

# HUMANITARIAN UPDATE

Covering 20 February – 6 March 2019 | Issue 4

## KEY ISSUES:

- Donors pledge US\$2.62 billion for humanitarian response in 2019.
- 2019 YHRP seeks \$4.2 billion to deliver assistance to 21.4 million people in dire need.
- Humanitarian partners are scaling up responses to escalated needs in Hajjah Governorate.
- WFP accesses Red Sea Mills in Al Hudaydah City for the first time in six months
- Increased efforts to contain the spread of communicable diseases

## DONORS PLEDGE US\$2.6 BILLION FOR 2019 HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE

International donors at a high-level event convened by the United Nations and co-hosted by the Governments of Switzerland and Sweden in Geneva on 26 February, pledged US\$2.62 billion for urgent and life-saving humanitarian aid to millions of people in Yemen in 2019. “[The] pledging conference can be considered a success,” UN Secretary-General António Guterres said. “The donors have pledged 30 per cent more than last year to help address the dramatic humanitarian situation in Yemen: from US\$2 billion in the pledging conference of 2018 to \$2.6 billion in the pledging conference 2019”.

Top donors were the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (\$750 million), UAE (\$750 million) UK (\$261.44 million), Kuwait (\$250 million) European Union (184.42 million) and Germany (\$114.16 million). The pledges, when committed, will help pay for the implementation of the 2019 Yemen Humanitarian Response Plan (YHRP). Partners operating in Yemen welcomed the support by donors at the conference, with international NGOs calling for unconditional access for Yemenis to humanitarian assistance and commercial imports in all

parts of Yemen; a countrywide ceasefire, protection of humanitarian workers and an inclusive peace agreement.

Partners estimate that as many as 6.5 million people are currently living in 83 hard-to-reach districts where humanitarian partners face medium or high access constraints. Out of the 83 hard-to-reach districts, 23 districts face high constraints and 60 districts face medium constraints. In 46 of these districts, access is mainly affected by conflict, including shifting frontlines especially in Al Bayda, Al Hudaydah, Sa’ada and Hajjah.

“This year is going to be tough,” said Ms. Lise Grande, Humanitarian Coordinator for Yemen. “This is why humanitarian partners are going to do everything possible to help civilians in Yemen to survive violence, access food, and receive the nutrition, health, WASH, shelter, education and protection support they are entitled to under international humanitarian and human rights law. We are grateful to all of the donors who generously support this operation.”



Source: OCHA

## 2019 YHRP AIMS TO ASSIST 21.4 MILLION MOST NEEDY PEOPLE



2019 Yemen humanitarian needs at a glance. Source: YHRP

The 2019 YHRP seeks US\$4.2 billion to provide lifesaving assistance to 21.4 million people out of 24.1 million people who need humanitarian some form of assistance and protection. The priority objectives are: helping millions of people overcome hunger; reducing the outbreak of cholera and infectious diseases; promoting the dignity of displaced families; decreasing the risk of displacement and violence against civilians; and preserving the capacity of public sector institutions to deliver life-saving basic services.

Four years of continuous conflict have turned Yemen into the worst humanitarian crisis of our time, fueled by conflict, economic collapse and the breakdown of public services. A higher percentage of people face death, hunger and disease than in any other country. In the last 12 months, the number of people unable to predict when they will next eat has risen by 13 per cent. Two hundred and thirty of Yemen's 333 districts are now food insecure. This includes 148 districts which are classified as phase 4 under the Integrated Phase Classification (IPC) system, and 45 districts with families in IPC phase 5.

"The level of suffering is shocking", said Ms. Grande. "Eighty per cent of the entire population—24.1 million people—requires some form of humanitarian assistance or protection. Ten million people are a step away from famine and starvation and seven million people are malnourished."

In five governorates, acute malnutrition rates exceed the WHO emergency threshold of 15 per cent; close to 30 per cent of all districts have recorded critical levels of malnutrition. In the health sector, the number of people in acute humanitarian need has risen by 49 per cent to 14 million. Less than 55 per cent of the population has access to safe drinking water. Some 36 per cent of school-age girls and 24 per cent of boys

do not attend school, 51 per cent of teachers have not received their salaries since 2016 and more than 1,500 schools are damaged by air strikes or shelling.

The rapid deterioration of the currency in late 2018 coupled with a drop in imports pushed the prices of basic prices like food and fuel far above what many families could afford. In 2018, the average cost of the minimum expenditure food basket increased by 60 per cent while fuel prices rose by 200 per cent compared to the pre-crisis period. The high cost of fuel has impacted agriculture, water supply, transport, electricity, health and sanitation services. Average food prices have continued to rise to as high as 150 per cent higher than pre-crisis period.

Overall, the economy has shrunk, pushing more than 80 per cent of the population below the poverty line. Partners estimate that roughly 70,000 people have been killed since 2016. In the last year, casualties rose by 11 per cent. At the same time, more than 685,000 people were displaced over the past year, mostly in Al Hudaydah Governorate and the west coast. Negative coping mechanisms and harmful practices have become more widespread, and hundreds of thousands of families have fallen into destitution and extreme deprivation.

"The largest humanitarian operation is underway in Yemen; millions of lives have been saved and hundreds of thousands of Yemeni families have been helped to survive," said Ms. Grande. "Each month nearly 10 million people receive food assistance and nutrition partners are helping to identify and cure a higher percentage of children suffering from severe acute malnutrition than in any comparable operation globally."

---

## WFP ACCESSES THE RED SEA MILLS FOR FIRST TIME IN SIX MONTHS

---

On 26 February, for the first time in six months, WFP managed to access the Red Sea Mills on the eastern outskirts of Al Hudaydah City. WFP lost access to the mills when fighting broke out in Al Hudaydah City in early September 2018.

When access was lost, the mills contained 51,000 metric tons, or a quarter, of WFP's in-country stock - enough wheat to feed 3.7 million people for one month. It is unclear how much of the wheat remains fit for human consumption. WFP has indicated that it needs to carry out a full assessment of the stock before it can begin moving it out and distributing it to people in need. A technical assessment of the samples of wheat grain is on-going to determine how much is

still fit for human consumption.

In late January, a fire damaged two silos at the mills destroying some of the stored wheat. The fire reportedly started as a result of mortar fire. "A quarter of a million people are in a catastrophic condition, facing near starvation, if assistance doesn't get to them," said the Humanitarian Coordinator for Yemen Ms. Lise Grande. "This is the first time we are seeing conditions like this. We need this wheat."

Humanitarian partners estimate that 3.3 million people in conflict-affected Al Hudaydah and Hajjah governorates - equivalent to 60 per cent of the total population, are in acute need of assistance. Partners reached more than one million people with food aid by the end of last year, including 72,000 people in Al Hudaydah City.

Despite difficulties, partners are redoubling efforts to reach a combined 2.6 million people in Al Hudaydah and Hajjah governorates. Across the country, a similar scale-up is underway with 12 million people targeted with food assistance each month in 2019. This includes 8.2 million people to receive in-kind food assistance, 2.8 million to receive commodity vouchers and a further one million people to benefit from cash-based transfers.



The Red Sea Mills in Al Hudaydah. Photo: WFP

## SCALING UP RESPONSE TO DISPLACEMENT IN HAJJAH GOVERNORATE

The conflict continues in Hajjah Governorate with reports of displacement in the northwest especially in Kushar and Hajour districts. Partners in the Al Hudaydah Hub are scaling up assistance to people who were recently displaced by the hostilities. Rapid response assistance is being delivered to 6,000 families and plans are underway to establish a more permanent presence of international partners in Hajjah town.

During the reporting period, fighting continued in Kushar with multiple airstrikes hitting several targets including houses. Civilian casualties were reported. On 22 of February, a house and a school were hit by airstrikes in Qarah District, while on 24 of February, two civilians were killed by an airstrike that hit a house in Wash'ha District. On the same day, a school was hit by an airstrike in Kushar District, the same school was previously hit on 21 February. Local partners estimate that over 3,900 families mostly from Kushar and Aflah Alshom districts have been displaced to various locations within Hajjah.

Over the last three years, hostilities in Hajjah Governorate have had a major humanitarian impact. Since December 2018, escalated hostilities have killed tens of civilians and displaced hundreds of families from their homes especially in Haradh and Hayran districts, to Abs District and other areas. Abs District already hosts an estimated 23,000 displaced families, most of whom have been displaced multiple times over the past four years.

Hajjah is one of the governorates with the highest severity of needs in Yemen. The Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) findings released in December show that more than a million people, out of a total population of 2.5 million, are in IPC Phase 3 (Crisis). Out of 31 districts in the governorate, 28 are classified at IPC Phase 4 (Emergency); 5 have pockets of populations at IPC Phase 5 (Catastrophe). Some 13 districts are among the 104 districts in Yemen that have the highest convergence of needs. At least 55 humanitarian partners are active in the governorate.

## INCREASED EFFORTS TO CONTAIN COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

The health sector in Yemen has been devastated by nearly four years of conflict. The number of health facilities and the quality of services have fallen, while incidences of preventable diseases are on the rise. Only 50 per cent of health facilities across the country are fully functional and even these face acute shortages of medicine, equipment, and staff. On average there are only around 11 health staff per 10,000 people - far below the global standard of 22 health staff per 10,000 people. Even where services are available, millions of people are unable to afford transport or other associated costs to reach such care.

In 2018, the incidence of preventable diseases rose. Millions more Yemenis are now more susceptible to disease due to weakened immune systems after years of food insecurity and cramped or unsanitary living conditions. Yemen has experienced the world's worst cholera outbreak with more than 1.3 million cases reported since 2017. Although new cases declined

considerably in 2018, they again spiked at the end of the year, demonstrating that cholera remains a serious threat. Dengue fever peaked in August and remained far above 2017 levels. Diphtheria re-emerged for the first time in Yemen since 1982, with more than 3,200 suspected cases since August 2017 and nearly 186 associated deaths. New measles infections jumped sharply in March 2018 and remained far above 2017 levels through until the end of the year.

Humanitarian partners continue to conduct vaccination campaigns, surveillance and treatment through health facilities. Partners currently support more than 2,200 health facilities across the country. On 22 February, WHO and its partners concluded a nationwide measles and rubella vaccination campaign reaching more than 11.6 million (90 per cent of target) children aged 6 months-15 years.



Measles and rubella vaccination campaign February 2019 - a boy is vaccinated, and health workers walk for hours to remote areas to administer the vaccine: ©UNICEF

### ADEN HUB

The security situation in Aden and the neighbouring governorates is relatively calm. No significant changes in prices were reported during the week of 14-21 February, but a shortage of cooking gas was reported in Mukalla city. The Yemeni Rial exchanged at 550 YER/US\$, the same rate as the previous week.

Displacement continues, mainly from Al Hudaydah and Taizz governorates. From 14-21 February, the number of displaced people in areas covered by the Aden Hub increased by 332 families. The numbers of IDPs from June 2018 to 28 February 2019 have now reached 22,636 families.

In Aden Governorate, the Emirate Red Crescent (ERC) distributed 350 food baskets for families in Zaghfah village at Al Shehir District. In Hadramaut Governorate, the UAE ambassador, ERC deputy and the Governor handed over 204 housing units for people affected by rain floods in Mukalla in 2008. The homes were built between 2012-2016 but could not be handed over to beneficiaries due to ongoing conflict. During the reporting period, the Hadramaut Governor participated in the annual meeting for NGOs in coordination with the NGO Coordinating Council in Mukalla.

### AL HUDAYDAH HUB

On 2 March the UNICEF Executive Director, Henrietta Fore, said that the war's horrific toll on children continues despite the agreement reached by parties to end the conflict and despite the humanitarian funding commitments made at the pledging conference in Geneva. The statement was issued following the death of five children while they were playing at home in At Tuhayat District. Each day, UNICEF said, eight children are killed or injured across 31 active conflict zones in Yemen.

At the request of local authorities, an inter-agency team visited the central prison facility in Al Hudaydah City to understand the needs of inmates. Some 44 migrants and around 750 Yemenis including 19 females and 10 children are in the prison. Living conditions are difficult due to lack of basic services including electricity, healthcare and WASH.

On 25 February, the Aden-based Ministry of Finance started paying a two-month salary (January and February 2019) to all civil servants in the government-controlled areas of Hudaydah Governorate, through local private banks. IOM supported Al Thawrah Hospital in Al Hudaydah City and four other health facilities in the governorate - in Al Luhaya, Al Hussieyniah, Al Kadan - with medicine. IOM also completed more than half of the rehabilitation work on WASH facilities in Al Thawrah hospital.

UNFPA, through a local implementing partner, started providing reproductive health and basic emergency obstetric and newborn care services at the local health center in Al Lawiyah, Ad Durayhimi District. WHO supported 17 health facilities in Al Hudaydah, two in Raymah and one in Mahwit governorates with 183,100 litres of fuel. WHO provided the local hospital in Ad Dahi District in Al Hudaydah with a power generator. It also provided the main health facilities in the four governorates with 156 immediate emergency health

supplementary kits.

### IBB HUB

Between 22-28 February, sporadic armed clashes continued in Taizz Governorate including in Al Silw, Jabal Habashi and Maqbanah districts. Civilian casualties were reported, but no figures are available. In Al Dhale'e Governorate, armed clashes were reported in Al Husha District. Partners are following up on reported displacement. In Ibb Governorate, security incidents increased during the reporting period.

Across Ibb and Taizz governorates, an acute shortage of cooking gas was reported in local markets. The limited quantities available were provided through neighborhood sheikhs at the price of 2,500 YER per 20-litre cylinder. In the black market, the gas was selling at 6,500 YER for a 20-liter cylinder.

Following an appeal from local authorities, the Shelter sub-cluster visited villages that were affected by a widening crack on the land in Ibb. In September 2018, an assessment by a local partner found that 228 families were affected, with seven houses destroyed, 39 severely damaged and 87 partially damaged. The Shelter Sub-cluster assessment team found that the number of families affected has increased. Some have left their homes, while others are hosted by relatives or are still living in partially damaged houses. The sub-cluster is developing a response to assist people affected.

### SA'ADA HUB

Daily airstrikes and shelling were reported in the border districts of Sa'ada Governorate, with Kitaf wa Al Boqe'e District experiencing the heaviest hostilities, particularly in the Wadi Al Abu Jubara area. In neighbouring Al Jawf Governorate, hostilities decreased slightly except in Khab wa Al Sha'af District. Local sources report that recent clashes have displaced about 1,500 families within Kitaf wa Al Boqe'e and to other districts such as Sa'adah and Al Hashwah.

Despite the situation, partners continued to deliver assistance. On 27 February, UNFPA reported the delivery of rapid response assistance in Monabbih, Sa'adah and Haydan districts targeting 250, 46 and 30 families, respectively. With this delivery, the Rapid Response Mechanism team, working through local partners will, since 6 January, have reached 3,635 families in eight districts (Sa'adah, As Safra, Haydan, Saqayn, Al Hashwah and Ghamr, Monabbih and Kitaf wa Al Boqe'e).

On 27 February, DRC, an implementing partner for WFP, started the February food distribution cycle in Razih and Al Dhaher districts of Sa'ada Governorate. In Al Jawf Governorate, food was dispatched to local partners to distribute. In total, 99.6 per cent of the planned commodities for the February cycle (2370.353MT) were dispatched. Some 85.1 per cent (2016.152 MT) of the dispatched commodities were received by the partners.

## SANA'A HUB

Hostilities picked up in Nihm District, Sana'a Governorate. On 24 February, four civilians were reportedly injured when an airstrike hit a house. In Marib Governorate, one civilian was killed, and three injured when houses and farms were hit by artillery shells in Bani Rubayh village in Harib Al Qaramish District on 25 February. Across areas covered by the Sana'a Hub, 15 casualties were reported from 22-28 February, the highest seen since the first week of October 2018. Of these casualties, nine resulted from airstrikes. Hostilities were also reported in Al Bayda Governorate.

Local authorities in Nihm appealed for assistance for 14 families (43 individual including 17 children and 11 women), who reportedly left their villages and came to government offices where they are in dire need of food and medication. Humanitarian partners provided some assistance and are planning to access Nihm to assess needs.

An acute shortage of cooking gas was reported in local markets in Sana'a region. The little that is available through neighbourhood sheikhs was selling at 3,500 YER per 20-litre cylinder; lower than the black-market price of 7,500 YER for a 20-litre cylinder. The currency fluctuated between 550-572 YER/US\$.

## UNVIM UPDATE

Al Hudaydah and As Saleef seaports are open and fully operational. Between 27 February - 5 March 2019, four vessels discharged 105,715 MT of cargo at Al Hudaydah and As Saleef ports (47,250 MT of food 58,465 MT of fuel).

On 27 February, the first containerized humanitarian vessels since May 2018 discharged 500 WFP containers in Al Hudaydah port. This is the first cargo of containers to reach the port since military operations in Hudaydah City in mid-2018.



47,250 MT



58,465 MT

Al Hudaydah 58,465 MT

Saleef 47,250 MT

Source: UNVIM

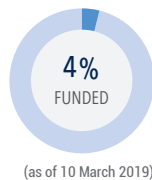
## 2019 FUNDING UPDATE

### FUNDING STATUS

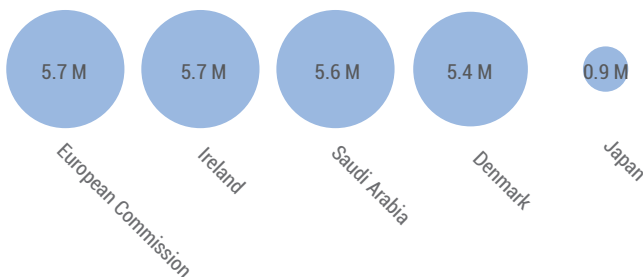
4.19 BN  
REQUIREMENTS  
(USD)

168 M  
FUNDED  
(USD)

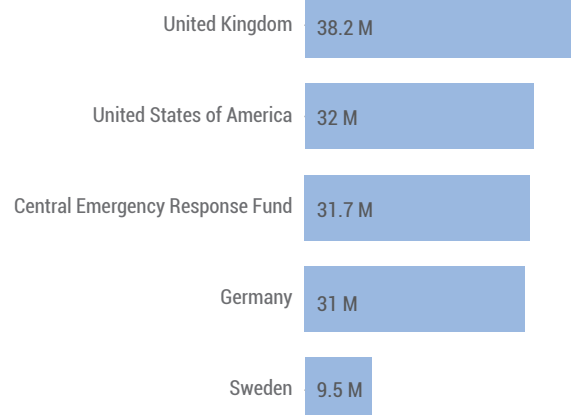
4.02 BN  
STILL NEEDED  
(USD)



### OTHER DONORS



### TOP 5 DONORS



Source: FTS

For further information, please contact:

**Sebastien Trives**, Head of Office, UN-OCHA Yemen | Tel: +967 712 222 800 | E-mail: [trives@un.org](mailto:trives@un.org)  
**Federica D'Andreagiovanni**, Head of Communication, UN-OCHA Yemen | Tel: +962 79 687 6082 | E-mail: [dandreagiovannif@un.org](mailto:dandreagiovannif@un.org)  
 OCHA information products are available at: [www.unocha.org/yemen](http://www.unocha.org/yemen) | [www.unocha.org](http://www.unocha.org) | [www.reliefweb.int](http://www.reliefweb.int)