key obstacles preventing sustainable agriculture.

Current governments capacity to manage the environmental challenges

From a technical-managerial perspective, Marib's government must overcome economic challenges (weak capacity, security and regional coordination constraints, lack of reliable data and monitoring and a range of other factors that hamper the

¹⁰ ReliefWeb. 2021. Fighting Cholera in Yemen - Yemen. [online] Available at: <<https://reliefweb.int/report/yemen/fighting-cholera-yemen>> [Accessed 4 March 2021].

¹¹ https://www.google.com/url?q=https://hrmars.com/papers_submitted/6831/impact-of-oil-wells-drilling-process-on-human-health-in-hadhramout-yemen.pdf&sa=D&source=editors&ust=1614287284206000&usg=AOvVaw09XqmiRjFRWijMyCxeFO9Y

¹² Saleh Mohammed Altamimi, Radieah Mohd Nor, and Mohd Sayuti Hassan, "Impact of Oil Wells Drilling Process on Human Health in Hadhramout, Yemen," *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Studies* 9, no. 12 (2019): 924–39, https://hrmars.com/papers_submitted/6831/impact-of-oil-wells-drilling-process-on-human-health-in-hadhramout-yemen.pdf. See, Helen Lackner, Abdulrahman Al-Eryani, "Yemen's environmental crisis is the biggest risk for its future", *The Century Foundation*, <https://tcf.org/content/report/yemens-environmental-crisis-biggest-risk-future/?session=1>

¹³ http://www.lifesciencesite.com/life/150118/10_33260lsj150118_56_59.pdf

¹⁴ https://ijshr.com/IJSHR_Vol.5_Issue.2_April2020/IJSHR0036.pdf

national and local ability to respond to current and projected changes in climate. Yemen has been a signatory to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change since 2009, but it will now be incumbent upon local authorities such as Marib's government to take the initiative in developing its own climate adaptation plan. An international consortium of scientists and policymakers recently proposed that efforts to tackle the environment need to begin with coordination of local stakeholders from the government and tribes.

To support better knowledge sharing and harmonization of efforts related to water and environmental management, programs would ideally include a combination of the following stakeholders:¹⁵

- » Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) and branch offices
- » National Water Resources Authority (NWRA) and branch offices
- » Urban Water Supply and Sanitation Project (UWSSP)
- » Urban Local Corporations
- » General Authority for Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Project (GARWSP) and branch offices
- » General Directorate of Irrigation (GDI) and branch offices
- » Improved Irrigation Project (IIP)
- » Groundwater and Soil Conservation Project (GSCP)
- » Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs),
- » Women's groups, and student and youth groups

¹⁵ <https://www.thehagueinstituteforglobaljustice.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/Water-Management-in-Yemen.pdf>



FIGURE 91. Young sweet orange tree (FAO)



FIGURE 90. Spraying for locust infestation, Spring 2020.

16 LOOKING AHEAD FOR MARIB CONSIDERATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

Marib has been transformed by the conflict and plays an increasingly significant role in Yemen as a bridge between the divided regions of the country. Marib's ability to defy the odds of the war in Yemen by remaining an island of relatively functional governance and prosperity will require proactive and careful policymaking to manage this growth. Civilians in Yemen face increased hardships on the horizon. With about 24 million of Yemen's 30 million people needing some form of humanitarian aid, the country is now on the brink of a full-scale famine. Localism has its limits and Marib's ability to remain an island of relative stability is at least partly dependent on its ability to maintain revenue. However, there is a chance for Marib to use its current relative wealth and prosperity to act proactively in shaping future urban development outcomes.

The socio-economic development of the city is inextricably tied to its security environment. If the breakthroughs achieved in the fall of 2020 with the prisoner release and steps towards a peace deal can be sustained and built upon, then an improved Master Plan has a foundation and window of feasibility. With the visit of the UN Secretary General's envoy Martin Griffiths to Marib in March of 2020¹ and subsequent statements, the UN has already strongly urged all parties to halt actions which perpetuate the deteriorating security environment. All future urban development is contingent on a mutual agreement between all sides on this and a commitment from national actors in Yemen and stakeholders within the region come to realize that Marib's role as a safe haven and potential engine of economic growth is too vital to fail, planning for the city and peri-urban areas can be implemented.

This model in Marib is both significant and unsustainable. It is significant because it is changing Yemen's political

landscape from one that relies on the polarity of Sana'a in the north and Aden in the south, by adding a third pole with significant population weight. This state of tripolar centrality serves as an asset to test Yemen's constitutional reforms of 2015, which rightly pointed out to a decentralized Yemen, and to decentralization as an end-state solution to the conflict. While Sana'a will always rely on its capital status, and Aden in the south on its vibrant trade relations and fertile land fortunes, Marib has leveraged the oil resources to restore its status as a city-state which was lost centuries back. The unsustainability however stems from multiple competing factors that may determine the future of Marib as a city-state. It is difficult to conceive how Marib will be able to maintain its privileged access to oil revenues should a national unity be reestablished, and the distribution of natural resources become in the hands of central powers again. Moreover, should the Houthi-Saleh forces eventually control Marib, they have already issued laws that would take the control of natural resources completely out of the hands of the peripheries or the decentralized authorities.

The following needs are also offered for consideration:

¹ In March of 2020, the UN Secretary General's Envoy visited Marib in an attempt to urge parties to halt the deteriorating security environment. # Armed attacks had escalated in the wake of the assassination of Iranian General Qasem Soleimani in January, 2020 (viewed as retribution by the Iranian proxy forces believed to be responsible for armed incursions in the Marib region such as attacks on the oil pipelines in the governorate). Griffiths' visit was considered a historic moment in Marib as it marked the first time a UN envoy visited Marib since the conflict broke out in 2014.

Demography and displacement:

Considerations

- » Population boom and the 'wet cement' of Marib's currently undefined population, which is still forming and reshaping the identity of the city.
- » Marib has already challenged negative stereotypes which cast tribalism as reactionary to progressive ideals of pluralist and inclusive societies. Instead, Marib's tribal committees have maneuvered skillfully by avoiding many pitfalls of the conflict.
- » There is an urgent need to consider trends related to the likelihood of communities to stay in Mareb according to different political and economic scenarios, and to ensure that needs for all the population are met.
- » New IDP Managerial Class, encouraged by tribal elite: the city is now almost totally run by the IDPs, including the internal security and the entirety of the public functions.² The local tribes prefer to have the IDPs staff the bureaucracy, and demonstrate a lack of interest and training roles in the state affairs, but many in the IDP community have the necessary skills. IDPs have eagerly filled the roles in Marib and those who came from urban regions are less inclined to define themselves by their tribal affiliation.
- » New IDP Middle Class: The rise of the IDP urban middle class as unaffiliated members of this newly created host-IDP hybrid community is a key building block of a sustainable future for Marib.
- » Decentralization in a nutshell: While the tribes have effectively decentralized the economy of Yemen by controlling local natural wealth, the bureaucratic middle class is leading the administrative decentralization. The tribes on their part are also increasingly worried about the increased authority in the hands of foreign influence.

Implications

Marib's status as a hosting magnet is significant on many levels, and should urge policy makers to:

- » Understand the nation and the world is watching Marib. The city represents an asset for Yemen and for the entire conflict resolution discourse, by showing a model of tolerance and hospitality akin to the true nature of Yemeni history and culture.
- » Plan that the population boom is likely irreversible. The nearly half a million new residents in Marib are not just a transient population but likely here to stay (even though we don't predict new major displacement waves having direct impact on the city itself), and push/ pull dynamics in similar protracted displacement situations indicate the majority of the IDPs in Marib will likely settle and are already in the process of establishing long-term roots.
- » Marib will constitute a new demographic and economic pole in Yemen. This will have a positive impact on the post-conflict governance model, as rising poles with an undeniable historic weight and living tradition can further stress the movement to a decentralized, multi-polar administration in the republic.
- » The city's accommodative capacity in terms of urban systems and services key functions must transform to durable solutions. Forward looking planning that considers investment in fixed infrastructure assets capable to serve the current population will play an important part in this.
- » Build on the existing emergency-propelled environment of tolerance and solidarity to support inter-communal dialogue during the transition to an inclusive post-

conflict socio-economic model.

- » Give special attention to Marib's most marginalized groups (specifically al-Muhamasheen and African migrants). The protection of their rights must be advocated for and affirmed in any humanitarian and resilience response

² According to the observations by one of the field research team who contributed to this section, and while visiting a security administration in Marib, the researcher met scores of law enforcement officers, policemen, and rescue first responders inside the centre, and only found one or two individuals who are originally from Marib governorate.

Governance and growth of technical capacity

Considerations

- » Local government has the greatest visibility on its residents' needs and now the city is best positioned to manage crucial services.
- » Marib is Yemen's most advanced model of provincial and regional administration, as envisioned in the proceedings of the National Dialogue Conference in 2015. In fact, Marib is leading other, less-advantaged and less-populated regions in their calls for further decentralization and subsidiarity reforms. The UN-led peace process is invited to give greater attention to these bottom-up transformation processes as a key component to conflict resolution.
- » The lack of technical and scientific skills in Marib represents the greatest governance challenge, as the institutions are struggling to attract adequate skills for their purposes, leading major capacity-development programmes, or expanding its bureaucracy and policing force commensurate with the growth of its functions.

Implications

- » Expansion of bureaucracy to only the bare minimum level of demand will ensure institutional effectiveness. Systematically increase the "thickness" of institutional capacity and their positive engagement in the daily lives of the residents.³ Capable institutions can have transparent and written laws and procedures, manage budgets and taxes, transparently manage investments and procurements, create jobs and involve the private sector. Priorities to this end include:
- » Support the development of a credible, accountable

and connected policing force, for example mirroring the social structures and community groups, including the tribal alliances and marginalized groups. Such mirroring is essential in structuring a policing force that can gain the confidence of the residents regardless of their background, and to ensure the independence of the force from external influences.

- » Delegate more authority to the municipal level to lead daily functions, to manage part of the local budget, and to promote a conversation over the urban and economic future of the city. While a full-fledged municipal administration in Marib remains unrealistic and lacks legal grounds, the governorate authority can significantly benefit from expanding localized authority and accountability.
- » Support with capacity development initiatives focusing on leadership programmes such as: information technology and e-services, integrated civil and property services, one-stop-shop, procurement and PPP, building regulations oversight and adherence to structural safety codes, and emergency response and disaster management.
- » Avoid the traps of urban growth that only benefits a privileged elite minority. With rapid growth and myriad of economic opportunities emerging, the local authority will be under increasing pressure to adopt a modernist urban agenda leading to rapid, unsustainable urban growth, exemplified by the city's new master plan.
- » Formulate the urban priorities of Marib around the management of the looming informal housing crisis. Marib officials need to rapidly revisit assumptions driving the city's master plan which currently places

management of high-profile urban growth projects ahead of addressing the basic housing and livelihood needs of the majority of the city. There is a need to rapidly focus on small-scale planning and management capacity that Marib needs.

- » Rapidly support capacity development to deal with camps and spontaneous hosting neighbourhoods turning into slums, and to make affordable housing solutions and shelter transformation (preferably reviving traditional housing techniques and organic materials). These actions will determine whether public institutions retain public support and maintain legitimacy by turning the informal settlements into zones of opportunity and engines of the city's growth.
- » Build awareness among local authority officials and planning entities of the importance and value of protecting the city's cultural and natural legacies, which might be at jeopardy. This holds the keys to the city's sustainable economic growth and sense of identity and ownership.
- » Conduct environmental feasibility and water assessments before large infrastructure commitments are made considering the sensitive area the master plan covers.

³ By 'thickness' we suppose that large and adequately resourced institutions tend to have an advantage in coordinating and managing large-scale projects, challenging agile or lean theories of management. In public institutions a critical mass is needed to run the bare minimum of state or local authority functions. While thickness and resources alone is no guarantee of effectiveness, coordination and leadership and some evidence shows that agile and slim institutions (small government) can lead to better effectiveness so balance is needed based on how essential capacities are locally defined. Examples of empirical research: Beer, A., & Lester, L. (2015). Institutional thickness and institutional effectiveness: developing regional indices for policy and practice in Australia. *Regional Studies, Regional Science*, 2(1), 205-228. Zukauskaitė, E., Trippl, M., & Plechero, M. (2017). Institutional thickness revisited. *Economic Geography*, 93(4), 325-345

Economy

Considerations

- » Marib's rentier economy serves the few, but many opportunities to create job opportunities are left out, causing deprivation and widespread poverty.
- » Oil as a mixed blessing. The discovery of oil in Marib in 1984 provided new opportunities for exploitation but also became a new source of grievance for the marginalized populations of the North and the midlands.
- » As it is unlikely for Marib to maintain the present level of consolidation of oil revenues, political dialogue over natural wealth rights must be included in the political peace process before it evolves into a driver to conflict. Acknowledging the role of the formerly marginalized governorate in sustaining oil and electricity supplies should not mask the problematic nature of the exploitation of natural wealth as the basis of future stability.
- » Even though anecdotal information on the growth of businesses suggests an explosion of economic activity, there is a lack of sufficient data on economic fundamentals to determine how the city's local economy is functioning, its overall health and what is needed to make the economy more robust and inclusive.

Implications

- » Conduct market and employment assessments of current businesses to better determine what is serving the population and generating the most value (revenue, employment, prestige) for Marib and for the various demographic groups.
- » Access to cheap energy sources and reliable electricity supply (which is improving to date as the local authorities are making substantial and timely investments in this critical sector) is serving as a positive indicator for an economy that is offering opportunities for all. The local authority, by readily ensuring such state-run supplies, is succeeding where many regions and countries in conflict have faltered. The promotion of Marib as a heaven for small and medium businesses should be further supported by a capable local authority that can issue permits, give incentives to business start-ups, and collect taxes to improve other critical services (such as transportation, water and sanitation, and vocational education).
- » While sectors such as tourism, banking and communications are facing overwhelming conflict-induced challenges in the foreseeable future, other sectors have real chances of success and can be promoted through resilience and non-humanitarian interventions. Support to agriculture, livestock and fishery has serious potentials and direct food-security benefits, if sustainable water management and irrigation solutions are adequately supported. The real estate and construction sector will continue to grow, and skills development specifically on indigenous and climate-conscious practices will seed invaluable knowledge in support of a transition to sustainable urbanisation of the city. The non-governmental sectors and the CSOs in Marib have been expanding given the space that the local authorities and security actors are offering, and

those nascent agencies can play a critical role in the area of civic engagement and expanding the interest and participation in public affairs.

Cultural Heritage - past is present

Considerations

- » All powers involved or intervening in Yemen militarily must take all necessary measures to ensure the safety and integrity of Marib's heritage, as the deliberate decimation of the country's past undermines Yemen ancient history.
- » The near-destruction of Marib's Sabeen-era ancient dam was decried as a deliberate attack on one of Yemen's most celebrated heritage sites. The same ideologies by which the Islamic State justified its destruction of cultural heritage sites may have influenced such attacks against precarious physical evidence of Yemen's great ancient civilizations, as that detracted from the deficit narrative with which various powers have sought to undermine Yemen's cultural legacy.⁴ Preserving cultural heritage from all sorts of violations, including due to wear and tear, human indifference and infringement, is an immanent source of threat as well. The absence of central or local oversight in this regard is both unjustified and bears future implications.
- » Marib's history is preserved not just in its ruins but also through its "political DNA": while many have noted the paradox of Marib as a "Switzerland" in a sea of conflict, the underlying causes and social systems which contributed to this outcome have been under examined. While many commentators have explained the causes as circumstantial (neutrality as a byproduct of geographic location just outside of conflict lines while still accessible to IDPs, or to "Great Man Theory" about Marib's leadership being responsible for deft maneuvering between blocs), historical social trends in Marib related to tribe-state relations, cultural heritage, and historic standing of the city should also be considered as important factors in creating this status.

Implications

- » The responsibility to preserve the cultural and natural heritage in Marib lies in the hands of all concerned authorities, whether local or central, civil or military. Degrading and undermining Marib's heritage not only hampers future economic opportunity and local revenues when cultural heritage tourism can gradually recover. Marib's heritage as the former capital of the oldest Arabian Peninsula kingdom (Kingdom of Saba) is also directly tied to the prestige and legacy of Yemen as the cradle of Arab-speaking sedentary/urban civilization. Because many of the most besieged countries in the Arab world (Syria, Iraq, Yemen) are also home the richest repositories of archaeological as well as living cultural heritage, Marib's ability to resist the 'fog of war' from obscuring the urgency of cultural heritage protection can set a precedent for other regions.
- » Cultural heritage protection should be prioritized at many levels, and should include the following actions:
 - » Drive institutional capacity development, adequate staffing and equipment as the most serious priority, specifically as lines of responsibilities are presently blurred between local and central agencies.
 - » Prioritize building capacity among youths to preserve, document and defend their heritage as a focal area for civil society empowerment.
 - » Build public awareness during the process of a step-up of institutional presence and protective safeguards. The future economic benefits from heritage tourism should help mobilize public opinion and build a critical mass of responsible citizens in Marib, to shoulder the

preservation responsibility of the state institutions.

- » The master plan and the enforcement of building regulations should provide for the protection of cultural and natural assets. Organizing events and seminars jointly with the local authorities can create the space to discuss the challenges and the various sources of risks, and to determine feasible short-term fixes to stop the deterioration.

⁴ Leverage culture as a defense of Marib's fragile success: Cultural heritage was "weaponized" in Marib which experienced attacks on its historic dam among other damages in Yemen's civil war was has seen "cultural crimes (proliferating) in the vacuum of political instability following the 2011 Arab Spring", (Frederick Deknatel, "Tearing the Historic Fabric: The Destruction of Yemen's Cultural Heritage", Los Angeles Review of Books, 21February 2017, <https://lareviewofbooks.org/article/tearing-the-historic-fabric-the-destruction-of-yemens-cultural-heritage>) This dynamic can be reversed as there is widespread public support in Marib as our polling revealed for cultural heritage as a great asset to protect the area and draw in much needed tourist economy as well as international funding for further preservation.

Health sector

The health response in Marib requires much greater international attention given the hosting strain and the several health hazards emanating from an under-resourced and unprepared urban and health infrastructure.

Healthcare Sector Recommendations

- » Minimum Service Packages Needed to Enhance Core Health Sector Components:
 - » Procuring and positioning essential services at PHC across the governorates in high density neighbourhoods within Marib City.
 - » Focus on bolstering trauma care capacity, specifically for the newly arriving IDPs and those affected by natural disasters.
 - » Inpatient care for people suffering from Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM).
 - » Initiate specialized units at CMH for cancer renal failure patients.
 - » Support vaccination supply and delivery chains for vulnerable IDP groups against OCV, diphtheria, OPV, and measles.
 - » Communicable disease prevention and control capacity needs enhancement, including through public services and infrastructure upgrade measures.
 - » Supplies to CMH and PHC need to be ensured (including fuel), as well as incentives to staff.
 - » Highly Vulnerable People Need to Have Access to a Range of Services that are Affordable, Reliable and Accessible:
 - » Expanding the capacity of the public option in collaboration with OHP is essential for a wide population group hosted in Marib.
- » Supporting all additional components of the Minimum Service Package including child and maternal health care, non-communicable disease prevention and care, mental health and psychosocial services.
- » Strengthening Coordination:
 - » Training for doctors, nurses and midwives.
 - » Upgrading drug supply and health information system.
 - » Capacity-building to health administration, specifically in terms of monitoring medicine quality and pricing, registration and taxation for the private suppliers and services, and data maintenance and upgrade.

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ANNEX - MARIB SCORECARD INSTRUCTIONS

MARIB: Scorecard Instructions

Purpose of Survey and Instructions:

--This urban scorecard will serve to help the government of Marib and the UN better understand the current needs of residents.

--The survey is completely voluntary and we are grateful for you time in this critical effort. It consists of 50 very brief questions and should take 10-20 minutes of your time.

--The survey is open to anyone currently living in Marib over the age of 16.

--There are no right or wrong answers. Only answer from your experience and know that your needs, and ideas matter which is why we are asking for your views.

--Thank you for making a difference. By rating your satisfaction with services in the city, you are supporting a new effort to identify new ways to improve Marib for all and reach the global Stability Development Goals for sustainable, safe, and inclusive cities. Your answers will guide city upgrading efforts to best support its residents need now and into the future.

((Home page Instructions for developers: When people open the scorecard survey "splash page" on mobile or desktop devices, they will see this screen first asking for their consent and stating that no question is required, their data will be protected, and they have the right to opt out at any time.))

Thank you for joining the effort to help Marib City better understand and serve the real needs of its residents. It all starts with you!

Section 1 of 10:

Marib City and UN Habitat will convene community focus groups to discuss the findings of this poll and identify needs and solutions. Would you like to participate in a future focus group?

Yes
No
Maybe

If you selected "Yes," or "Maybe" please include the best way (Phone/Email) the Focus Group organizers can follow up with you.

Section 2 of 10:

Identity
Consent and Personal Information: This survey is optional. Only answer the questions you feel comfortable with. Some of the questions in this poll may be of a personal or sensitive nature and you may choose to opt out of the poll at any time.

1. Your current age is:

التعليمات الخاصة بملئ استطلاع واقع الخدمات والظروف المعيشية في مأرب ومحيطها

الغرض من الاستطلاع والتعليمات الأساسية:
يساعد هذا الاستطلاع الجهات العامة المحلية الموفرة للخدمات، وبرامج الأمم المتحدة الداعمة من فهم الواقع والاحتياجات

- هذا الاستطلاع تطوعي بالكامل، ونحن نشكر كل من سيساهم في تعبئته والوقت والجهد المبذولين. يتألف الاستطلاع من ٥٠ سؤال مبسط، ويستغرق ما بين ١٠ و٢٠ دقيقة لإنهائه.

- يمكن لكل من يعيش في مأرب أو في محيطها المشاركة بالاستطلاع، على ألا يقل سنه عن ١٦ عاماً.

- لا توجد إجابات صحيحة أو خاطئة في الاستطلاع. تفضل بالإجابة بحسب معرفتك بالاحتياجات وشاركنا بأرائك كلما كان ذلك متاحاً في متن الاستطلاع. شكراً لك لسعيك لخلق الفارق. من خلال تقييمك لأداء الخدمات ومدى رضاك عنها، أنت تسهم في تحديد خيارات الجهات المعنية في وضع الحلول التي سنؤذي لتعزيز النهضة في مأرب، وصولاً لأهداف التنمية المستدامة. إجاباتك ستدل المدينة على أفضل التوجهات الملبيبة لاحتياجات سكانها وتأمين ازدهار مستقبلهم.

((تعليمات الصفحة الرئيسية للمطورين: عندما يفتح الأشخاص «صفحة البداية» الخاصة باستطلاع بطاقة النقاط على الأجهزة المحمولة أو أجهزة سطح المكتب، سيرون هذه الشاشة أولاً وتطلب موافقتهم وتوضح أنه لا يوجد سؤال مطلوب، وستتم حماية بياناتهم، وهم الحق في إلغاء الاشتراك في أي وقت.))

شكراً لانضمامك معنا في خلق مستقبل أفضل لمدينة مأرب، ولتحسين فهمنا جميعاً للاحتياجات بغية تقديم خدمة أفضل لعموم سكانها. كل شيء يبدأ معك!

القسم ١ من ١٠

مدينة مأرب وبرنامج المونل سيعملان على تحليل نتائج هذا الاستطلاع وتوضيح النتائج من خلال جلسات نقاش تتبع الاستطلاع. هل تود المشاركة بتلك الجلسات النقاشية؟

نعم
لا
ربما

إذا كانت الإجابة على السؤال السابق بنعم أو ربما، يرجى تزويدنا بأفضل طريقة يمكننا بواسطتها التواصل معكم لاحقاً، سواء عبر الهاتف أو البريد الإلكتروني.

القسم ٢ من ١٠

التعريف بالمشارك في الاستطلاع
الموافقة على المشاركة والمعلومات الشخصية: هذا الاستطلاع اختياري. بمقدورك الإجابة على الأسئلة التي ترغب بها. يمكن لبعض الأسئلة أن تكون حساسة أو تخرج عن إطار خبرتك الخاصة، ولهذا يمكنك التوقف عن ملئ الاستبيان عند الرغبة وفي أي وقت أحببت.
عمرك الحالي:
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16-24
25-35
36-60
Over 60

٥٣-٥٢
٠٦-٦٣
أكثر من ٠٦

2. Your gender
Female
Male

الجنس:
أنثى
ذكر

3. Which best describes your current "presence" in Marib today?
I have been a resident of Marib since before the current situation began.
I arrived in Marib after the current situation started in 2015.
I just arrived in Marib in the past six months.

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4. Select which best describes where you live in Marib ((Programmers: Need to include best image of Marib here with shape files for key neighborhoods))

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Neighborhood A, etc.....

5. My current work is in the general field of:
Agriculture
Animal husbandry
Fishing
Building and Construction
IT services and Communications
Trade and Commerce
Highly skilled professional (Medical physician, engineer, etc.)
Education
Public Sector Service provider
Transportation
Mining/ Energy
Other

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6. Are you currently unemployed?
Yes
No
I am still a student

هل تعاني حالياً من البطالة؟
نعم
لا
أتابع تعليمي حالياً

Section 3 of 10

COVID-19 Public Health
1. I do not leave my home often now for fear of getting COVID-19.
Strongly Agree
Somewhat Agree
Somewhat Disagree
Strongly Disagree
Don't know/no opinion

٣ من ١٠
القسم ٣ من ١٠
الصحة العامة وفيروس كورونا (كوفيد ١٩)
لا أأغادر المنزل كثيراً مؤخراً خوفاً من التقاط فيروس كوفيد ١٩
أتفق بشدة
أتفق لحد ما
لا أتفق لحد ما
لا أتفق بشدة
لا أعلم لا رأي لدي

2. The city has done a lot to provide resources to help people stay safe from COVID-19? (face masks, new clinics, training, etc.)
Strongly agree
Somewhat Agree
Somewhat Disagree
Strongly Disagree
Don't know/no opinion

٢.
لقد قامت المدينة بالكثير لتوفير الموارد اللازمة لمساعدة الناس وحمايتهم من فيروس كوفيد ١٩ (من قبيل توفير الكمادات في الأسواق، نقاط طبية، حملات توعية، إلخ)
أتفق بشدة
أتفق لحد ما
لا أتفق لحد ما
لا أتفق بشدة
لا أعلم لا رأي لدي

3. I believe the city needs to change a great deal of its

٣.
أعتقد بأن على المدينة أن تتغير كثيراً استجابةً لفيروس كوفيد ١٩ (المحال التجارية، الخدمات العامة، النقل، العناية الصحية وسوى ذلك)

current structures (stores, services, transportation, healthcare, etc.) in response to COVID.	أتفق بشدة أتفق لحد ما لا أتفق لحد ما لا أتفق بشدة لا أعلم لا رأي لدي	Strongly Agree Somewhat Agree Somewhat Disagree Strongly Disagree Don't know/no opinion	لا أتفق لحد ما لا أتفق بشدة لا أعلم لا رأي لدي
Section 4 of 10 Pillar 1: Housing The overall survey is weighted towards housing-related questions as a reflection of UN-Habitat mandate and profiling objectives. 1. How satisfied are you with options for finding affordable housing in Marib? Very satisfied Somewhat satisfied Somewhat dissatisfied Very dissatisfied Don't know/no opinion	القسم ٤ من ١٠ السكان إلى أي مدى تلبية مأرب الحاجة لتوفير المسكن الرخيص لقاطنيها؟ مرضى للغاية مقبول غير مقبول لحد ما غير مقبول بتاتاً لا أعلم لا رأي لدي	Section 5 of 10 Pillar 2: Economy+Jobs 1. Your work has been impacted by the current situation in Yemen. Strongly Agree Somewhat Agree Somewhat Disagree Strongly Disagree Don't know/no opinion	القسم ٥ من ١٠ الاقتصاد وفرص العمل تأثر نشاطك الاقتصادي سلباً بسبب الوضع القائم في اليمن أتفق بشدة أتفق لحد ما لا أتفق لحد ما لا أتفق بشدة لا أعلم لا رأي لدي
2. The cost of staying in your current residence/home takes up more than 50% of your current income/earnings. Strongly Agree Somewhat Agree Somewhat Disagree Strongly Disagree Don't know/no opinion	يكلفني البقاء في مسكني الحالي ما فوق ٥٠٪ من دخلي الشهري بصورة وسطية. أتفق بشدة أتفق لحد ما لا أتفق لحد ما لا أتفق بشدة لا أعلم لا رأي لدي	2. You are able to find good ways of earning enough to support yourself and your family. Strongly Agree Somewhat Agree Somewhat Disagree Strongly Disagree Don't know/no opinion	بإمكانك أسرتك الحصول على دخل كافٍ عبر وسائل مرضية تكفي لإعالتك وأسرتك أتفق بشدة أتفق لحد ما لا أتفق لحد ما لا أتفق بشدة لا أعلم لا رأي لدي
3. You feel safe in your current home from dangers (natural /manmade violence /risk of eviction). Strongly Agree Somewhat Agree Somewhat Disagree Strongly Disagree Don't know/no opinion	أشعر بالأمان بمكان إقامتي الحالي من مختلف المخاطر (الطبيعية منها أو العنف من صنع الإنسان، أو خطر الإخلاء) أتفق بشدة أتفق لحد ما لا أتفق لحد ما لا أتفق بشدة لا أعلم لا رأي لدي	3. The health crisis has made the conflict even more difficult for local business. Strongly Agree Somewhat Agree Somewhat Disagree Strongly Disagree Don't know/no opinion	الأزمة الصحية الأخيرة صعبت من واقع العمل والنشاط الاقتصادي أتفق بشدة أتفق لحد ما لا أتفق لحد ما لا أتفق بشدة لا أعلم لا رأي لدي
4. Everyone feels welcome to rent a residence in any location in the city including the IDPs. Strongly Agree Somewhat Agree Somewhat Disagree Strongly Disagree Don't know/no opinion	يشعر الجميع بما في ذلك الوافدون اليوم بالترحيب وإمكانية استئجار المسكن في أي موقع كان في المدينة. أتفق بشدة أتفق لحد ما لا أتفق لحد ما لا أتفق بشدة لا أعلم لا رأي لدي	4. The economy is getting better and you have more hope for the future. Strongly Agree Somewhat Agree Somewhat Disagree Strongly Disagree Don't know/no opinion	الاقتصاد في حالة من التحسن وأنا متفائل بمستقبل أفضل أتفق بشدة أتفق لحد ما لا أتفق لحد ما لا أتفق بشدة لا أعلم لا رأي لدي
5. You are satisfied with how close your home is to job opportunities. Strongly Agree Somewhat Agree Somewhat Disagree Strongly Disagree Don't know/no opinion	تشعر بالرضى لقرب مسكنك من مكان عملك أو من نشاطك الاقتصادي أو التعليمي أتفق بشدة أتفق لحد ما لا أتفق لحد ما لا أتفق بشدة لا أعلم لا رأي لدي	5. There are many opportunities for women to work. Strongly Agree Somewhat Agree Somewhat Disagree Strongly Disagree Don't know/no opinion	هنالك الكثير من فرص العمل للنساء أتفق بشدة أتفق لحد ما لا أتفق لحد ما لا أتفق بشدة لا أعلم لا رأي لدي
6. It has been getting more difficult to find affordable places to live in Marib in the past year. Strongly Agree Somewhat Agree Somewhat Disagree Strongly Disagree Don't know/no opinion	تزداد صعوبة توفير المسكن الملائم والرخيص في مأرب مقارنة بالعام المنصرم. أتفق بشدة أتفق لحد ما لا أتفق لحد ما لا أتفق بشدة لا أعلم لا رأي لدي	6. Markets are open in your area, offering most of what people need. Strongly Agree Somewhat Agree Somewhat Disagree Strongly Disagree Don't know/no opinion	الأسواق متوفرة في منطقتي وتتوفر فيها غالب احتياجات الناس أتفق بشدة أتفق لحد ما لا أتفق لحد ما لا أتفق بشدة لا أعلم لا رأي لدي
7. People in the neighborhood are building randomly, and many are violating building rules and norms.	الناس في الحي الذي أقطن به تبني عشوائياً، أو تتجاوز ضوابط البناء المعمول بها. أتفق بشدة أتفق لحد ما	7. As far as you know, local agriculture is doing well at the present time. Strongly Agree Somewhat Agree Somewhat Disagree Strongly Disagree Don't know/no opinion	على حد علمي، فإن الزراعة الحالية نشطة في الوقت الراهن أتفق بشدة أتفق لحد ما لا أتفق لحد ما لا أتفق بشدة لا أعلم لا رأي لدي
		8. Agriculture and animal husbandry has been improving	الزراعة وتربية الحيوانات تشهد تحسناً في محيط مأرب نتيجة ازدياد الطلب المحلي في الأسواق

in the surrounding areas of Marib as a result of increasing local demand.

Strongly Agree
Somewhat Agree
Somewhat Disagree
Strongly Disagree
Don't know/no opinion

اتفق بشدة
اتفق لحد ما
لا أتفق لحد ما
لا أتفق بشدة
لا أعلم لا رأي لدي

Strongly Agree
Somewhat Agree
Somewhat Disagree
Strongly Disagree
Don't know/no opinion

اتفق لحد ما
لا أتفق لحد ما
لا أتفق بشدة
لا أعلم لا رأي لدي

9. If you want to start a business it is easy for you to do so.

Strongly Agree
Somewhat Agree
Somewhat Disagree
Strongly Disagree
Don't know/no opinion

إذا رغبت في البدء بمشروع فإن من السهل علي القيام بذلك
اتفق بشدة
اتفق لحد ما
لا أتفق لحد ما
لا أتفق بشدة
لا أعلم لا رأي لدي

8. Services are generally improving.

Strongly Agree
Somewhat Agree
Somewhat Disagree
Strongly Disagree
Don't know/no opinion

الخدمات تتحسن بشكل عام
اتفق بشدة
اتفق لحد ما
لا أتفق لحد ما
لا أتفق بشدة
لا أعلم لا رأي لدي

Section 6 of 10

Pillar 3: Infrastructure and Services

1. You are satisfied with your daily access to electricity.

Very satisfied
Somewhat satisfied
Somewhat dissatisfied
Very dissatisfied
Don't know/no opinion

تشعر بالرضى عن عدد الساعات التي تتزود بها بالكهرباء خلال اليوم
مرضى للغاية
مقبول
غير مقبول لحد ما
غير مقبول بتاتاً
لا أعلم لا رأي لدي

9. Are you satisfied with the information you can access about the city on local websites (including social media such as Facebook pages) to answer any questions you have about city services?

Very satisfied
Somewhat satisfied
Somewhat dissatisfied
Very dissatisfied
Don't know/no opinion

هل تستطيع الحصول على معلومات وافية تحتاجها في إدارة شؤون حياتك ومعرفة واقع الخدمات عبر المواقع الالكترونية (بما يشمل وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي مثل صفحات فيس بوك)؟
مرضى للغاية
مقبول
غير مقبول لحد ما
غير مقبول بتاتاً
لا أعلم لا رأي لدي

2. You can only access electricity for half of the day or less.

Strongly Agree
Somewhat Agree
Somewhat Disagree
Strongly Disagree
Don't know/no opinion

يمكنك التزود بالكهرباء لفترة لا تتجاوز ٢١ ساعة أو أقل
اتفق بشدة
اتفق لحد ما
لا أتفق لحد ما
لا أتفق بشدة
لا أعلم لا رأي لدي

10. I know where to go in an emergency (security incident, natural disaster, illness).

Strongly Agree
Somewhat Agree
Somewhat Disagree
Strongly Disagree
Don't know/no opinion

أعرف إلى أين علي التوجه أو الاتصال في حال حدوث الطوارئ (حصول جريمة أو نزاع، حوادث طبيعية، المرض)

3. You can easily access safe and drinkable water.

Strongly Agree
Somewhat Agree
Somewhat Disagree
Strongly Disagree
Don't know/no opinion

بإمكانك الحصول على مياه شرب آمنة بصورة سهلة
اتفق بشدة
اتفق لحد ما
لا أتفق لحد ما
لا أتفق بشدة
لا أعلم لا رأي لدي

11. People in the city pay taxes.

Strongly Agree
Somewhat Agree
Somewhat Disagree
Strongly Disagree
Don't know/no opinion

يقوم السكان في المدينة بدفع الضرائب والرسوم المترتبة عليهم
اتفق بشدة
اتفق لحد ما
لا أتفق لحد ما
لا أتفق بشدة
لا أعلم لا رأي لدي

4. Are you satisfied with the quality and type of education children in your family can receive?

Very satisfied
Somewhat satisfied
Somewhat dissatisfied
Very dissatisfied
Don't know/no opinion

هل تشعر بالرضى حيال نوعية ومستوى التعليم الذي تتلقاه أو يتلقاه أي من أفراد أسرتك حالياً؟
مرضى للغاية
مقبول
غير مقبول لحد ما
غير مقبول بتاتاً
لا أعلم لا رأي لدي

12. It is easy to make a complaint (In person, over computer or phone) in the city when a service or area needs to be improved.

Strongly Agree
Somewhat Agree
Somewhat Disagree
Strongly Disagree
Don't know/no opinion

من السهل التقدم بالشكاوى (إما بالاتصال الهاتفي، أو عبر الانترنت أو شخصياً) في المدينة عندما تتعطل خدمة ما أو عندما تحتاج تلك الخدمة للتحسين والصيانة
اتفق بشدة
اتفق لحد ما
لا أتفق لحد ما
لا أتفق بشدة
لا أعلم لا رأي لدي

5. How satisfied are you with basic civic services (post office, registration, operational licenses)?

Very satisfied
Somewhat satisfied
Somewhat dissatisfied
Very dissatisfied
Don't know/no opinion

ما مدى رضاك عن الخدمات المدنية الأساسية المقدمة في المدينة (مكتب البريد، السجلات المدنية والعقارية، التراخيص وسواها)
مرضى للغاية
مقبول
غير مقبول لحد ما
غير مقبول بتاتاً
لا أعلم لا رأي لدي

Section 7 of 10

Pillar 4: Governance

6. The current situation has damaged or interrupted a lot of services in the city.

Strongly Agree
Somewhat Agree
Somewhat Disagree
Strongly Disagree
Don't know/no opinion

أدى الوضع القائم إلى تعثر الكثير من الخدمات في المدينة
اتفق بشدة
اتفق لحد ما
لا أتفق لحد ما
لا أتفق بشدة
لا أعلم لا رأي لدي

1. I am satisfied with how the city of Marib is improving life in the city, despite the many challenges facing Yemen at this time.

Strongly Agree
Somewhat Agree
Somewhat Disagree
Strongly Disagree
Don't know/no opinion

أشعر بالرضى حول الطريقة التي تتطور بها ظروف الحياة في مدينة مأرب، بالرغم من كل التحديات التي تواجه اليمن في الوقت الراهن
اتفق بشدة
اتفق لحد ما
لا أتفق لحد ما
لا أتفق بشدة
لا أعلم لا رأي لدي

7. The government faces a lot of pressures to provide adequate services in the city for all of the people.

تواجه الحكومة الكثير من التحديات لتأمين الخدمات الأساسية الملائمة لجميع المواطنين
اتفق بشدة

2. If I have a problem, I am more likely to go to the government than to a tribal council.

Strongly Agree
Somewhat Agree
Somewhat Disagree

إذا كانت لدي مشكلة، أفضل اللجوء للأجهزة الحكومية والرسمية بدلاً للوسطاء والشخصيات المحلية
اتفق بشدة
اتفق لحد ما
لا أتفق لحد ما
لا أتفق بشدة

Strongly Disagree Don't know/no opinion	لا أعلم لا رأي لدي	Don't know/no opinion	أشعر بالترحاب والألفة في أكثر الأماكن في مأرب
3. If I think of an ideal model for government in Marib it would be the civil state the way it is described in the current constitution of Yemen Republic, rather than any other form of government. Strongly Agree Somewhat Agree Somewhat Disagree Strongly Disagree Don't know/no opinion	إذا فكرت بأفضل نمط حوكمي في مأرب، فأنا أفضل الدولة المدنية طبقاً لدستور الجمهورية اليمنية عن أي نموذج آخر. أتفق بشدة أتفق لحد ما لا أتفق لحد ما لا أتفق بشدة لا أعلم لا رأي لدي	5. I feel welcome to go to most places in Marib. Strongly Agree Somewhat Agree Somewhat Disagree Strongly Disagree Don't know/no opinion	أتفق بشدة أتفق لحد ما لا أتفق لحد ما لا أتفق بشدة لا أعلم لا رأي لدي
4. As an average citizen, I believe that my voice and opinion can make a difference in the city. Strongly Agree Somewhat Agree Somewhat Disagree Strongly Disagree Don't know/no opinion	بوصفي مواطناً في المدينة، أعتقد أن رأيي وصوتي يمكن أن يصنع فرقاً في مستقبل المدينة. أتفق بشدة أتفق لحد ما لا أتفق لحد ما لا أتفق بشدة لا أعلم لا رأي لدي	6. Section 9 of 10 Pillar 6: Environment 1. The environment is worse than it used to be because of climate change, and is making life in the city more difficult. Strongly Agree Somewhat Agree Somewhat Disagree Strongly Disagree Don't know/no opinion	القسم ٩ من ١٠ البيئة الواقع البيئي أسوأ مما كان عليه من حيث أثر التبدلات المناخية، مما يصعب ظروف العيش في المدينة أو محيطها أتفق بشدة أتفق لحد ما لا أتفق لحد ما لا أتفق بشدة لا أعلم لا رأي لدي
5. Outside powers (such as other governments, corporations, etc.) use their power to make life more difficult in the city sometimes. Strongly Agree Somewhat Agree Somewhat Disagree Strongly Disagree Don't know/no opinion	القوى الخارجية (كالشركات والحكومات الأخرى) تستخدم قوتها أحياناً بما يصعب من شروط الحياة في المدينة. أتفق بشدة أتفق لحد ما لا أتفق لحد ما لا أتفق بشدة لا أعلم لا رأي لدي	2. Natural assets such as trees and riversides are respected here. There are efforts to preserve the environment and protect it from buildings and development. Strongly Agree Somewhat Agree Somewhat Disagree Strongly Disagree Don't know/no opinion	المعالم الطبيعية كالأشجار وضافان الأنهار تحظى بالاحترام والحماية. ثمة جهود تبذل للمحافظة على البيئة وحمايتها من التعديلات العمرانية. أتفق بشدة أتفق لحد ما لا أتفق لحد ما لا أتفق بشدة لا أعلم لا رأي لدي
Pillar 8 of 10 Pillar 5: Civil Society and Social Cohesion	المحور ٨ من ١٠ المجتمع والترابط الاجتماعي	3. In our city people are finding local solutions to address environmental problems, such as solutions to water shortages, improving energy usage, and exploring new building methods. Strongly Agree Somewhat Agree Somewhat Disagree Strongly Disagree Don't know/no opinion	الناس في المدينة يقومون بإيجاد الحلول للمشاكل البيئية كالتعامل مع شح المياه، أو تحسين طرق استهلاك الوقود، أو استعمال سبل البناء الجديدة أو التقليدية التي تحمي البيئة أتفق بشدة أتفق لحد ما لا أتفق لحد ما لا أتفق بشدة لا أعلم لا رأي لدي
1. If I can't get help from the government, I can get help from others in my neighborhood or my social network. Strongly Agree Somewhat Agree Somewhat Disagree Strongly Disagree Don't know/no opinion	إذا عجزت عن الحصول على مساعدة من الجهات الرسمية، فيمكنني من محيطي الاجتماعي أو جيرانني في الحي تقديم المساعدة اللازمة. أتفق بشدة أتفق لحد ما لا أتفق لحد ما لا أتفق بشدة لا أعلم لا رأي لدي	Section 10 of 10 Pillar 7: Cultural Heritage	القسم ١٠ من ١٠ التراث الثقافي
2. People from different groups and backgrounds generally get along in Marib. Strongly Agree Somewhat Agree Somewhat Disagree Strongly Disagree Don't know/no opinion	الناس في مأرب متلائمة ومتعيشة بغض النظر عن خلفياتها الاجتماعية والثقافية والعشائرية أتفق بشدة أتفق لحد ما لا أتفق لحد ما لا أتفق بشدة لا أعلم لا رأي لدي	1. Protecting Marib and Yemen's cultural and archaeological heritage is important to me. Strongly Agree Somewhat Agree Somewhat Disagree Strongly Disagree Don't know/no opinion	أعتبر أن حماية إرث مأرب واليمن الثقافي هام بالنسبة لي أتفق بشدة أتفق لحد ما لا أتفق لحد ما لا أتفق بشدة لا أعلم لا رأي لدي
3. I feel more respected in Marib than where I lived before I came here, or more than when I visit other places. Strongly Agree Somewhat Agree Somewhat Disagree Strongly Disagree Don't know/no opinion	أشعر بالاحترام في مدينة مأرب أكثر من المكان الذي قدمت منه، أو في الأماكن الأخرى التي أزورها. أتفق بشدة أتفق لحد ما لا أتفق لحد ما لا أتفق بشدة لا أعلم لا رأي لدي	2. There are places in the city that you value because they are historic or beautiful (such as parks, plazas, oases, mosques, or water sources.) Strongly Agree Somewhat Agree Somewhat Disagree Strongly Disagree Don't know/no opinion	هناك مواقع بالمدينة محببة لدي نظراً لقيمتها الثقافية وجمالها الأخاذ (كالحدايق والمقاهي والساحات والجوامع ومناهل المياه) أتفق بشدة أتفق لحد ما لا أتفق لحد ما لا أتفق بشدة لا أعلم لا رأي لدي
4. I feel there is opportunity for me in Marib regardless of my appearance (skin color or ethnicity) or family background. Strongly Agree Somewhat Agree Somewhat Disagree Strongly Disagree	أشعر أنني قادر على الحصول على فرصتي في مأرب بغض النظر عن سماتي الشكلية (كلون البشرة أو الانتماء) أو خلفيتي الأسرية أتفق بشدة أتفق لحد ما لا أتفق لحد ما لا أتفق بشدة لا أعلم لا رأي لدي		

UN-Habitat seeks to provide up to date, holistic documentation and analysis of the impact of the crisis in key cities, through City Profiles, synthesising information and insight from existing sources and priority sectors, supplemented by direct field research by UN-Habitat teams based in each city. This profile is part of a regional urban profiling exercise that aims to develop urban profiles for the cities of Basra, Sinjar, Derna (Libya), Marib (Yemen) Deir-ez-Zor and Dar'a (Syria). UN-Habitat's expertise in urban analysis, community approaches and crisis contexts have informed the development of the City Profiling process. All City Profiles are developed in close association with the concerned governorates and municipalities.

The structure of the City Profile provides a pre-crisis baseline and data from the current situation to understand the impact of the crisis accompanied by narrative description and analysis. Furthermore, City Profiles review the functionality of the city economy and services, understanding of capacities and coping mechanisms and the identification of humanitarian or development priorities. They do not provide comprehensive data on individual topics, but seek to provide a balanced overview. The City Profile affords an opportunity for a range of stakeholders to represent their diagnosis of the situation in their city, provides a basis for local discussions on actions to be taken and helps to make local information and voices accessible to external stakeholders seeking to assist in development response.