

HUMANITARIAN UPDATE

Covering 28 September – 6 October 2018 | Issue 29

KEY ISSUES:

- The rapid depreciation of the Yemeni Rial has further increased the vulnerability of food insecure households.
- Economic output has contracted by about 50 per cent since 2015. About 52 per cent of Yemenis now live on less than US\$1.90 a day.
- Fighting continues in Al Hudaydah City. A civilian was killed and others were injured when an IDP site was shelled on 6 October.
- Suspected cholera cases have increased with roughly 10,000 reported per week, double the average in the first eight months of this year.

CURRENCY PLUNGE IS HURTING MILLIONS OF YEMENI PEOPLE

The rapid devaluation of the Yemeni Rial continues to hike price of basic commodities reducing the purchasing power of millions of people, creating uncertainties among traders and importers which has in turn resulted in scarcity of supplies in the market. According to FAO, immediate intervention is needed to avoid a complete collapse of the economy.

On 5 October, the Humanitarian Coordinator for Yemen, Ms. Lise Grande, warned that the currency crisis is driving millions of people one step closer to famine. Every month, the WFP and partners provide food assistance to nearly eight million Yemenis, but humanitarian partners estimate that the downward spiral of the Rial could push another 3.5 to 4 million people into pre-famine conditions.

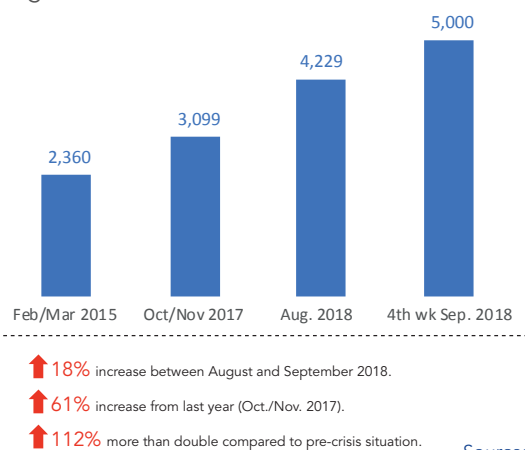
In the first week of October, the Rial exchanged at an all-time low of 800 YER/US\$ before rising to 710-750 YER/US\$ in Aden, Sana'a and Al Hudaydah cities. The rise followed the announcement by Saudi Arabia that it would provide \$200 million to the Yemeni Central Bank to shore up the currency. Despite this intervention, the negative effects of the currency depreciation continue to be seen in the unprecedented increase in the cost of basic commodities.

An analysis by FAO shows that the cost of the minimum food basket for seven people per month rose to about 42,101 YER in the first week of October - a 25 per cent increase compared to the second week of September. Petrol increased by 23 per cent from September prices. Compared to the pre-2015 period, essential commodity prices have increased by 140-204 per cent and fuel by 280-357 per cent. Prices of locally produced commodities have also sharply increased.

The spike in commodity prices has increased vulnerability, forcing households to adopt negative coping mechanisms such as buying less food or cheaper and less nutritious staples; purchasing on credit resulting in debt or spending more money on food supplies and neglecting other important expenses such health and education. In Ibb and Taizz governorates, an acute shortage of fuel and cooking gas is reported, with many people relying on the parallel market at 19,000 YER for 20 litres of fuel instead of 11,500 YER at some stations. In Al Hudaydah City, many exchange shops are either closing-down or limiting operations.

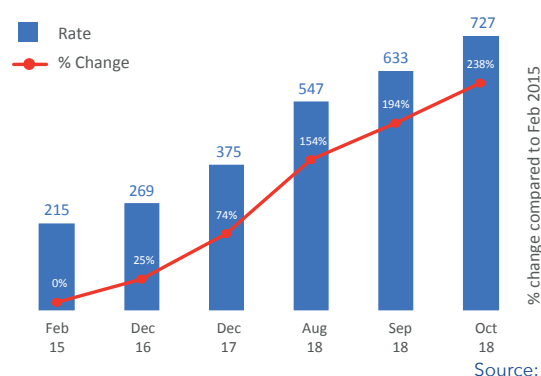
The currency plunge is just the latest in a series of conflict-related economic shocks that have hit Yemen's economy. On 3 October, the World Bank warned that Yemen's economic prospects for 2018 and beyond will

Increasing cost of minimum food basket



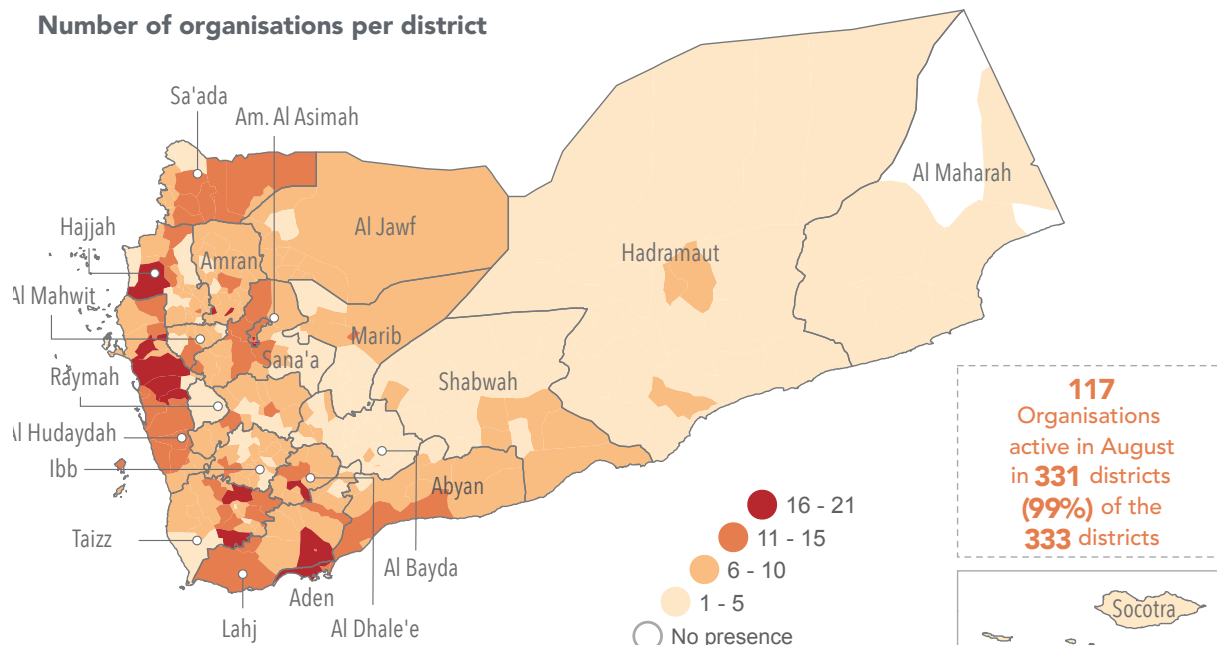
critically depend on rapid improvements in the political and security situation. Since 2015 economic output has contracted by about 50 per cent and poverty has dramatically increased with an estimated 52 per cent of the population now living on less than US\$1.90 a day and 81 per cent have an income of less than US\$3.20 a day.

Exchange rate (YER/USD)



ORGANISATIONAL PRESENCE AS OF AUGUST 2018

Despite an extremely challenging operating environment, a total of 117 national and international organizations, including nine UN Agencies, are working together to help people with the greatest humanitarian needs in almost all districts of Yemen.



UPDATES FROM HUBS

Al Hudaydah: Fighting continued in the same areas of Al Hudaydah city as in the previous week: around the airport, and at Kilo 16 and Kilo 10 along the Al Hudaydah-Sana'a road, but generally less intense. Sporadic armed confrontations also occurred along the western coastline mainly in Ad Durayhimi, At Tuhayt and Bayt Al Faqiyah districts. In Hajjah Governorate, sporadic clashes are reported on the outskirts of Hayran District and around Haradh town. Civilian casualties, including fatalities, were reported. Farms and homes were damaged.

On 6 October, one woman was killed and 12 civilians injured, including eight children, in a shelling incident that occurred at the Bani Jaber internally displaced person camp in Al-Khawkhah district. The survivors were treated in a field hospital in Al Mukha in Taizz Governorate and assistance was provided to families who had sought safety in the camp. The attack on the IDP site was condemned by the UN Humanitarian Coordinator in Yemen who stressed that there is no conceivable justification for what is happening to civilians in Yemen.

Ibb Hub: In Taizz Governorate, fighting has continued on various fronts, and intensified in Hayfan District, where access is still affected by ground fighting and landmine contamination on roads. In Maqbanah District, initial reports indicate that 51 households have been displaced by fighting in Al-Kadamah village. Another 319 households have reportedly been displaced from Al-Awshaqah sub-district in Mawza' District to Al-Mukha Junction. During the reporting period, a landmine detonated in Al-Silw District killing three civilians. In Ibb city, sporadic clashes in Al Dhiar District killed two people.

On the humanitarian front, the local education authority

in Ibb Governorate has requested fees from students attending public schools. The sub-national education cluster is discussing possible intervention with the local authority, particularly for displaced families. Teachers who have not received regular salaries for two years, can no longer meet their most basic needs and have been forced to seek other ways of income to provide for their families. UNICEF estimated that conflict has pushed at least half a million children out of school since 2015, and another 3.7 million are at risk of missing this school year if teachers are not paid. Further delay in paying teachers will likely lead to the collapse of the education sector and impact millions of children in Yemen making them vulnerable to child labor, recruitment into the fighting, trafficking, abuse and early marriage. A political solution to this problem is urgently needed as an entire generation of children is facing the loss of their education - and their future. During the reporting period, partners suspended the emergency cash transfer project because the project call centre was non-functional. Meanwhile, the number of suspected dengue fever cases reported from 1-27 September in Taizz has reached 1,509 in with 15 associated deaths, in 14 districts. Partners are conducting response activities including awareness raising, spraying and treatment in Taizz City.

Sa'ada Hub: Airstrikes and sporadic clashes were reported in several districts in Al Jawf and Sa'ada governorates. Conflict is reported to have escalated in Baqim, Kitaf wa Al Boqe'e and Al Dhaheer districts in Sa'ada, causing population displacement. Civilian casualties and damage to civilian property was reported in various areas. Local authorities have suggested that the displaced families have moved to safe areas in various districts, but numbers are unknown. Another 600 households from Hayran District in Hajjah Governorate have reportedly settled in Haydan District,

Sa'ada Governorate. Partners will verify the numbers and assess needs.

In Al Jawf, fears have arisen that most schools may close because salaries for teachers have not been paid. Six have already closed. Local authorities are discussing the issue with humanitarian partners. During the reporting period, WFP launched its general food distribution, targeting 103,379 households across the Sa'ada Governorate. UNHCR, through a local partner, distributed rental subsidies in six districts of Al Jawf to 2,761 households including IDPs and host community members. In Sha'adah District, Oxfam started the construction of the Rahban Water Project which will provide water to 12,000 people.

Sana'a Hub: During the reporting period, shelling and clashes were reported in Al Bayda Governorate, but casualties are unknown. Houses and farms were reportedly hit. On the humanitarian front, the authorities have appealed for assistance in Al Haymah Al Kharijiyah districts where most of the inhabitants can no longer generate sufficient income to buy food and water sources for six villages have dried up. Partners are responding to the situation despite access difficulties.

As of 30 September, 34,078 households displaced from Al Hudaydah had been registered in various governorates monitored by the Sana'a hub. Of these, 17,477 families have received rapid response assistance including 2,249 that received NFIs. One school in Sana'a City is still hosting IDPs. On 3 October, a shipment of three million doses of vaccines procured by UNICEF arrived at Sana'a International Airport. These will be used for a national vaccination campaign against measles and rubella for children aged 6 months to 15 years.

SURGE IN SUSPECTED CHOLERA CASES

The latest data from WHO indicates that the number of suspected cholera cases is accelerating in Yemen with roughly 10,000 suspected cases now reported per week. This is double the average numbers for the first eight months of this year, when a total of 154,527 suspected cases of cholera and 196 deaths were recorded. WHO explains that the increase has occurred in the context of conflict, lack of access to healthcare and WASH services, population movement and seasonality. In addition, surveillance for suspected cholera has increased in recent weeks, which means that more cases were detected.

The total number of suspected cholera cases from 27 April 2017, when the first outbreak occurred, until 16 September 2018, was 1,192,281 with 2,954 confirmed cases and 2,470 associated deaths. In recent weeks, 222 districts reported suspected cholera cases, and 12 governorates have reported an increase in suspected cases with the steepest increases in Aden (up by 67 per cent) in Amran (up by 50 per cent) and in Ibb (up by 46 per cent). According to WHO, there are 68 Diarrhea Treatment Centres (DTC) and Oral Rehydration Centres operating in 82 high-risk districts while 14 districts do not yet have DTCs.

On 30 September, WHO and UNICEF launched a second oral vaccination campaign in Al Hudaydah and Ibb governorates. During the six-day campaign, 3,000 local health workers vaccinated more than 306,000 people in Al Hali and Al Marawiah districts of Al Hudaydah and the Hazm Al Udayn District of Ibb. A

Aden hub: Tensions were reported in Aden City, as demonstrations took place against deteriorating public services and increased commodity prices. During the reporting period, displacement continued to areas monitored by the Aden hub. As of 3 October, the total number of families displaced from conflict areas reached 25,391 households, including 8,108 households from Al Hudaydah. In Al Dhale'e Governorate, Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) closed hospital operations in Al Dhal'e City following two attacks against its staff in 10 days. MSF is one of the few medical organisations delivering humanitarian assistance to the community in Al Dhal'e. The operation was mainly treating casualties from the frontlines as well as non-conflict related surgical cases around the city.

In terms of humanitarian response, 6,318 displaced households from Al Hudaydah have been registered for assistance, of whom 5,934 have received rapid response kits. In Al Mokha, humanitarian partners have distributed food baskets to 4,000 IDP households and to another 1,000 IDP households in Dhubbab. Food baskets have also been distributed to displaced households in Al Khawkha, along with NFIs to new IDPs. Food baskets have also been distributed to 10,182 households in Abyan and 39,432 in Shabwah governorates. Hygiene kits have been distributed to 422 households in Aden and to 366 households in Al Rebat camp in Lahj and in Al Dhale'e City.



Source: UNICEF

similar campaign in August reached over 380,000 people. The campaigns are part of an integrated cholera response plan to prevent a third major wave of cholera in Yemen. Cholera is endemic to Yemen therefore outbreaks, seasonal or sporadic, are to be expected. While rapid access to treatment is essential during and outbreak to save lives, vaccines are not the solution to stop an epidemic. Cholera transmission is closely linked to inadequate access to clean water and sanitation facilities; a combination of surveillance - to rapidly detect and respond to outbreaks - promotion of access to safe drinking water, improved sanitation and hygiene practices, social mobilization and treatment are required to prevent the transmission of the disease.

CASH ASSISTANCE

On 6 October, UNICEF recommenced its cash assistance programme. Nearly 1.5 million of the poorest families in Yemen – an estimated 9 million people in all the 333 districts – will benefit from these emergency cash transfers, which are funded by the World Bank. Cash assistance makes a real difference to beneficiaries. With rampant inflation and limited livelihood options,

many families have used up all their resources and have resorted to negative coping mechanisms, including child marriage and child labour. With the cash assistance some beneficiaries will be able to send their children back to school and buy basic daily commodities.

LOGISTICS CLUSTER UPDATE

In the week of 28 September, there were three airlifts to Yemen, transporting approximately 50 MT of relief items. An estimated 156 MT are in the pipeline and are due to be airlifted from Djibouti to Sana'a in October.

Regular sea cargo and passenger transport services via the VOS Apollo has not yet resumed. VOS Theia will resume travel as soon as ongoing bunkering operations

are completed. In the meantime, the Logistics Cluster is arranging shipments by dhow, and two shipments are due to be made from Djibouti the week commencing 1 October, one for Al Hudaydah and one for Aden. The Logistics Cluster also continues to arrange land transport from Sana'a, Al Hudaydah and Aden to any accessible location and can submit security clearance and deconfliction requests on behalf of service users.

UNVIM UPDATE

Al Hudaydah and Saleef sea ports are operational. Between the 3rd and the 9th of October, three commercial vessels berthed and discharged supplies at the ports.

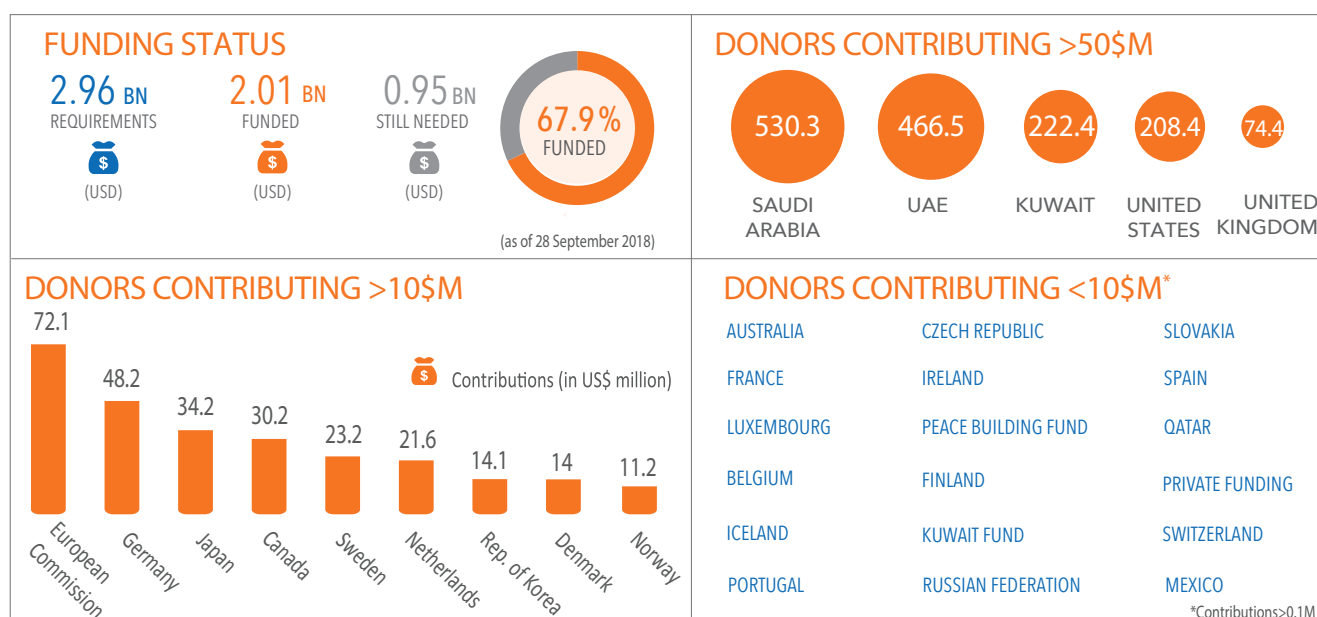


Al Hudaydah	35,921
Saleef	44,800
Ras Issa	0

Source: UNVIM

Analysis of UNVIM data indicates that in September 2018, from the time a vessel submitted a request to UNVIM for clearance until they eventually offloaded their cargo at Al Hudaydah or Saleef ports and sailed, it took an average of 13.8 days. There has been a significant improvement since March 2018, when the process took an average of 26.3 days.

FUNDING UPDATE (AS OF 10 OCTOBER 2018)



Source: FTS

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