

HIGHLIGHTS (3 Jun 2020)

- Pledging conference makes urgent plea for US\$2.41 billion to save lives
- Alarming deterioration in the COVID-19 situation
- COVID-19 threatens food availability
- Fighting continues to kill and injure civilians despite the UN Secretary-General's call for a ceasefire
- Yemen Humanitarian Fund partners respond to COVID-19



Displaced girl in Al-Safia IDP Camp in Taizz Governorate, Feb. 2020. OCHA/Mahmoud Fadel-YPN

KEY FIGURES

24.1M

People in Need

14.3M

People in Acute Need

3.65M

Displaced People

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BACKGROUND (3 Jun 2020)

Pledging conference makes urgent plea for US\$2.41 billion to save lives

On 2 June, the United Nations (UN) and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia will hold a ground-breaking virtual High-Level Pledging Event to garner support for the humanitarian response in Yemen. The 2020 Humanitarian Response Plan Extension, to be launched at the pledging event, is seeking US\$2.41 billion to assist 19 million people with life-saving aid between June and December 2020. This amount includes \$180 million to support COVID-19 response.

Yemen remains the world's worst humanitarian crisis. The cumulative impact of more than 5 years of conflict, economic decline and institutional collapse has left 24 million people – about 80 per cent of the population – in need of humanitarian aid and protection. The coronavirus (COVID-19) is spreading rapidly and exacerbating the humanitarian situation. With needs outstripping funds, there is an added sense of urgency for the High-Level Pledging Event. Aid agencies, working closely with

donors, have engaged with the authorities and made progress in addressing obstacles that have hindered a principled aid operation prompting key donors to withhold funding. Since mid-April, more than 30 core UN programmes were down-sized and some closed, putting the lives of millions of people who depend on aid every month on the line.

Already, at the start of 2020, the number of people reached with assistance each month had decreased from an average of 15.2 million people per month in the last quarter of 2019 to 13.5 million in the first two months of the year – a decrease in assistance was reported in 155 districts in 21 governorates with Sana’a, Dhamar, and Ibb governorates and Sana’a City worst affected. If aid agencies are unable to scale up again, millions of lives will be at serious risk and the situation will be catastrophic for those already facing malnutrition, food insecurity and disease.

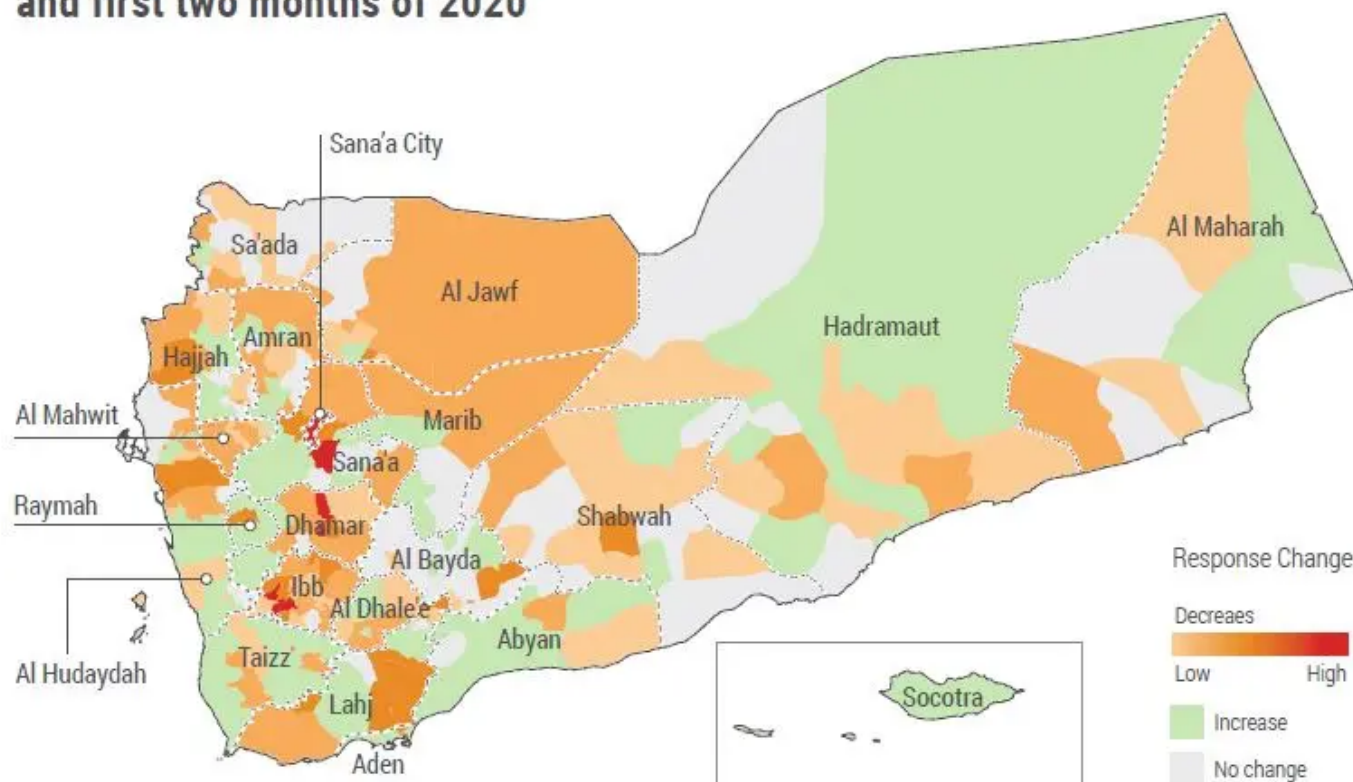
The rapid spread of the COVID-19 pandemic heralds another potential tragedy, low immunity levels across the population makes the preservation of large-scale aid programmes in the health, WASH, nutrition and other sectors vital if millions of vulnerable people are to withstand the virus.

In 2019, humanitarian programmes made an enormous difference. Large-scale assistance played a central role in saving lives and addressing human suffering, including preventing famine, stopping a cholera epidemic and helping families fleeing violence. Lack of resources and a complex operating environment are threatening to reverse these gains and millions will suffer if the UN, working with partners, is unable to deliver on its mandate because of lack of funding. Aid agencies in Yemen are calling on donors to pledge generously to the humanitarian operation on 2 June and pay pledges promptly.

VISUAL (3 Jun 2020)

Reduction in cluster response between quarter 4 of 2019 and first two months of 2020

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VISUAL (3 Jun 2020)

No. of partners reduced from 128 in the 4th quarter of 2019 to 118 in the 1st of 2020

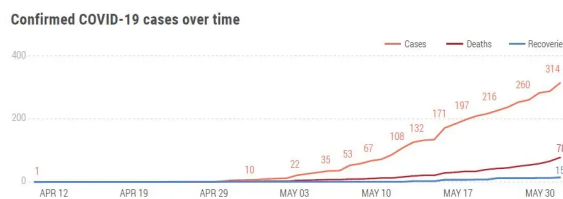
No. of partners reduced from 128 in the 4th quarter of 2019 to 118 in the 1st of 2020



EMERGENCY RESPONSE (3 Jun 2020)

Alarming deterioration in the COVID-19 situation

COVID-19 is spreading rapidly across Yemen. By 31 May, 314 cases and 78 related deaths had been reported amid concern that official reports lag far behind actual infections. The case fatality rate is disturbingly high at 20.77 per cent indicating the need to redouble efforts to respond to the virus.



Humanitarian agencies in Yemen continue to do all they can to step up the response and save lives: prioritising suppression of virus transmission through public information campaigns; procuring and distributing medical supplies and equipment; and supporting COVID-19 clinical readiness and response capacities. More than 14,000 volunteers have been trained and are on the ground, braving fear and stigma, explaining how the virus is transmitted, how people can protect themselves and what to do if someone falls ill. Together with mass media messaging, these activities have reached an estimated 16 million people.

The UN has procured more than 9,500 metric tons of medical equipment, testing kits and medicine from a highly competitive global market; 4,857 metric tons have already arrived in country and another 4,698 metric tons are in the pipeline. Still more is urgently needed, especially oxygen and personal protective equipment. The UN is rushing to expand hospital capacity in key population centres. This includes establishing 21 new intensive care units (ICUs) in COVID-19 designated hospitals, adding to 38 existing ICUs, deploying two high capacity mobile field hospitals with nearly 100 beds, and providing salaries for frontline health care workers.

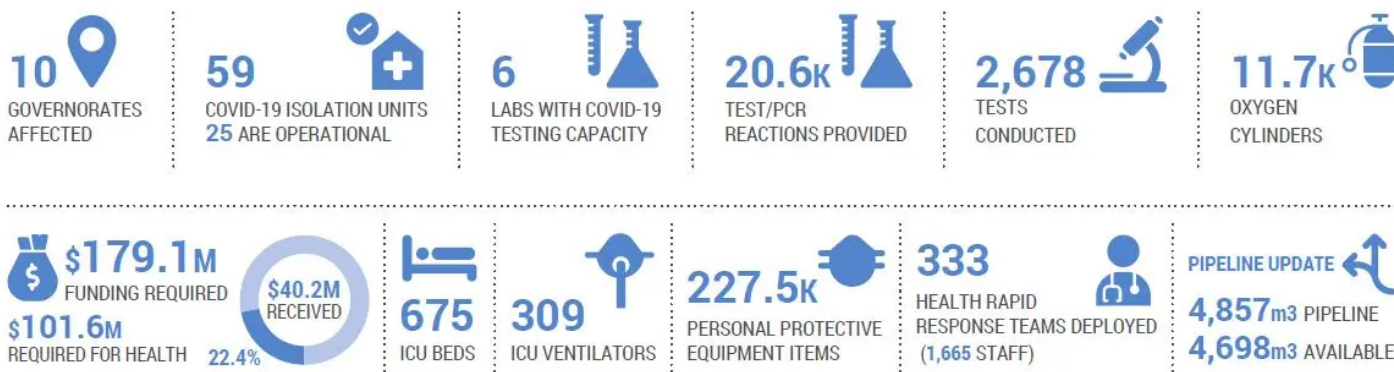
However, financial resources and medical supplies are in extremely short supply. Five years of conflict have weakened people's immune systems and the public health system is being overwhelmed as the number of suspected cases soar. Reports indicate that people exhibiting severe symptoms, including high fever and distressed breathing, are being turned away from health facilities that are either full or unable to provide safe treatment.

Only 50 per cent of health facilities are fully functioning and those that continue to function lack basic equipment such as masks and gloves, oxygen and other essential supplies for the treatment of COVID-19. Many health workers have no protective gear, and most are not receiving salaries. Aid agencies are doing everything they can to help, but need further resources to scale up the COVID-19 response.

VISUAL (3 Jun 2020)

Aid agencies are stepping up response to address COVID-19

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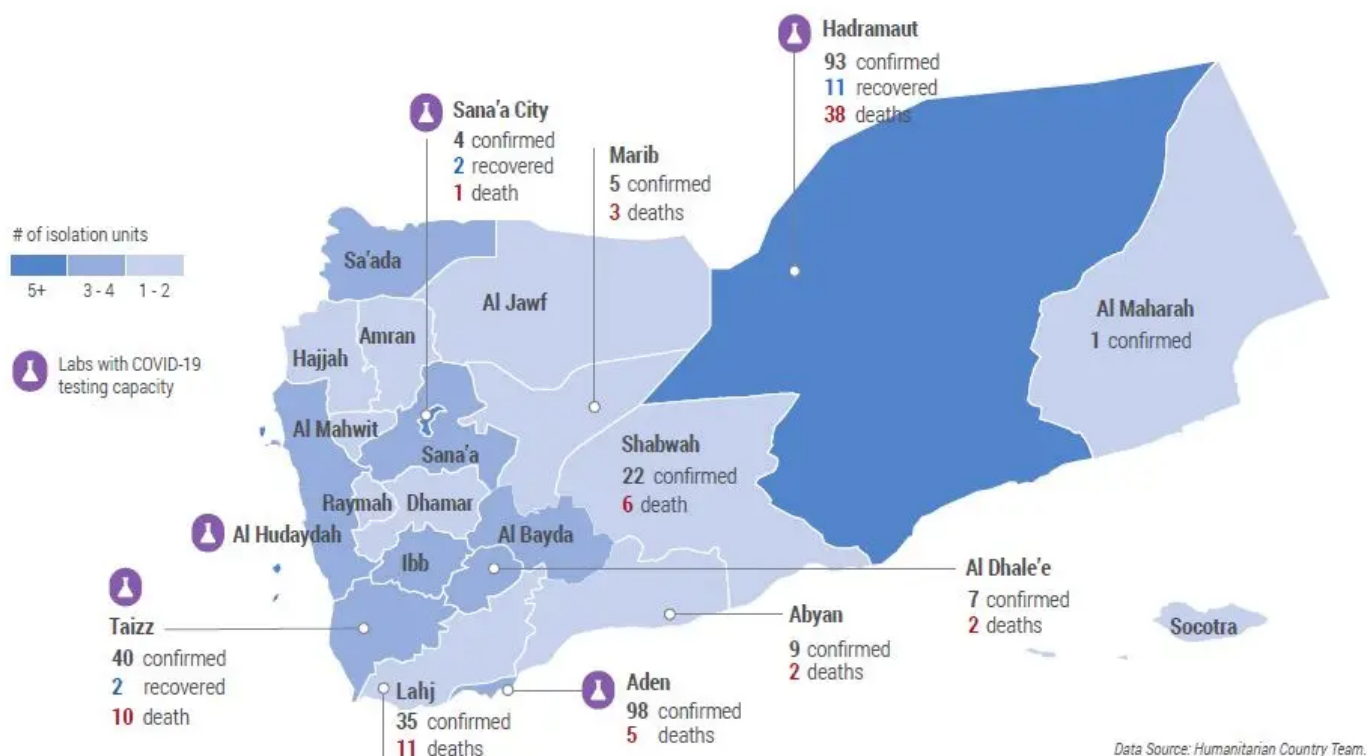


Data Source: Humanitarian Country Team.

VISUAL (3 Jun 2020)

Number of COVID-19 cases, laboratories and isolation units per governorate

Number of COVID-19 cases, laboratories and isolation units per governorate



ANALYSIS (3 Jun 2020)

COVID-19 threatens food availability

As the world grapples with the response to the COVID-19 pandemic, global markets, supply chains and trade disruptions are beginning to affect access to food supplies, especially for poor countries such as Yemen. The country depends almost entirely on imports to meet local market demand for staple food commodities, with remittances providing a vital lifeline for many families and communities across Yemen.

There has been a significant decrease in food imports in the year to date. Compared with 2019, food imports decreased by 12 per cent in February, by 43 per cent in March and by 39 per cent in April, as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The net impact on the markets of the reduced level of food imports will be felt in coming months if the import food supply chain experiences any gaps or interruptions.



Remittances have been similarly affected. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the oil economies of Gulf states has caused a sudden drop in remittances to Yemen, reducing the availability of hard currency and further weakening the exchange rate. Although the impact of the drop in remittances is yet to be fully established, it will further reduce the income of 80 per cent of the population who rely on remittances. Remittances contributed an estimated \$3.8 billion in 2019, with 90 per cent coming from Gulf countries.

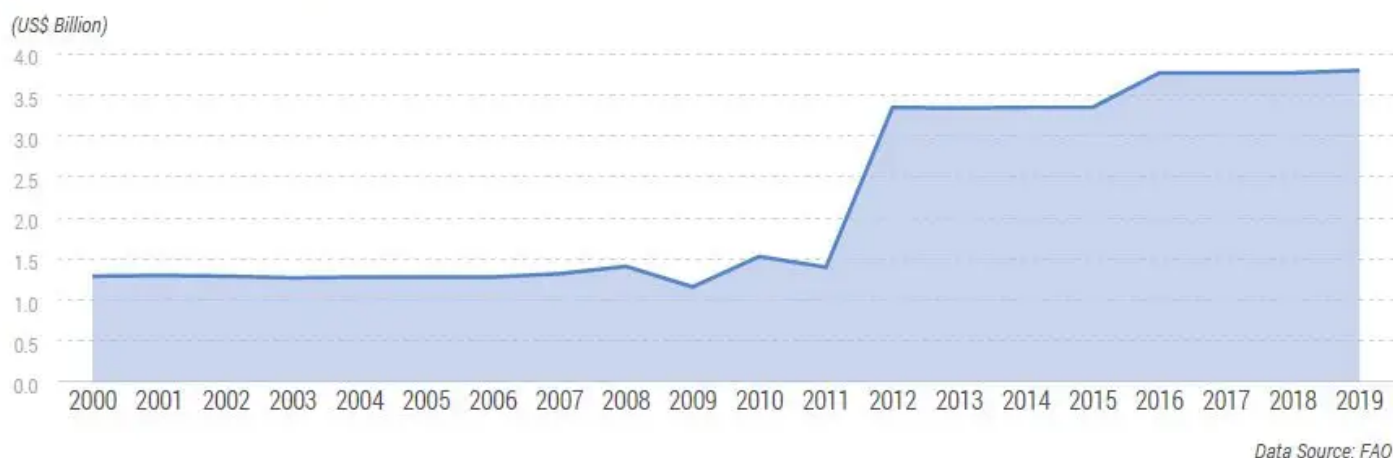
Food availability is beginning to show signs of disruption. The supply chain of locally produced varieties of fruit, vegetables and local grain remains challenged. Post-harvest losses in the supply chain have been reported, especially for fresh vegetables. The fisheries industry is also hugely affected, leading to a reduction in both demand and supply of fish. In Al Hudaydah, Al Jawf and Hajjah governorate, farmers are taking precautions to cushion the effect of COVID-19, such as selling their animals, which in turn has caused a drop in livestock prices. In Al Hudaydah and Al Jawf, the price of sheep has fallen by 13 per cent, while in Hajjah prices dropped by 12 per cent.

The price of basic commodities is rising, affecting access to food. The average cost of the minimum food basket across Yemen has risen to 40,150 Yemeni rials (\$64), a 4 per cent increase compared to the pre-COVID period in February 2020. The basket cost has steadily increased in response to the increasing retail price of food commodities. Between the second and third week of May, the cost of the minimum food basket increased by 36 per cent in Sana'a City, by 12 per cent in Lahj Governorate and by 10 per cent in Taizz Governorate and on Socotra island. Dwindling food access remains the main contributing factor to family food insecurity.

VISUAL (3 Jun 2020)

Remittances to Yemen

Remittances to Yemen

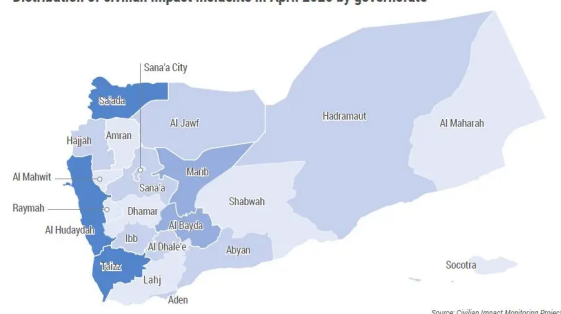


TRENDS (3 Jun 2020)

Fighting continues to kill and injure civilians despite the UN Secretary- General's call for a ceasefire

On 23 March the UN Secretary-General called for a global ceasefire that would allow humanitarians to reach the people most vulnerable to the spread of COVID-19. Two days later, Mr. Guterres made a specific call to the parties fighting in Yemen to end hostilities and ramp up efforts to counter a potential outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, a call which was welcomed by the parties. Despite this, and a unilateral ceasefire called by Saudi Arabia for two weeks from 9 April, subsequently extended until the end of May to coincide with the holy month of Ramadan, all parties in Yemen have continued to fight causing civilian casualties and damaging civilian infrastructure. Though a reduction in hostilities was reported in most areas in the first three weeks of May, there were occasional upticks in some northern governorates and sporadic hostilities in the south between the Government of Yemen (GoY) and forces supporting the Southern Transitional Council (STC).

Distribution of civilian impact incidents in April 2020 by governorate



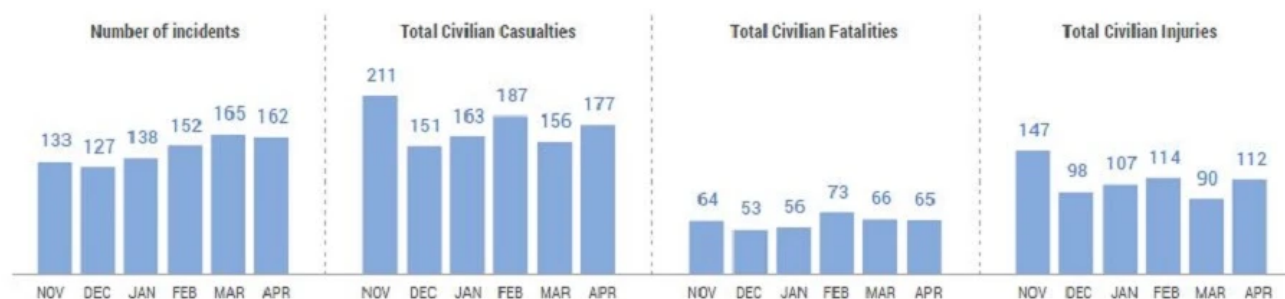
In April, the number of civilian casualties reported by the Protection Cluster's Civilian Impact Monitoring Project (CIMP) increased from 156 in March to 177. Of 65 fatalities reported in April, 11 were children and 17 were women, and there were 14 children and 39 women among the 112 civilians injured. This compares with 66 fatalities in March, including 15 children and 10 women, and 90 civilians injured, including 21 children and 9 women. In April, by far the highest number of civilian casualties reported was in the Ibb hub area (79), driven largely by a mass casualty incident when the women's section of the Central Prison in Al Mudhaffar District in Taizz City, came under shellfire. The incident caused 34 casualties, killing 8 women, including a child visiting her mother, and injuring at least 26 women. The Al Hudaydah hub had the second highest number, with 38 civilian casualties, including 11 in Bayt Al-Faqih, 7 in Al-Hali and 6 in Hays.

While clashes slowed on most frontlines and the number of civilian casualties declined in most areas during Ramadan in May, the Yemen Data Project indicated that the period between 8 and 14 May saw the highest weekly rate of raid since the unilateral ceasefire announced on 9 April, when it reported 49 air strikes, twice the average weekly number. Northern governorates were by far the most affected and there was a peak in Al Bayda between 2 and 12 May. The number of air strikes remained high the following week to 24 May, when 47 air strikes were reported across the country, 7 per cent above the average weekly preceasefire rate in 2020, with increases in Al Jawf, Hajjah and Marib which accounted for 68 per cent of all air strikes. In Al Bayda and Al Dhale'e, reports indicate that fighting did not reduce in May, and in other hotspots including Marib and Al Hudaydah, it flared up intermittently, as did clashes between IRG forces and the STC in Abyan Governorate. In the month to 27 May, CIMP recorded a total of 116 civilian casualties: 31 civilian casualties across the Ibb hub area, 33 in the Sana'a hub, 21 in the Aden hub, 16 in the Al Hudaydah hub, and 15 in the Sa'ada hub.

VISUAL (3 Jun 2020)

Civilian impact incidents by governorate in April 2020

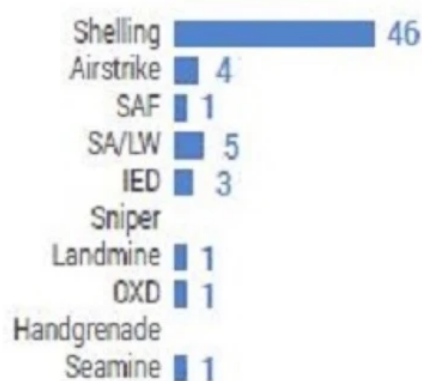
Civilian impact incidents by governorate in April 2020



VISUAL (3 Jun 2020)

Number of incidents and type of armed violence per hub

62 Al Hudaydah



38 Sana'a



38 Sa'ada



22 Ibb



2 Aden



EMERGENCY RESPONSE (3 Jun 2020)

Yemen Humanitarian Fund partners respond to COVID-19

Yemen Humanitarian Fund (YHF) partners responded immediately to the threat of COVID-19 across the country, enabling partners to raise awareness to protect the population and prevent the health service from being overwhelmed. To date, 15 national and international YHF-funded NGOs have reprogrammed activities that could not proceed to support COVID-19 response efforts across 15 governorates, focusing on health, water and sanitation interventions. In addition, funds were used to inform over 20,000 people about how to protect themselves and prevent COVID-19 infection. An estimated 230 awareness sessions and outreach were conducted through door-to-door visits,

YHF funding received by end of May



YHF allocations



social media, public announcements, and running awareness activities in public places, including mosques and health facilities, using information, education and communication materials containing COVID-19 related messages. Partners also provided health care workers and community health volunteers with personal protective equipment, face masks, disposable gloves, hand sanitizers, and soap.

Response plan under-funded

As of late May, the humanitarian response in Yemen had received only \$0.51 billion of the \$2.23 billion needed between June and December this year. The YHF was also seriously underfunded and at the end of May had received the lowest amount compared with the same time over the last three years, and only about a fifth of the funding received at this time in 2019. This is affecting support to frontline partners in responding to humanitarian needs – the YHF has only allocated \$3.5m through one reserve allocation in the first 5 months of 2020, compared with over \$113m allocated at the same time in 2019. In the light of the current funding environment and donor conditions requiring an enhanced approach to risk management, the YHF Advisory Board opted in April to reduce its 2020 resource mobilization target from \$180 million to \$100 million.

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