YeCon Initiative
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Objectives

- (1) Generate inclusive track II dialogue between key stakeholders
- (2) Secure a sustainable ceasefire agreement paving the way for the withdrawal of foreign forces and national reconciliation
- (3) Build the capacity of Yemeni institutions to address the humanitarian crisis
Pre-project risk assessment

- Extremely volatile conflict environment
- Absence of security guarantees
- Presence of foreign actors
- No credible commitment mechanisms
- Lack of resources and infrastructure
- Political turmoil -- Hadi / Saleh legitimacy issues
Worst Case Scenario

- Houthi and Hadi’s forces fail to come to a negotiated agreement.
- The conflict continues, allowing AQAP to consolidate control in the southwest regions.
- Saudi Arabia, Saleh, and the US continue airstrikes and other militarized forms of support against the Houthis.
- Exacerbation of famine and depletion of water sources.
- State fracturing increases.
- The combined effects trigger a refugee crisis, threatening stability of the entire region.
Project Partnership

● Phase 1:
  ○ Middle East and Maghreb Division (GAC)
  ○ Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)

● Phase 2:
  ○ Oxfam
  ○ Middle East Desalination Research Centre (MEDRC)
Project: Phase I

- Track II negotiations with key stakeholders:
  - Saudi Arabia
  - Iran
  - Hadi Gov’t
  - Houthi / Saleh bloc

- Carrots and sticks:
  - Threaten Saudis with cuts to military funding if they do not participate
  - Stress to Iran the low-cost, high-reward opportunity to engage with the Saudis in 3rd-party territory
  - If process is successful, GCC membership for Yemen ($$$$

- Canada as facilitator, GCC as process guarantor
Project: Phase II

- Contingent upon success of Phase I → security paves the way for NGO entry and capacity-building
- Focus: addressing the **causes** of humanitarian strife (weak state institutions, food dependence, water insecurity, absence of economic opportunities) rather than the symptoms
  - GCC Membership is key (common market, resource sharing, research and development)
Benefits to Yemen

- Immediate, short-term relief of famine and water insecurity
- Potential for peace among warring parties, and therefore greater stability in the region
- Long-term capacity-building for institutions
Benefits to Canada

- Diversify relationships with the Middle East
- Leadership role in mediation → Norway and UNSC bid
- Increasing our presence in the Middle East via our aid portfolio
Monitoring

● Time frames:
  ○ Phase 1: 1 year
    ■ GCC monitors implementation of ceasefire, sanctions those who breach
    ■ Weekly reporting to GAC (issues discussed, progress made, conflict statistics)
  ○ Phase 2: 5 years
    ■ Monthly reports on humanitarian situation (including metrics)
    ■ Continuation of dialogue mechanism including Yemeni stakeholders → goal = reunification and reconciliation of the state (new leaders?)
Evaluation

● Short term (6mos-1 year)
  ○ Constructive dialogue
  ○ Set the conditions for foreign withdrawal
  ○ Reduce direct harms to civilian population

● Long term (3-5 years)
  ○ Decrease regional tensions
  ○ Build Yemeni capacity to improve humanitarian situation (Metrics include: response time, # of items supplied, supply availability, arrival time, # of deaths, incidence of disease, etc.)