

HUMANITARIAN UPDATE

Issue 8/ August 2021

A child filling water in Dar Saad IDP site in Aden, 22 February 2020. Photo by Mahmoud Fadel-YPN for UN/OCHA

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YEMEN

KEY HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE SECTORS REMAIN CRITICALLY UNDERFUNDED

Yemen remains the world's largest humanitarian crisis, where protracted conflict, widespread displacement, severe food insecurity, economic stagnation, the collapse of state institutions, and restrictive humanitarian access, coupled with natural hazards and the COVID-19 pandemic, have triggered extremely high levels of humanitarian and protection needs. More than 20 million people – about two-thirds of the population – need humanitarian assistance. However, despite such staggering needs, the Yemen Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) remains only around 50 per cent funded. Crucially, as of 31 August, several critical humanitarian response sectors have received less than 15 per cent of the funds needed to respond to the needs of millions of vulnerable people, including

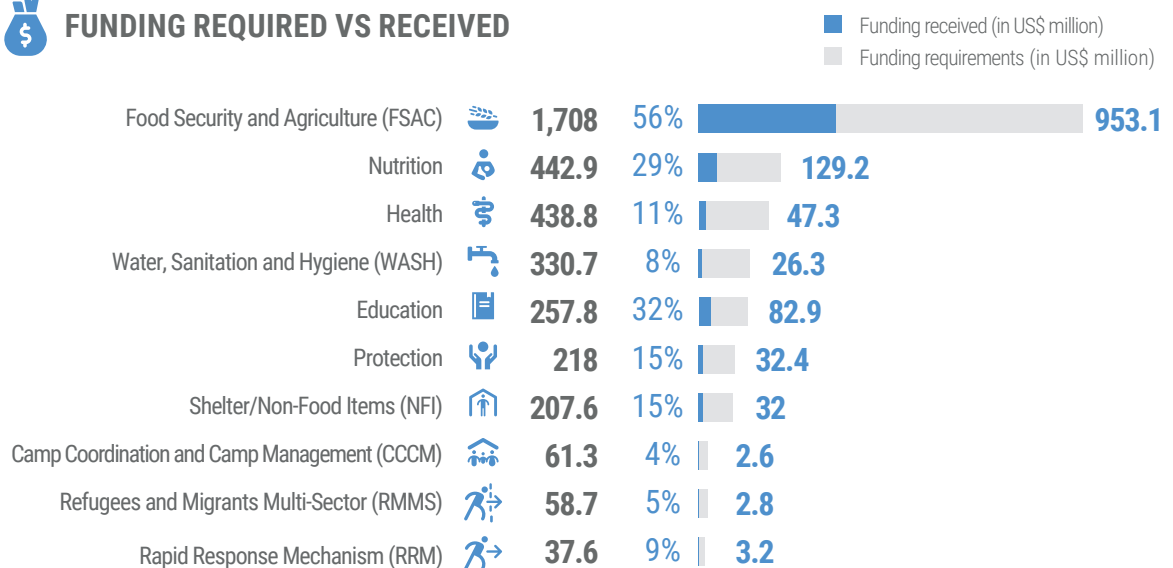
internally displaced persons (IDPs), women and children and people with disabilities.

The Health Cluster aims to provide health assistance to 11.6 million people in need under the 2021 Yemen HRP. It is also working to strengthen the health system in Yemen, which has been further weakened by the COVID-19 pandemic. Yet it remains severely underfunded, having received only 10.8 per cent of the funds required to save lives and enhance the health, safety and dignity of conflict-affected people.

Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) partners have so far received only 8 per cent of the funds needed to meet the needs of 11.2 million vulnerable people in 2021. Without additional timely funding, they will not be able to adequately reduce the risk



FUNDING REQUIRED VS RECEIVED



Funding received as of 29 August 2021.
Source: FTS

of WASH-related diseases, improve public health and preserve the life and dignity of vulnerable population groups, including IDPs, returnees and host communities.

Partners providing protection services to civilians facing serious protection risks to their safety, well-being, and the realization of their basic rights are also contending with severe funding shortages. These partners have so far received only 14.9 per cent of the funding they need, undermining their ability to assist 8.6 million people, including IDPs, women and children, older people, people with disabilities and marginalized groups such as the Muhamasheen.

Aid organizations providing services to more than 4 million displaced people have so far received minuscule levels of funding compared with existing needs. While partners providing shelter support to displaced people are 15.4 per cent funded, those working to provide newly displaced people with Rapid Response Mechanism assistance – i.e., a minimum package of critical life-saving assistance provided within the first 72 hours of displacement – are only 8.5 per cent funded. Furthermore, only 4.3 per cent of the funds needed to ensure that 1,700 IDP sites, hosting more than a million people, are safer, more habitable and better organized, have been received to

date. Meanwhile, the refugees and migrants multisector has so far received just 4.7 per cent of the funds needed to reduce the protection risks facing migrants, refugees and asylum seekers and provide them with sustained support to enhance their well-being and dignity.

And although more than 2.25 million children under 5 and over a million pregnant and breastfeeding women are projected to suffer from acute malnutrition in 2021, Nutrition Cluster partners have so far received only 29.2 per cent of the required funding.

This critical issue was stressed by Martin Griffiths in his first briefing to the UN Security Council in his new role as the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator. After noting that even food assistance to people in need in Yemen – which is some 55 per cent funded – will probably face cuts by October if further funding is not urgently provided, Mr. Griffiths emphasized that “programmes in other sectors – especially health, water, sanitation and shelter – are already struggling. And if aid levels fall sharply, there you get the risk of famine roaring back.”

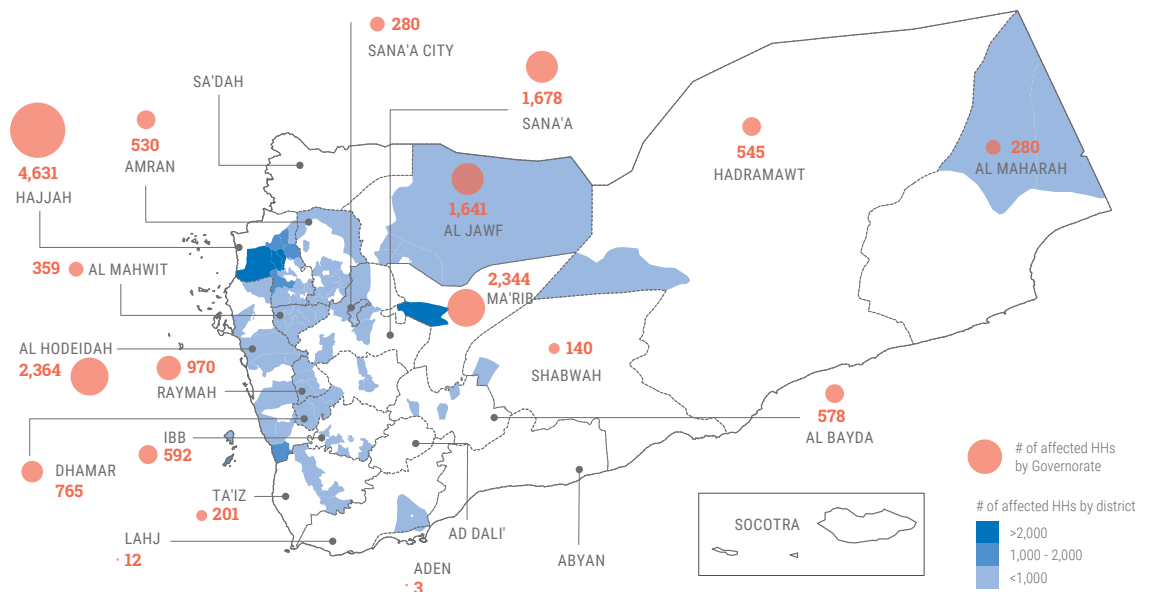
FLOODS SWEEP ACROSS YEMEN, CAUSING EXTENSIVE DAMAGE FOR SECOND TIME IN 2021

Starting in late July and continuing into early August, torrential rains and widespread flooding hit Yemen for the second time this year. Floods damaged public infrastructure, homes and shelters and reportedly caused multiple deaths and injuries. Damage to private property and other structures – including sites hosting internally displaced persons (IDPs), houses, farms, roads, power networks and sewage systems – was reported in one-third of Yemen’s districts – 101 districts – and across 18 governorates. Overall, it is estimated that 34,383 families (about 240,681 individuals) were affected, 10,412 of whom need urgent assistance.

Hajjah Governorate was the hardest hit, with 21,101 families residing in the governorate reportedly impacted by recent floods. Al Hodeidah, Ma’rib, Sana’a and Al Jawf governorates also saw high concentrations of families affected by torrential rains and flooding. Across Yemen, displaced families, especially those living in IDP sites, have been particularly impacted.

To facilitate a swift and efficient response, humanitarian partners triggered a nationwide Flood Preparedness Plan for the second time this year, mobilizing different types of assistance to affected populations and ensuring the continuity of life-saving assistance delivery to affected people. As of 31 July, humanitarian partners had provided Rapid Response Mechanism assistance to 1,579 affected families, shelter assistance and non-food items to 5,138 families, water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) assistance to 3,601 families, and emergency food assistance to 4,286 families. Interventions by CCCM Cluster partners, including awareness raising and the implementation of mitigation measures to guard against the flow of water into IDP shelters, benefited 3,532 families, while the Refugees and Migrants Multi-Sector (RMMs) supported 462 families.

FLOOD-AFFECTED FAMILIES BY GOVERNORATE



Source: OCHA/Clusters

BRINGING CLEAN, SAFE AND ACCESSIBLE WATER TO COMMUNITIES

Nearly 18 million people in Yemen – including over 9 million children – do not have access to clean and safe water. Many people have no choice but to walk long distances exposed to the elements just to access water sources, which are often insufficient or even contaminated. The time and effort required to obtain water also negatively impacts children who have to fetch water, by taking away their time to play and by disrupting their education as they are forced to miss classes. The water scarcity is compounded by the lack of electricity and the ongoing fuel shortage, which worsen access to water networks. Overall, only around one-third of Yemen’s population is connected to a piped water network.

To help address this, UNICEF has been working on projects to bring water directly to communities in Yemen. One such example is a UNICEF project in Ibb Governorate that was completed in April 2020. This project established a new solar power system, supplied equipment and installed two full pumping units to connect homes as well as some health facilities, schools and mosques in Al Odayn District to the district water network, thereby providing more than 12,000 people with reliable access to safe and clean water at lower cost and in a more environmentally friendly manner. Thanks to this project, the price of water decreased by 30 per cent to YER 700 per cubic meter, compared to YER 1,000 for the same quantity before the installation of the solar power system. Moreover, schools, health facilities and mosques as well as some impoverished families were exempted from payment.

More than a year later, communities in the area continue to benefit. “Without this project, people would have moved away from Al Odayn District”, said Hamoud Hasan, a Project Manager with the General Authority for Rural Water in Ibb Governorate. “Instead, people have started coming and settling here.” This sentiment was affirmed



Yemeni children carrying water from wells.
© Ibrahim Almashtiqi, UNICEF.

by Abbas Algurbani, one of the many people who benefited from this activity: “This project has significantly improved many aspects of our lives, bringing water into our homes as well as providing it for land irrigation and livestock. It has also reduced the prohibitive cost of oil and fuel we previously needed to pump well water. It feels like we’ve found treasure.”

More districts in Ibb Governorate stand to gain from similarly improved water supply, as UNICEF and its partners continue to implement other solar power system installations and water pumping network

rehabilitations to benefit a further 20,000 people in the governorate. Humanitarian partners are also active in other parts of Yemen, working to bring clean, safe and accessible water to communities across the country. These projects are grounded in the humanitarian-development nexus, recognizing that lifesaving humanitarian assistance must be complemented by the establishment of sustainable and resilient services, in this case contributing towards Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 6 – ensuring availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.



Solar panels provided by UNICEF to pump water from wells to houses in Al Odayn District in Ibb Governorate. © Ibrahim Almashriqi, UNICEF.

SCALING UP YEMEN'S FIGHT AGAINST ANIMAL DISEASE OUTBREAKS

Yemen's livestock sector remains a lifeline and crucial income source for most of the country's rural population. However, livestock in Yemen face several health risks. Common ailments include parasites, respiratory infections, Peste des Petits Ruminants (PPR), Sheep and Goat Pox (SGP), foot and mouth disease, mastitis and foot rot. If not adequately addressed, these animal diseases can have severe consequences for the country's already compromised food security.

As part of The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) efforts to control animal diseases and build the resilience of livestock-dependent communities in Yemen, a month-long livestock vaccination and treatment campaign was conducted in July and August 2021. Over 600,000 sheep and goats in 16 districts of Ta'iz, Lahj and Abyan governorates were treated against various internal and external parasites and diseases and vaccinated against PPR and SGP – two of the most infectious animal diseases affecting most small ruminants in Yemen.



A farmer looks on as local agriculture officers vaccinate and treat his goat in a village in Lahj Governorate in July 2021. © FAO

This campaign is expected to help generate income for over 36,000 livestock-dependent households, for whom these animals are productive assets and often also the main source of income and food – including for the daily milk supply that is especially vital for the nutrition and wellbeing of children and lactating women.

Campaigns such as these remain an essential part of efforts to protect, rebuild and restore agricultural productivity and create livelihood opportunities in Yemen as millions of people continue to grapple with the consequences of a devastating conflict.

WORLD HUMANITARIAN DAY 2021: THE HUMANITARIAN IMPACT OF THE CLIMATE CRISIS

19 August marked another World Humanitarian Day – a day to raise awareness about humanitarian assistance worldwide and to pay tribute to the people who risk their lives to provide it. In Yemen, where humanitarian partners continue to deliver lifesaving aid in restrictive environments, the United Nations Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS) has recorded some 100 incidents of violence and insecurity impacting humanitarian personnel, assets and facilities since January 2020. Seventy-one of these occurred last year, and a further 29 were in the first seven months of 2021. Most – 62 incidents – pertained to physical assault, detention, intimidation and other forms of mistreatment of humanitarian personnel, while the remaining 38 incidents involved humanitarian assets and facilities. In addition to highlighting the need to better protect humanitarian workers in crises, this year's World Humanitarian Day also sought to remind the world of the climate emergency we are all in, which is wreaking havoc

at a scale beyond what the humanitarian community and people on the frontlines of this emergency can manage.

Across the world, millions of people are already losing their homes, their livelihoods and their lives as a result of the climate crisis. Globally, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) estimates that following climate-related disasters, the number of people in humanitarian need could double to over 200 million by 2050, and humanitarian funding needs could increase to US\$20 billion annually by 2030. While the climate is changing everywhere, it is people living in already fragile circumstances who feel the effects most harshly.

In Yemen, vulnerability to natural hazards, floods and droughts have led to the destruction of shelters and infrastructure, restricted access to markets and basic services, wrecked livelihoods, facilitated the spread of deadly diseases and caused



Two children stand alongside flooded streets in Sana'a City.
© YPN for OCHA

injuries and fatalities, as well as contributed to population displacement in what is already the world's fourth biggest internal displacement crisis. The country's annual rainy season typically brings heavy rainfalls, high winds and flooding, particularly to coastal areas. In 2020, at least 13 governorates were impacted by adverse weather, affecting over 62,500 families, while thousands more families have already been impacted in 2021. By blocking passage of roads, flooding also continues to impede the ability of humanitarian partners to deliver lifesaving assistance to people in need.

Driven by conflict and economic collapse, some 5 million people in Yemen are on the brink of famine as the country grapples with increasing food insecurity, rising malnutrition and associated mortality as well as other long-term, irreversible effects on child growth and development. Already, more than 2.25 million children aged below 5 years and over a million pregnant and breastfeeding women are projected to suffer from acute malnutrition this year. With ongoing desertification and water sources slowly depleting, the already frail food security situation is further threatened by recurrent drought and climate change, which are negatively impacting the availability of arable land and access to safe drinking

water. These pressures also undermine income and livelihoods especially in rural areas, contributing to greater internal migration towards larger population centres and adding further pressure on already stretched infrastructure, stoking tensions between displaced communities and host communities.

As the Humanitarian Coordinator for Yemen, David Gressly, emphasized in his [statement](#) on World Humanitarian Day, "Urgent action must be taken to meaningfully address climate change, and to reduce the human and environmental cost of the climate crisis. Otherwise, it is the most vulnerable among us who will once again bear the greatest cost."

Yemen is already recognized as the world's worst humanitarian crisis, after over six years of war, economic collapse and surging public health risks. The climate crisis poses yet another threat, placing further burden upon people who are already among the world's most vulnerable. The climate crisis is not a myth – it is real, it is here, and it is a humanitarian crisis.

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