

# **Field Study Report on the Presence of IDPs and Muhammasheen at the Governmental and Service Provision Facilities in Marib City: Effects and Solutions**

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Cover Photo: an aerial image of the IDP community at the Community College in Al-Rawdhah Neighborhood, Marib City, Yemen.

Taken on Aug. 31<sup>st</sup>, 2020.

## About Musaala for Human Rights

It is a Yemeni NGO established in Dec. 2017, with License No. (275), issued by the Ministry of Social Affairs & Labor Office in Marib governorate. It works in the area of defending and protecting human rights by monitoring and documenting human rights violations, supporting and rehabilitating the victims, and holding accountable the perpetrators of such violations in order to stop and ensure non-recurrence of the violations.

## Acknowledgement

The tools of research used to carry out this study as well as the report writing were supervised by Al-Hussein Ali Sawlan, Consultant and Program and Project Director at Musaala for Human Rights

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We, in Musaala for Human Rights, would like also to thank all the respondents targeted by the study (institutions, individuals, and IDPs), who accepted to share their opinions with us and enrich the discussion at the small focus groups.

This study has been prepared by Musaala for Human Rights in partnership and collaboration with the Executive Unit of the IDP Camp Management in Marib governorate, with the support of PY.



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## **Executive Summary**

This report is an attempt to help the local authorities and the organizations operating in the humanitarian and relief area to provide workable solutions and alternatives to address the problem of the IDPs' presence and stay at the governmental facilities. It includes a number of lessons learned and relevant recommendations for the parties concerned with the IDP issues and affairs in order to enhance the current and future efforts. The study findings show also the consequences of the IDPs' continued stay at the governmental and service provision facilities which has stopped the provision of their services for the local community and IDPs in Marib City. It also contains the solutions suggested from the perspectives of the IDPs themselves, the host community, the local authority, and the humanitarian and relief organizations operating in Marib governorate.

When solutions are being sought for the problem of the IDPs' stay at the governmental facilities, the IDPs are usually viewed as the cause and that they, not others, have the solution. However, through this study, we managed to bring closer the viewpoints and opinions of all of the parties and entities concerned (the local authority, the IDPs living at the governmental and service provision facilities, the host community, and the local NGOs and INGOs working in the humanitarian and relief area in Marib City) about the consequences and solutions suggested to the problem of the IDPs' stay at the governmental facilities and their discontinuation of service provision.

We hope that the findings of this study would contribute to the improvement of the policies and mechanisms adopted by the authorities and the organizations working in the humanitarian area in connection with the IDPs living at the governmental and service provision facilities. It is also hoped that it will contribute to the development and production of a number of suggestions, recommendations, and solutions through which the entities concerned can develop and design future activities, projects, and interventions related to the issues of internal displacement in general and the IDPs living at governmental facilities in particular.

This study focused on the Marib City district, being the largest in terms of the number of IDPs hosted, and the large number of governmental facilities used by the IDPs as shelters since 2015 till now. Considering the fact that the social and cultural environments are consistent across the different districts of Marib governorate, the findings of this report are therefore applicable to the IDPs living at the governmental facilities in other districts and areas in Marib governorate.

The study findings are based on the research conducted by Musaala for Human Rights, in partnership with the Executive Unit of the IDP Camp Management in Marib governorate, with the support of PY, during Aug. 1 – Sept. 15, 2020. Some 8 small focus group discussions were held for the target groups described in the Research Sampling.

## **Study Recommendations**

### **Recommendations for the local authority and the Executive Unit of the IDP Camp Management**

- Providing suitable shelter alternatives for the IDPs living at the governmental facilities in Marib City and developing a timed plan for facility abandonment and maintenance before bringing them back to service.
- Involving the IDPs in finding out the suitable solutions in order to relocate them from the governmental facilities so that they ensure safe and suitable alternative places where all services are provided.
- Continued assurance, monitoring, and evaluation that the precautionary measures are taken by the IDP communities at the governmental facilities to stop the spread of COVID-19.
- The local authority has to develop an emergency plan to address the wave of internal displacement coming from the governorate, including the assignment of specific but expandable areas of land in collaboration with the organizations to prepare and equip them as camps.

### **Recommendations for the local NGOs and INGOs operating in the humanitarian and relief area**

- Providing assistance for the local authority to find and prepare suitable shelter alternatives for the IDPs living at the governmental facilities in Marib City, and reconstruct and repair the governmental facilities abandoned by the IDPs in order to help reactivate the roles and services of such facilities.
- Providing the technical and financial support for the Executive Unit of the IDP Camp Management in the area of camp management, displacement movement monitoring, and preparation of an updated authentic database of the IDPs in Marib governorate.
- Continuing the awareness-promotion efforts and activity implementation which ensure the IDPs' compliance and application of the precautionary measures at the IDP communities at the governmental facilities to stop the spread of COVID-19.
- The future efforts, plans, and programs should focus on the implementation of projects and provision of services that contribute to the development of the individual and the community and equipping the affected groups and communities with the skills to start small income-generating businesses, not depending solely on the relief and emergency response projects.
- Conducting awareness-promotion activities and campaigns at the governmental facilities on the effects of the IDPs' continued stay at such governmental facilities and the extent of damage caused to them due to their being used as a shelter.

## **Study Methodology**

### **Study Problem:**

- There hasn't been a field study and careful analysis of the effects of the IDPs' stay at the governmental and service provision facilities in Marib City, their discontinuation of service provision for both the IDPs and local community, and the solutions suggested thereto.
- To verify whether the IDPs' continued stay at the governmental facilities affect social cohesion between the IDPs and the host community in Marib City or not.

### **Study Goal and Objectives:**

**The goal of this study is as follows:** To come out with a field study on the consequences of the IDPs continued stay at the governmental and service provision facilities, their discontinuation of service provision for the local community and IDPs in Marib City, and the main suggestions, recommendations, and suitable solutions to treat the same.

### **The objectives of the study are as follows:**

- To study the consequences and solutions suggested for solving the problem of the IDPs' stay at the governmental facilities in Marib City and their discontinuation of service provision.
- To exercise pressure on the local authority and the organizations concerned with the IDPs in order to provide alternative and suitable solutions for the IDPs.

### **Data Collection Methods and Tools**

We collected data through the design of a questionnaire form. Each of the target groups in the research sample were given a set of questions all of which aim to gather data and opinions from the respondents about the reasons for the IDPs' use of the governmental facilities as shelters and the consequences of their stay. They also aim to determine the effect on social cohesion between the IDPs and the host community in Marib City and highlight the efforts already made by the local authority and the local NGOs and INGOs to treat this problem.

After the design of the questionnaire form, we chose to conduct the research through the use of the small focus group tool. Each session include no less than 7 persons and no more than 10 persons from the target groups in order to ensure a dialogue and discussion environment where each group members gather separately to present and discuss the causes of the IDPs' stay at the governmental facilities in Marib City and the consequences of their stay which caused such facilities to discontinue their service provision for the host community. We also listened to the participants' main suitable solutions to treat the problem of the IDPs' stay and presence at the governmental facilities. At the sessions, we listened to them and took down their observations and opinions during a participatory discussion that lasted for no more than one and a half hours.

Finally, there is the role of the consultant who read all the reports and outcomes of the focus group sessions, transcribed and analyzed them, and then wrote the final draft of the study whose findings are showcased in this report.

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**Study Scope and Sampling**

- Time: Aug. 1 – Sept. 15, 2020.
- Place: Marib City, Marib Governorate, Yemen.
- Groups: IDPs, host community, local authority, local NGOs.

The research we conducted included 8 small focus group sessions which targeted a total of 59 persons representing the following groups: local authority, local NGOs and INGOs, the IDPs and muhammasheen living at the governmental and service provision facilities in Marib City, and the host community in Marib City.

The following table describes the size and traits of the target sample of the study:

Session No.	Target Group / Sample Type	Number and Gender		
		Male	Female	Total
1	IDPs living at the Ministry of Agriculture & Irrigation Office	6	1	7
2	IDPs living at the Community College	5	2	7
3	The local authority in Marib governorate	5	0	5
4	Local NGOs and INGOs in Marib	3	2	5
5	Host community (1)	7	2	9
6	Muhammsheen in 40-Meter St.	5	1	6
7	IDPs living at the museum + Al-Nassr Camp (Sports Hall)	6	3	9
8	Host community (2)	8	3	11
<b>Total</b>		<b>45</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>59</b>





Photo 1: an IDP community at the Ministry of Agriculture & Irrigation Office in Al-Salam neighborhood, Marib City, Yemen. Photo taken on Aug. 30, 2020

## **Study Report Findings**

### **Reasons for IDPs' use of the governmental facilities as shelter:**

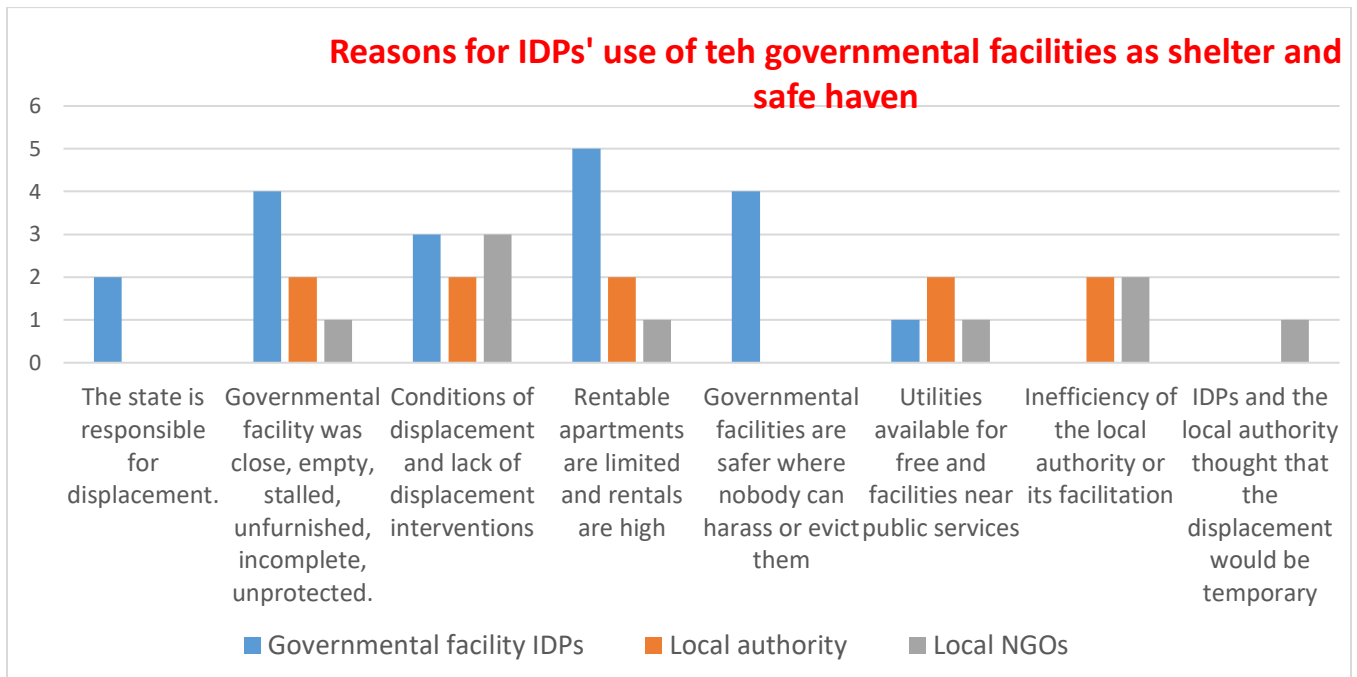
The field study findings revealed a common opinion expressed by all the respondents (representatives of IDPs, local authority, and local NGOs in Marib City): the main cause for the IDPs' use of the governmental facilities as shelters and safe haven is that each of the governmental facilities was either closed, empty, unfurnished, stalled, incomplete, unprotected, or unguarded. Another cause is the limited availability of rentable apartments or houses inside Marib City, and the high rentals required, if available. There is also the advantage of having utilities at the governmental facilities and their location within reach of public services.

Moreover, the time and circumstances of displacement and lack of interventions on the part of the authority or organizations to cope with the displacement wave are among the key causes of the IDPs' use of the governmental facilities as a shelter.

The respondents representing the IDPs living at the governmental facilities in Marib City mentioned other reasons, i.e., that the state and the NGOs are responsible for addressing the displacement issue, that the IDP has the right to use a governmental facility as a shelter, and that the governmental facilities are safer places where nobody can harass or evict them.

Moreover, the respondent representing the local authority and local NGOs in Marib City mentioned that one of the causes is the inefficiency of the local authority or its facilitation of the IDPs' access to the governmental facilities.

The local NGO respondents noted another cause of the IDPs' use of the governmental facilities as shelter, i.e., the IDPs and the local authority thought that the displacement would be just temporary and wouldn't last for a long time.



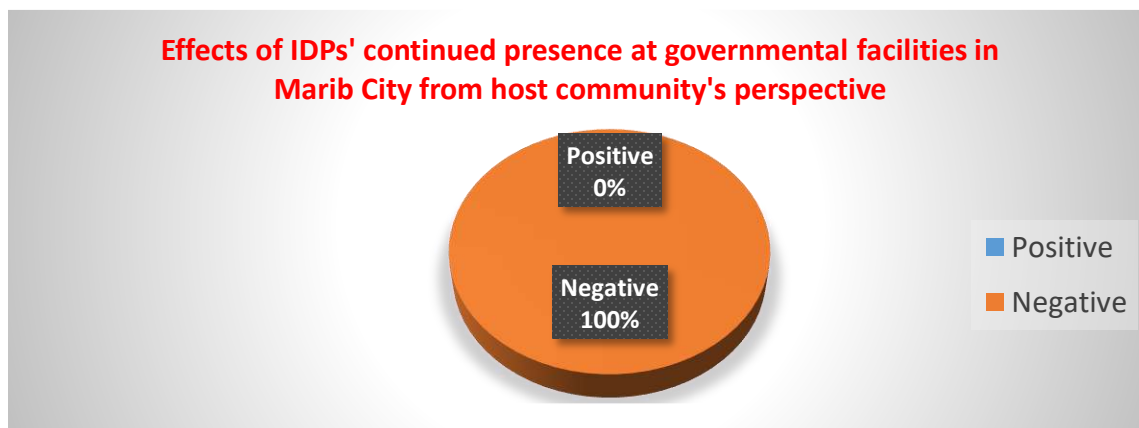
#### Local authority's instructions to allow the IDPs live at governmental facilities

All of the local authority representatives targeted by the study confirmed that the local authority in Marib governorate did not direct or shelter the IDPs at the governmental facilities, and that it was the IDPs themselves who used such governmental facilities as shelters due to the abovementioned reasons.

#### The effects of IDPs' continued presence at the governmental facilities

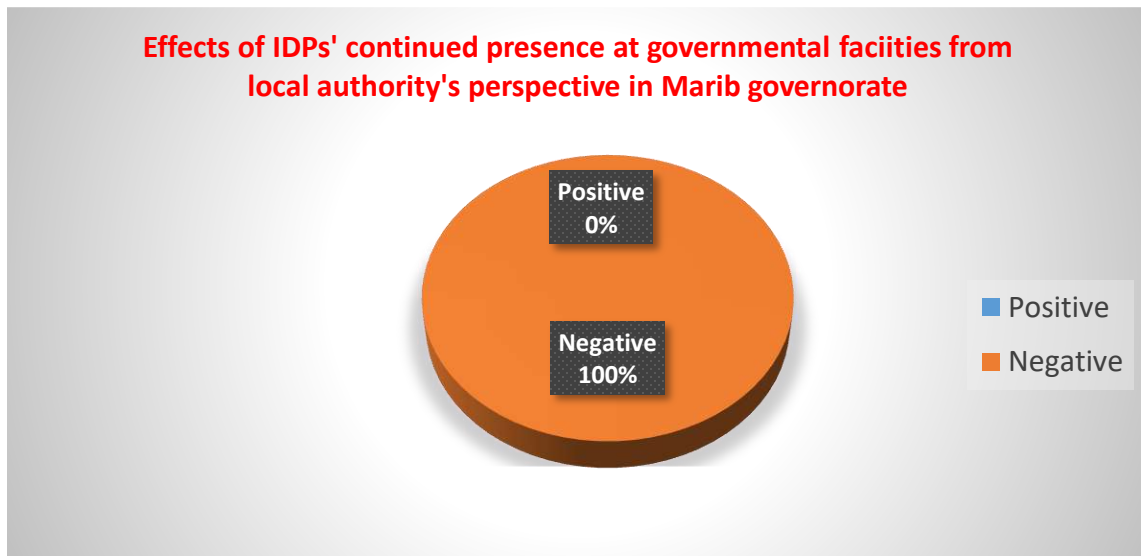
The Marib City host community respondents targeted by the study indicated that the stay of the IDPs at the governmental facilities is something negative, for the two following reasons:

1. The governmental facilities have stopped functioning. The facilities and their staff fail to continue their work and provide their services for the IDPs and the host community.
2. The governmental facilities have been damaged damaged due to acts of misconduct or vandalism or the introduction of new structures in the buildings.



All the Marib governorate local authority respondents targeted by the study said that the stay of the IDPs at the governmental facilities is something negative that affects the performance and quality of services supposed to have been or be provided by such governmental facilities, for the following reasons:

1. The governmental facilities have stopped functioning. Such facilities and their staff are no longer able to continue their work and provide their services for the IDPs and the host community.
2. The governmental facilities have been distorted through acts of misconduct, vandalism, or introduction of new structures in the building.
3. Hundreds of students have been deprived of the opportunity of receiving technical education and vocational training.



All of the Marib governorate NGO respondents targeted by the study indicated that the IDPs' stay at the governmental facilities is something negative that affects the performance and quality of services supposed to have been or be provided by such governmental facilities for the following reasons:

1. The governmental facilities have stopped functioning. Such facilities and their staff are no longer able to continue their work and provide their services for the IDPs and the host community.
2. The overcrowdedness of the city as all of the facilities are located downtown.
3. This may cause discrimination among the IDPs living at the governmental facilities and those living at camps and outdoors.
4. The spread of diseases and epidemics due to the facilities being overcrowded with IDPs.



### **Social cohesion between IDPs and host community in Marib City**

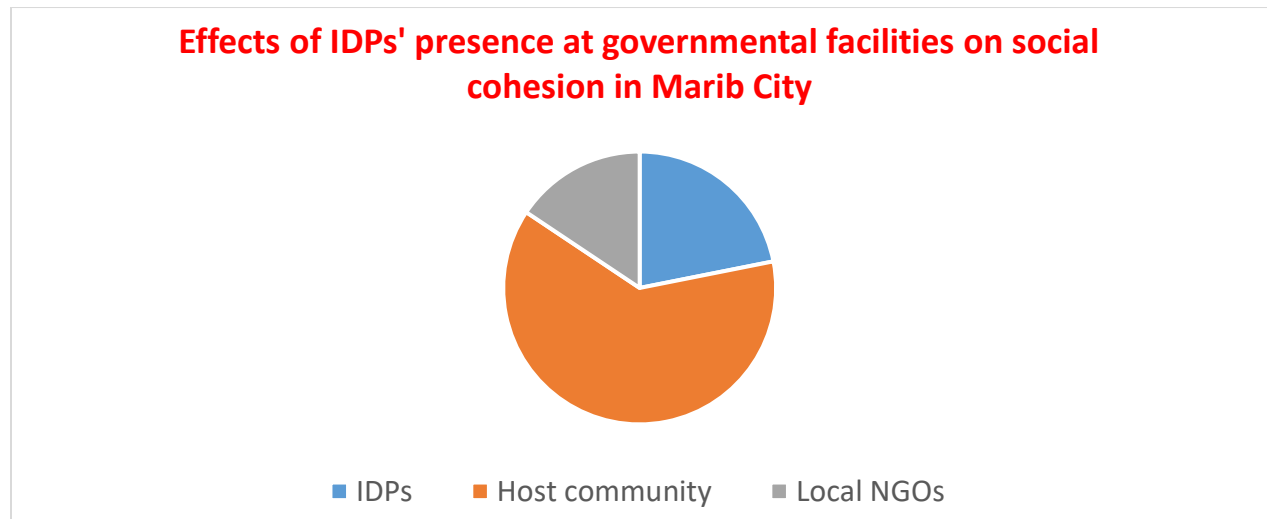
The field study showed indicators of the effect of the continued stay of the IDPs at the governmental facilities on social cohesion between the IDPs and the host community in Marib City. 41% of the Marib City governmental facility IDP respondents targeted by the study said that their continued stay at the governmental facilities would cause a social rift and affect the social cohesion between the IDPs and the host community in Marib City, due to inadequate communication and integration between the IDPs and the host community. The IDPs face the resentment and dissatisfaction of the host community in Marib City due to their stay at the governmental facilities whose services have been discontinued. There is also the fact of the IDPs' receipt of more assistance from the organizations than the host community, whose members are in need for such assistance due to the deteriorating economic conditions caused by the ongoing conflict in Yemen.

Some 59% of the governmental facility IDP respondents said that their continued stay at such facilities does not cause any social gap nor does it affect social cohesion between the IDPs and the host community, because such facilities are state-owned and they are not privately owned lands and that they do not belong to the host community. They added that such governmental facilities are closed and are inactive since before their access to them, and that they were not providing any significant services for the host community. The IDP respondents also indicated that the host community understand the humanitarian situation they experienced during their displacement and the efforts they all made over the past years to defend and protect Marib governorate.

Moreover, the Marib City host community respondents targeted by the study said that the continued stay of the IDPs at the governmental facilities would affect the social texture and cohesion between the IDPs and the host community. In addition to the damage caused to the governmental facilities and the discontinuation and interruption of the services used to be provided by such facilities for the host community, a number of problems and phenomena have emerged between the host community and the governmental facility IDPs in Marib, the main of which are as follows:

- Throwing the garbage in wrong places.
- The overflowing of cesspits.
- The destruction of the infrastructure and distortion of the facilities where they reside.

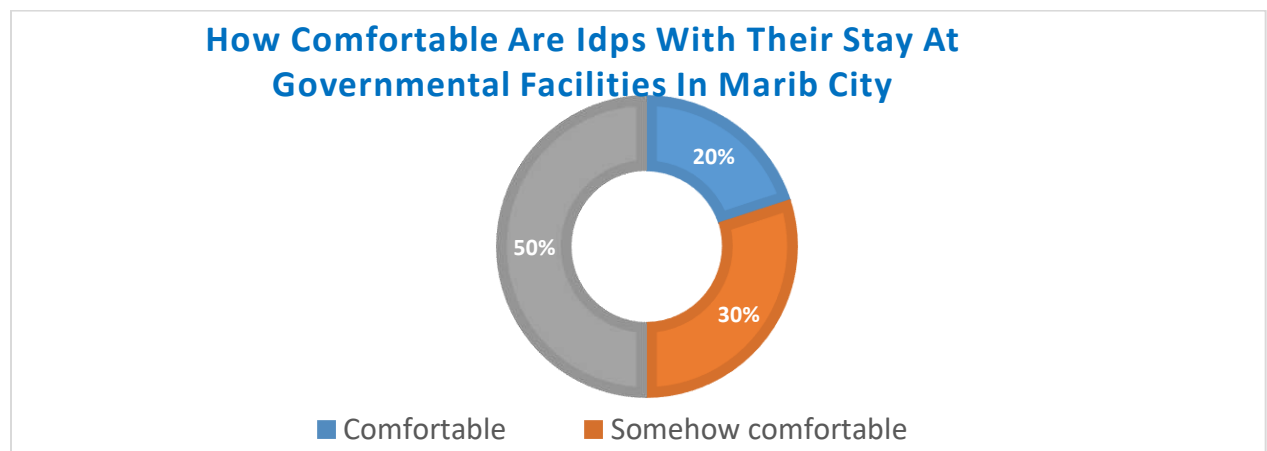
All of the Marib NGO respondents targeted by the study said that the continued stay of the IDPs at the governmental facilities would cause a social rift and significantly affect social cohesion. The host community is not annoyed by the IDPs' stay at the governmental facilities whose services have been stopped. There is also the effect on the power supply of the host community living around the governmental facilities used by the IDPs as the number of IDPs is high and they randomly connect to the electricity grid.



#### How comfortable are IDPs at the governmental facilities in Marib City?

The field study has included an assessment section of the level of the IDPs' satisfaction with their stay at the governmental facilities in Marib City. Some 20% of them responded that they are comfortable because such governmental facilities are better than other places and save them the rentals. However, some 30% of the IDPs said that they are satisfied to some extent compared to what is faced by other IDPs living outdoors and open areas.

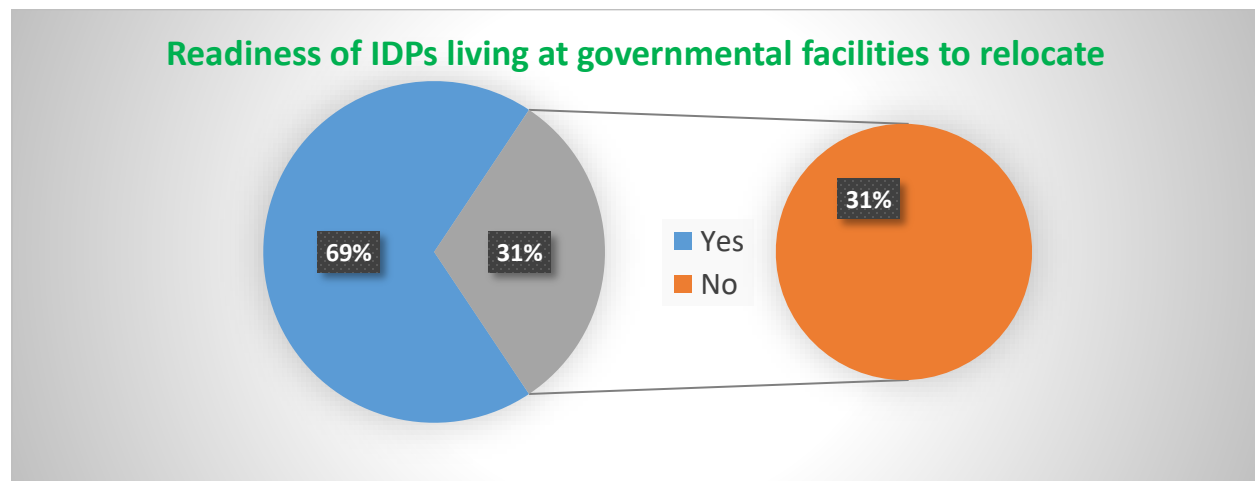
Furthermore, 50% of the IDPs at such governmental facilities said that they are not satisfied with their stay at such overcrowded places because they are far away from their homes and areas. They also feel anxiety and fear of the possibility of homelessness and displacement once again.



### **Readiness of IDPs living at the governmental facilities to relocate**

The findings of the field study on the Marib City governmental facility IDPs showed that 69% of the IDPs at such facilities have thought or are ready to relocate and abandon the governmental facility and go to a suitable alternative places where decent life services are available and their dignity can be protected.

However, 31% of them said that they haven't thought nor have they had the readiness to relocate somewhere else except back to their home areas.



### **IDPs' concerns if evicted from the governmental facilities**

The study findings revealed that the Marib City governmental facility IDPs who haven't thought or are not ready to relocate from the governmental facility have a number of concerns. Among the main concerns are the following:

- The fear of becoming homeless again, left without a shelter or a safe haven.
- Fear of getting out of the facility without having an alternative, taking into consideration the high costs of rent.
- Fear of relocating them to remote areas where services are unavailable.

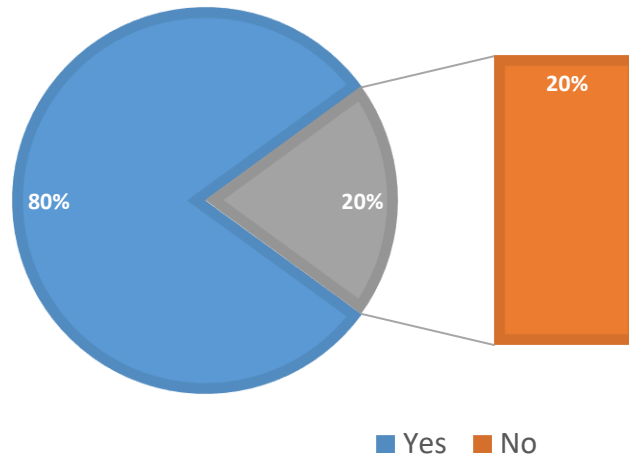
### **Efforts made and services provided by local authority for IDPs living at the governmental facilities in Marib City**

#### **IDPs meeting with local authority**

Some 80% of the Marib City governmental facility IDPs targeted by the study said that more than one meeting have been held with the local authority in Marib governorate. They added that the objective of such meetings with the local authority was to discuss the alternative solutions and the possibility of coordinating with the relief organizations to find out solutions. However, most of such meetings failed.

Some 20% of the respondents said that they haven't met with the local authority in this regard.

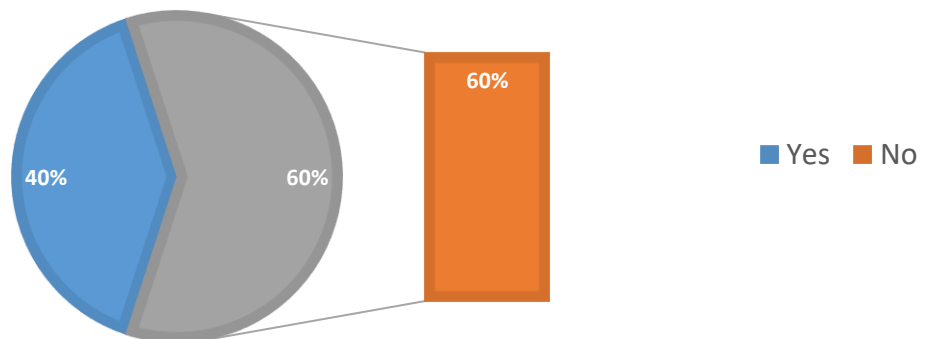
### Did The IDPs Meet The Local Authority To Discuss Alternative Solutions?



### Efforts made by local authority for IDPs living at the governmental facilities

Some 40% of the Marib City governmental facility IDPs targeted by the study said that the local authority had made efforts during their displacement and stay at such governmental facilities, including: facilitating their stay at the governmental facilities, instructing the local NGOs and INGOs to come to such facilities to provide them with humanitarian assistance and carry out Protection and WASH activities, etc. Yet, 60% of the respondents said that there haven't been any efforts made or roles played by the Marib governorate local authority to help them.

### HAVE THERE BEEN ANY EFFORTS MADE BY LOCAL AUTHORITY FOR IDPS LIVING AT GOVERNMENTAL FACILITIES IN MARIB CITY?





All of the Marib City host community respondents targeted by the study said that the local authority have played a number of roles and carried out many duties towards the IDPs, which are, by way of example and not limitation, as follows:

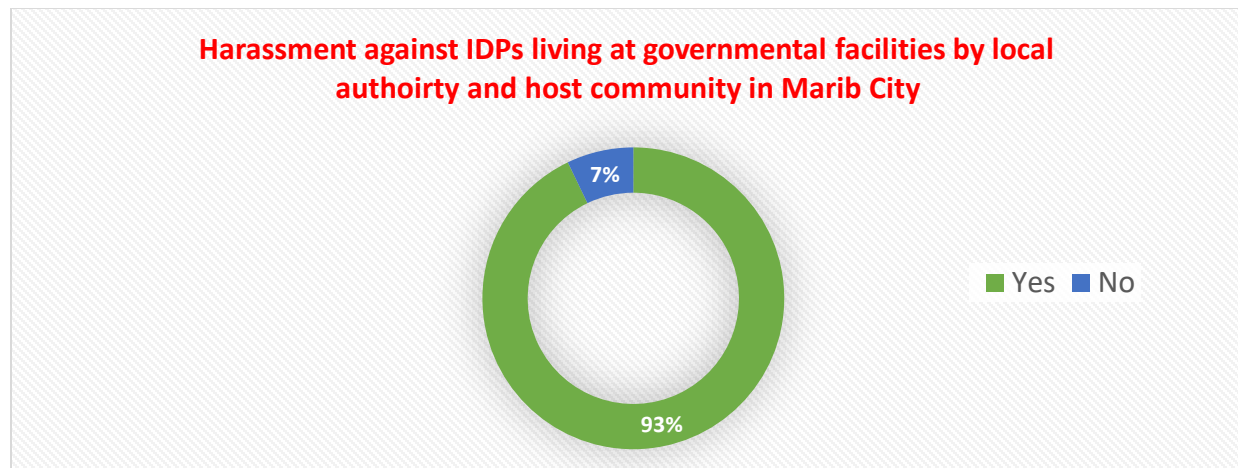
- The local authority, in collaboration with relief organizations, set up camps and moved some of the IDPs from some governmental facilities, but some of them refused to leave the facilities.
- The local authority allocated spaces in Al-Jufainah area and provided tents for a number of IDP families, in collaboration with local NGOs and INGOs.
- The authority evicted the IDPs used to dwell in schools and started to repair and rehabilitate the schools and educational facilities, in collaboration with a number of organizations.

All of the Marib local authority respondents targeted by the study said that the local authority could not provide alternative places for the IDPs living at the governmental facilities because the local authority do not own large pieces of land in Marib City nor do they have the resources to purchase pieces of land and prepare alternative places at this time.

### **Harassment by local authority**

The study findings showed that 93% of the Marib City governmental facility IDPs targeted by the study confirmed that they have experienced harassment perpetrated by the authority like requesting them to get out from the governmental facilities outright, having an order issued by the court to evict them without providing alternative solutions, and summoning them to the security department to instruct them to leave the facilities.

However, 7% of them said they haven't faced any harassment from the authority or the host community.



### **Efforts made and measures taken by local authority to ensure integrity of the governmental facilities and their annexes**

The field study findings have revealed that the local authority took a number of measures to ensure the safety and integrity of the governmental buildings and facilities used as shelter by the IDPs. The most important measures include the following:

- Taking pledges from the IDP families living at the facilities to preserve the tools and furniture and not introduce new structures in the building or its annexes.
- The local authority instructed the government department managers to form committees for the purpose of making inventories of the properties and pieces of furniture.
- Maintaining coordination with the organizations and giving them instructions when implementing any activities requiring the introduction of any structures that may affect or distort the building.
- Stopping some projects or newly introduced structures that may damage the building or its annexes.

The field study findings also showed that the local authority in the governorate tried to provide alternative solutions in lieu of the services used to be provided by the governmental facilities but stopped due to the IDPs' stay. Some of the solutions included the respective department manager's renting of makeshift apartments to run the facilities, continue their work, and provide some of their services for the citizens. However, such solutions were inefficient and not as required, according to the statements of the Marib local authority respondents.

### **Cooperation of local NGOs and INGOs with local authority to find out solutions**

Some 40% of the Marib local authority respondents targeted by the study indicated that there haven't been any collaboration or joint efforts among the local NGOs, INGOs, and the governorate local authority concerning the issue of the IDPs' continued stay at the governmental facilities and their discontinuation of service provision. However, 60% of them said that there has been collaboration among the local authority and the local NGOs and INGOs, i.e., the coordination, preparation, and planning of projects to relocate the IDPs more than once, but were unsuccessful.

#### **Has there been cooperation between local NGOs, INGOs, and local authority?**



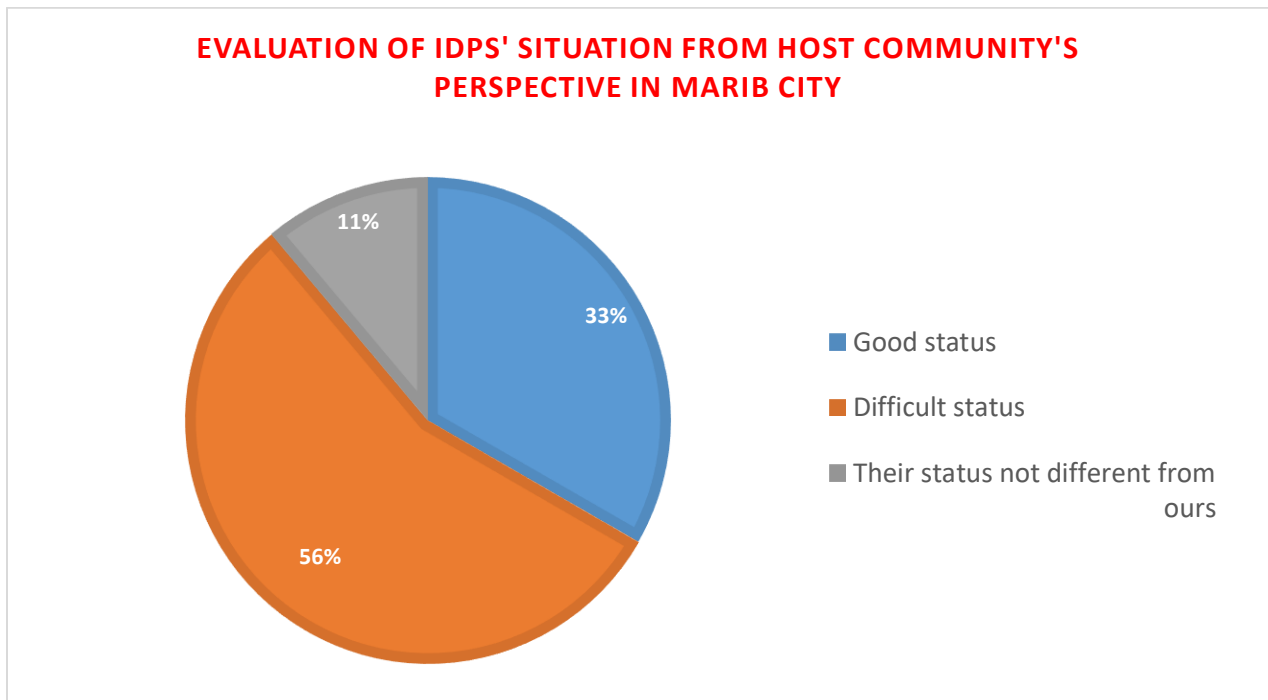
## **Efforts made and services provided by host community for IDPs living at the governmental facilities in Marib City**

### **Assessment of internal displacement status from host community's perspective**

The field study findings also show the opinion and assessment of the Marib City host community targeted by the study. Some 33% of the respondents said that the status of the IDPs in Marib governorate is good and better than other areas of displacement due to the presence of security and stability they miss in their home areas as well as the availability of the basic services in the governorate and the assistance provided by the relief organizations.

Some 56% of the respondents said that the status of the IDPs in Marib governorate is very difficult because assistance is inadequate and is not provided with the required quality and in the right manner. There are also the risks faced by the IDPs like rainwater flooding.

Some 11% of the respondents said that the status of the IDPs in the governorate is not different from that experienced by the host community due to the social and economic burdens inflicted by the war and suffered by all of the people.



### **Assistance and services provided by host community for IDPs at these facilities**

Moreover, the Marib City host community respondents targeted by the study mentioned that the host community have a role not only in receiving and welcoming the IDPs only, but also in serving the IDPs through the following:

- Counting the IDP families and providing lists to the organizations operating in Marib to get assistance for them.
- Integrating them and not harassing them.
- Participating in many awareness-promotion activities and assistance distribution to the IDPs.
- Opening their doors, receiving the IDP families, and intermarrying with them.
- Other services such as the cooperation between the businessmen and philanthropist to provide food assistance for the IDPs and fixing the electricity and water faults at the IDP homes and communities.

### **Solutions suggested by host community to the problem of IDPs' continued stay at the governmental facilities in Marib City**

All of the Marib City host community respondents targeted by this study indicated the importance of working out a speedy solution to the IDPs' continued stay at the governmental facilities whose service provision has been discontinued. They suggested solutions the most important of which are as follows:

- Conducting awareness-promotion campaigns among the IDPs on the effects of their stay at the governmental facilities and the discontinuation of the services used to be provided by such facilities for the community.
- Providing the suitable alternative for the IDPs before relocating them, i.e., building complete housing units, and collaborating with the local NGOs and INGOs for that purpose.

### **Efforts made and services provided by local NGOs and INGOs for IDPs living at the governmental facilities in Marib City**

#### **Meeting of local NGOs and INGOs with local authority**

All of the local NGO respondents, targeted by the study, said that there have been more than one formal and informal meeting held with the Marib governorate local authority where they discussed the displacement status in general and presented the issue of the governmental facility IDPs and the relevant possible solutions.

There are also the direct meetings and discussion and dialogue sessions conducted by some organizations with the IDPs living in such facilities for the purpose of exploring the reasons and solutions to their continued stay at such governmental facilities.

### **Efforts made by local NGOs and INGOs**

All of the local NGO respondents, targeted by the study, said that there have been efforts made and many projects implemented by a number of organizations in an attempt to find out alternative solutions to the issue of the IDPs' continued stay at the governmental facilities. The most important of them are as follows:

- The International Organization of Migration (IOM)'s attempt to relocate the IDPs living at the museum to Al-Jufainah Camp, but was unsuccessful.
- Some activities carried out by some organizations like the provision of cash assistance (monthly rental allowance) for the IDP families, but were not sustainable. They were distributed for a limited period of time and did not cover all of the IDPs.
- The efforts and projects implemented to build housing units and prefabricated caravans but were unsuccessful because of lack of the suitable land and places for construction and implementation.

### **Solutions suggested by local NGOs to solve the problem of IDPs' continued stay at the governmental facilities in Marib City**

All of the Marib City local NGO respondents, targeted by the study, indicated the significance of working out a speedy solution to the problem of the IDPs' stay at the governmental facilities and the discontinuation of their service provision. They suggested the following solutions:

- Conducting a study of the status of the IDPs at such governmental facilities, providing them with a suitable alternative, and turning their issue into a public opinion issue so that the authority is forced to do what is required.
- Raising the awareness of the IDPs on the extent of damage caused to the governmental and service provision facilities due to their continued use of them as a shelter.
- The local authority has to find suitable alternative places supplied with the basic services, in collaboration with the local NGOs and INGOs, and then relocate the IDPs to those places.



Photo 2: an aerial image showing a community of IDPs and muhammasheen in 40-Meter St., near the Economical Corp. building, Marib City, Yemen. Photo taken on Aug. 30, 2020