



## From Under the Trees to the Waiting Room

How Has the Experience of Women  
at Marib General Hospital Changed?





## The tree was not just a shadow

The tree was not just a shadow... **it was a roof and an umbrella.** In the **courtyard of Marib General Hospital**, where people's needs meet limited resources, the sight of women waiting under the trees was painfully familiar. Each one spread out on the ground, cradling her child, or leaning against a faded wall , waiting for a call from inside. There were no seats, no place that respects women's privacy or makes them feel they are in a safe space.

The scene was part of the daily life of the place, etched in the details of dust and the faces of the silent waiters. From here, the question arose: why is there no space worthy of women inside the hospital?

This question was not raised in an official meeting, but in a listening session organized by **the Protection Foundation for Civil Orientation**, as part of the "Governance of Civil Society Organizations Working in the Field of Human Rights (GoCSOs)" project, supported by Resonate! Yemen and funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands which was sufficient to move a scene that had been stagnant for years.



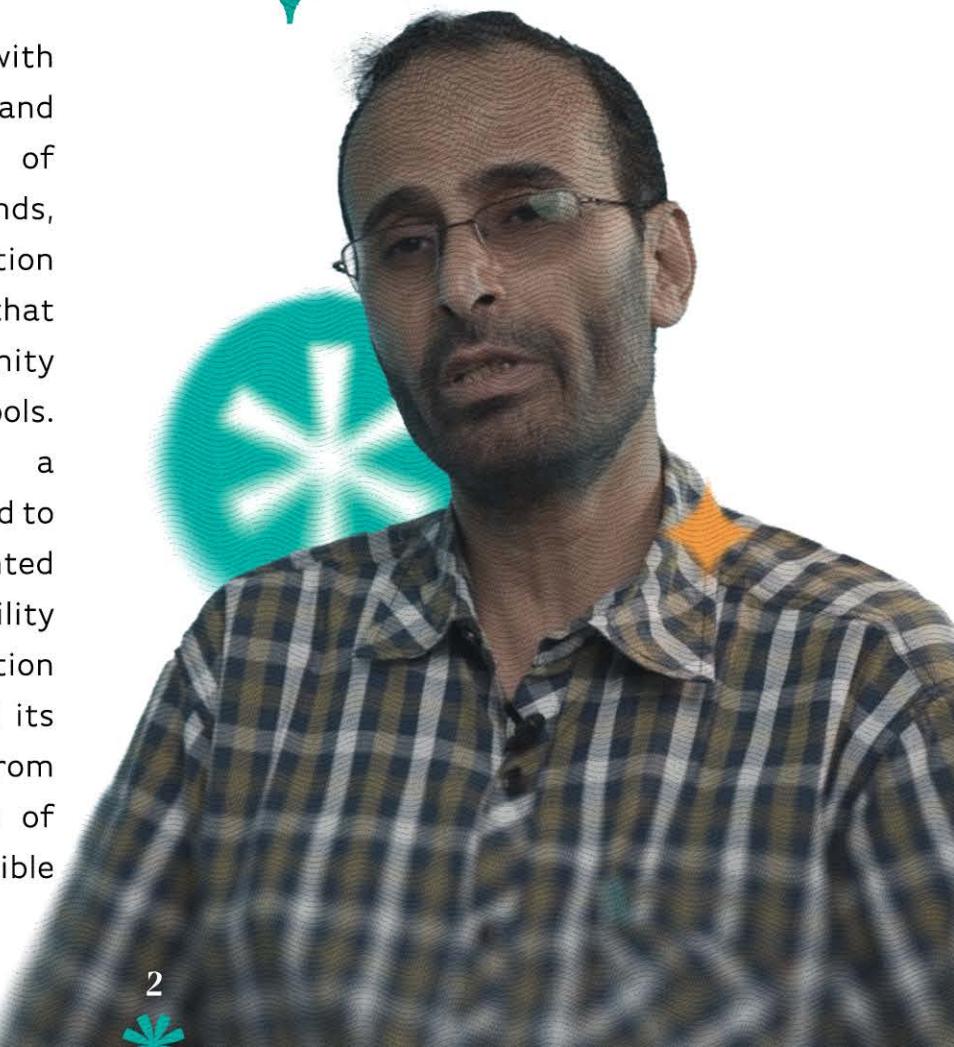
## From Internal Structure to Social Change

### How Did It All Begin?

- ▶ **The question:** Why don't women have a safe place to wait? It was not just an inquiry, but a moment of collective awareness that opened the door to a different project that responds to people's needs. However, turning it into a real initiative was only possible after the Protection Foundation overcame its internal challenges in management, structure, and organization.

**Ali Al-Tam, the executive director, says:** "We did not have a clear system or tools for planning and implementation; we were working with more enthusiasm than methodology. We had passion and a desire for change, but we lacked the tools to turn that passion into impact."

Here, the intervention came with support from Resonate! Yemen and funding from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands, where the Protection Foundation received specialized training that redefined its role in the community and provided it with new tools. From this transformation, a project was born that responded to a community need highlighted during listening and accountability sessions with the administration of Marib General Hospital and its visitors. The project emerged from the realities and experiences of women and turned into a tangible response to people's needs.



## A project built on the voice of the people

➤ **This is how the project was born, and this is how its idea was realized on the ground.** The Protection Foundation for Civil Orientation rehabilitated and equipped a waiting area dedicated to women inside Marib General Hospital, accommodating nearly fifty women daily. It was furnished with eight double chairs (**equivalent to twenty-four single seats**), suitable bedding, and good lighting. **"It was not just a place. It was a restoration of privacy, comfort, and appreciation,"** says Ali Al-Tam, expressing his feelings of success with his initiative.

**"Before the waiting area, women used to wait outdoors in unsuitable conditions, but today it has become a destination for them and a landmark within the hospital reflecting attention to their needs,"** adds the executive director.

The Protection Foundation's initiative did not stop at rehabilitating the waiting area; it also included the **"Aafitak" application**, which allows patients, especially women, to book appointments and inquire before their arrival, thus reducing congestion in front of clinics and booking counters. The application recorded nearly five hundred bookings and inquiries during its first month of launch.

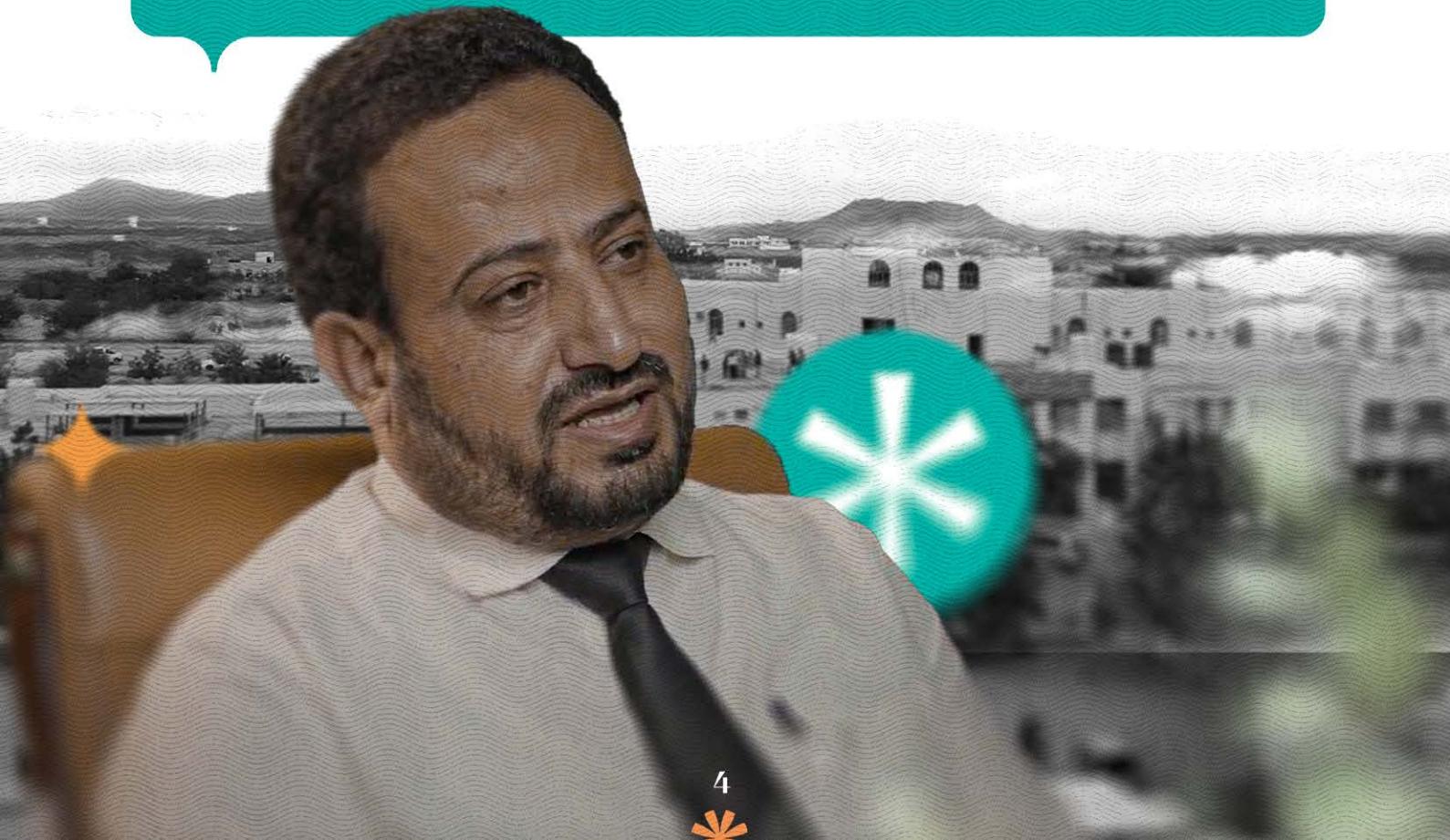


## \* Infinite gratitu

- **Amina, one of the hospital visitors, says,** "Today, I feel that we have a place that respects us and meets our needs, as mothers and sisters. Now we are counted and present, and we have a place and status." Her experience reflects a deep humanitarian impact of a simple change, demonstrating how community participation can transform into a real and sustainable project.

The Protection Foundation has proven that building institutional capacities is the cornerstone of community change; when an institution becomes professional and capable of planning and responding, small initiatives can have an impact that exceeds expectations.

**Dr. Abdul Aziz Al-Shaddadi, Director of Marib General Hospital, expresses his appreciation for the initiative by saying:**  
"The lounge is a qualitative leap in serving patients, especially women, as it has improved the healing environment and waiting conditions. Today, I look at the faces of women, and the worry of waiting has been lifted from them, and I feel that the burden has also been lifted from me."



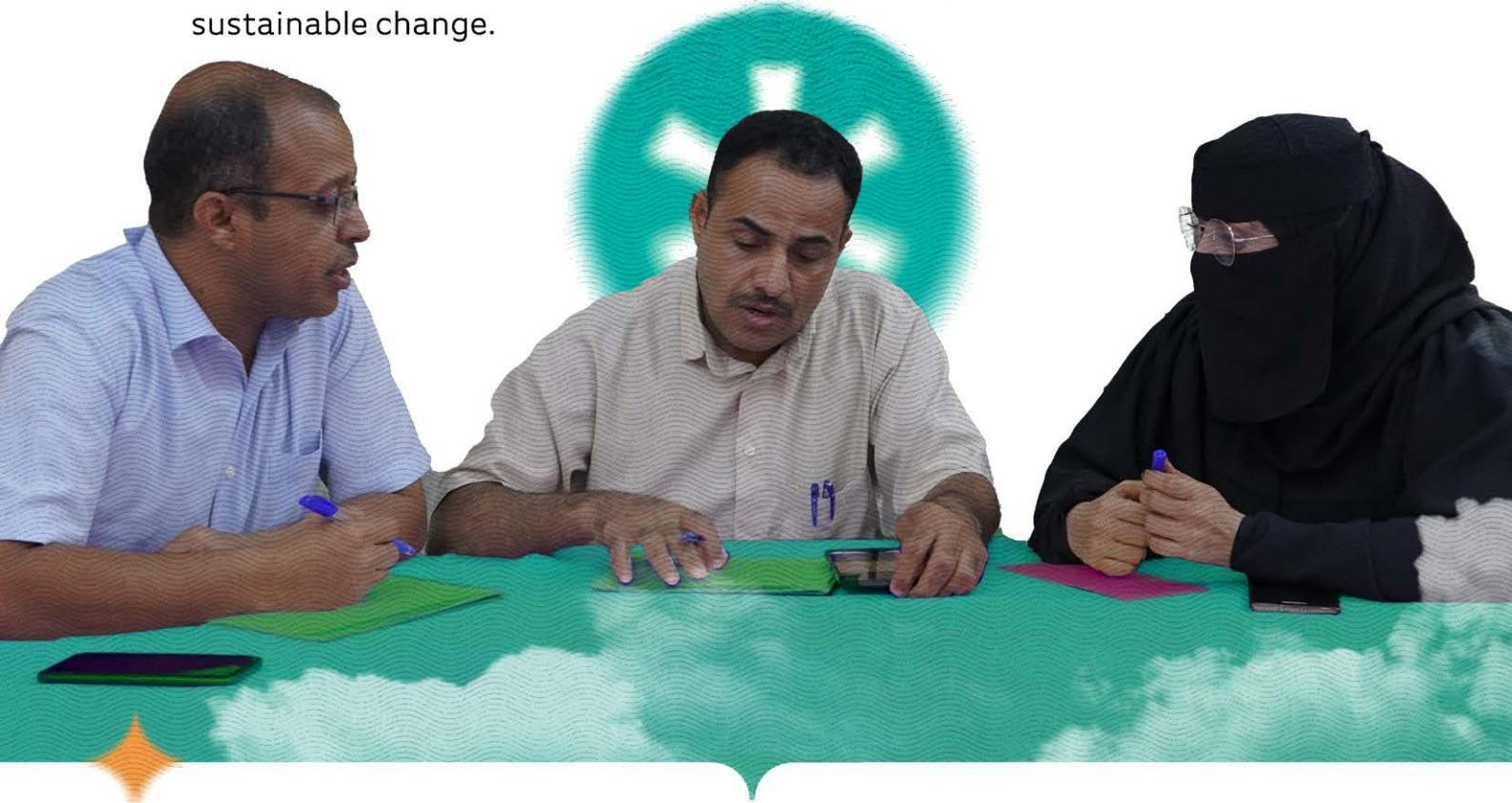


## Recommendations and Continuity

- **The Protection Foundation emphasizes** the importance of support that is not limited to implementing activities but focuses on building the capacities of institutions to understand their surroundings and respond to people's priorities. The experience of the lounge has shown that impactful change does not need to be massive; it needs to be genuine and rooted in the community, based on actual listening to the voices of women that are often overlooked in service planning. Therefore, the foundation recommends generalizing the experience in health facilities, especially in remote areas where the need for safe spaces and privacy for women is more urgent.

**"These small initiatives make a big difference, especially when they come from the heart of the community and the voices of its members," says the Executive Director of the Protection Foundation for Civil Direction.**

The foundation also emphasizes that sustainability does not only mean implementing similar projects, but also creating long-term partnerships that believe in the ability of communities to express and plan, and invest in empowering local institutions and transforming them into pioneering models for real and sustainable change.





## Strong roots

and branches reaching out to the people

- The experience of **the Protection Foundation** shows that building institutional capacities is not a luxury, but a prerequisite for creating a sustainable impact. The support it received was not a fleeting training, but an investment in its structure and collective mind, enabling it to understand its surroundings, listen to the voices of the people, and turn needs into real responses. The foundation has changed, but more importantly, this change has come to light: into the hospital corridors, and to the women who have long been marginalized by services, so that today they find a place that befits them and resembles them. Thus, the Protection Foundation is now seen as a reliable partner that listens well and knows where to start and where to head.

Despite the simplicity of the project – a waiting area and seats – its impact was profound, as it not only changed the place for women but also redefined the relationship between the citizen and the institution, between civil society and its needs, and between waiting and the feeling of comfort.

**Dr. Abdul Aziz adds, saying:**

**"This kind of simple interventions in form, yet deep in impact, is what we need to improve the relationship between the citizen and the health institution."**

Here lies the true value of everything that has happened: that a single institution, with thoughtful training, purposeful funding, and community awareness, was able to change a scene that had remained stagnant for years. Also waiting – with all its weight – has taken on a new meaning.





Ministry of Foreign Affairs



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