



Save the Children



# Child Led Assessment Report

Hodeida and Amran Governorates - **August 2015**

THE IMPACT OF THE CONFLICT ON YEMENI INTERNALLY DISPLACED CHILDREN

## Table of contents

Yemen: A Crisis Within A Crisis .....	3
Child led Assessment Report .....	4
Conclusions And Recommendations .....	11
Save the Children Planned Response .....	12
Recommendations For The International Community And Parties .....	13
Children's Recommendations .....	14
Success Stories .....	16
Children's Drawings .....	20

## YEMEN: A crisis within a crisis

Yemen is one of the poorest countries in the Middle East, with 53% of the population suffering from multi-dimensional poverty even before the escalation of conflict. The country also registers one of the highest chronic malnutrition rates in the world with half of the two million children under the age of five acutely malnourished and 47% stunted.

The outbreak of the conflict in March between the Saudi-allied national government and Houthi armed groups in Yemen has only exacerbated these issues and prompted a large scale protection crisis that now runs parallel to the overwhelming humanitarian needs that existed prior to the start of the conflict.

Today, 21.1 million people (80% of the population), including 9.9 million children are now in need of humanitarian assistance. Over 5,000 people have been killed including almost 500 children and over 26,000 people have been injured including over 700 children.

The conflict has displaced more than a million people, destroyed infrastructure and resulted in serious shortages of fuel, food and other supplies. There are rising incidences of diseases such as dengue fever, and the health sector is on the verge of collapse in some areas, resulting in people dying of treatable and preventable causes. Potential famine has been highlighted as a risk, as the food security situation continues to worsen, and over 12 million people are now facing critical levels of food insecurity.

In July 2015, Save the Children supported 20 children and young people to conduct an assessment of 105 displaced children between the ages of 12 and 18 from the governorates of Sana'a, Aden, Hajjah, and Saadah. In the context of increased level of displacement and reduced access to basic services; the purpose of the assessment was to gauge the impact the conflict has had on displaced children and the issues that they are facing due to the intensification of violence over the past months. Furthermore, the findings of the assessment will be used to inform programme design for Save the Children's response.

## Child-led assessment findings

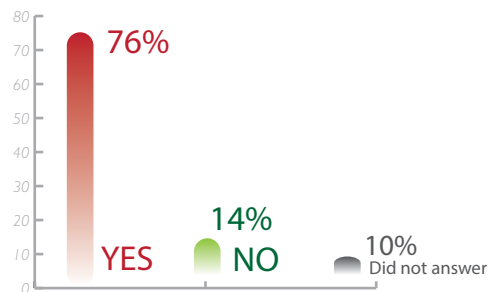
105 displaced children (55 girls and 50 boys) were surveyed during the assessment. The children surveyed originally lived in the governorates of Aden, Hajjah, Sada'a and Sana'a and had been displaced to the governorates of Hodeida or Amran, where the assessments were conducted.

## Experience of Displacement

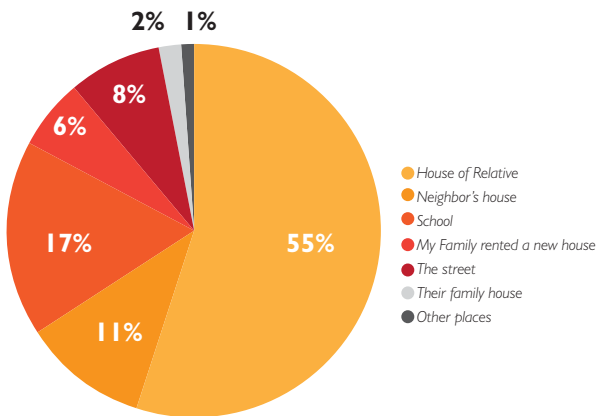
76% of the displaced children interviewed said that they had faced difficulties as they were displaced from their areas of origin. For the majority of the respondents the difficulties centred on the lack of transportation available when they had to move.

13% responded that they arrived to the place that they are now displaced to by walking for hours in the dark due to insufficient transportation as a result of fuel shortages.

## Did you face difficulties during displacement?



*The highest number of children who experienced difficulties due to a lack of access to transport were children from Sada'a. 34% of the children interviewed from Sada'a reported that they faced transportation difficulties during displacement, such as not having enough fuel to travel in their own family's vehicles, or that they were unable to afford the expensive fees charged by other means. Some children reported that there were more than 30 people in one small car during their escape from the conflict.*



## Shelter Situation

17% of the children said that they are currently living in abandoned schools and 8% are now living on the street or in make-shift shelters.

55% of the children interviewed said they had been displaced to a home belonging to a relative, while 11% to a home of a neighbour.

The chart to the left provides a breakdown the current shelter situation for the respondents.

## Safety of Displaced Children

48% of the children expressed that they don't feel safe in the areas they have been displaced to, with the majority giving airstrikes and conflict as the principle reasons. Those displaced to schools and makeshift shelters noted that they felt unsafe due to the very basic conditions they were living in. Many reported that they don't feel comfortable as they are treated as strangers by the local community and are unable to play with host community children.





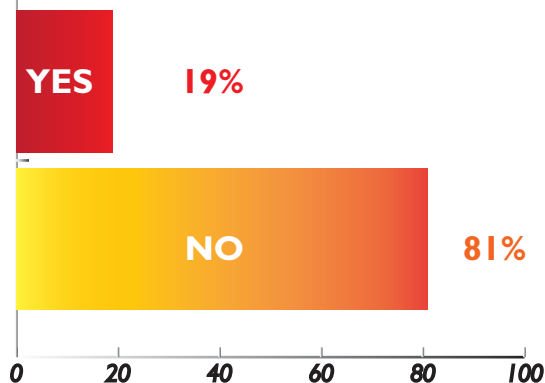
\*Drawing by Mona 9 years old.

## Violence Against Displaced Children

During displacement many children were subjected to abuse. 19% of the children surveyed said they have been subjected to a form of abuse; mainly verbal or physical violence.

While 81% stated that they didn't face abuse directly many had heard about other children who were subjected to abuse, such as children being recruited into armed groups or being killed or injured as a result of the conflict. Several of the participants told stories of their friends or relatives having been killed or injured.

### Did you experience any form of abuse during displacement?

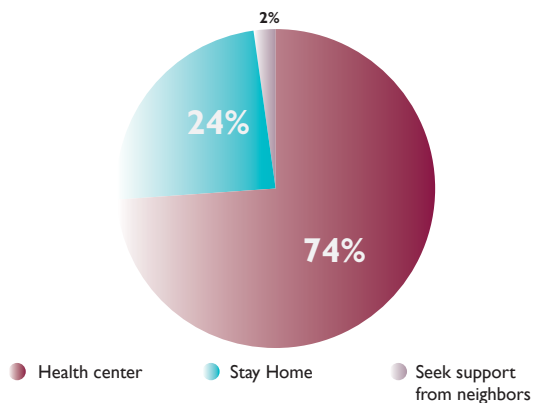


## Access to Health Care

Almost three-quarters (74%) of the children noted that they have access to a health centre near to where they are staying. Yet many explained that the quality of the services are not very good.

45% of the children stated that there were no health workers present at the health centres when they had visited and almost one quarter of the respondents (24%) said they would prefer to stay at home when they feel sick as they were too scared to venture outside.

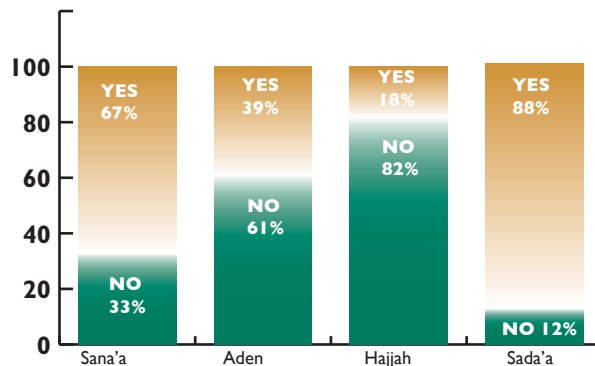
### Where do you go for treatment if you get sick?



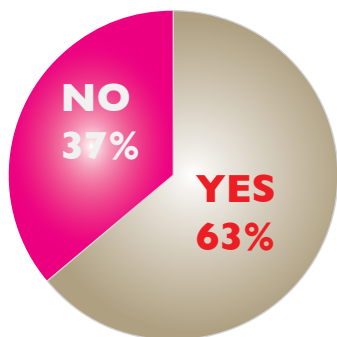
## Malnutrition Situation

42% of the children said they had heard about cases of child malnutrition in the places they had been displaced to. Yet despite the clear needs many of the children stated that there was no specialised medical treatment available for malnutrition cases that they were aware of: 55% said there were no medical staff to treat malnutrition cases in their displaced areas and 55% said that there were no medical staff to treat malnutrition cases in their area of origin.

### Are there medical staff to treat cases of malnutrition in your area of origin?



## Are you aware of children who are taking care of other children as a result of displacement?



## Rights of Displaced Children

Only 52% of the interviewed children said they knew about their rights in an emergency situation. While, 46%, responded that they did not know the meaning of the words “Child Rights”.

## Increased Child Responsibility As A Result of Displacement

38% of the children who were interviewed said that they know of children who now have to take care of other children due to the loss of family members.

## Child Labour

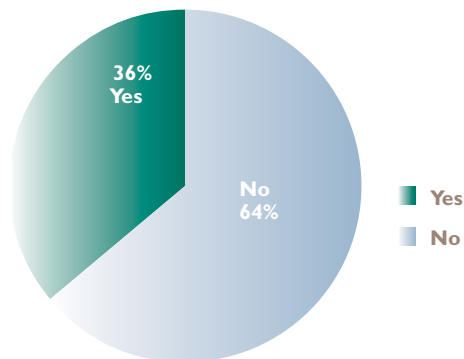
12% of children surveyed stated they were now responsible for finding income for their families since being displaced. 61% stated that income responsibility sat with their fathers, 15% with their elder brothers and 13% with their mothers. Some of the children stated that they often go to search or beg for free food or clean water at nearby markets or from the host community.

## Displaced Children’s Views on the Conflict:

Despite the huge challenges that displaced children are going through most of those surveyed were optimistic about the future. 63% of the children said they believe the conflict will end soon and that they will then be able to go back to their homes and schools.



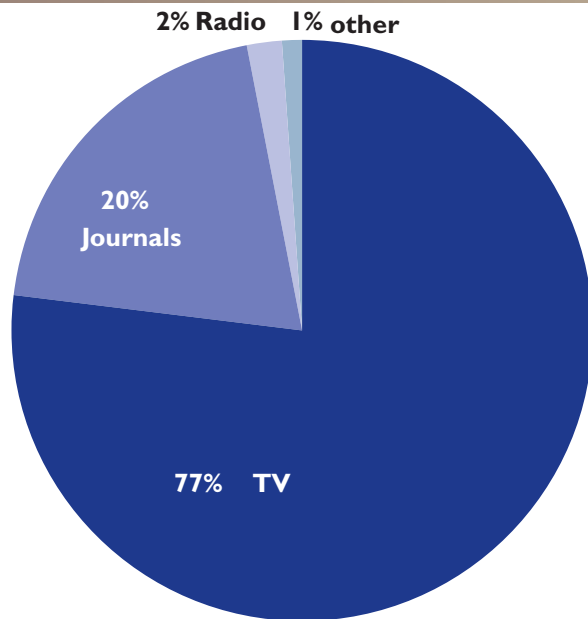
## Have you heard about Save the Children's Child friendly Spaces?



### Child Friendly Spaces

Unfortunately only 36% of the respondents said that they have knowledge of Save the Children's Child Friendly Spaces (CFS). 38% of the children who attend the CFS's said they participate in setting plans and activities with many asking for activities to be more child-led. Many of the children said the CFS's are useful and are helping them to get over their experiences.

## Best media channel for children to receive information



### Access to Information Concerning the Emergency and Conflict:

76% of children stated that media is a good resource for getting information about the current conflict. 77% of the children said that TV is their main source of information and only 2% radio. Almost two-thirds (64%) of them said they would like to receive awareness materials that are visual and have nice designs and drawings.

## Conclusions and Recommendations

The findings from this child-led assessment underline the disastrous impact the conflict is having on Yemen's displaced children. As in any escalation of hostilities, children are the most vulnerable and are at higher risk of being separated from families in the event of displacement, and for exploitation, abuse and recruitment into armed groups or forces. They are also at risk of suffering psychosocial distress from witnessing and experiencing violence.

If we do not ensure those affected get the appropriate support to move on with their lives an entire generation runs the risk of suffering for years to come, unable to get over their experiences or contribute to building a stronger, peaceful Yemen.

## Save the Children planned response:

**Save the Children** holds a workshop with those children who took part in facilitating the assessment to ensure the findings are shared and that child-led recommendations are created to influence stakeholders, the international community and programming design

**Save the Children** continues to train and disseminate information to children on their rights; providing them with the safe space and platform to share their views, inform stakeholders and influence programming design

**Save the Children** to expand child protection programming to ensure that children who are heading a household, suffering from distress, or have been victims of the conflict or abuse get appropriate support

**Save the Children** to work with the Ministry of Public Health and Population to ensure that nutrition services are delivered in all health centers Save the Children supports.

**Save the Children** to expand assessment/ protection outreach services to target specific vulnerable groups, such as IDPs living in schools and informal settlements.

**Save the Children** to increase information and outreach to vulnerable populations to ensure they are aware of service provision in their area, preferably via television as suggested by respondents.



## Recommendations for the international community and parties to the conflict:

To prevent further cycles of conflict-triggered displacement, all parties to the conflict must immediately end the violence and seek a negotiated solution to the crisis.

The international community must work with all parties within Yemen to ensure that life-saving assistance, including medical supplies and fuel, and commercial supplies, such as food and basic items, are allowed to enter Yemen and move freely.

Donors and the international community should support a fully funded, coordinated, impartial and needs-based response.



# Children's Recommendations

“ Stop the conflict in our country  
We call for peace.

Provide medical staff in all health facilities  
We want to be healthy

Provide clean water  
We want to be protected from disease

Rebuild and repair schools that have been damaged  
so children can return to education

Provide regular electricity  
We want to watch TV children programs

”

# Children's Recommendations

“ Rebuild and repair our schools  
We want to back to school

Support us to return to our homes  
We want to live in peace and happiness

Provide a protective environment to us  
We want to live with our families safely

Bring brotherhood back to all Yemenis  
We want to return smiles to the children's faces

Build a playground for displaced children  
We want to have a normal life ”

**Sadiq\*** is a member of the Children's Parliament for 2014-2016, and represents children in Amran. He was one of the 20 children who participated in conducting a child-led assessment for displaced children in Amran on 30 June 2015.

Before the assessment, Save the Children conducted a one-day training for the 20 participants to build their capacity on how to conduct an assessment. The participants then conducted the assessment the next day. "I am excited about this assessment as it is the first experience for me. I live among many IDPs in my area but I never think to ask them about their rights, especially the children, but now I know it is important." Sadiq told us.

Sadiq was one of the first children to come to the office on the day of the assessment. He was full of energy and excited to start. He was asking the team about everything to make sure he understood the assessment process. After the assessment finished, all participants gathered again in the Save the Children office and talked about their experience.

Sadiq is very well educated about Children Rights and issues that children face: "You as Save the Children should do your best to raise awareness among children about their rights. I interviewed 8 children and all of them were expressing their experiences during their displacement as if it is happening now. I realized how much children don't know about their rights. Some of them don't know the meaning of word "rights". This is what I heard from most of the children I interviewed." Sadiq said.

At the end of the assessment day, Sadiq showed his interest to be a volunteer with Save the Children and he expressed his willingness to support the IDPs especially children in Amran and anywhere in Yemen.

## Success Story

*\*Names changed to protect identities*

**Salma\*** is a member of the Children's Parliament for 2014-2016, and represents children in Amran. She was one of the 20 children who participated in conducting a child-led assessment for displaced children in Amran on 30 June 2015.

Before the assessment, Save the Children conducted one day training for the participants to build their capacity on how to conduct an assessment. The participants then conducted the assessment the next day. Salma came with her father who encouraged her to participate in activities that seek to improve the situation in for children in Amran and the whole of Yemen. "I was happy when Save the Children called me and nominated me to participate in this assessment. It is great to meet displaced children and record their stories." Salma expressed before conducting the assessment.

After a long day, moving from school to school, our Child Friendly Spaces and host community homes Salma had a different picture about the situation of the now displaced children: " I didn't expected what I saw. Children live in a very difficult situation, they lack basic services; shortage food, health services, living in schools that are supposed to be their place to study. It is really sad. Most of the children I interviewed, don't know about their needs or rights in emergencies" Salma added.

When they finished the assessment, all the participants returned to Save the Children's office and shared their experiences with each other. Salma raised an important issue regarding child protection in which many children she met face trauma because of the airstrikes or conflict they have experienced. She liked the Child Friendly Spaces and she recommended to focus on such activities that will help to improve the protection situation of children: "There were children, especially girls, who were telling their stories as if it was happening right now and remember every moment of their displacement and movement to Amran. Children need to express their experiences and they appreciate when people listen to them." Salma explained.

*\*Names changed to protect identities*



**Success Story**



**Mariam\*** is a member of the Children's Parliament for 2014-2016, and represents children Hodidah. She was one of 20 children who participated in conducting a child-led assessment for displaced children in Hodidah on 30 June 2015.

Before the assessment, Save the Children conducted a one day training for the participants to train them on what a needs assessment is and how to conduct one. The following day the participants visited areas now hosting Internally Displaced People (IDP) to find out what children were experiencing: "I did not understand the importance of the assessment until I joined the training conducted by Save the Children in Tawasol's office. I was nervous that I might be scared or confused while I conducted the assessment – but instead I was excited. This was the first time I've ever been involved in any kind of training like this." Mariam told us.

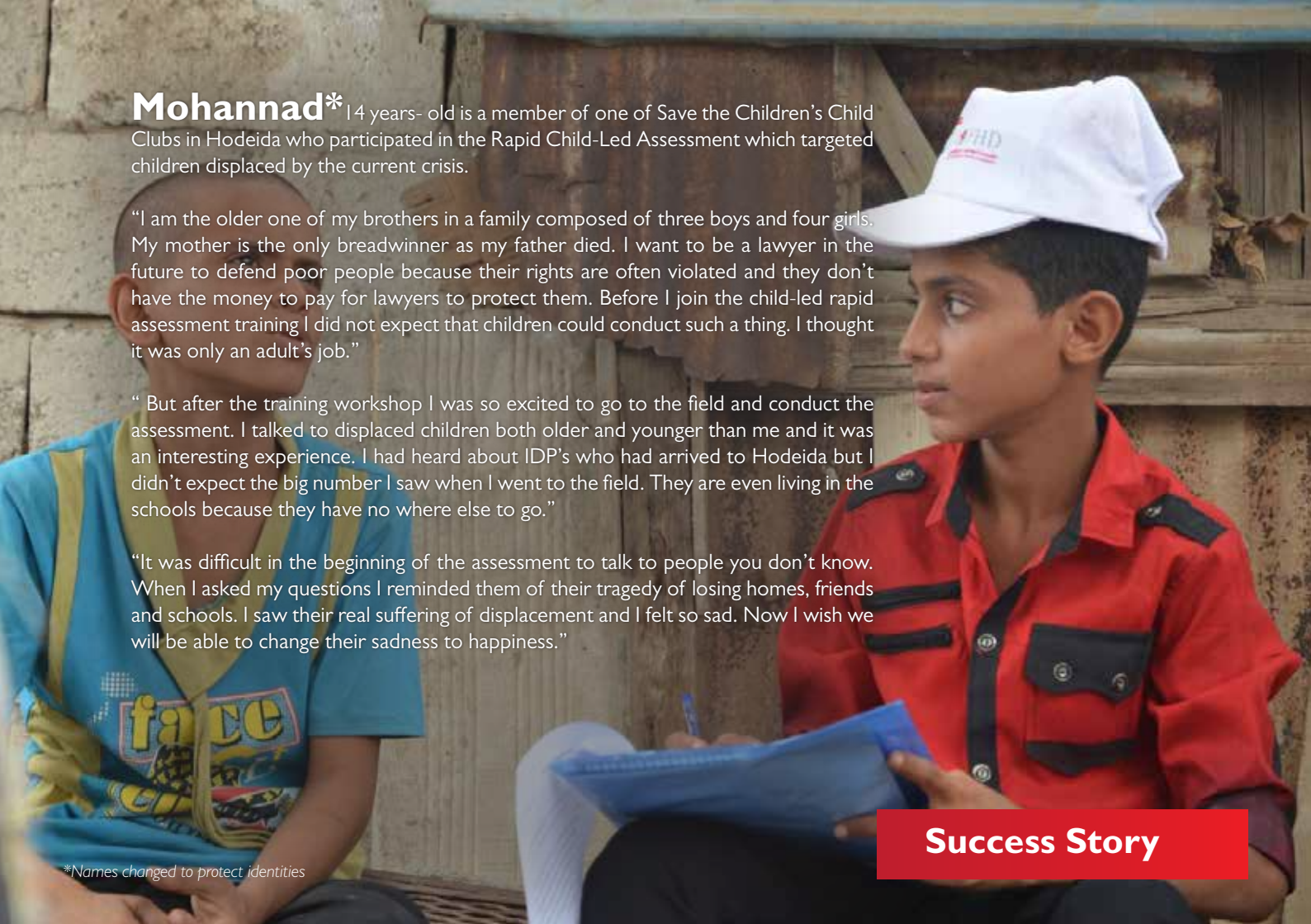
The participants were divided into three groups as per location and Mariam was a member of the group visiting displaced children in Al-Ansar school.

Our Child Protection team noted that Mariam was particularly energetic and interactive with all her colleagues in the assessment and with the displaced children she met: "I felt like most of the children that I interviewed were scared of the place they were now living in, especially those living in schools because their neighbours told them they may be hit by airstrikes. One of the displaced children told me she begs with her brother to provide food for their sick mother while her other smaller brothers bring the water - this made me really sad and realise how hard the situation is for them. Afterwards I saw that one of the displaced girls was happy, and smiling and when I asked her why she said that it was because she finally had found someone to talk to about herself."

Mariam dreams to be a journalist in the future to advocate for children rights and to help IDPs and plans to join Save the Children's Media Network advocating on childhood issues in Hodeida as a first step in her way to achieve her dream.

*\*Names changed to protect identities*

**Success Story**



**Mohannad\*** 14 years- old is a member of one of Save the Children's Child Clubs in Hodeida who participated in the Rapid Child-Led Assessment which targeted children displaced by the current crisis.

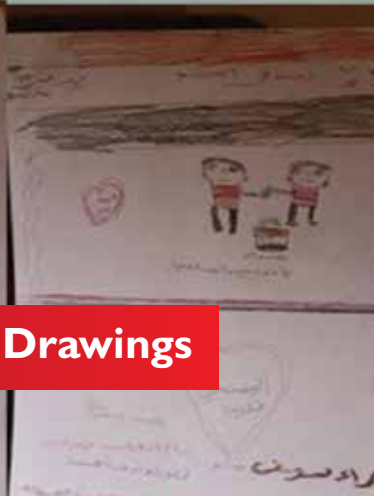
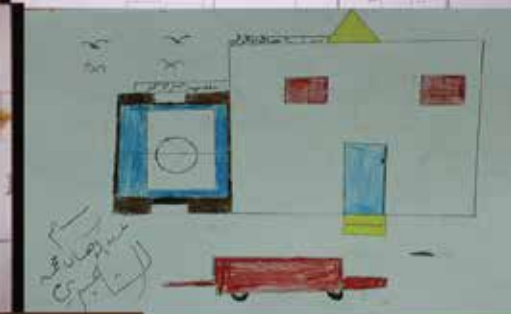
"I am the older one of my brothers in a family composed of three boys and four girls. My mother is the only breadwinner as my father died. I want to be a lawyer in the future to defend poor people because their rights are often violated and they don't have the money to pay for lawyers to protect them. Before I join the child-led rapid assessment training I did not expect that children could conduct such a thing. I thought it was only an adult's job."

" But after the training workshop I was so excited to go to the field and conduct the assessment. I talked to displaced children both older and younger than me and it was an interesting experience. I had heard about IDP's who had arrived to Hodeida but I didn't expect the big number I saw when I went to the field. They are even living in the schools because they have no where else to go."

"It was difficult in the beginning of the assessment to talk to people you don't know. When I asked my questions I reminded them of their tragedy of losing homes, friends and schools. I saw their real suffering of displacement and I felt so sad. Now I wish we will be able to change their sadness to happiness."

*\*Names changed to protect identities*

**Success Story**



Children's Drawings