

The void in cultural expression has increased public despair and disillusionment among young people, and has impeded their ability to engage in dialogue, reconciliation and peace.

**Capacity gaps within the private sector:** The Yemeni private sector suffers from significant management gaps in strategic planning, business development, sustainable funding, networking, international linkages, and visibility.

**Challenges facing cultural heritage preservation in Yemen:** Several World Heritage Sites as well as valuable landmarks of cultural and historical importance have been severely damaged by the ongoing conflict. Lack of awareness of preservation standards, extreme weather conditions, and citizens-led violations constitute additional threats. Damages affect not only public and private buildings but also public spaces, equipment as well as infrastructures (water, sanitation, pavement, telecommunication, and electricity), thus worsening the security and living conditions of local communities living within and around the historical sites. In addition, there are significant gaps among local government agencies dealing with heritage in terms of sustainable planning, preventive conservation and disaster mitigation.

**Limited local engagement on peace-building and conflict resolution:** the potential of existing Yemeni development knowledge is not fully exploited. Women and young people are not consistently engaged in research, public discourse and advocacy on development, economy and post-conflict reconstruction.

Identification of main stakeholders and corresponding institutional and/or organisational issues (mandates, potential roles, and capacities) to be covered by the action:

**The Social Fund for Development (SFD):** SFD is a quasi-governmental organisation whose programmatic priorities are to increase access to basic services, enhance economic opportunities, and promote the resilience of low-income Yemenis, through the creation of cash-for-work schemes and microenterprise programmes. SFD will be contracted to implement cash-for-work rehabilitation schemes and organise capacity-building workshops for local heritage management in the cities covered by this Action.

**Public Works Project (PWP):** this body was established in 1996 in coordination between the Yemen government and the World Bank. Its objectives are to create jobs, provide infrastructure services, and enhance the community participation in the development process and to improve the capacity of the contracting and consulting services in Yemen. After a series of positive collaborations, UNESCO will use their expertise to complement large-scale rehabilitation works managed by SFD in areas where PWP has greater field presence.

**General Organization for the Preservation of Heritage Cities in Yemen (GOPHCY):** Due to several organisational and capacity concerns, GOPHCY is not proposed as a direct implementation partner, but GOPHCY nonetheless remains the official preservation authority where the most professional and local knowledge about the historic cities is concentrated. GOPHCY's input is necessary for effective implementation and performance has been successful so far in dealing with technical and feasibility studies under UNESCO's supervision.

**Al-Amal Microfinance Bank (AMB):** A leading microfinance institution, AMB has 17 branches in main cities of eight governorates. It covers the rest of governorates and rural areas via financial agents (money changers) and non-financial agents (merchants) in more than 3,300 points of sale (POS). Currently, the bank implements through those agents some projects related to solar energy and agricultural loans. It serves 40% of active microfinance clients in Yemen.

**Development Champions Forum,** women and men who have been involved in state institutions, private sector, academia and/or civil society for decades and thus have the knowledge, experience and networks to address Yemen's most pressing issues on an expert level.

### 3. DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTION

#### 3.1. Objectives and Expected Outputs

The **overall objective** (impact) of this Action is to create opportunities for early inclusive economic recovery in Yemen.