



Home Office

Country Policy and Information Note

Yemen: Security and humanitarian situation

Version 5.0

December 2021

Preface

Purpose

This note provides country of origin information (COI) and analysis of COI for use by Home Office decision makers handling particular types of protection and human rights claims (as set out in the [Introduction](#) section). It is not intended to be an exhaustive survey of a particular subject or theme.

It is split into 2 parts: (1) an assessment of COI and other evidence; and (2) COI. These are explained in more detail below.

Assessment

This section analyses the evidence relevant to this note - that is information in the COI section; refugee/human rights laws and policies; and applicable caselaw - by describing this and its inter-relationships, and provides an assessment of, in general, whether one or more of the following applies:

- a person is reasonably likely to face a real risk of persecution or serious harm
- that the general humanitarian situation is so severe that there are substantial grounds for believing that there is a real risk of serious harm because conditions amount to inhuman or degrading treatment as within [paragraphs 339C and 339CA\(iii\) of the Immigration Rules](#) / Article 3 of the [European Convention on Human Rights \(ECHR\)](#)
- that the security situation is such that there are substantial grounds for believing there is a real risk of serious harm because there exists a serious and individual threat to a civilian's life or person by reason of indiscriminate violence in a situation of international or internal armed conflict as within [paragraphs 339C and 339CA\(iv\) of the Immigration Rules](#)
- a person is able to obtain protection from the state (or quasi state bodies)
- a person is reasonably able to relocate within a country or territory
- a claim is likely to justify granting asylum, humanitarian protection or other form of leave, and
- if a claim is refused, it is likely or unlikely to be certifiable as 'clearly unfounded' under [section 94 of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002](#).

Decision makers **must**, however, still consider all claims on an individual basis, taking into account each case's specific facts.

Country of origin information

The country information in this note has been carefully selected in accordance with the general principles of COI research as set out in the [Common EU \[European Union\] Guidelines for Processing Country of Origin Information \(COI\)](#), April 2008, and the Austrian Centre for Country of Origin and Asylum Research and Documentation's (ACCORD), [Researching Country Origin Information – Training Manual](#), 2013. Namely, taking into account the COI's relevance, reliability, accuracy, balance, currency, transparency and traceability.

The structure and content of the country information section follows a [terms of reference](#) which sets out the general and specific topics relevant to this note.

All information included in the note was published or made publicly available on or before the 'cut-off' date(s) in the country information section. Any event taking place or report/article published after these date(s) is not included.

All information is publicly accessible or can be made publicly available. Sources and the information they provide are carefully considered before inclusion. Factors relevant to the assessment of the reliability of sources and information include:

- the motivation, purpose, knowledge and experience of the source
- how the information was obtained, including specific methodologies used
- the currency and detail of information
- whether the COI is consistent with and/or corroborated by other sources.

Multiple sourcing is used to ensure that the information is accurate and balanced, which is compared and contrasted where appropriate so that a comprehensive and up-to-date picture is provided of the issues relevant to this note at the time of publication.

The inclusion of a source is not, however, an endorsement of it or any view(s) expressed.

Each piece of information is referenced in a footnote. Full details of all sources cited and consulted in compiling the note are listed alphabetically in the [bibliography](#).

Feedback

Our goal is to provide accurate, reliable and up-to-date COI and clear guidance. We welcome feedback on how to improve our products. If you would like to comment on this note, please email the Country Policy and Information Team.

Independent Advisory Group on Country Information

The [Independent Advisory Group on Country Information](#) (IAGCI) was set up in March 2009 by the Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration to support him in reviewing the efficiency, effectiveness and consistency of approach of COI produced by the Home Office.

The IAGCI welcomes feedback on the Home Office's COI material. It is not the function of the IAGCI to endorse any Home Office material, procedures or policy. The IAGCI may be contacted at:

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Information about the IAGCI's work and a list of the documents which have been reviewed by the IAGCI can be found on the Independent Chief Inspector's pages of the [gov.uk website](#).

Contents

Assessment	6
1. Introduction	6
1.1 Basis of claim	6
2. Consideration of issues	6
2.1 Credibility.....	6
2.2 Exclusion	7
2.3 Convention reason(s).....	7
2.4 Risk.....	8
2.5 Internal relocation.....	11
2.6 Certification	12
Country information	13
3. Demography	13
4. Main actors	14
4.1 Houthis	14
4.2 The government of Yemen	15
4.3 Ali Abdullah Saleh loyalists.....	15
4.4 Southern separatists	16
4.5 Jihadist militants.....	17
4.6 International actors.....	17
5. Background to the conflict.....	18
6. Timeline of main events	20
7. Humanitarian situation.....	23
7.1 Overview.....	23
7.2 Numbers of people who need humanitarian assistance.....	24
7.3 Severity of need by location.....	24
7.4 Food security.....	24
7.5 Water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH).....	27
7.6 Healthcare including Covid-19.....	28
7.7 Education.....	30
7.8 Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs).....	30
7.9 Shelter and non-food items (NFI)	32
7.10 Impact on the economy.....	33
7.11 Humanitarian support.....	34
7.12 Humanitarian access	36
8. Security situation	38

8.1	Maps	38
8.2	Control of territory	39
8.3	Nature of violence	40
8.4	Security situation in 2020.....	42
8.5	Developments in northern Yemen in 2021	43
8.6	Developments in southern Yemen in 2021	49
8.7	Security events and number of casualties	50
8.8	Freedom of movement.....	59
Terms of Reference		61
Bibliography		62
	Sources cited	62
	Sources consulted but not cited	66
Version control		67

Assessment

Updated: 24 December 2021

1. Introduction

1.1 Basis of claim

- 1.1.1 That the general humanitarian situation in Yemen is so severe that there are substantial grounds for believing that there is a real risk of serious harm because conditions amount to torture or inhuman or degrading treatment as defined in paragraphs 339C and 339CA(iii) of the Immigration Rules / Article 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR).
- 1.1.2 That the security situation in Yemen is such that there are substantial grounds for believing there is a real risk of serious harm because there exists a serious and individual threat to a civilian's life or person by reason of indiscriminate violence in a situation of international or internal armed conflict, as defined in paragraphs 339C and 339CA(iv) of the Immigration Rules.

[Back to Contents](#)

2. Consideration of issues

2.1 Credibility

- 2.1.1 For information on assessing credibility, see the instruction on [Assessing Credibility and Refugee Status](#).
- 2.1.2 Decision makers must also check if there has been a previous application for a UK visa or another form of leave. Asylum applications matched to visas should be investigated prior to the asylum interview (see the [Asylum Instruction on Visa Matches, Asylum Claims from UK Visa Applicants](#)).
- 2.1.3 In cases where there are doubts surrounding an person's claimed place of origin, decision makers should also consider the need to conduct language analysis testing (see the [Asylum Instruction on Language Analysis](#)).

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[Back to Contents](#)

2.2 Exclusion

- 2.2.1 Parties on all sides of the conflict have reportedly been responsible for numerous serious human rights abuses (see [Nature of violence](#)). If it is accepted that the person has been involved with such a party (see [Key actors](#)) then decision makers must consider whether there are serious reasons for considering whether one (or more) of the exclusion clauses is applicable. Each case must be considered on its individual facts and merits.
- 2.2.2 If the person is excluded from the Refugee Convention, they will also be excluded from a grant of humanitarian protection (which has a wider range of exclusions than refugee status).
- 2.2.3 For further guidance on the exclusion clauses and restricted leave, see the Asylum Instruction on [Exclusion under Articles 1F and 33\(2\) of the Refugee Convention](#), [Humanitarian Protection](#) and the instruction on [Restricted Leave](#).

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[Back to Contents](#)

2.3 Convention reason(s)

- 2.3.1 A severe humanitarian situation and/or a state of civil instability and/or where law and order has broken down, which might exist in some places outside of government control, do not of themselves give rise to a well-founded fear of persecution for a Refugee Convention reason.
- 2.3.2 In the absence of a link to one of the 5 Refugee Convention grounds necessary to be recognised as a refugee, the question to address is whether the person will face a real risk of serious harm in order to qualify for Humanitarian Protection (HP).
- 2.3.3 However, before considering whether a person requires protection because of the general humanitarian and/or security situation, decision makers must consider if the person faces a reasonable degree of likelihood of persecution for a Refugee Convention reason. Where the person qualifies for protection under the Refugee Convention, decision makers do not need to consider if

there are substantial grounds for believing the person faces a real risk of serious harm and a grant of HP.

- 2.3.4 For further guidance on Convention reasons see the instruction on [Assessing Credibility and Refugee Status](#).

[Back to Contents](#)

2.4 Risk

a. Humanitarian situation

- 2.4.1 Yemen is experiencing a severe humanitarian crisis as a result of the ongoing conflict, described by the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) as the largest humanitarian crisis in the world (see [Humanitarian situation – Overview](#)). Areas in which people are in severest need are in the north and west of the country controlled by the Houthi rebels (see [Humanitarian Situation - Severity of need by location](#)).
- 2.4.2 Yemen has an estimated population of just under 30.5 million. Of those, the UN assessed that 20.7 million people, or two out of every 3 Yemenis, need some form of humanitarian assistance (including 12.1 million in ‘acute’ need) (see [Humanitarian situation – Numbers of people who need humanitarian assistance](#)).
- 2.4.3 UNOHCA projected that 16.2 million people would require humanitarian food and livelihood assistance in 2021, with over 2.25 million children and more than a million pregnant and lactating women projected to suffer from acute malnutrition. Food insecurity is most severe in areas with active conflict or in areas where humanitarian access is limited by the security situation and the devaluation of the Yemeni rial has made it substantially harder for ordinary people in Yemen to afford basic food (see [Humanitarian situation – Food security](#)).
- 2.4.4 Those in need also include an estimated 15.4 million people that require basic water, sanitation and hygiene assistance, with 8.7 million people in ‘acute’ need. Nearly 18 million people, including over 9 million children, do not have access to clean and safe water, and 42% of the population have no adequate sanitation (see [Humanitarian situation – Water, sanitation and hygiene \(WASH\)](#)).
- 2.4.5 According to UNOCHA 20.1 million people need health assistance, of which 11.6 million are in acute need. 82% of districts in Yemen are in severe need of health assistance, with only 51% of health facilities in Yemen fully functional, although they often cannot offer adequate care. Covid-19 has also had a significant effect on the healthcare system. An estimated 15% of the functioning health system has been repurposed for the Covid-19 response, which has contributed to reducing overall health coverage by 20 to 30%. By September 2021 there were more than 9,000 confirmed cases of Covid-19 and 1,700 deaths, although these figures are likely to be much higher across the country due to a lack of testing capacities and the fact that they do not include information from governorates controlled by the Houthis (see [Humanitarian situation – Healthcare including Covid-19](#)).
- 2.4.6 More than 4 million people are internally displaced in Yemen and have settled in over 1,500 spontaneous, unplanned camps and require support to

meet their basic needs (see [Humanitarian situation – Internally Displaced Persons \(IDP\)](#)). There are also 7.3 million people that require shelter and non-food item assistance, with 2.9 million people living in extremely dire conditions (see [Humanitarian situation - Shelter and non-food items \(NFI\)](#)).

- 2.4.7 The war has had a severe effect on the economy, causing significant rising prices, depreciation of the currency and loss of jobs. Basic services have been seriously affected with reports of many shops and businesses being forced to close down (see [Humanitarian situation – Impact on the economy](#)).
- 2.4.8 UNOHCA aimed to provide humanitarian support to 16 million people in 2021, 77% of the 20.7 million people in need. A total of 167 partner organisations will aim to deliver aid across all of Yemen’s 333 districts, however, 220 of these districts are considered hard-to-reach for humanitarian organisations ([Humanitarian Situation – Humanitarian Support](#) and [Humanitarian Situation – Humanitarian Access](#)).
- 2.4.9 The delivery of humanitarian assistance is impacted by insecurity caused by conflict and arbitrary regulations and restrictions imposed by local authorities. In 2020, active front line hostilities affected access to 49 districts, an increase from the 35 districts affected at the end of 2019, with humanitarian organisations reporting 4,848 access incidents across 199 districts in 20 governorates in Yemen, up from 2,380 incidents in 2019. Most districts with access issues are in northern Yemen under Houthi control (see [Humanitarian Situation – Humanitarian Support](#) and [Humanitarian Situation – Humanitarian Access](#)).
- 2.4.10 In general the humanitarian situation is so severe that a person is likely to face a real risk of serious harm because conditions amount to torture or inhuman or degrading treatment as defined in paragraphs 339C and 339CA(iii) of the Immigration Rules / Article 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR). However, each will case need to be considered on its facts, with the onus on the person to demonstrate that they face a real risk of serious harm.
- 2.4.11 For guidance on Humanitarian Protection, see the [Asylum Instruction on Humanitarian Protection](#).

[Back to Contents](#)

b. Security situation

- 2.4.12 Paragraphs 339C and 339CA(iv) of the Immigration Rules - which set out that a real risk of serious harm as a serious and individual threat by reason of indiscriminate violence in a situation of international or internal armed conflict - **only** apply to civilians who must be non-combatants. This could include former combatants who have genuinely and permanently renounced armed activity.
- 2.4.13 Yemen is in a state of internal armed conflict involving several actors (see [Key actors](#) and [Overview of the conflict](#)).
- 2.4.14 There are reports of indiscriminate, disproportionate and unlawful violence by all parties to the conflict, with attacks on civilian homes, hospitals, schools, markets, food stores and factories among others (see [Nature of violence](#)).

- 2.4.15 The Houthis continue to control northern and eastern areas of Yemen, including Sann'a and its surrounding provinces (see [Control of territory](#)). In 2020 Houthi forces opened up several new fronts, with the main objective to gain control of Marib city, the last stronghold of the internationally-recognised Yemeni government (YG) (see [Security situation in 2020](#)). In February 2021, Houthi forces launched a large-scale offensive on Marib city, gaining territory before halting their offensive in May 2021, amid unprecedented international efforts to find a political solution to the conflict. However, the Houthis resumed their offensive again in late June and despite resistance from Saudi-led coalition airstrikes and resistance on the ground by pro-Hadi tribes and military forces, reports in mid-October 2021 stated that they had reached the outskirts of Marib city (see [Developments in northern Yemen in 2021](#)).
- 2.4.16 Elsewhere in Marib governorate, Houthi forces seized control of the centre of Al-Abdiya district on 15 October 2021 after besieging the district for around 3 weeks, cutting off supplies of food, water and fuel to the 35,000 people living there. During the Houthi offensive there have been reports of the rebels using heavy and medium weapons to shell villages within the Al-Abdiya district, targeting more than 500 houses and the district's only hospital, in addition to abducting 500 people, including children, and looting the contents of houses and farms. In response the Saudi-led coalition carried out a number of air strikes and have reportedly killed over 165 Houthi fighters including two prominent Houthi commanders (see [Developments in northern Yemen in 2021](#)). The conflict in Marib government is ongoing at the time of writing with over 10,000 people being displaced as a result (see [Security events and number of casualties](#)).
- 2.4.17 Fighting between the Houthi rebels and YG forces and the Saudi led coalition took place across a number of Yemen's governorates throughout 2021 with some of the highest numbers of security incidents and fatalities taking place in Al Hudaydah, Taizz, Al Bayda, Al Jawf, Ad Dali, Sadah and Shabwah governorates (see [Developments in northern Yemen in 2021](#) and [Security events and number of casualties](#)).
- 2.4.18 In August 2019 the Southern Transitional Council (STC), backed by the United Arab Emirates (UAE), took control of Aden following clashes with the YG. In November 2019, the STC and the YG signed a power-sharing deal, known as the Riyadh Agreement, with the aim of solving conflict in Southern Yemen. In December 2020 negotiations between the STC and the YG to implement the Riyadh Agreement made a breakthrough, with the STC agreeing to join a newly constituted government in exchange for allowing the government to move back to Aden. However, throughout the first half of 2021, the relationship between the two parties deteriorated, with clashes taking place in the Abyan governorate in July 2021. There have been no reports of fighting between the two parties since, although a car bomb targeting YG officials was detonated in Aden in October 2021, killing and injuring security personnel and a number of civilians. However, it was not clear who was responsible for the attack (see [Timeline of key events](#) and [Developments in southern Yemen in 2021](#)).

- 2.4.19 According to the monitoring group Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project (ACLED) as of February 2021, approximately 130,000 people have died as a direct result of the violence, including 13,000 civilians, some of whom were children, since the start of the conflict (see [Security situation in 2020](#) and [Security events and number of casualties](#)).
- 2.4.20 Data obtained from ACLED indicates that between 1 January 2021 and 8 October 2021 (the most recent data available at the time of writing) there have been a total of 13,382 fatalities as a result of 6,521 security events across Yemen. According to the data obtained from the Civilian Impact Monitoring Project (CIMP) there have been a total of 437 civilian deaths between January and September 2021, with the peak of civilian deaths (80) occurring in June 2021 (see [Security events and number of casualties](#)). CPIT was unable to find specific information regarding how many civilian fatalities took place in each specific governorate in Yemen in the sources consulted (see [Bibliography](#)).
- 2.4.21 While security events have taken place across every governorate in Yemen in 2021, the majority of the sustained violence has taken place in Marib governorate. In general, subject to paragraph 2.4.24 below, the levels of indiscriminate violence are not so high that there is a real risk of serious harm as set out in paragraphs 339C and 339CA(iv) of the Immigration Rules. However, the conflict situation in Yemen remains fluid and levels of violence can escalate quickly.
- 2.4.22 Even where there is not in general a real risk of serious harm by reason of indiscriminate violence in a situation of armed conflict, decision makers must consider whether there are particular factors relevant to the person's circumstances which might nevertheless place them at risk. The more a person is able to show that they are specifically affected by factors particular to their personal circumstances, the lower the level of indiscriminate violence required for them to be at a real risk of serious harm.
- 2.4.23 Therefore, a person may still face a real risk of serious harm even where generally there is not such a risk if they are able to show that there are specific reasons over and above simply being a civilian for being affected by the indiscriminate violence.
- 2.4.24 However, the level of indiscriminate violence in Marib governorate is likely to be at such a level that substantial grounds exist for believing that a person, solely by being present there, faces a real risk of harm which threatens their life or person.
- 2.4.25 For guidance on considering serious harm where there is a situation of indiscriminate violence in an armed conflict, including consideration of enhanced risk factors, see the Asylum Instruction, [Humanitarian Protection](#).
- 2.4.26 For further information and guidance on assessing risk, see the [Asylum Instruction on Assessing Credibility and Refugee Status](#).

[Back to Contents](#)

2.5 Internal relocation

- 2.5.1 Travel within Yemen is restricted by the fluctuating levels of violence throughout the country. The various forces involved in the conflict also

operate checkpoints on major roads and can restrict freedom of movement (see [Freedom of movement](#)).

- 2.5.2 There are also reports of travellers being subjected to physical harassment, extortion, theft, or short-term kidnappings for ransom at checkpoints operated by armed tribesmen, occasionally alongside military or other security officials (see [Freedom of movement](#)).
- 2.5.3 Societal discrimination restricts the freedom of movement of women, although restrictions vary by location (see [Freedom of movement](#)).
- 2.5.4 In general, due to the fluctuating levels of violence and the risk of ill-treatment at checkpoints internal relocation is unlikely to be an option. It is not reasonable for a person to relocate to an area where there is a real risk of serious harm as set out in paragraphs 339C and 339CA(iv) of the Immigration Rules.
- 2.5.5 For further guidance on considering internal relocation and factors to be taken into account see the Asylum Instruction, [Assessing Credibility and Refugee Status](#).

[Back to Contents](#)

2.6 Certification

- 2.6.1 Where a claim is refused, it is unlikely to be certifiable as 'clearly unfounded' under section 94 of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002.
- 2.6.2 For further guidance on certification, see [Certification of Protection and Human Rights claims under section 94 of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002 \(clearly unfounded claims\)](#).

[Back to Contents](#)

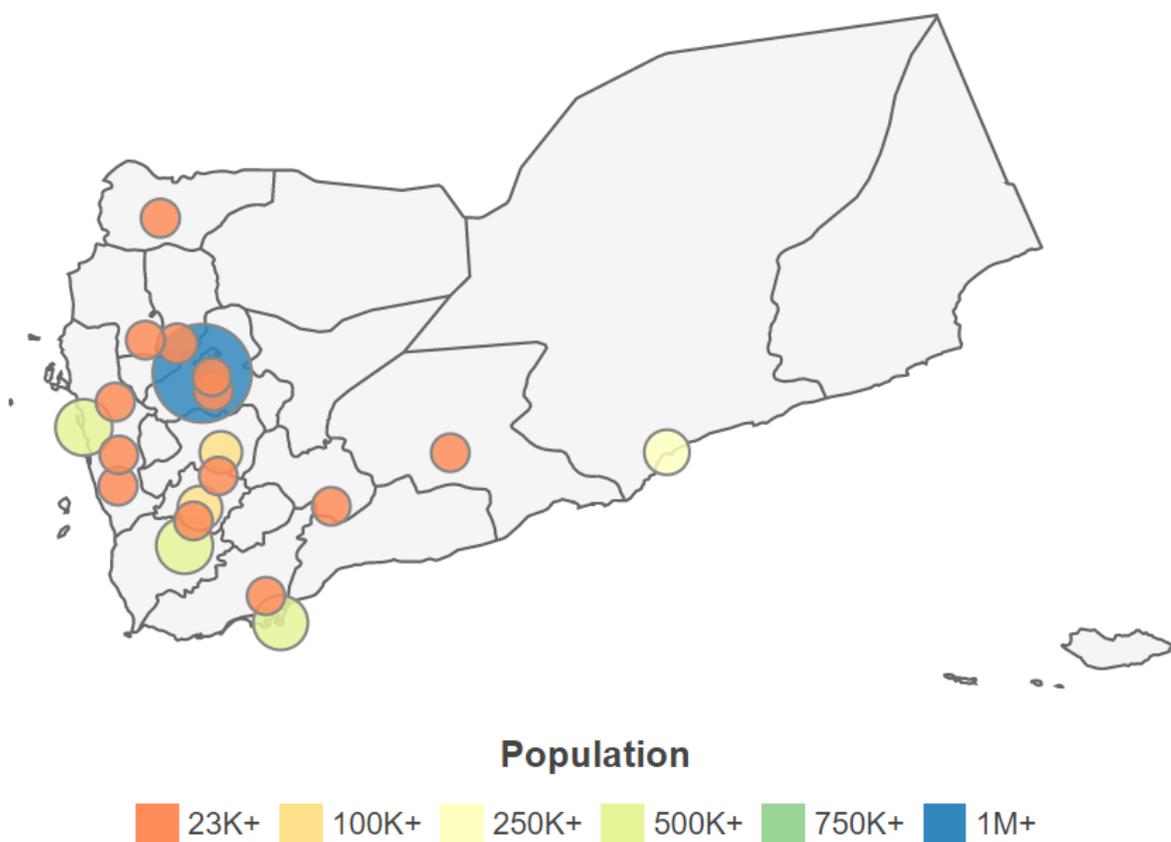
Country information

Section 3 updated: 24 December 2021

3. Demography

3.1.1 According to a July 2021 estimate by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) Yemen has a population of approximately 30,399,234¹. The official religion of Yemen is Islam, with 99.1% of the population being Muslim (65% are Sunni and 35% are Shia)². The same source stated that 'the vast majority of the population is found in the Asir Mountains (part of the larger Sarawat Mountain system), located in the far western region of the country.'³

3.1.2 The population density of Yemen is shown on the below map⁴:



3.1.3 The five most populous cities are: Sanna (1,937,451), Al Hudaydah (617,871), Ta'izz (615,222), Aden (550,602) and Mukalla (258,132)⁵.

[Back to Contents](#)

¹ CIA World Factbook, '[Yemen – People and Society](#)', 22 September 2021

² CIA World Factbook, '[Yemen – People and Society](#)', 22 September 2021

³ CIA World Factbook, '[Yemen – People and Society](#)', 22 September 2021

⁴ World Population Review, '[Yemen Population 2021](#)', 2021

⁵ World Population Review, '[Yemen Population 2021](#)', 2021

4. Main actors

4.1 Houthis

- 4.1.1 In an article entitled 'Who are Yemen's Houthis?', last updated in May 2018, the Wilson Center (WC) (which described itself as a 'key non-partisan policy forum for tackling global issues through independent research and open dialogue to inform actionable ideas for the policy community'⁶) stated:

'The Houthis are a large clan originating from Yemen's northwestern Saada province. They practice the Zaydi form of Shiism. Zaydis make up around 35 percent of Yemen's population.

'A Zaydi imam ruled Yemen for 1,000 years, before being overthrown in 1962. Since then, the Zaydis - stripped of their political power - have struggled to restore their authority and influence in Yemen. In the 1980s, the Houthi clan began a movement to revive Zaydi traditions, feeling threatened by state-funded Salafist preachers who established a base in Houthi areas. Not all Zaydis, however, align with the Houthi movement.

'Houthi insurgents have clashed with Yemen's government for more than a decade. Since 2011, the Houthi movement has expanded beyond its Zaydi roots and become a wider movement opposed to President Abd Rabbuh Mansour Hadi. The insurgents have also begun referring to themselves as Ansarullah, or "Party of God."⁷

- 4.1.2 In October 2019 Deutsche Welle (DW) (which described itself as 'an unbiased media organization' and 'Germany's international broadcaster'⁸) published an article entitled 'Yemen's Houthi rebels: Who are they and what do they want?' which stated:

'The Houthi movement, named after the family it is associated with, emerged from Yemen's northern province Saada, bordering Saudi Arabia, and has been locked in an increasingly complex war...

'After morphing into a militia in the 2000s, they fought six rounds of war from 2004-2010 against then-President Saleh's forces, until the 2011 Arab Spring uprising toppled him.

'When two years of national dialogue broke down, the Houthis ousted the new Saudi-backed Yemeni leader Abed Rabbo Mansour Hadi and took Sanaa.

'After they allied with their former enemy Saleh, fearing their growing power, Saudi Arabia and the UAE, with help from the US and UK, opened an air and ground war against them.'⁹

- 4.1.3 The same source stated the following regarding the Houthis military capabilities and reported Iranian support:

⁶ WC, '[About the Wilson Center](#)', no date

⁷ WC, '[Who are Yemen's Houthis?](#)', last updated 29 May 2018

⁸ DW, '[About DW](#)', no date

⁹ DW, '[Yemen's Houthi rebels: Who are they and what do they want?](#)', 1 October 2019

'Saudi's western allies have accused Iran of directing, arming and financially supporting the movement, an accusation Houthi supporters frequently deny.

'Tehran's rhetoric has been firmly pro-Houthi. Experts point to Iranian designs and technology being used in Houthi missile attacks and drone designs, while various sources have claimed missiles and small arms are shipped overland through Oman, though the evidence chain is patchy.

'The UN Panel of Experts on Yemen found Iran has supplied the Houthis with donations of fuel to raise revenue for their campaign, but no direct financial or military link has been found.

'Peter Salisbury, a senior analyst at the International Crisis Group told DW: "If Iran has been directly supporting the Houthis, as most people believe, it has been able to sustain at least a degree of plausible deniability."

'A hybrid range of forces make up the military element of the Houthis, otherwise referred to as Ansar Allah, with some 60 per cent of the former Yemeni army loyal to Saleh having allied with the group.

'A September 2019 report by Renad Mansour and Peter Salisbury estimate their strength at 180,000-200,000 armed men with access to weapons systems ranging from tanks and technical vehicles to anti-tank guided missiles and long-range ballistic missiles.

'The group claims many of the advanced parts their arsenal were captured when it captured the state in 2014.

'But while they do not have the overwhelming financial and advanced military resources of the Saudis, the Houthis have demonstrated an outsized capability, controlling around a third of Yemeni territory including the major population centers — and have even breached Saudi borders.'¹⁰

- 4.1.4 For more information see the video entitled '[Who are the Houthis in Yemen?](#)' published on YouTube by the Turkish Radio and Television Corporation (TRT) on 17 December 2018.

[Back to Contents](#)

4.2 The government of Yemen

- 4.2.1 The President of Yemen is Abdabbuh Mansour Hadi, who succeeded Ali Abdullah Saleh in 2012. In March 2015 President Hadi was forced to flee abroad following attempts by the Houthis and security forces loyal to former President Saleh to take over control of the entire Country¹¹. President Hadi returned to Yemen in September 2015 following gains made by the Saudi Arabia led coalition¹².

[Back to Contents](#)

4.3 Ali Abdullah Saleh loyalists

- 4.3.1 Ali Abdullah Saleh was President of the Yemen Arab Republic (North Yemen) from 1978 and then President of the Yemen Arab Republic after the

¹⁰ DW, '[Yemen's Houthi rebels: Who are they and what do they want?](#)', 1 October 2019

¹¹ BBC, '[Yemen crisis: Why is there a war?](#)', 19 June 2020

¹² Independent, '[Timeline: Yemen war began in 2014 when Houthis seized Sanna](#)', 11 February 2021

country was unified in 1990. He ceded power in February 2012 to his deputy, Abdrabbuh Mansour Hadi, following protests against his rule¹³.

- 4.3.2 Forces loyal to Hadi formed a surprise alliance with the Houthis when they seized Yemen's capital Sanaa in 2014¹⁴. This alliance collapsed in November 2017 when Saleh broke ties with the Houthis, stating he was open to a dialogue with the Saudi-led coalition. Saleh was killed in December 2017 by Houthi rebels in a rocket-propelled grenade and shooting attack on his car¹⁵.

[Back to Contents](#)

4.4 Southern separatists

- 4.4.1 In January 2020 the European Council on Foreign Relations (ECFR) (an 'international think-tank that aims to conduct cutting-edge independent research on European foreign and security policy' whose members include 'serving foreign ministers, former prime ministers, members of national parliaments and the European Parliament, EU Commissioners, former NATO secretary generals, thinkers, journalists and business leaders'¹⁶) published an article entitled 'War and pieces: Political divides in southern Yemen' which stated:

'Since the 2010s, a wide range of separatist movements have represented the main political demands in southern Yemen. These groups are motivated by their geographical and historical origins, backed by various foreign powers, and divided by their demands for independence or autonomy. The Southern Transitional Council (STC), the most prominent separatist group, claims to represent the south as a whole but it has limited control over parts of western governorates.

'...Since the 2010s, the main political demands throughout the south have been expressed by a wide range of separatist movements whose only ideological difference concerns whether they demand complete independence or autonomy. These movements have undergone significant fragmentation... The movements, a mixture of allies and rivals, are organised under the Supreme Council for the Peaceful Struggle to Liberate and Restore the South (which has taken on slightly different names in the past decade).'¹⁷

- 4.4.2 In May 2020 the ECFR published another report entitled 'The Yemen conflict: Southern separatism in action' which stated:

'The STC is one of many separatist groups in southern Yemen. Since its creation in 2017, it has achieved prominence thanks to the financial and diplomatic support it receives from the United Arab Emirates (UAE). Its international offices lend it a wide public presence. Locally, the UAE recruited, trained, deployed, and financed its military forces. However, since

¹³ BBC, '[Ali Abdullah Saleh, Yemen's dominant force](#)', 4 December 2017

¹⁴ Reuters, '[Yemen's Saleh keeps friends and foe guessing...](#)', 6 September 2017

¹⁵ Al Jazeera, '[How did Yemen's Houthi-Saleh alliance collapse?](#)', 4 December 2017

¹⁶ ECFR, '[About ECFR](#)', no date

¹⁷ ECFR, '[War and pieces: Political divides in southern Yemen](#)', 22 January 2020

withdrawing from the country last year and handing responsibility for its activities to Saudi Arabia, the UAE has reduced its support for the STC.¹⁸

4.4.3 Throughout the conflict in Yemen the southern separatists, particularly the STC have been in differing states of war and peace with the government of Yemen. For more information see [Overview of the conflict](#) and [Timeline of key events](#).

4.4.4 For more information regarding the origins of southern movements and geopolitical alignments see the reports entitled '[War and pieces: Political divides in southern Yemen](#)' and '[The Yemen conflict: Southern separatism in action](#)'.

[Back to Contents](#)

4.5 Jihadist militants

4.5.1 Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) seized control of parts of the south and carried out attacks, notably in Aden, following the political transition in 2012. Their militant rivals, Daesh (Islamic State), also operate in the country¹⁹.

4.5.2 A backgrounder entitled 'Yemen's Tragedy: War, Stalemate, and Suffering' last updated on 2 September 2021 and published by the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR) ('an independent, nonpartisan membership organization, think tank, and publisher', whose remit focusses on the foreign policy choices facing the United States and whose members include government officials, scholars, lawyers, nonprofit professionals, journalists, educators, religious leaders and business executives²⁰) stated:

'AQAP, in Yemen since the early 1990s, has benefited from the more recent chaos. In 2015, it captured the coastal city of Mukalla and released three hundred inmates, many believed to be AQAP members, from the city's prison. The militant group expanded its control westward to Aden and seized parts of the city before coalition forces recovered much of the region in 2016. AQAP has also provided Yemenis in some areas with security and public services unfulfilled by the state, which has strengthened support for the group.

'...Though it has become less active in recent years, AQAP still vies for influence with the Houthis and the Islamic State, especially in the central al-Bayda Governorate. The Islamic State marked its 2015 entrance into Yemen with suicide attacks on two Zaydi mosques in Sanaa, which killed close to 140 worshippers. Though the group has claimed other high-profile attacks, including the assassination of Aden's governor in late 2015, its following lags behind that of AQAP. The United Nations estimates that the Islamic State has hundreds of fighters in Yemen, while AQAP has around seven thousand.'²¹

4.5.3 Al-Qaeda and Daesh are proscribed terrorist organisations in the UK²².

¹⁸ ECFR, '[The Yemen conflict: Southern separatism in action](#)', 8 May 2020

¹⁹ BBC, '[Yemen crisis: Why is there a war?](#)', 19 June 2020

²⁰ CFR, '[About CFR](#)', no date

²¹ CFR, '[Yemen's Tragedy: War, Stalemate, and Suffering](#)', last updated 2 September 2021

²² Home Office, '[Proscribed terrorist groups or organisations](#)', last updated 16 July 2021

4.6 International actors

4.6.1 The CFR backgrounder last updated in September 2021 stated:

‘At Hadi’s behest in 2015, Saudi Arabia cobbled together a coalition of Sunni-majority Arab states: Bahrain, Egypt, Jordan, Kuwait, Morocco, Qatar, Sudan, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE). By 2018, the coalition had expanded to include forces from Eritrea and Pakistan. They launched an air campaign against the Houthis with the aim of reinstating Hadi’s government. For Riyadh, accepting Houthi control of Yemen would mean allowing a hostile neighbor to reside on its southern border, and it would mark a setback in its long-standing contest with Tehran.

‘After Saudi Arabia, the UAE has played the most significant military role in the coalition, contributing some ten thousand ground troops, mostly in Yemen’s south. However, the UAE removed most of them after entering into conflict with its allies in 2019, when it backed the separatist Southern Transitional Government (STC), which captured Aden.

‘...[T]he United States has backed the Saudi-led coalition, as have France, Germany, and the United Kingdom.’²³

Section 5 updated: 24 December 2021

5. Background to the conflict

5.1.1 In June 2020 the BBC published an article entitled ‘Yemen crisis: Why is there a war?’ which stated:

‘The conflict has its roots in the failure of a political transition supposed to bring stability to Yemen following an Arab Spring uprising that forced its longtime authoritarian president, Ali Abdullah Saleh, to hand over power to his deputy, Abdrabbuh Mansour Hadi, in 2011.

‘As president, Mr Hadi struggled to deal with a variety of problems, including attacks by jihadists, a separatist movement in the south, the continuing loyalty of security personnel to Saleh, as well as corruption, unemployment and food insecurity.

²³ CFR, [‘Yemen’s Tragedy: War, Stalemate, and Suffering’](#), last updated 2 September 2021



Abdrabbuh Mansour Hadi (L) and Ali Abdullah Saleh (R) address a ceremony at the presidential palace in Sanaa, Yemen (27 February 2012)

'The Houthi movement (known formally as Ansar Allah), which champions Yemen's Zaidi Shia Muslim minority and fought a series of rebellions against Saleh during the previous decade, took advantage of the new president's weakness by taking control of their northern heartland of Saada province and neighbouring areas.

'Disillusioned with the transition, many ordinary Yemenis - including Sunnis - supported the Houthis, and in late 2014 and early 2015 the rebels gradually took over the capital Sanaa.

'The Houthis and security forces loyal to Saleh - who was thought to have backed his erstwhile enemies in a bid to regain power - then attempted to take control of the entire country, forcing Mr Hadi to flee abroad in March 2015.'²⁴

5.1.2 In March 2021 the United States' Congressional Research Service (CRS) published a report entitled 'Yemen: Civil War and Regional Intervention' which stated:

'In 2014, the northern Yemeni-based Ansar Allah/Houthi movement took over the capital, Sanaa (also commonly spelled Sana'a), and in early 2015, advanced southward from the capital to Aden on the Arabian Sea. In March 2015, after Yemeni President Abdu Rabbu Mansour Hadi, who had fled to Saudi Arabia, appealed for international intervention, Saudi Arabia assembled a coalition of several of its Arab partners and launched a military offensive aimed at restoring Hadi's rule and dislodging Houthi fighters from the capital and other major cities.

'Since then, the conflict in Yemen has killed tens of thousands, caused significant humanitarian suffering, and has significantly damaged the country's infrastructure. One U.S.- and European-funded organization, the Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED), estimates as of November 2020 that more than 130,000 Yemenis have been killed since 2015.

'Although media coverage of the Saudi-led intervention has characterized the war as a binary conflict (the Saudi-led coalition versus the Houthis), there

²⁴ BBC, '[Yemen crisis: Why is there a war?](#)', 19 June 2020

actually have been a multitude of combatants whose alliances and loyalties have been somewhat fluid. In summer 2019 in southern Yemen, long-simmering tensions between the internationally recognized Republic of Yemen government (ROYG) and the separatist Southern Transitional Council (STC) boiled over, leading to open warfare between the local allies of Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. In 2020, periodic clashes continued, though both sides finally implemented a power sharing agreement at the end of the year and formed a coalition government.

'Many foreign observers have denounced human rights violations that they charge have been committed by all parties to the conflict. In the United States and some European countries, there has been vociferous opposition to coalition air strikes that hit civilian targets... For several years, Yemen has been considered the worst humanitarian crisis in the world.'²⁵

- 5.1.3 For more information see a video produced and published by Al Jazeera ('an independent news organisation funded in part by the Qatari government'²⁶) in November 2019 entitled '[Why is Yemen at war?](#)'.

[Back to Contents](#)

Section 6 updated: 24 December 2021

6. Timeline of main events

- 6.1.1 Below is a timeline compiled using various sources of some key events that have taken place throughout the conflict in Yemen:

November 2011: President Saleh agrees to hand over power to his deputy, Abdrabbuh Mansour Hadi, after months of protests. A unity government including the prime minister from the opposition is formed²⁷.

February 2012: Abdrabbuh Mansour Hadi is inaugurated as president after uncontested elections²⁸.

September 2014: Presidential panel approves draft federal constitution to accommodate Houthi and southern grievances, but Houthis seize control of most of Sanaa and reject the deal²⁹ ³⁰. Forces loyal to former President Saleh form an alliance with the Houthis following the seizing of Sanaa³¹.

February 2015: The Houthis appoint a presidential council, known as the Supreme Political Council, to replace President Abed Rabbo Mansour Hadi³².

March 2015: The battle for Aden begins and the civil war breaks out in earnest. The Houthis and their allies seize control of Aden International Airport and President Hadi flees to Saudi Arabia. A Saudi-led, US backed

²⁵ CRS, '[Yemen: Civil War and Regional Intervention](#)', updated 12 March 2021

²⁶ Al Jazeera, '[About us](#)', undated

²⁷ BBC, '[Yemen profile – Timeline](#)', updated 6 November 2019

²⁸ BBC, '[Yemen profile – Timeline](#)', updated 6 November 2019

²⁹ BBC, '[Yemen profile – Timeline](#)', updated 6 November 2019

³⁰ Independent, '[Timeline: Yemen war began in 2014 when Houthis seized Sanaa](#)', 11 February 2021

³¹ Reuters, '[Yemen's Saleh keeps friends and foe guessing...](#)', 6 September 2017

³² Independent, '[Timeline: Yemen war began in 2014 when Houthis seized Sanaa](#)', 11 February 2021

coalition begins an air campaign against the Houthis and imposes a naval blockade^{33 34}.

September 2015: Hadi returns to Aden after Saudi-backed government forces retake the port city³⁵.

April 2016: U.N. sponsored talks between the government and rebels begin³⁶.

December 2017: Houthis kill former president Saleh following days of street fighting in Sanaa, after he had approached the Saudi-led coalition, indicating he might switch sides³⁷.

June 2018: The coalition attempted to break the deadlock on the battlefield by launching a major offensive to capture from the Houthis the Red Sea city of Hudaydah, whose port is the principal lifeline for almost two thirds of Yemen's population³⁸.

December 2018: After UN-mediated talks, the Yemeni government and the Houthis sign the Stockholm Agreement that includes prisoner swaps, a mutual redeployment of forces away from Hudaydah Port, and a committee to discuss the contested city of Taiz³⁹.

August 2019: Southern separatists (the STC) backed by the United Arab Emirates clash with forces of the internationally backed government near the presidential palace in Aden. On 10 August 2019 the STC seized control of Aden^{40 41}.

November 2019: Yemen's internationally recognized government and its southern rivals sign a power-sharing deal, known as the Riyadh Agreement, aiming to end the infighting in the country's south⁴². The UN hoped the agreement would clear the way for a political settlement to end the civil war⁴³.

January 2020: A sudden escalation in hostilities between the Houthis and coalition-led forces, with fighting on several front lines, missile strikes and air raids⁴⁴.

March 2020: Houthi rebels take control of the strategic city of Hazm, the capital of the Jawf province⁴⁵.

April 2020: In April 2020 the STC declared self-rule in Aden, breaking a peace deal signed with the internationally recognised government, saying it

³³ BBC, '[Yemen profile – Timeline](#)', last updated 6 November 2019

³⁴ Independent, '[Timeline: Yemen war began in 2014 when Houthis seized Sanna](#)', 11 February 2021

³⁵ Independent, '[Timeline: Yemen war began in 2014 when Houthis seized Sanna](#)', 11 February 2021

³⁶ Independent, '[Timeline: Yemen war began in 2014 when Houthis seized Sanna](#)', 11 February 2021

³⁷ Independent, '[Timeline: Yemen war began in 2014 when Houthis seized Sanna](#)', 11 February 2021

³⁸ BBC, '[Yemen crisis: Why is there a war?](#)', 19 June 2020

³⁹ Arab Center Washington DC, '[A Timeline of the Yemen Crisis...](#)', 19 February 2021

⁴⁰ Independent, '[Timeline: Yemen war began in 2014 when Houthis seized Sanna](#)', 11 February 2021

⁴¹ BBC, '[Yemen conflict: Southern separatists seize control of Aden](#)', 11 August 2019

⁴² Independent, '[Timeline: Yemen war began in 2014 when Houthis seized Sanna](#)', 11 February 2021

⁴³ BBC, '[Yemen crisis: Why is there a war?](#)', 19 June 2020

⁴⁴ BBC, '[Yemen crisis: Why is there a war?](#)', 19 June 2020

⁴⁵ Independent, '[Timeline: Yemen war began in 2014 when Houthis seized Sanna](#)', 11 February 2021

would govern the port city and southern provinces⁴⁶. The Saudi-led coalition announced a two-week ceasefire due to the coronavirus pandemic which was rejected by the Houthis⁴⁷.

June 2020: UAE-backed southern separatists take control of Socotra archipelago, from forces of Yemen's internationally recognized government⁴⁸. Later in June the southern separatist forces and the government of Yemen agreed to a ceasefire⁴⁹.

July 2020: The STC in southern Yemen give up the self-rule they declared in April 2020, building on the ceasefire between the separatists and the government signed in June 2020⁵⁰.

December 2020: The STC agreed to join a newly constituted Hadi government in exchange for allowing the government to move back in Aden, the interim capital⁵¹. President Hadi announces a Cabinet reshuffle. On 30 December 2020 a large explosion strikes the airport in Aden, shortly after a plane carrying the newly formed Cabinet landed there. At least 25 people are killed and 110 wounded⁵².

January 2021: U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo announced he will designate the Houthis as a 'foreign terrorist organization'. He said the designation will take effect on 19 January 2021, one day before Joe Biden takes office⁵³.

February 2021: Biden says the US is ending support for the Saudi-led coalition fighting in Yemen and calls for a cease-fire. A State Department official says the Biden administration is moving to revoke the designation of Houthis as a terrorist group⁵⁴.

February 2021: Hundreds of fighters on both sides killed in a week-long Houthi offensive against forces from the internationally recognised government in the Yemeni region of Marib. A military source described the offensive as the conflict's deadliest clashes since 2018^{55 56}.

March 2021: The Houthis announced that they had fired more than 20 drones and ballistic missiles into Saudi Arabia. The coalition launched air strikes targeting Houthi rebels in Yemen's capital Sanaa and in other governorates, Saudi Arabia's official news agency reported^{57 58}. The UN security council called on the Houthis to end their offensive in the Yemeni

⁴⁶ BBC, '[Yemen crisis: Why is there a war?](#)', 19 June 2020

⁴⁷ Independent, '[Timeline: Yemen war began in 2014 when Houthis seized Sanna](#)', 11 February 2021

⁴⁸ Independent, '[Timeline: Yemen war began in 2014 when Houthis seized Sanna](#)', 11 February 2021

⁴⁹ Al Jazeera, '[Yemen government, southern separatists agree to ceasefire](#)', 22 June 2020

⁵⁰ BBC, '[Yemen conflict: Southern separatists give up on self-rule](#)', 29 July 2020

⁵¹ ACLED, '[Ten conflicts to worry about in 2021](#)' (page 27-28), February 2021

⁵² Independent, '[Timeline: Yemen war began in 2014 when Houthis seized Sanna](#)', 11 February 2021

⁵³ Independent, '[Timeline: Yemen war began in 2014 when Houthis seized Sanna](#)', 11 February 2021

⁵⁴ Independent, '[Timeline: Yemen war began in 2014 when Houthis seized Sanna](#)', 11 February 2021

⁵⁵ Reuters, '[Yemen's Houthis raise stakes in Marib "blood bath", sources say](#)', 22 February 2021

⁵⁶ Al Jazeera, '[Fighting intensifies between Houthis, Yemen gov't forces in Marib](#)', 28 February 2021

⁵⁷ Al Jazeera, '[Houthis fire missiles, drones at Saudi oil facilities](#)', 7 March 2021

⁵⁸ Washington Post, '[Houthis strike Saudi oil giant's facilities in the kingdom's east](#)', 7 March 2021

province of Marib⁵⁹. Saudi Arabia proposed a ceasefire plan to the Houthis which was rejected⁶⁰.

April 2021: Houthi fighters advance towards the city of Marib, the government's last northern stronghold, with both sides suffering heavy casualties⁶¹.

May 2021: The UN Security Council call for an immediate ceasefire in Yemen, singling out the offensive by Houthi rebels in the governorate of Marib⁶².

June 2021: An explosion that Yemen's Saudi-backed government blamed on a Houthi missile strike killed at least 17 people, including a 5-year-old girl, at a petrol station in the Marib Governorate. US and British envoys called for the Houthis to end their offensive in northern Yemen⁶³.

August 2021: The top negotiator for Yemen's Houthi rebels said it would be useless to hold fresh talks with Hans Grundberg, the newly appointed UN envoy for the country, unless there is movement on the Houthis' demand for an end to the blockade of rebel-held areas⁶⁴. On 29 August 2021 a drone and missile attack on a government air base in the southern province of Lahij killed at least thirty soldiers and wounded sixty others, a military spokesperson said. He blamed the attack on the country's Houthi rebels⁶⁵.

September 2021: Houthi military forces continued to advance towards the city of Marib, held by the Saudi-backed government⁶⁶. Fighting between Houthi rebels and pro-government troops intensified in the battle for the key city of Marib throughout the month with reports of heavy casualties^{67 68 69}.

- 6.1.2 For more information on the situation in Yemen at the time of writing see the video produced and published in June 2020 by the Guardian entitled '[Why Yemen's civil war is about to get worse](#)'.

[Back to Contents](#)

Section 7 updated: 24 December 2021

7. Humanitarian situation

7.1 Overview

- 7.1.1 On 21 February 2021 the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) published its Humanitarian Needs Overview for Yemen (HNOFY). The report stated:

'Yemen remains the world's largest humanitarian crisis. The crisis is the result of a brutal armed conflict that escalated six years ago, has killed and

⁵⁹ Al-Monitor, '[UN Security Council urges Houthis to end escalation in Marib](#)', 18 March 2021

⁶⁰ Al Jazeera, '[Saudi Arabia proposes ceasefire plan to Yemen's Houthi rebels](#)', 22 March 2021

⁶¹ Agence France-Presse, '[Yemen Rebels Advance on Marib, Dozens Reported Dead](#)', 25 April 2021

⁶² Associated Press, '[UN Security Council urges immediate cease-fire in Yemen](#)', 13 May 2021

⁶³ Reuters, '[U.S. and UK envoys urge Yemen peace after blast kills at least 17](#)', 6 June 2021

⁶⁴ Reuters, '[Top Houthi negotiator says no point in meeting new U.N. envoy now](#)', 8 August 2021

⁶⁵ Al Jazeera, '[Dozens killed in Houthi attack on Yemen's largest base](#)', 29 August 2021

⁶⁶ Reuters, '[Yemen's Houthis near Marib City, eyeing Yemen gas and oil fields](#)', 23 September 2021

⁶⁷ ABC News, '[Fighting in Yemen's central province kills 28 in one day](#)', 2 September 2011

⁶⁸ Agence France-Presse, '[78 killed in fighting for Yemen's Marib: Military sources](#)', 8 Sept 2021

⁶⁹ Agence France-Presse, '[Over 140 killed in clashes for Yemen's Marib...](#)', 24 September 2021

injured tens of thousands of civilians and which continues today. The war has fuelled displacement making Yemen now the fourth largest IDP crisis globally with 4 million people displaced, wrecked the economy, reversed pre-conflict development gains, exacerbated long-standing vulnerabilities, and severely frayed Yemen's social fabric, causing immense suffering.⁷⁰

7.1.2 On 16 March 2021 UNOCHA published its Humanitarian Response Plan for Yemen (HRPFY) which stated:

'At the start of 2021, Yemen is at risk of descending into deeper crisis. Recognized as the world's worst humanitarian crisis for the past four years, the country is now hurtling towards the worst famine the world has seen in decades... The humanitarian situation was aggravated in 2020 by escalating conflict, the COVID-19 pandemic, disease outbreaks, torrential rains and flooding, a desert locust plague, economic collapse, a fuel crisis across northern governorates and reduced humanitarian aid. Alarming levels of food insecurity and acute malnutrition returned, exacerbated by the economic downturn spurred by COVID-19.'⁷¹

[Back to Contents](#)

7.2 Numbers of people who need humanitarian assistance

7.2.1 The UNOCHA HRPFY stated:

- 20.7 million people, 2 out of every 3 Yemenis, need some form of humanitarian and protection assistance.
- Of these, 12.1 million people are in acute need.⁷²

[Back to Contents](#)

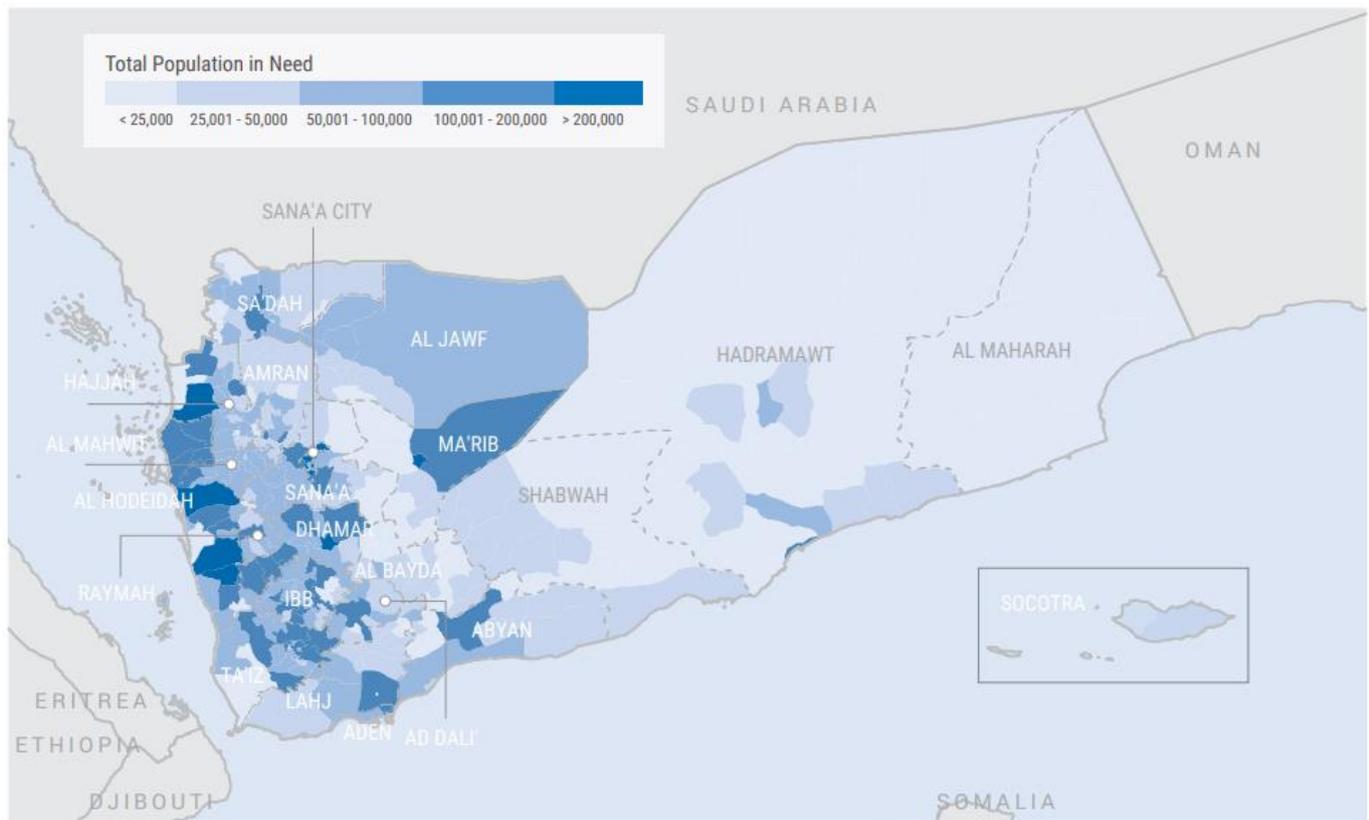
7.3 Severity of need by location

7.3.1 UNOCHA's HNOFY report published the below map showing the severity of humanitarian conditions and number of people in need by governorate:

⁷⁰ UNOCHA, '[Humanitarian Needs Overview – Yemen](#)', (page 14), 21 February 2021

⁷¹ UNOCHA, '[Humanitarian Response Plan – Yemen](#)', (page 5), 16 March 2021

⁷² UNOCHA, '[Humanitarian Response Plan – Yemen](#)', (page 5), 16 March 2021



73

[Back to Contents](#)

7.4 Food security

7.4.1 The UNOCHA HNOFY report published in February 2021 stated that:

- 16.2 million people (more than half the population of Yemen) were projected to require humanitarian food and livelihoods assistance by June 2021.
- Over 2.25 million cases of children under 5 years old, and more than a million pregnant and lactating women, are projected to suffer from acute malnutrition in the course of 2021
- At risk groups - mainly IDPs (Internally Displaced Persons), Muhamasheen (or Marginalised - 'a Yemeni underclass that has experienced centuries of discrimination, exploitation and poverty'⁷⁴), female-headed households, people with disabilities, landless daily labourers, older people, and women – face the most severe forms of food insecurity
- Most rely on food consumption coping strategies such as reduced food portions, adults skipping meals so children can eat, and use of less preferred foods
- Conflict remains the principal driver of food insecurity. It is associated with widespread displacement, humanitarian access constraints,

⁷³ UNOCHA, '[Humanitarian Needs Overview – Yemen](#)', (page 9), 21 February 2021

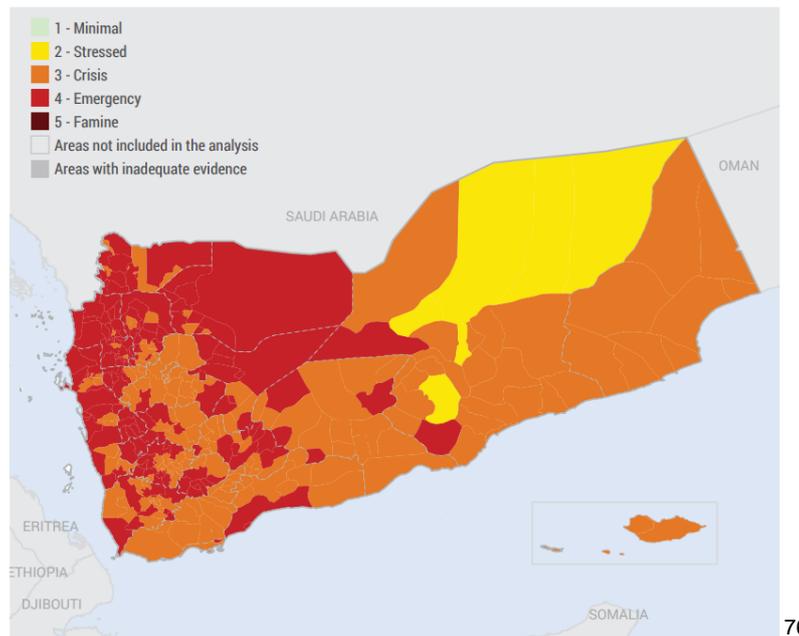
⁷⁴ Sana'a Center, '[The...Systematic Marginalization of Yemen's Muhamasheen...](#)', 4 June 2019

disruption of public services, import restrictions, fuel shortages and economic collapse

- Food insecurity is most severe in areas with active conflict or bordering areas where humanitarian access is limited by the security situation. It is also acute in areas where people survive on low and irregular sources of income and with limited access to public services⁷⁵

7.4.2 The same source additionally published the below map showing projected food insecurity situations across Yemen.

Acute Food Insecurity Situation Projection for January - June 2021



7.4.3 UNOCHA published a report on the humanitarian situation in Yemen, covering September 2021, which stated:

‘Ongoing devaluation of the Yemeni rial (YER) and soaring prices are compounding hunger in Yemen, where some 16.2 million people already face food insecurity this year. Food prices have risen by around 60 per cent in some parts of Yemen since the start of the year, driven by the collapse of the YER and intensifying already inadequate food consumption – a measure of hunger tracked by the World Food Programme (WFP).

‘In areas under the control of the internationally recognized government (IRG), where food has become most unaffordable, the rial fell by nearly 40 per cent against the US dollar in the first eight months of 2021, surpassing YER 1,000 per USD for the first time ever in July. As of end-September, it had surpassed YER 1,200 per USD. In these southern areas of Yemen, inadequate food consumption is now over 45 per cent. In the country’s north,

⁷⁵ UNOCHA, [‘Humanitarian Needs Overview – Yemen’](#), (page 6, 65-67), 21 February 2021

⁷⁶ UNOCHA, [‘Humanitarian Needs Overview – Yemen’](#), (page 67), 21 February 2021

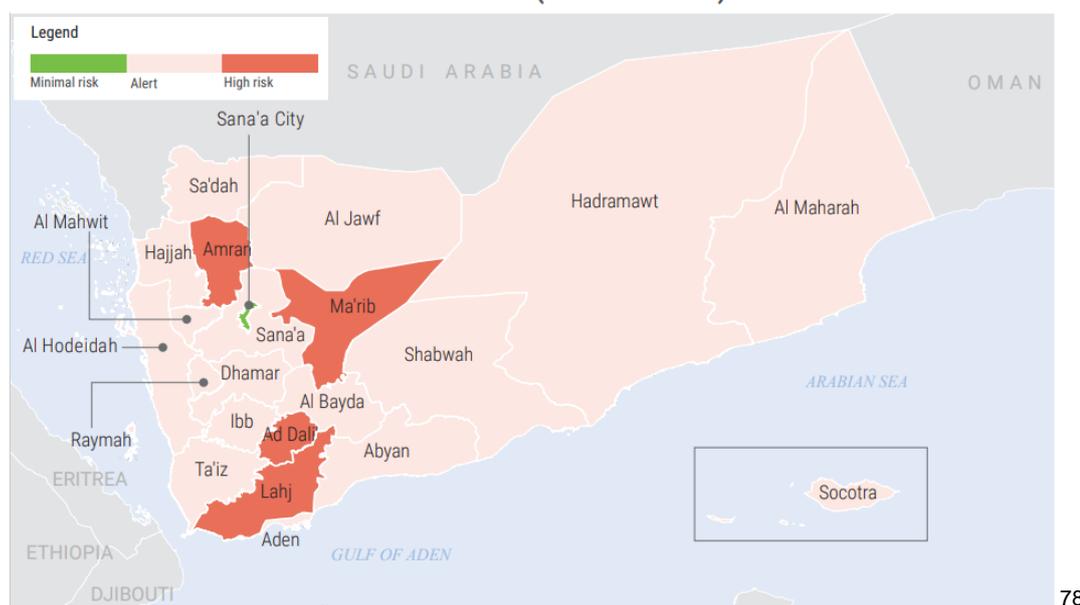
where tight economic controls imposed by the de facto authorities (DFA) keep the rial relatively stable, it is around 37 per cent.

'The devaluation of the rial is making it substantially harder for ordinary people in Yemen to afford basic food, an already difficult prospect given disruptions to market functionality due to over seven years of conflict, the displacement of more than 4 million people, and the impact of COVID-19... The cost of the national minimum food basket (MFB) in Yemen – an indicator of the cost of living – reached YER 62,607 in August 2021, some 36 per cent higher than at the start of this year and nearly quadruple the cost in January 2015. In IRG areas, the change has been even more drastic, with the August 2021 MFB costing YER 78,136, around 45 per cent more than in January 2021 and 4.5 times its cost in January 2015.

'...In 12 of Yemen's 22 governorates, at least 40 per cent of the population experience inadequate food consumption, including five in which at least a fifth of the population endure more critically poor food consumption – Ad Dali', Al Jawf, Amran, Lahj and Raymah. In the third quarter of 2021, while the food security level in Al Jawf Governorate is expected to be adjusted from high risk down to alert status, four governorates are expected to deteriorate from minimal risk to alert status (Al Bayda, Hadramawt, Al Maharah and Socotra). The situation has grown so dire in some places that some families have resorted to eating leaves in order to subdue their hunger, as highlighted by WFP in a recent [article](#).⁷⁷

- 7.4.4 The same source published the below map showing projected food security alert levels across Yemen's governorates:

PROJECTED FOOD SECURITY ALERT LEVEL (JUL-SEP 2021)



- 7.4.5 For information on the situation in Yemen regarding malnutrition see [section 3.5 of the UNOCHA HNOFY](#).

[Back to Contents](#)

⁷⁷ UNOCHA, '[Yemen Humanitarian Update – Issue 9 / September 2021](#)', (page 1-2) 3 October 2021

⁷⁸ UNOCHA, '[Yemen Humanitarian Update – Issue 9 / September 2021](#)', (page 2) 3 October 2021

7.5 Water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH)

7.5.1 The UNOHCA HNOFY report published in February 2021 stated that:

- An estimated 15.4 million people require support to meet basic WASH needs, including 8.7 million who are in acute need
- Infrastructure damage from conflict, the effects of climate change and natural hazards, a deterioration in socio-economic conditions and import disruptions (especially fuel) are the major drivers for WASH needs
- About 49 per cent of Yemenis have no access to safe water and 42 per cent have no adequate sanitation. Major disparities persist between rural and urban areas, with 51 per cent and 28 per cent of these populations not using improved water sources respectively
- Water quality remains a serious issue, with 50 per cent of Yemenis reporting issues relating to taste, appearance or smell of their water source
- Sanitation remains a major public health risk, with open defecation practised by 4 million people (13 per cent of population). Open defecation was observed in 88 per cent of cholera prioritized districts and is highest in areas with critical malnutrition rates
- In terms of hygiene, only 45 per cent of Yemenis report having access to soap, whilst less than 50 per cent of populations in districts with high incidence of WASH related disease report washing their hands at critical times. These conditions greatly favour the spread of communicable disease, including COVID-19 and diarrhoeal disease that contributes to malnutrition, famine risk and cholera
- Socio-economic status significantly affects access to WASH services and vulnerability to disease. Cost is the main barrier for the 55 per cent of households who lack soap, and 80 per cent of households do not treat water at home due to lack of supplies. Over 17 per cent of families rely on purchased or trucked water, the cost of which increased by 25 per cent from January to November 2020⁷⁹

7.5.2 UNOCHA published a report on the humanitarian situation in Yemen, covering August 2021, which stated:

‘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

⁷⁹ UNOCHA, [‘Humanitarian Needs Overview – Yemen’](#), (page 93-94), 21 February 2021

water networks. Overall, only around one third of Yemen's population is connected to a piped water network.⁸⁰

[Back to Contents](#)

7.6 Healthcare including Covid-19

7.6.1 The UNOHCA HNOFY report published in February 2021 stated that:

- Approximately 20.1 million people (4,961,478 men, 4,893,469 women, 5,220,895 boys and 4,995,192 girls) need health assistance, including 11.6 million people who are in acute need
- At least 1 child dies every 10 minutes in Yemen because of preventable diseases
- Currently, 273 districts (82 per cent) are in severe need of health assistance, including 34 hard-to-reach districts. According to the 2020 Health Resources and Services Availability Monitoring System (HeRAMS), only 51 per cent of health facilities in Yemen are fully functional
- Functional health facilities often cannot offer adequate care. Fewer than 40 per cent of secondary health facilities provide non-communicable disease and mental health services. Only 20 per cent provide integrated maternal and child healthcare
- Epidemics and other disease outbreaks are overburdening the weak health system. Despite a notable decline in cholera cases (273,551 suspected cases were reported from January to December 2020), disrupted WASH and sanitation infrastructure and widespread malnutrition are increasing susceptibility to outbreaks of cholera and other communicable diseases
- Vector-borne diseases are surging, including dengue fever and malaria, severe acute respiratory infections (SARI), and vaccine-preventable diseases due to disruption to vaccination services
- There is a critical lack of mental health services throughout the country, with existing services highly centralized at the secondary healthcare level. Primary healthcare centers are unprepared to offer any type of mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS)⁸¹

7.6.2 The UNOCHA report on the humanitarian situation in Yemen, covering September 2021, stated:

- In Yemen, COVID-19 has put additional pressure on a health system devastated by conflict. After more than six years of war, half of the country's hospitals are out of service and the population has become vulnerable to endemic diseases, including cholera, polio, diphtheria and dengue fever
- Since it arrived in Yemen in April 2020, COVID-19 has forced health officials and aid partners to reassign scarce medical resources to

⁸⁰ UNOHCA, '[Yemen Humanitarian Update – Issue 8 / August 2021](#)', 5 September 2021

⁸¹ UNOCHA, '[Humanitarian Needs Overview – Yemen](#)', (page 69-71), 21 February 2021

save lives and contain the spread of the virus. It is estimated that some 15 per cent of the functioning health system has been repurposed for the COVID-19 response, which contributed to reducing overall health coverage by 20 to 30 per cent

- By 30 September [2021], more than 9,000 confirmed cases were reported across southern governorates, with over 1,700 people losing their lives in the pandemic. These figures greatly underestimate community spread, given the lack of testing capacities across the country. They also exclude cases in governorates controlled by the de facto authorities (DFA) in Sana'a, where most of Yemen's population lives
- The lack of resources has been the main impediment to the implementation of country-wide response and containment strategies. Testing capacities are almost non-existent, except for travellers
- The few existing COVID-19 isolation centres are overwhelmed, while hospitals and community health centres lack medical supplies and resources to be able to respond to mounting needs effectively
- Available vaccines are nowhere near enough to meet needs across the country, and to date only 0.1 per cent of Yemen's population have been fully vaccinated against COVID-19, according to [Our World in Data](#)⁸²

[Back to Contents](#)

7.7 Education

7.7.1 The UNOHCA HNOFY report published in February 2021 stated that:

- Of 10.1 million school-aged girls and boys (5-17-years-old) in Yemen, the Education Cluster estimates that 8.1 million need assistance. About 2.9 million are in acute need
- These include 1.65 million internally displaced children, 1.5 million children with a disability and minority groups who face challenges in accessing education. In addition, 171,603 teachers (80 per cent of them male) need support
- Conflict and continued disruption of schooling are having a profound impact on the development of nearly all school-aged boys and girls in Yemen. Data show 2,507 schools have been destroyed, damaged or used for non-educational purposes, affecting learning for 1.1 million children. Of these schools, 58 per cent are damaged by conflict or floods, and 30 per cent are hosting IDPs, used as quarantine centres or occupied by armed groups
- The conditions in functioning schools are inadequate. Overcrowded, under-resourced schools with mixed-aged and mixed-ability learning environments increase educational needs. COVID-19 has aggravated these risks. Schools closed from mid-March to October 2020, severely disrupting learning for 5.8 million students

⁸² UNOHCA, '[Yemen Humanitarian Update – Issue 9 / September 2021](#)', (page 7-8) 3 October 2021

- A pervasive issue in Yemen is a lack of teaching staff, many have left the sector to seek other sources of income. The lack of qualified teaching staff is an ongoing problem. Delays in salary payments is a considerable disincentive for teachers to regularly report for work in functioning schools and often spurs them to seek out alternative livelihoods or supplement their income in other ways
- Teachers are not properly trained on psychosocial support, conflict sensitivity, inclusion, and risk prevention, which are essential in addressing the needs of conflict affected girls and boys⁸³

[Back to Contents](#)

7.8 Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)

7.8.1 The UNOHCA HNOFY report published in February 2021 stated that:

- Yemen has the fourth highest level of internal displacement in the world. More than 4 million people have been displaced since 2015, including 172,000 who fled their homes in 2020
- Most internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Yemen have been displaced for more than two years, and often multiple times, straining their resources, and exacerbating vulnerabilities
- The influx of large numbers of IDPs can put an additional burden on resources and infrastructure in hosting communities, which often also are conflict-affected and have significant humanitarian needs
- While approximately 1 million former IDPs have returned home, they often remain exposed to protection risks from the ongoing conflict and struggle to access support
- Conflict remains the overwhelming cause of displacement, although natural disasters, in particular floods, also displaced significant numbers of people each year
- Women are disproportionately and severely affected by displacement. More than 70 per cent of IDPs in Yemen are women and children, and approximately 30 per cent of displaced households are now headed by females, compared to 9 per cent before conflict escalated in 2015
- IDP boys and girls face problems accessing education and other essential public services, often because they lack civil documentation such as birth certificates and / or their caregivers lack identity documents
- Men and boys are at heightened risk of protection risks including forced recruitment and arbitrary detention
- Older people have specific assistance and protection needs. However, they often do not receive adequate aid, nor aid that adequately addresses their specific needs⁸⁴

⁸³ UNOCHA, '[Humanitarian Needs Overview – Yemen](#)', (page 62-63), 21 February 2021

⁸⁴ UNOCHA, '[Humanitarian Needs Overview – Yemen](#)', (page 20, 28), 21 February 2021

7.8.2 The same source stated the following regarding the camps and shelters used by IDPs:

- More than 4 million displaced Yemenis have settled in over 1,500 spontaneous, unplanned camps and require support to meet their basic needs
- The locations, population size and characteristics of these sites change over time. Currently, these sites are mostly in Hajjah (35 per cent of IDPs living in camp-like settings), Al Hodeidah (19 per cent), Ma'rib (15 per cent), Al Jawf (7 per cent) and Ta'iz (5 per cent)
- IDP sites are often unsafe, undignified and a precarious place for displaced people. Data show that 76 per cent lack formal land tenancy agreements, which can lead to secondary displacement, and eviction threats, and which can compromise living conditions. Some 32 per cent of sites are at risk of flooding. About 48 per cent of people in IDP hosting sites are within 5 kilometres of areas of active hostilities
- Sites also lack services. Data show that more than half of the sites are not reached by the humanitarian actors, and 93 per cent of camp-like settings across the country lack basic services such as food distributions, protection services, WASH, and education, of which 83 per cent face critical service gaps
- IDP sites host many high-risk groups, including people with disabilities, older persons, child and female headed households, marginalized people, people with chronic and serious diseases, unaccompanied and separated children as well as pregnant and lactating women. Data show that 88 per cent of IDP sites host four or more of these high-risk groups
- Data show that 93 per cent of sites lack adequate shelter maintenance and assistance, 89 per cent lack adequate health services, 91 per cent lack adequate WASH services, and 82 lack adequate food distributions
- IDPs in sites reported the following as their highest priority needs: food (37 per cent of sites), shelter (24 per cent), water (10 per cent), and protection (8 per cent). Only 0.2 per cent of sites report adequate access to multi-sectoral services
- Shelter conditions are inadequate in 68 per cent of sites. Shelter types include makeshift shelters (46 per cent of sites), emergency shelters (21 per cent) and open-air shelters (1 per cent of sites)⁸⁵

[Back to Contents](#)

7.9 Shelter and non-food items (NFI)

7.9.1 The UNOHCA HNOFY report published in February 2021 covering the situation in 2020 stated that:

⁸⁵ UNOCHA, '[Humanitarian Needs Overview – Yemen](#)', (page 59-60), 21 February 2021

- After nearly six years of conflict resulting in thousands of civilians killed, displacing more than four million people and causing destruction of critical civilian infrastructure, houses and farms, the people of Yemen have also endured recurrent natural disasters, depriving them of their right to access basic housing and eroding their capacity to access more long term housing solutions
- 7.3 million people require Shelter/NFI assistance with almost 2.9 million individuals living in extremely dire conditions, with the displaced population in the most urgent need. Their acute needs concern the lack of basic weatherproof shelter and access to essential items such as blankets, mattresses and sleeping mats
- It is estimated that at least 270,000 individuals do not have any form of shelter, often sleeping under a tree, a piece of cardboard or in unfinished construction sites, changing frequently their location with very few belongings
- Over 8,000 families displaced on monthly basis which represent a total of 192,000 people displaced over the year
- Geographically, Taizz (1,100,084 people), Hajjah (955,845), Al Hudaydah (871,886), Ibb (675,915), and Sa'ada (675,915) have the highest concentration of people in need where Al Jawf (312,972), Aden (265,982), Amran (256,651) and Sana'a (289,771) governorate were identified with the highest severity⁸⁶

[Back to Contents](#)

7.10 Impact on the economy

7.10.1 The UNOCHA HNOFY report published in February 2021 stated that:

- Parties to the conflict have weaponized the economy as part of the larger war effort. Since 2015, the economy has shrunk by half, and more than 80 per cent of Yemenis now live below the poverty line.
- This collapse is most visible in loss of income, depreciation of the Yemeni rial (YER), loss of Government revenue, commercial import restrictions and rising commodity prices.
- Yemenis who still have a source of income have witnessed reduced household purchasing power by the unprecedented depreciation of the Yemeni rial. In the south, the rial was trading at roughly YER920/US\$ in mid-December 2020 – the worst rate ever recorded and about four times more than the pre-crisis rate. In the north, the rial was trading around YER600/US\$.
- The depreciation of the rial and inflation were key factors in driving up food prices in 2020. The price of food doubled between 2015 and 2019 and prices continued to rise throughout 2020.
- Experts estimate that GDP [Gross Domestic Product] losses endured in the first 5 years of the conflict could double to US\$181 billion [£132

⁸⁶ UNOCHA, '[Humanitarian Needs Overview – Yemen](#)', (page 88-90), 21 February 2021

billion GBP⁸⁷] if the conflict continues through 2022. The Yemeni rial is expected to continue to depreciate, severely affecting the purchasing power of the population.⁸⁸

7.10.2 An article published on 17 October 2021 by BBC Monitoring (BBCM) entitled ‘Aden shops close down as Yemeni currency continues to plunge’ stated:

“Dozens of shops” in Aden are set to close their doors following the continued plunge in the Yemeni rial’s exchange rate, reported privately owned Al-Masdar Online on 17 October.

‘Al-Masdar said that in Sheikh Othman “the largest market in Aden,” dozens of wholesale and retail food stores, as well as shops selling items like clothes and furniture, were shutting after a further fall in the value of the local currency on 16 October to “record levels”.

‘Al-Masdar noted that following a further “unbelievable” plunge in currency values, as of the evening of 16 October the exchange rate of the Yemeni rial against the Saudi rial fell to 355 riyals, while the exchange rate of the rial against the US dollar exceeded 1,300.

‘Al-Mashhad al-Yemeni on 17 October quoted a value of 1,387 for selling riyals against the dollar in Aden, compared with a value of around 600 in Houthi-held Sanaa, where the currency value has been significantly more stable.

‘On 25 September Al-Masdar reported that value of the rial against the dollar fell to 1,200, despite measures taken by the Aden-based central bank, after receiving \$665m from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in late August to help shore up the economy.’⁸⁹

[Back to Contents](#)

7.11 Humanitarian support

7.11.1 The UNOCHA 2021 Humanitarian Response Plan for Yemen (HRPFY) published in March 2021 provided the following overview:

‘The 2021 Yemen Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) requires US\$ 3.85 billion [£2.82 billion GBP⁹⁰] to reach 16 million people, 77 per cent of the 20.7 million people in Yemen who need some form of humanitarian and protection assistance due to protracted armed conflict, recurrent natural hazards, displacement, economic collapse and the breakdown of infrastructure and basic services.

‘...The Yemen Humanitarian Country Team has developed three strategic objectives to guide the 2021 response, informed by needs and priorities outlined in the 2021 Yemen HNO [Humanitarian Needs Overview]. The objectives encompass multiple and overlapping needs experienced by people in Yemen and aim to facilitate an integrated response across sectors.

⁸⁷ Xe.com, ‘[USD to GBP converter](#)’, 13 October 2021

⁸⁸ UNOCHA, ‘[Humanitarian Needs Overview – Yemen](#)’, (page 7, 15-16), 21 February 2021

⁸⁹ BBCM, ‘[Aden shops close down as Yemeni currency continues to plunge](#)’, 17 October 2021

⁹⁰ Xe.com, ‘[USD to GBP converter](#)’, 13 October 2021

‘Strategic Objective 1: Preventing disease outbreaks and reducing morbidity and mortality

‘Strategic Objective 1 aims to prevent disease outbreaks and reduce crisis-related morbidity and mortality among the most vulnerable by providing safe and dignified health and WASH assistance and services and maintaining essential infrastructure in areas of highest risk.

‘Strategic Objective 2: Preventing famine, malnutrition and restoring livelihoods

‘Strategic Objective 2 aims to help millions of destitute Yemenis overcome hunger by providing food, livelihoods and nutrition assistance, increasing household incomes and resilience to shocks and advocating for measures that bring economic stability.

‘Strategic Objective 3: Protecting and assisting civilians

‘Strategic Objective 3 aims to prevent, mitigate protection risks and facilitate redress for women, men, girls and boys, especially the displaced and most vulnerable civilians through building their resilience, humanitarian assistance, specialized protection services and advocacy.’⁹¹

7.11.2 The report also included the following table showing how many people are targeted and how much money is needed for each of the three strategic objectives of the HRP.

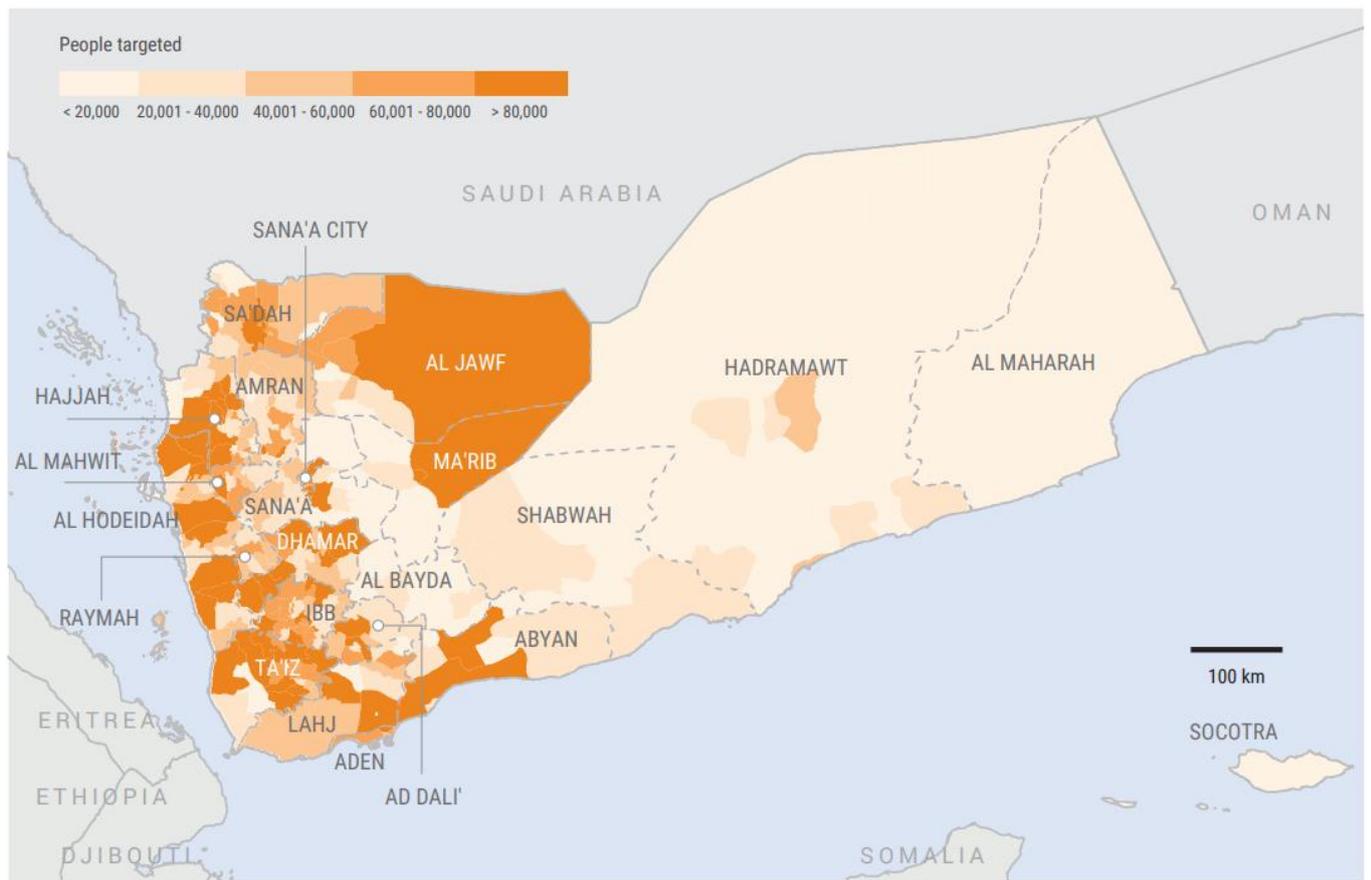
STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE	PEOPLE TARGETED	REQUIREMENTS (US\$)
S01 Preventing disease outbreaks and reducing morbidity and mortality	11M 	\$1.02B
S02 Preventing famine, malnutrition and restoring livelihoods	16M 	\$2.26B
S03 Protecting and assisting civilians	6.9M 	\$576.9M

92

7.11.3 The same source additionally published the following map showing the number of people targeted for humanitarian assistance in each of Yemen’s governorates:

⁹¹ UNOCHA, [‘Humanitarian Response Plan – Yemen’](#), (page 7,15), 16 March 2021

⁹² UNOCHA, [‘Humanitarian Response Plan – Yemen’](#), (page 7,15), 16 March 2021



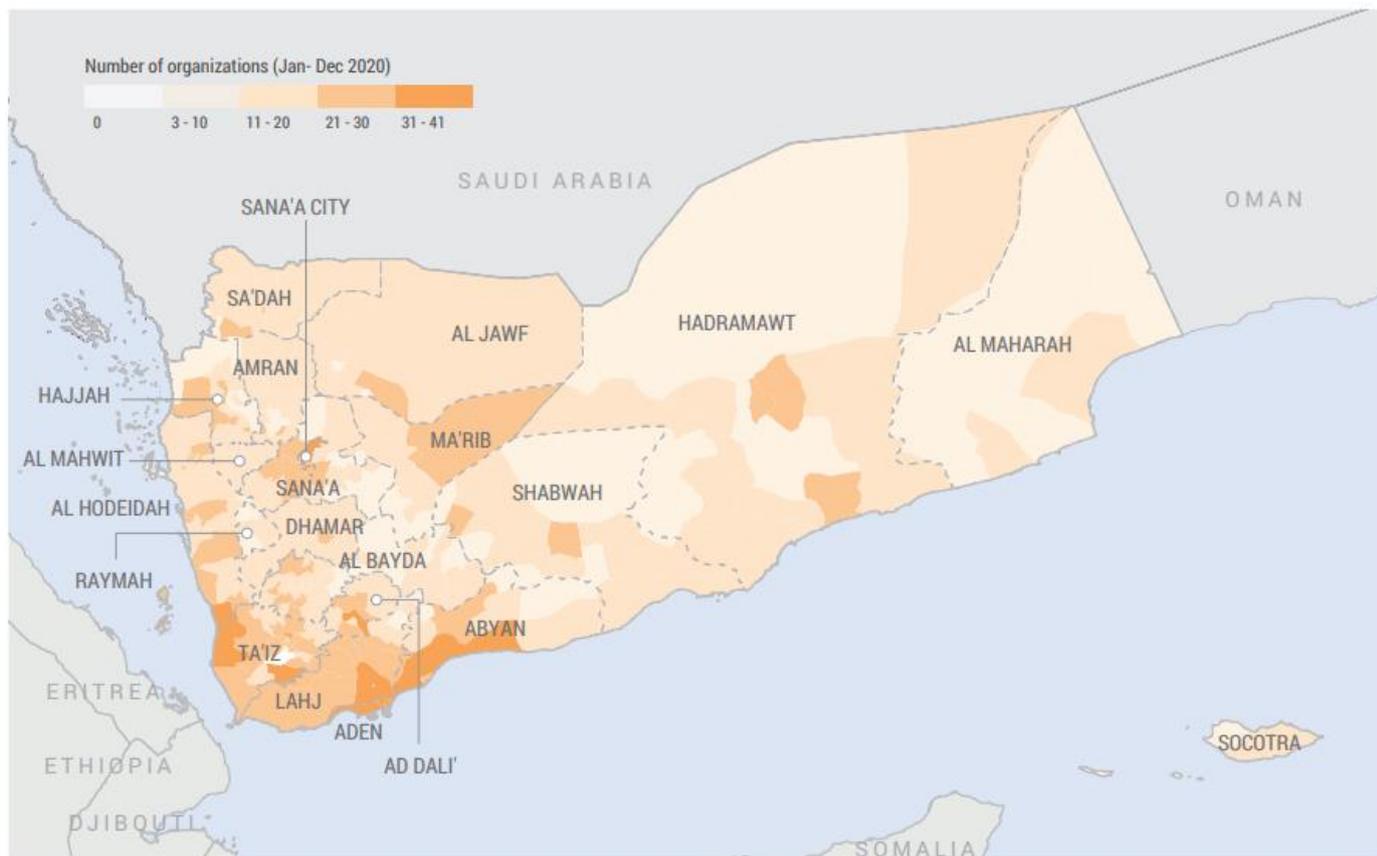
93

7.11.4 The same report further stated that 'In 2021, 167 partners will implement activities approved under the 2021 Yemen HRP. This includes United Nations agencies, INGOs and NNGOs. Partners aim to work in all of Yemen's 333 districts.'⁹⁴

7.11.5 The same source additionally produced the following map showing the number of organisations working in each of Yemen's governorates:

⁹³ UNOCHA, '[Humanitarian Response Plan – Yemen](#)', (page 16), 16 March 2021

⁹⁴ UNOCHA, '[Humanitarian Response Plan – Yemen](#)', (page 42), 16 March 2021



95

7.11.6 For more information on the humanitarian aid UNOCHA are trying to deliver see the full [2021 Humanitarian Response Plan for Yemen](#).

[Back to Contents](#)

7.12 Humanitarian access

7.12.1 In January 2021 Human Rights Watch (HRW) published its annual report on the human rights situation in Yemen covering events in 2020. The report stated:

'Human Rights Watch documented in September that Houthi authorities, Yemeni government and affiliated forces, and the UAE-backed STC were severely restricting the delivery of desperately needed humanitarian aid. Millions have been suffering in Yemen because the Houthis and other Yemeni authorities have denied the UN and other aid agencies unhindered access to people in need. International and local aid groups have faced a wide range of obstacles imposed by parties to the conflict on the ground, severely restricting their work.

'The Houthi authorities have imposed hundreds of regulations and lengthy delays in approving aid projects. They block aid assessments required to identify people's needs, seek to control aid monitoring, and dictate or interfere with lists of aid recipients in order to divert aid to authority loyalists.

⁹⁵ UNOCHA, '[Humanitarian Response Plan – Yemen](#)', (page 43), 16 March 2021

'The coalition has forced the Sanaa International Airport to remain closed since August 2016.'⁹⁶

7.12.2 The UNOCHA HRPFY stated:

- Over 16.5 million people in need, located in 220 districts out of the total 333 districts in Yemen, are considered hard-to-reach for humanitarian organizations, up from 5 million in 2019.
- In these areas safe, sustained and principled delivery of assistance and of protection services are challenged by bureaucratic impediments, armed conflict and insecurity and logistical constraints, often by all these factors combined.
- Most challenges to sustained and principled access for humanitarian organizations remain in northern Yemen, but access issues have increased steadily in southern Yemen as well.
- Conflict creates complex challenges for humanitarian delivery owing both to insecurity and arbitrary regulations and restrictions imposed by local authorities. In 2020, active front line hostilities affected 49 districts, an increase from the 35 districts affected at the end of 2019.
- Last year, humanitarian partners reported some 4,848 access incidents across 119 districts in 20 governorates in Yemen. This is a considerable increase from 2019, when 2,380 incidents were reported, with worsening access trends having begun in the second half of 2019, although this can in part be attributed to increased reporting from major operational partners. See the below table for the types of access incidents across 2020.

Type of incidents by month in 2020



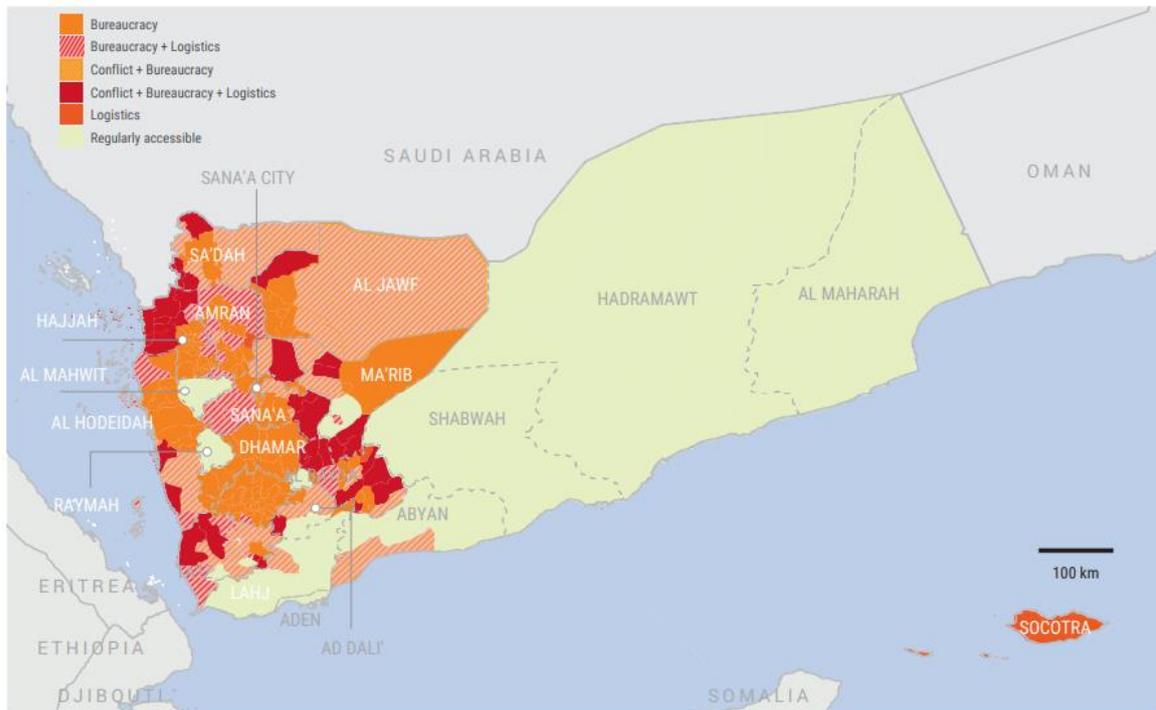
97

7.12.3 The same source additionally produced the below map indicating the governorates of Yemen which are the most difficult to access and the reasons why:

⁹⁶ HRW, 'World Report 2021 – Yemen', 13 January 2021

⁹⁷ UNOCHA, 'Humanitarian Response Plan – Yemen', (page 45), 16 March 2021

Hard-to-reach map



[Back to Contents](#)

Section 8 updated: 24 December 2021

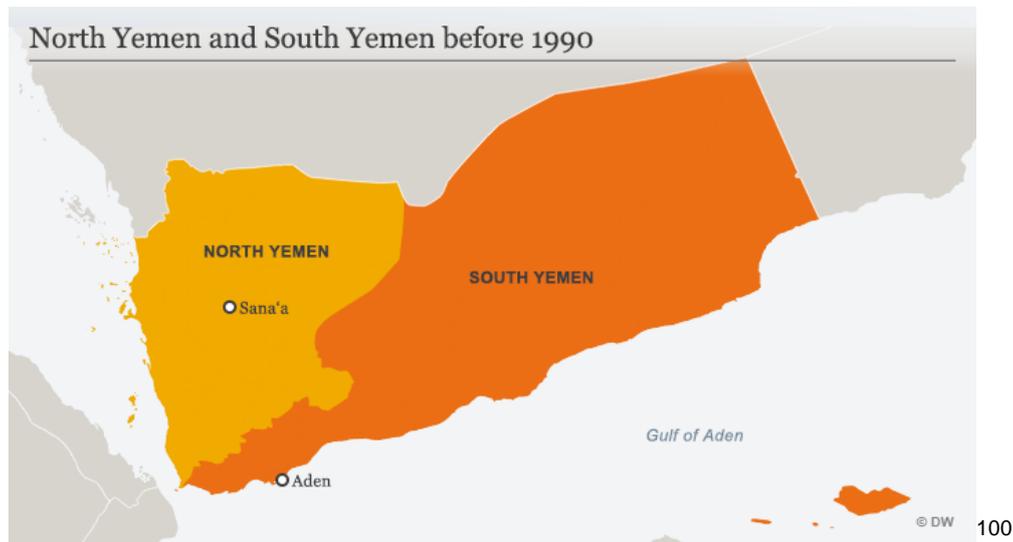
8. Security situation

8.1 Maps



⁹⁸ UNOCHA, '[Humanitarian Response Plan – Yemen](#)', (page 44), 16 March 2021

- 8.1.1 Sources often refer to ‘South/ern Yemen’ and ‘North/ern Yemen’. These areas broadly correspond with the boundaries of the former Yemen Arab Republic (North Yemen) and People’s Democratic Republic of Yemen (South Yemen). Although referred to as north and south, these boundaries geographically correspond to west/south-east and east/south-west. The following map shows the division between north and south Yemen before 1990:



[Back to Contents](#)

8.2 Control of territory

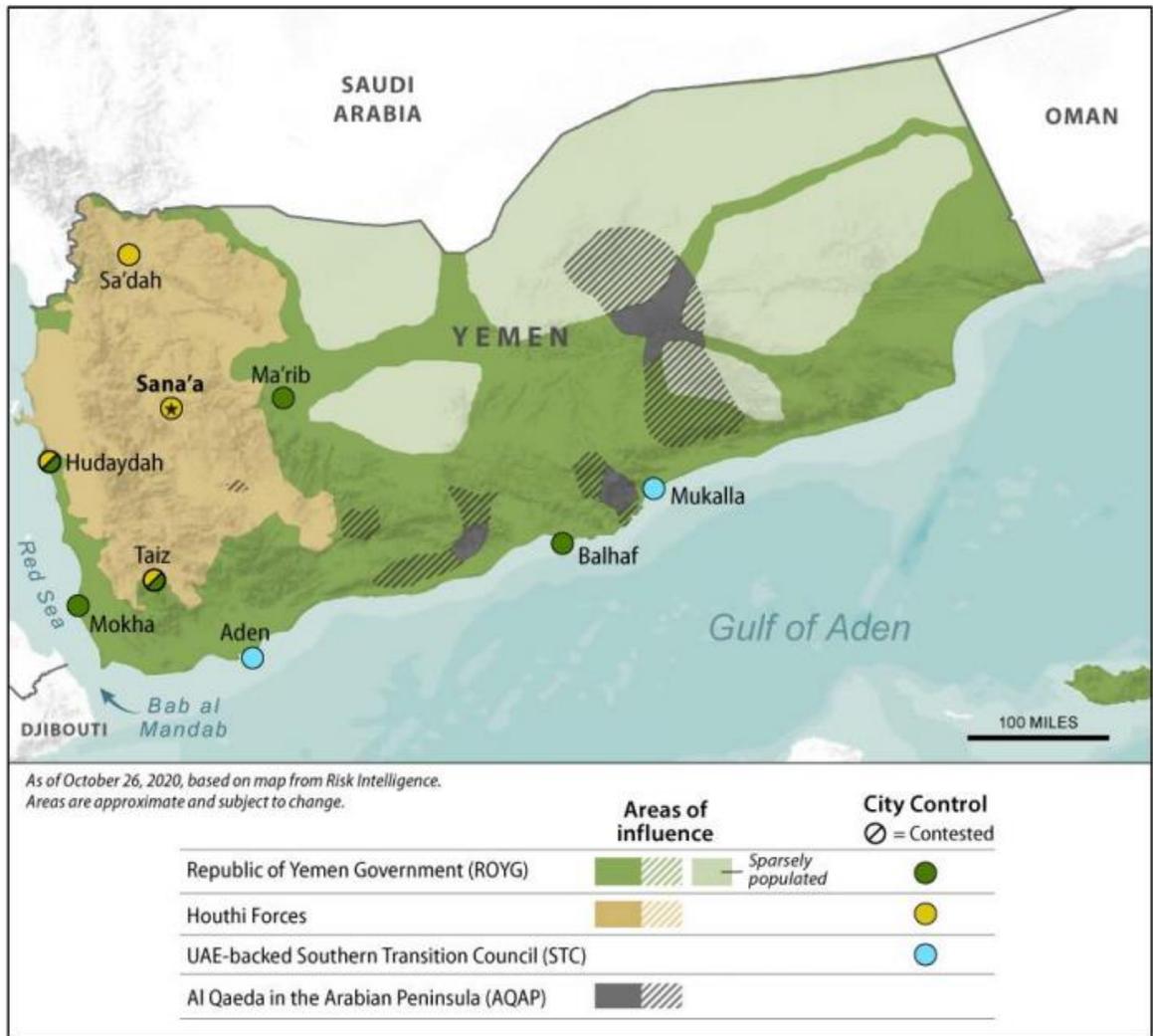
- 8.2.1 The CRS report last updated in March 2021 provided a map (the most up to date map available at the time of writing) showing control of territory in Yemen as of October 2020:

⁹⁹ WorldAtlas, '[Maps of Yemen](#)', no date

¹⁰⁰ DW, '[Yemenis in south rally for independence from north](#)', 21 May 2017

Figure I. Lines of Control in Yemen

As of October 2020



101

[Back to Contents](#)

8.3 Nature of violence

8.3.1 The HRW report published in January 2021 stated:

'All parties to the armed conflict in Yemen and have committed serious violations of the laws of war, many of which may amount to war crimes by responsible personnel. In 2020, Saudi-led coalition forces conducted airstrikes that indiscriminately killed and injured civilians. As of March, the Saudi-led coalition had conducted between 20,624 and 58,487 airstrikes since March 2015, according to the Yemen Data Project. Almost a third of all airstrikes carried out by the coalition hit civilian objects such as residential homes, hospitals, schools, weddings, farms, food stores, school buses, markets, mosques, bridges, civilian factories, detention centers, and water wells. The Saudi-led coalition and the Houthis have committed unlawful attacks against detention centers, killing and injuring detainees.

¹⁰¹ CRS, '[Yemen: Civil War and Regional Intervention](#)', (page 3), last updated 12 March 2021.

'The Saudi-led coalition and Houthi forces continued to fire mortars, rockets, and other missiles indiscriminately into heavily populated areas including Marib, Taizz, and, Hodeidah. These weapons killed or wounded civilians and damaged critical infrastructure such schools and health facilities. In April, Houthi forces attacked the Taizz Central Prison complex, killing five female prisoners, two young girls, and a policewoman, and wounding nine others, according to Mwatana, a Yemeni human rights group. Houthi forces continued to fire ballistic missiles indiscriminately into Saudi Arabia.'¹⁰²

8.3.2 The US State Department (USSD)'s human rights report (the USSD report) published in March 2021 and covering events in 2020 stated that 'The United Nations, NGOs, media outlets, as well as humanitarian and international organizations reported what they characterized as disproportionate and indiscriminate use of force by all parties to the continuing conflict, causing civilian casualties and damage to infrastructure from shelling and airstrikes.'¹⁰³

8.3.3 On 13 September 2021 the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC) published the 'Report of the Group of Eminent International and Regional Experts on Yemen' (the UNHRC report). The group 'was mandated to, inter alia, monitor and report on the situation of human rights in Yemen and to carry out comprehensive investigations into all alleged violations and abuses of international human rights law and all alleged violations of international humanitarian law committed by all parties to the conflict since September 2014, including possible gender dimensions of such violations.'¹⁰⁴ The report stated:

'The Group of Eminent Experts continues to have reasonable grounds to believe that the parties to the armed conflict in Yemen have committed a substantial number of violations of international humanitarian law. Subject to a determination by an independent and competent court, the Group finds that:

'(a) Individuals in the coalition, in particular from Saudi Arabia, may have conducted airstrikes in violation of the principles of distinction, proportionality and precaution, acts that may amount to war crimes;

'(b) Individuals in the Government of Yemen and the coalition (in particular from Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates) and the southern transitional council have committed, as applicable to each party, acts that may amount to war crimes, including murder of civilians, torture, cruel or inhuman treatment, rape and other forms of sexual violence, outrages upon personal dignity, denial of fair trial, and enlisting children under the age of 15 or using them to participate actively in hostilities;

'(c) Individuals in the Government of Yemen and the coalition have conducted indiscriminate attacks using indirect-fire weapons, acts that may amount to war crimes;

¹⁰² HRW, '[World Report 2021 – Yemen](#)', 13 January 2021

¹⁰³ USSD, '[2020 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices: Yemen](#)', (Section 1G), 30 March 2021

¹⁰⁴ UNHRC, '[Report...of International and Regional Experts on Yemen](#)', (page 2), 13 Sept 2021

‘(d) Individuals in the de facto authorities have conducted indiscriminate attacks using indirect-fire weapons and have used anti-personnel landmines, acts that may amount to war crimes;

‘(e) Individuals in the de facto authorities have committed acts that may amount to war crimes, including murder of civilians, torture, cruel or inhuman treatment, rape and other forms of sexual violence, outrages upon personal dignity, denial of fair trial, impeding humanitarian relief supplies, and enlisting children under the age of 15 or using them to participate actively in hostilities.’¹⁰⁵

[Back to Contents](#)

8.4 Security situation in 2020

8.4.1 In February 2021 the Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED) (‘a disaggregated data collection, analysis, and crisis mapping project’¹⁰⁶ that ‘collects the dates, actors, locations, fatalities, and types of all reported political violence and protest events’¹⁰⁷ throughout the world) published a report, citing various sources, entitled ‘Ten conflicts to worry about in 2021’ which stated:

‘Six years into the conflict, the scale of destruction in Yemen has reached unprecedented levels: ACLED estimates approximately 130,000 people have died as a direct result of the violence, including over 13,000 civilians killed in targeted attacks. More than 19,000 fatalities were reported in 2020 stemming directly from the conflict - a 29% decrease in total reported fatalities from 2019, but still the third deadliest year of the war.

‘...The conflict between the Houthis and pro-Hadi forces escalated in 2020. While the UN-brokered Stockholm Agreement had borne some fruit in 2019, especially around Hodeidah, it seems to have had adverse effects in 2020. Houthi forces opened up several new fronts last year, with the main objective to gain control of Marib city. Marib is the anchor and stronghold of the internationally-recognized government, and losing the city might enable the Houthis to further advance towards the nearby oil fields and the desert areas of Shabwah and Hadramawt governorates.

‘Since the beginning of 2020, the Houthis continuously advanced towards Marib from the west, northwest, and southwest. At the time of this writing, the frontlines are only several dozens of kilometers from the city. The current balance of power seems to tilt in favor of the Houthis. Despite an intensive air campaign by the Saudi-led coalition to stop the Houthi offensive, pro-Hadi tribes and military forces are losing ground. If the Houthis achieve a takeover of Marib city in 2021, the humanitarian fallout will be devastating. Marib grew from a city of 30,000 people to almost two million during the civil war, as it provided a safe haven for IDPs from other governorates.

‘At the same time, negotiations between the STC and the Hadi government to implement the Riyadh Agreement - signed in November 2019 under the auspices of Saudi Arabia, in order to solve the conflict in southern Yemen -

¹⁰⁵ UNHRC, [Report...of International and Regional Experts on Yemen](#), (page 16-17), 13 Sept 2021

¹⁰⁶ ACLED, [About ACLED](#), no date

¹⁰⁷ ACLED, [About ACLED](#), no date

witnessed a breakthrough in December 2020. The STC agreed to join a newly constituted Hadi government in exchange for allowing the government to move back in Aden, the interim capital. How exactly the restructuring and redeployment of security units, foreseen in the Riyadh Agreement, will be implemented is yet to be seen. Moreover, it is unclear how and why the STC would give up control over the de facto minimized southern state under their control in Aden, Lahij, Socotra, and some parts of Abyan, Ad Dali, and Shabwah.

‘Nevertheless, first steps were achieved. Both forces retreated from the Abyan frontlines, while neutral elements of the Presidential Guard moved back into the Presidential Palace in Aden. Earlier purported breakthroughs in the implementation of the Riyadh Agreement throughout 2020 had failed to solve the conflict on the ground. In all southern governorates, the success in implementing the Riyadh Agreement will be crucial in determining future patterns of violence.’¹⁰⁸

8.4.2 The same source opined:

‘While 2020 was met with a mixture of hope and scepticism over the prospects for peace in Yemen, the actual trajectory of the conflict has dashed any hopes for an end to the fighting in 2021. Houthi forces continued advancing on several fronts, especially in Al Jawf and Marib governorates, while pro-Hadi forces barely registered any successes on the battlefield. This imbalance of power will make it unlikely that Houthi forces will agree to a ceasefire or inclusive peace process in the short term. As long as one side in the conflict believes it can overpower the other militarily — as Houthi forces currently do — the conflict will not end.’¹⁰⁹

[Back to Contents](#)

8.5 Developments in northern Yemen in 2021

8.5.1 In August 2021 ACLED published a mid-year update to the report published in February 2021, also citing various sources, entitled ‘Ten conflicts to worry about in 2021’ which stated:

‘In February 2021, Houthi forces launched a large-scale offensive on Marib city, the last stronghold of the Hadi government in northern Yemen. They reached areas within 15 kilometers west of the city, before halting their offensive in May, amid unprecedented international efforts to find a political solution to the conflict. The Houthis resumed their offensive again in late June.

‘At the time of writing, Houthi forces have not yet taken control of Marib. Due to a sustained air campaign by the Saudi-led coalition and resistance on the ground by pro-Hadi tribes and military forces, the Houthis have achieved no significant gains since April 2021. Houthi forces seem determined to overtake the city nevertheless, as this would represent a turning point in the conflict, possibly one of no return. From Marib city, Houthi forces would be able to move eastwards and take control of the Safer oil and gas facilities, which would represent a major blow to the coffers of the Hadi government.

¹⁰⁸ ACLED, [‘Ten conflicts to worry about in 2021’](#) (page 27-28), February 2021

¹⁰⁹ ACLED, [‘Ten conflicts to worry about in 2021’](#) (page 28), February 2021

This new territory would also open new possible routes towards southern Yemen through the Shabwah governorate... According to the International Organization for Migration (IOM), an assault on the city could displace 385,000 people.

'...[S]ince May 2021, political violence decreased significantly in Marib: ACLED records a monthly average of 132 political violence events across May-June in the governorate compared to 225 across February-April. This was the result of unprecedented engagement of international actors in support of the peace process, which saw renewed Houthi participation in negotiations, as well as a notable change in Oman's role from being a facilitator of the process to being its mediator.

'...In late June, Houthi forces renewed their offensive on Marib — yet another failure of the diplomatic track. As a way to alleviate pressure on Marib city, pro-Hadi forces then launched an offensive against Houthi forces in Al Bayda governorate. This worked temporarily, leading in early July to the most violent week ever recorded in Al Bayda since the start of ACLED's Yemen coverage in 2015. Houthi forces were quick to reverse a number of pro-Hadi territorial gains, however, and fighting in Marib has since flared up again.'¹¹⁰

- 8.5.2 On 9 September 2021 ACLED published a report entitled 'Regional Overview: Middle East 31 July – 3 September 2021' which stated:

'In Yemen, overall levels of political violence last month remained relatively consistent with those recorded in July. Al Bayda governorate, however, saw a drastic decline in political violence throughout the month, continuing a trend that began in late July. Pro-Hadi forces had launched an offensive against Houthi-held territory in the governorate in early July, but failed to achieve the territorial gains they had hoped for.

'The declining violence in Al Bayda governorate was partly counterbalanced by an increase in political violence in Taizz governorate, primarily the result of clashes between pro-Hadi and Houthi forces on the outskirts of Taizz city. In late August, Houthi forces notably launched coordinated attacks on the city from different directions, although these were all repelled by pro-Hadi forces affiliated with the Taizz Axis.

'In Marib governorate, political violence was mostly driven by Saudi-led coalition airstrikes throughout most of last month, as armed clashes between Houthi and pro-Hadi forces remained at relatively low levels. In the last week of August, however, hostilities between Houthi and pro-Hadi forces flared up significantly with armed clashes reaching levels unseen in the governorate since April 2021. Houthi forces claimed a number of territorial gains west of Marib city, as well as south of the governorate in Rahabah district.'¹¹¹

- 8.5.3 On 16 September 2021 ACLED published a report entitled 'Regional Overview: Middle East 4-10 September 2021' which stated:

'[A]lthough overall levels of political violence decreased last week, there was a significant increase in Saudi-led coalition airstrikes on Taizz and Sadah

¹¹⁰ ACLED, '[Mid-Year Update: 10 conflicts to worry about in 2021](#)', (page 23-24), August 2021

¹¹¹ ACLED, '[Regional Overview: Middle East 31 July – 3 September 2021](#)', 9 September 2021

governorates. In Taizz, the number of airstrike events last week was the most recorded in a week since May 2018. In Sadah, the Houthi stronghold in northwestern Yemen, last week marked the second week this year with the most airstrike events. This increase in airstrike events is most likely a response to continued Houthi attacks on Saudi Arabia. In Taizz, the Saudi-led coalition targeted missile platforms that Houthi forces have used to target Saudi Arabia.

‘In Marib governorate, clashes between pro-Hadi and Houthi forces decreased considerably last week while Saudi-led coalition airstrikes remained at sustained levels. Most activity was concentrated in Sirwah district, west of Marib city, after Houthi forces announced the takeover of the Rahabah district in the south of the governorate on 4 September.’¹¹²

8.5.4 On 22 September 2021 ACLED published a report entitled ‘Regional Overview: Middle East 11-17 September 2021’ which stated: ‘Houthi forces renewed their offensive in Al Bayda governorate last week after several weeks of calm frontlines. They succeeded in retaking large swathes of territory from pro-Hadi forces in Maswarah, As Sawmaah, and Mukayras districts, with some sources reporting that they had now taken control of the entire governorate.’¹¹³

8.5.5 On 6 October 2021 ACLED published a report entitled ‘Regional Overview: Middle East 25 September – 1 October 2021’ which stated:

‘Houthi forces continued their offensive in the south of Marib governorate last week. Despite resistance from pro-Hadi forces and tribes with Saudi-led coalition air support, Houthi forces advanced within Al Jubah and Harib districts, where they captured several strategic sites. Houthi forces captured Al Khashinah military camp in Al Jubah district before they were forced to retreat under heavy Saudi-led coalition airstrikes. Conflicting reports on which group is in control of Al Khashinah and Umm Rish camps, both in Al Jubah district, have continued throughout the week. Houthi forces also continue to surround pro-Hadi forces in Al Abdiyah district, where some claim that over 30,000 civilians have been besieged.

‘Meanwhile, clashes between Houthi and pro-Hadi forces flared up in Al Hazm and Khabb wa Ash Shaaf districts of Al Jawf governorate last week, near the border with Marib governorate. With a concomitant increase in Saudi-led coalition air raids, political violence in Al Jawf reached its highest level last week since March 2021.’¹¹⁴

8.5.6 On 12 October 2021 BBCM published an article entitled ‘Yemen rebels claim advances in battle for key province of Marib’ which stated:

‘Yemen's Houthi rebels have claimed to have made further advances during their latest operation in the key province of Marib, where they have been battling government forces since early this year.

‘In a news briefing aired live on the Houthi Al-Masirah TV channel on 12 October, spokesman for the Houthi armed forces Yahya al-Sarea said that

¹¹² ACLED, [‘Regional Overview: Middle East 4-10 September 2021’](#), 16 September 2021

¹¹³ ACLED, [‘Regional Overview: Middle East 11-17 September 2021’](#), 22 September 2021

¹¹⁴ ACLED, [‘Regional Overview: Middle East 25 September – 1 October 2021’](#), 6 October 2021

the forces had liberated a total of 600 square kilometres in the "Operation Dawn of Victory". It had brought the rebel forces to the outskirts of the city of Marib, he said.

'...Al-Sarea said that during the latest operation in Marib, the Saudi-led coalition backing the government had carried out more than 948 air strikes, some of which hit civilian homes and main roads.

'The rebel group meanwhile had carried out 68 missile attacks on the positions and bases of rival forces, said the spokesman, adding that 49 had been inside Yemen and 19 on "enemy territory". The Houthi drone forces had carried out 245 attacks on their rivals, also inside Yemen and on their own territory, he said.

'The latter is a reference to neighbouring Saudi Arabia, which has reported frequent border attacks on sites including two airports in the south of the kingdom earlier this month.'¹¹⁵

8.5.7 An article published on 13 October 2021 by BBCM entitled 'Yemen warns of "imminent humanitarian catastrophe" amid Marib siege' stated:

'The Yemeni government has warned of an "imminent humanitarian catastrophe" as residents of a neighbourhood in the key battleground of Marib remain under siege by the Houthi rebels for almost a month.

'Information Minister Muammar al-Eryani said in a statement to government-run Saba news agency on 13 October that the siege on Al-Abdiya had led to food and medical supplies running out.

'He said that equipment in the district's only hospital had stopped working due to a complete power cut and diesel supplies having run out. The hospital was unable to treat the 160 civilians - mostly women and children - who had been injured in indiscriminate shelling by the Houthi rebels, he added.

'Rebel forces had used heavy and medium weapons to shell villages and had targeted more than 500 houses, he said.

'...Also overnight on 12 October, the Saudi-led coalition said that its forces were supporting the operations and measures being carried out by the Yemeni defence ministry to protect civilians in Al-Abdiya state news agency SPA news agency said on its Twitter account.

'It added that all the coalition's operations were in line with international humanitarian law.

'Houthi-controlled Saba news agency quoted a security source as saying on 12 October that coalition jets had launched 14 air strikes on Al-Abdiya and two on the Sirwah district of Marib.

'Marib is the internationally recognised government's last stronghold in the Houthi-controlled north.

'The rebels resumed an offensive on the province in early February, triggering some of the worst fighting since the conflict escalated with the

¹¹⁵ BBCM, '[Yemen rebels claim advances in battle for key province of Marib](#)', 12 October 2021

launch of the coalition's aerial bombing campaign against the Houthi movement in March 2015.¹¹⁶

8.5.8 On 15 October 2021 BBCM published an article entitled 'Authorities in Yemen's Marib declare besieged district "disaster zone"' which stated:

'Authorities in the central Yemeni province of Marib have declared a district under siege by the Houthi rebels as a "disaster zone".

'The office of public health in Marib declared Al-Abdiya a disaster zone in a post on Facebook late on 13 October, in which it also condemned Houthi shelling of the district's only hospital and its child nutrition unit. It said that at the time of the shelling, a number of children were being treated, as well as civilians who had been injured in shelling by rebel forces on their homes.

'It came as Information Minister Muammar al-Eryani warned that the siege was a "serious escalation" which "blows up any glimmer of hope for de-escalation and peace" in the war-torn country.

'Houthi-controlled Saba news agency meanwhile said that Saudi-led coalition jets had launched 18 air strikes on Al-Abdiya overnight on 13 October.

'It comes after Yemen's Permanent Representative to the UN Abdullah Al-Saadi said in a letter to the Security Council that the rebels had been depriving the 35,000 civilian residents of the district of food, water, medicine and baby milk since 21 September. He said that the situation had led to the deaths of three civilians so far from preventable causes.¹¹⁷

8.5.9 On 18 October 2021 a BBCM article entitled 'Yemen's Marib witnesses further clashes amid Houthi celebrations' which stated:

'Media supportive of the internationally recognised Yemeni government army have reported that two Houthi military leaders are among hundreds killed in fierce battles in the strategic province of Marib, including in the key district of Al-Abdiya.

'The reports come hours after the Houthi Movement announced it had made significant gains in Marib, including "liberating" Al-Abdiya.

'The rebels had launched a weeks-long siege on the district, cutting off supplies of food, water and fuel to the population, some 17,000 of whom had been displaced from elsewhere in the country.¹¹⁸

8.5.10 The same source further stated:

'The government army announced that the two prominent Houthi commanders had been killed in fighting in Marib, privately owned Al-Mashhad Al-Yemeni reported on 18 October.

'The outlet named the deceased as Abu Saleh al-Madani, the deputy chief of staff of the Houthi military, and Mohammed al-Banous, the commander of reserve forces guarding Houthi installations.

¹¹⁶ BBCM, '[Yemen warns of "imminent humanitarian catastrophe" ...](#)', 13 October 2021

¹¹⁷ BBCM, '[Authorities in Yemen's Marib declare besieged district "disaster zone"](#)', 15 October 2021

¹¹⁸ BBCM, '[Yemen's Marib witnesses further clashes amid Houthi celebrations](#)', 18 October 2021

'The Saudi-led coalition - whose air force backs government forces in Yemen - announced late on 17 October that it had killed over 165 Houthi fighters and destroyed 10 military vehicles in Al-Abdiya, as reported by Saudi-funded Al Arabiya.

'The media office of the government army tweeted on 17 October showing night-time operations against Houthi positions in southern Marib. It said its artillery bombardment and the coalition's air strikes had caused "heavy losses" to the Houthis.

'Despite highlighting its offensives, neither the coalition nor the government army reported any territorial gains in the province.'¹¹⁹

- 8.5.11 On 20 October 2021 BBCM published an article entitled 'Yemen rebels "abduct more than 500 people" in Marib' which stated:

'Houthi rebel fighters have reportedly abducted more than 500 people in Al-Abdiya in the key battleground of Marib in central Yemen. It comes days after the rebels entered the district after imposing a three-week siege on its 35,000 residents.

'Rebel fighters are continuing to raid houses in Al-Abdiya, days after seizing control of its centre and large parts of the district, activists told privately owned Al-Masdar Online news website on 20 October. They said the rebels were looting the contents of houses and farms.

'The activists - who have been following the humanitarian situation in the districted in southern Marib - noted that some of the more than 500 people abducted by the rebels were children, in addition to people who had been injured during Houthi shelling and battles between the rebels and government forces. They said that the rebels had also blown up two houses.

'Houthi forces seized control of the centre of Al-Abdiya on 15 October, after besieging the district for around three weeks...According to the activists, rebel forces are continuing to impose a siege on the entrances and exits of Al-Abdiya in order to prevent its residents from leaving.'¹²⁰

- 8.5.12 The same article further stated:

'It comes as pro-government forces were reported to have recaptured strategic military positions in southern Marib.

'The defence ministry's September Net website on 19 October quoted a military commander as saying on the same day that army and pro-government forces had retaken positions on the outskirts of the districts of Al-Jubah and Harib, located adjacent to Al-Abdiya, after defeating the Houthi rebels in those areas.

'The commander said that the rebel forces had suffered major human and material losses, while a group of fighters had handed themselves over to army forces along with all their equipment. He also praised the "major role" played by the Saudi-led coalition whose jets had bombed Houthi targets during the battle in the area.'¹²¹

¹¹⁹ BBCM, '[Yemen's Marib witnesses further clashes amid Houthi celebrations](#)', 18 October 2021

¹²⁰ BBCM, '[Yemen rebels "abduct more than 500 people" in Marib](#)', 20 October 2021

¹²¹ BBCM, '[Yemen rebels "abduct more than 500 people" in Marib](#)', 20 October 2021

8.6 Developments in southern Yemen in 2021

8.6.1 The August 2021 report published by ACLED, citing various sources, stated:

‘In December 2020, the STC agreed to join a power-sharing government with President Abdrabbuh Mansur Hadi in exchange for allowing the government to move back into Aden, the interim capital. At the beginning of the year, ACLED identified this as a potential opportunity for the southern secessionists and the Hadi government to unify against Houthi forces.

‘So far this has not materialized. After a hopeful end to 2020, the relationship between the two parties has only deteriorated. Joining a power-sharing government at the national level does not seem to have removed STC secessionist ambitions. STC-affiliated forces are notably still very much under STC control, instead of the defense and interior ministries, as per the military provisions of the Riyadh Agreement. In June 2021, these forces stormed several Hadi-aligned newspapers in Aden with the reported goal of establishing “Aden News Agency for the State of South Arabia”. That same month, the STC also made unilateral military appointments and designated its own foreign representatives to a number of countries.

‘Following the increase in tensions between the two parties, Saudi Arabia was quick to convene talks between the STC and the Hadi government on 2 July to reaffirm both parties’ adherence to the Riyadh Agreement. On the same day, however, clashes erupted between pro-Hadi and STC forces in Abyan governorate over control of Lawdar district security department. Tensions between the two camps then escalated further, as pro-Hadi forces repressed protests organized throughout southern governorates on 7 July to commemorate the 1994 “Southern Invasion Day”.¹²²

8.6.2 The ACLED report published on 9 September 2021 looking at events between 31 July and 3 September 2021 stated:

‘In southern Yemen, the second deadliest attack this year, outside the frontlines of Marib, was recorded in Lahij governorate last month. On 29 August, Houthi drones and ballistic missiles struck Al Anad air base, killing 40 soldiers from the Giants Brigades and injuring 92 others. The continued fragile security situation in southern Yemen is also illustrated via an attack by unidentified gunmen on the convoy of Hadi Minister of the Interior Ibrahim Haydan in the Hadramawt valley last month.¹²³

8.6.3 The ACLED report published on 22 September 2021 looking at events that took place between 11 and 17 September stated:

‘[D]emonstrations broke out in several districts of Aden and Hadramawt governorates last week over deteriorating living conditions, fomented by the depreciation of the Yemeni Rial. ACLED records more demonstration events in Aden last week than during any week since the beginning of coverage in January 2015. In a number of demonstrations, security forces — affiliated with the STC in Aden and with the Hadi government in Hadramawt — cracked down on demonstrators with live fire, resulting in nine reported

¹²² ACLED, [‘Mid-Year Update: 10 conflicts to worry about in 2021’](#), (page 24), August 2021

¹²³ ACLED, [‘Regional Overview: Middle East 31 July – 3 September 2021’](#), 9 September 2021

fatalities. The unrest culminated in the declaration of a state of emergency across southern governorates by STC President Aydarus Al Zubaydi.

'...From Al Bayda, Houthi forces launched an offensive into Bayhan district of neighboring Shabwah governorate, where they also managed to take control of a number of sites and to make progress towards the district center. Houthi forces had been expelled from Bayhan in December 2017 and are now engaging pro-Hadi forces there for the first time since then.'¹²⁴

8.6.4 An article published on 13 October 2021 by BBCM entitled 'Yemeni officials "survive" Aden blast' stated:

'A violent explosion has been reported in the Tawahi district of the southern Yemeni city of Aden, coinciding with the passing of a convoy of vehicles reportedly carrying government officials, domestic media outlets have reported.

'Southern-focused news website Aden al-Ghad said a car bomb had exploded, citing eyewitnesses. It said initial reports indicated that the governor of Aden and the minister of agriculture were among those in the convoy.

'The Al-Mashhad al-Yemeni news website meanwhile quoted local sources as similarly saying that the attack had targeted the officials.

'It said governor Ahmed Lamlas and the ministers of agriculture and marine resources had survived the car bomb attack.

'However, it reported that security personnel responsible for their protection were among those killed and injured, along with a number of civilians. It posted a video showing smoke rising purportedly in the aftermath of the incident.'¹²⁵

[Back to Contents](#)

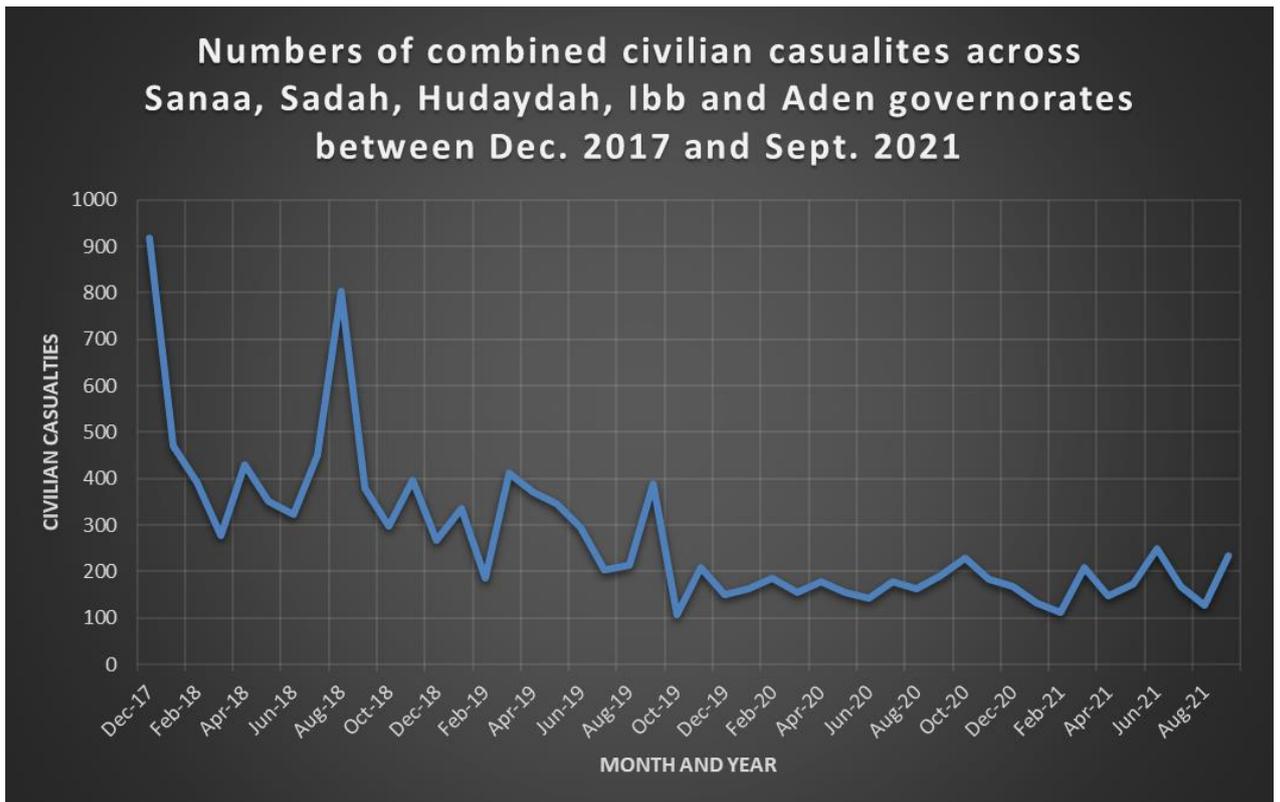
8.7 Security events and number of casualties

8.7.1 Looking specifically at incidents impacting civilians across 2021, using data obtained from the Civilian Impact Monitoring Project (CIMP) (a 'monitoring mechanism for real-time collection, analysis and dissemination of open source data on the civilian impact from armed violence in Yemen'¹²⁶), CPIT produced the below graph which shows the total number of civilian casualties reported each month in the governorates of Sanaa, Sadah, Hudaydah, Ibb and Aden between December 2017 and September 2021:

¹²⁴ ACLED, '[Regional Overview: Middle East 11-17 September 2021](#)', 22 September 2021

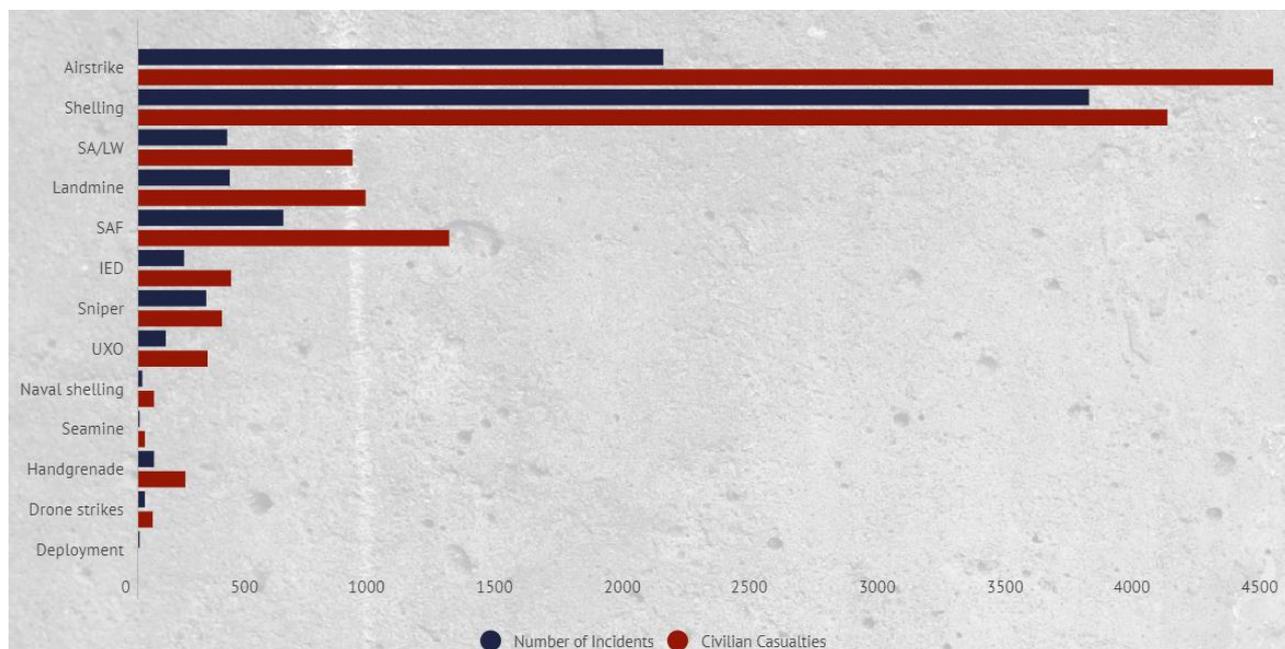
¹²⁵ BBCM, '[Yemeni officials "survive" Aden blast](#)', 10 October 2021

¹²⁶ CIMP, '[About CIMP](#)', no date



127

8.7.2 CIMP also produced the below graph showing the total number of civilian casualties reported to have been caused by each type of armed violence since 2017:



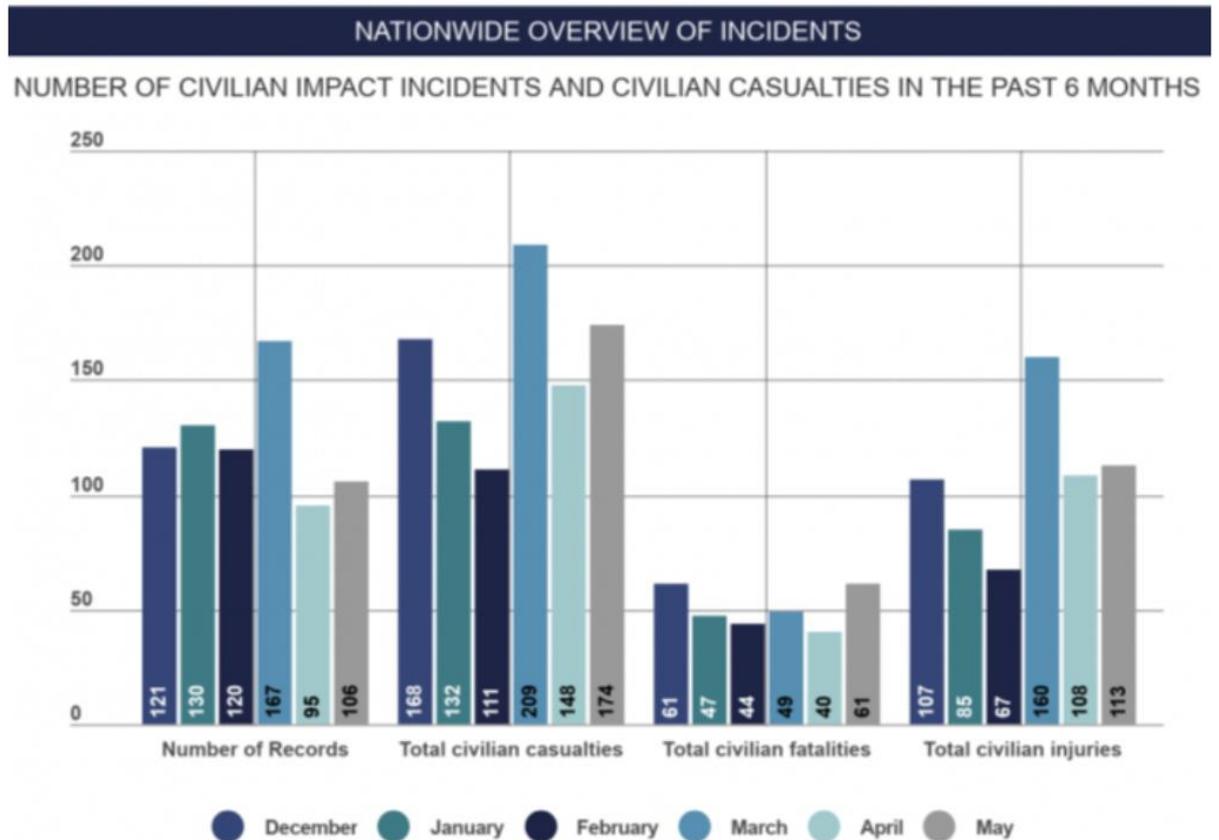
128

¹²⁷ Graph produced by CPIT using data from the [Civilian Impact Monitoring Project](#)

¹²⁸ CIMP, '[Total Civilian Casualties by Type of Armed Violence](#)', last updated 30 September 2021

8.7.3 The acronyms used in the above graph are as follows; Small arms and light weapons (SA/LW), Small arms fire (SAF), IED (Improvised Explosive Device), UXO (Unexploded Ordnance).

8.7.4 CIMP published the following graph in May 2021 showing the numbers of civilian injuries and fatalities between December 2020 and May 2021:



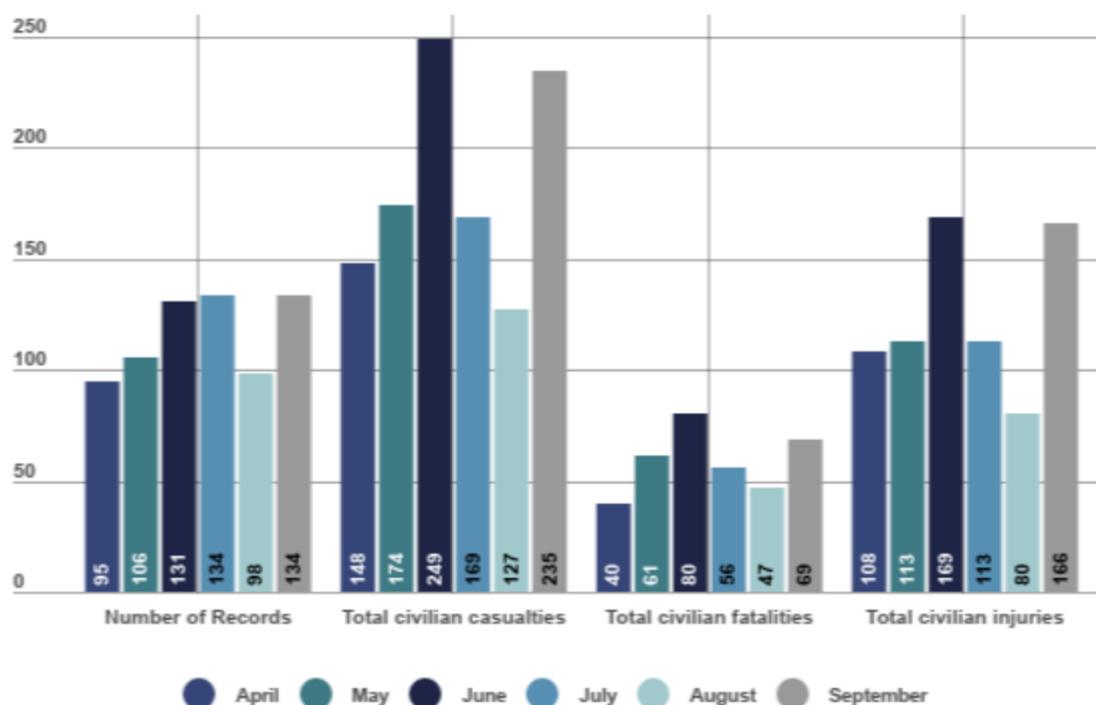
129

8.7.5 The same source also published the following graph in September 2021 showing the numbers of civilian injuries and fatalities between April 2021 and September 2021 (the most up to date report available at the time of writing):

¹²⁹ CIMP, '[CIMP Monthly Report – May 2021](#)', May 2021

NATIONWIDE OVERVIEW OF INCIDENTS

NUMBER OF CIVILIAN IMPACT INCIDENTS AND CIVILIAN CASUALTIES IN THE PAST 6 MONTHS



130

8.7.6 According to data obtained from ACLED's data export tool, there were 6,521 security events across Yemen between 1 January 2021 and 8 October 2021 (the most recent data available at the time of writing), resulting in 13,382 fatalities (Note: these fatalities include combatants and civilians). Security events include battles, explosions/remote violence, protests, riots, violence against civilians and strategic developments. For definitions of the different security events and the specific sub-events associated with each, see the document entitled '[ACLED Definitions of Political Violence and Protest](#)'.

8.7.7 Below is a table compiled by CPIT using data obtained from ACLED's data export tool showing the number of security events and related fatalities throughout Yemen between 1 January 2021 and 8 October 2021:

Location	Number of security events	Fatalities
Abyan	184	131
Ad Dali	270	654
Aden	320	48
Al Bayda	331	693
Al Hudaydah	1,357	3,047
Al Jawf	347	991
Al Mahrah	16	2

¹³⁰ CIMP, '[CIMP Monthly Report – September 2021](#)', September 2021

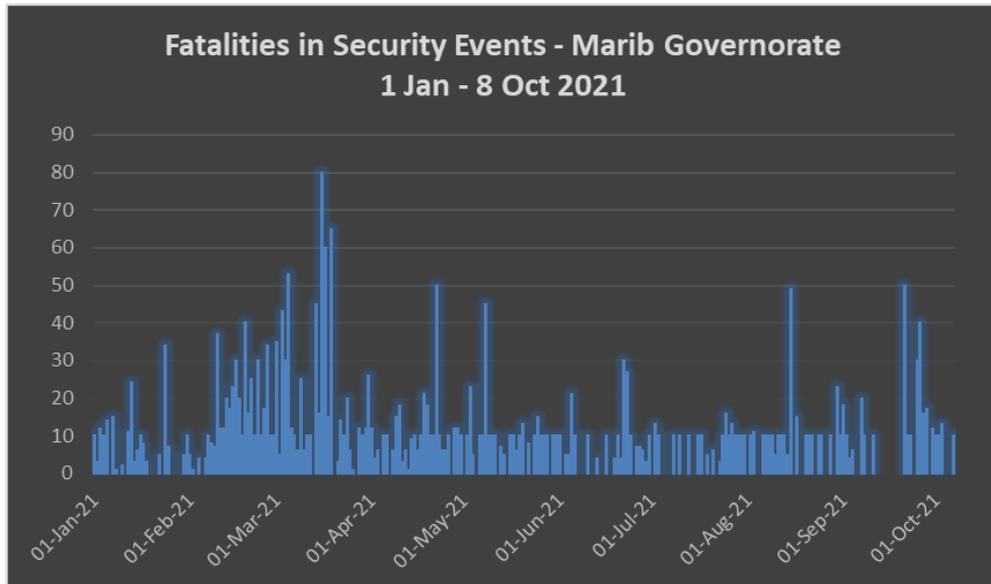
Al Mahwit	34	1
Amanat al Asimah	132	78
Amran	23	10
Dhamar	42	9
Hadramawt	91	18
Hajjah	149	205
Ibb	99	35
Lahij	106	125
Marib	1,616	5,602
Raymah	22	0
Sadah	563	465
Sanaa	69	65
Shabwah	171	91
Suqutra	14	0
Taizz	565	1,112

131

- 8.7.8 According to data obtained from ACLED's data export tool, there were 1,616 security incidents in Marib governorate between 1 January 2021 and 8 October 2021, resulting in 5,602 fatalities (Note: these fatalities include combatants and civilians). 341 of these incidents were classed as 'armed clashes' and resulted in 3,398 fatalities. Separately, there were 147 air or drone strikes resulting in 1,094 fatalities and 79 shelling/artillery/missile attacks, causing 79 fatalities¹³². The below graph shows fatalities in Marib governorate between 1 January 2021 and 8 October 2021.

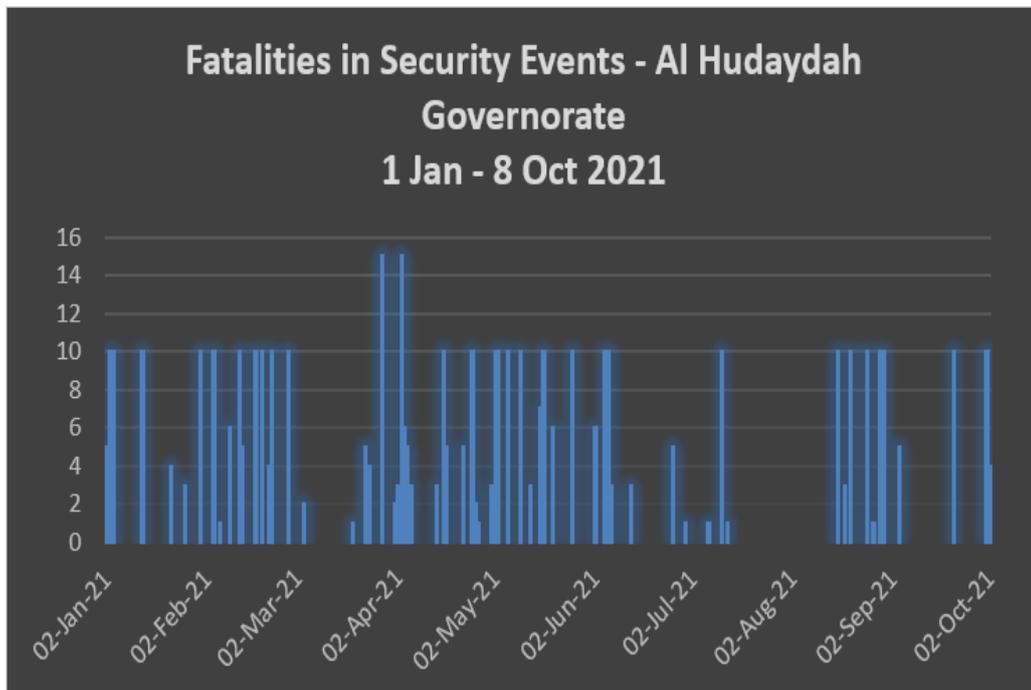
¹³¹ ACLED Export Tool, '[Yemen:1 January – 8 October 2021](#)', 15 October 2021 (available on request)

¹³² ACLED Export Tool, '[Yemen:1 January – 8 October 2021](#)', 15 October 2021 (available on request)



133

8.7.9 According to data obtained from ACLED’s data export tool, there were 1,357 security incidents in Al Hudaydah governorate between 1 January 2021 and 8 October 2021, resulting in 3,047 fatalities (Note: these fatalities include combatants and civilians). 404 of these incidents were classed as ‘armed clashes’ and resulted in 2,409 fatalities. Separately, there were 205 air or drone strikes resulting in 28 fatalities and 590 shelling/artillery/missile attacks, causing 556 fatalities¹³⁴. The below graph shows fatalities across Al Hudaydah between 1 January 2021 and 8 October 2021.



135

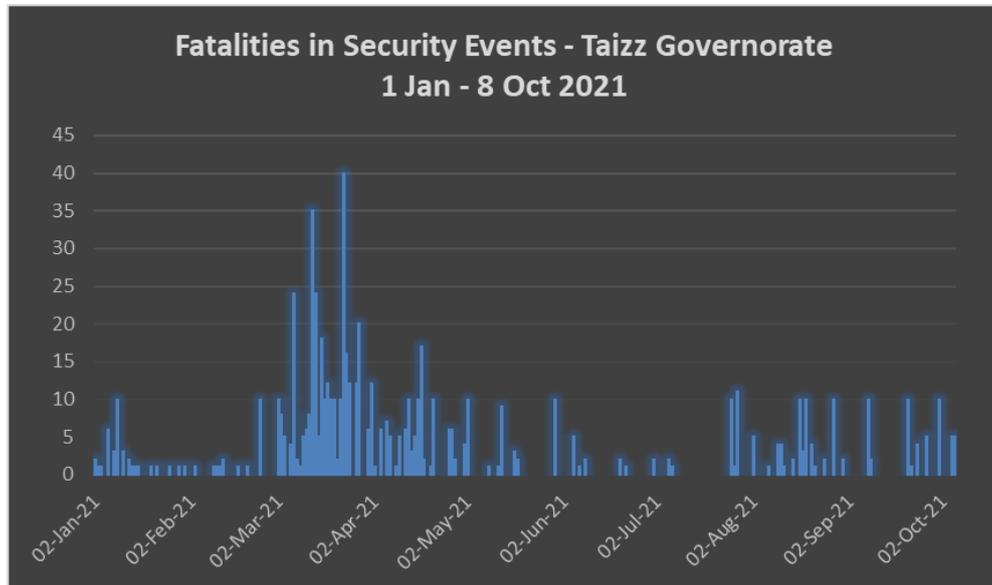
8.7.10 According to data obtained from ACLED’s data export tool, there were 587 security incidents in Taizz governorate between 1 January 2021 and 8

¹³³ ACLED Export Tool, [‘Yemen:1 January – 8 October 2021’](#), 15 October 2021 (available on request)

¹³⁴ ACLED Export Tool, [‘Yemen:1 January – 8 October 2021’](#), 15 October 2021 (available on request)

¹³⁵ ACLED Export Tool, [‘Yemen:1 January – 8 October 2021’](#), 15 October 2021 (available on request)

October 2021, resulting in 1,112 fatalities (Note: these fatalities include combatants and civilians). 192 of these incidents were classed as ‘armed clashes’ and resulted in 673 fatalities. Separately, there were 12 air or drone strikes resulting in 9 fatalities and 63 shelling/artillery/missile attacks, causing 88 fatalities¹³⁶. The below graph shows fatalities across Taizz between 1 January 2021 and 8 October 2021.



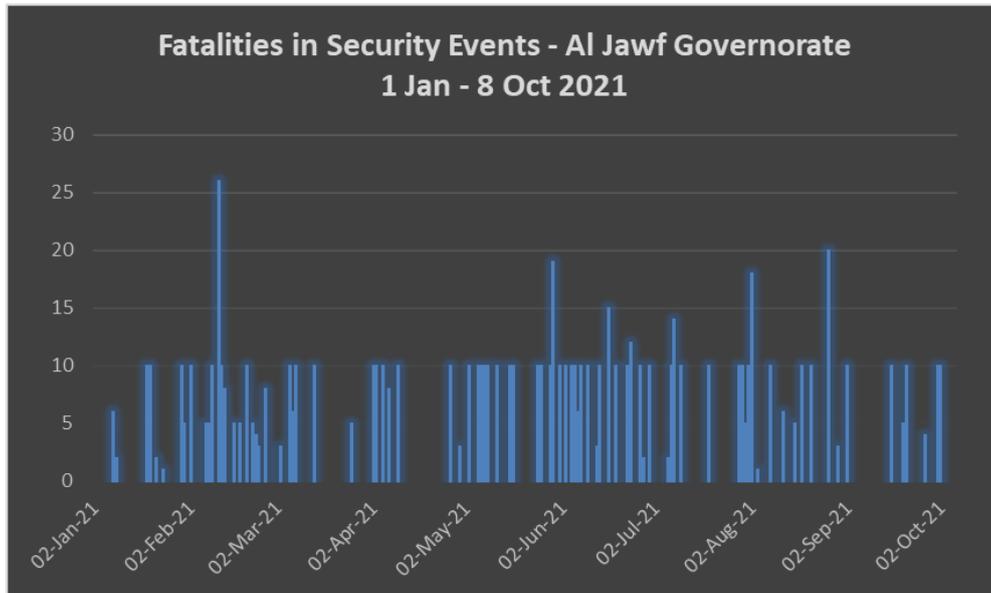
137

8.7.11 According to data obtained from ACLED’s data export tool, there were 347 security incidents in Al Jawf governorate between 1 January 2021 and 8 October 2021, resulting in 991 fatalities (Note: these fatalities include combatants and civilians). 143 of these incidents were classed as ‘armed clashes’ and resulted in 656 fatalities. Separately, there were 136 air or drone strikes resulting in 175 fatalities and 4 shelling/artillery/missile attacks, causing 10 fatalities¹³⁸. The below graph shows fatalities across Al Jawf between 1 January 2021 and 8 October 2021.

¹³⁶ ACLED Export Tool, [‘Yemen:1 January – 8 October 2021’](#), 15 October 2021 (available on request)

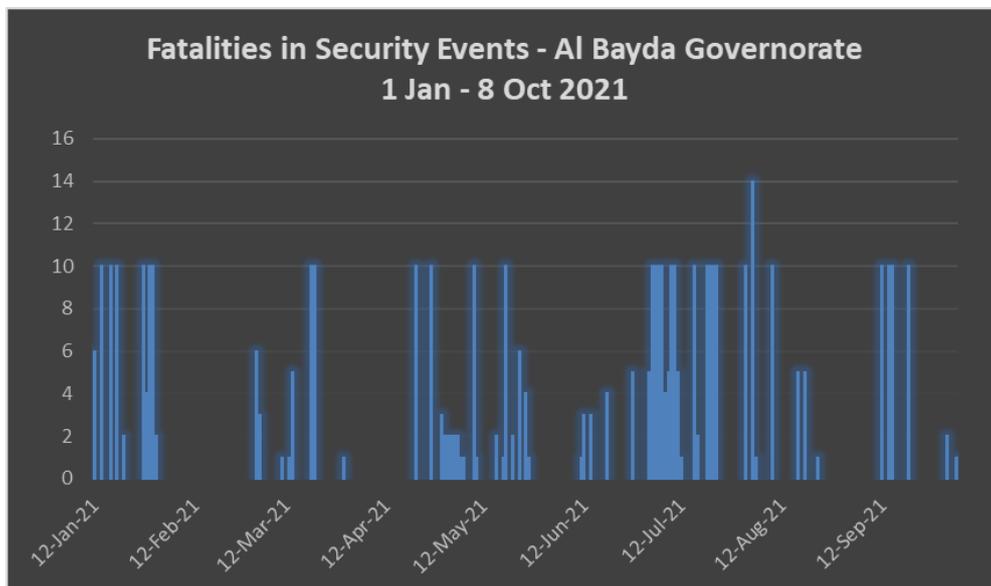
¹³⁷ ACLED Export Tool, [‘Yemen:1 January – 8 October 2021’](#), 15 October 2021 (available on request)

¹³⁸ ACLED Export Tool, [‘Yemen:1 January – 8 October 2021’](#), 15 October 2021 (available on request)



139

8.7.12 According to data obtained from ACLED’s data export tool, there were 331 security incidents in Al Bayda governorate between 1 January 2021 and 8 October 2021, resulting in 693 fatalities (Note: these fatalities include combatants and civilians). 192 of these incidents were classed as ‘armed clashes’ and resulted in 673 fatalities. Separately, there were 102 air or drone strikes resulting in 302 fatalities and 29 shelling/artillery/missile attacks, causing 138 fatalities¹⁴⁰. The below graph shows fatalities across Al Bayda between 1 January 2021 and 8 October 2021.



141

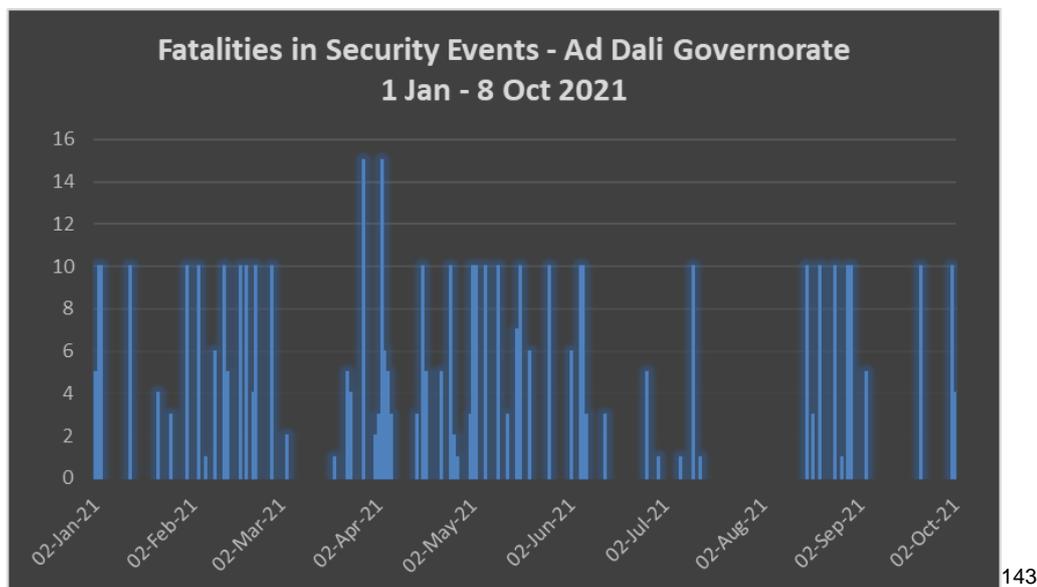
8.7.13 According to data obtained from ACLED’s data export tool, there were 270 security incidents in Ad Dali governorate between 1 January 2021 and 8 October 2021, resulting in 654 fatalities (Note: these fatalities include combatants and civilians). 162 of these incidents were classed as ‘armed clashes’ and resulted in 555 fatalities. Separately, there were 43

¹³⁹ ACLED Export Tool, [‘Yemen:1 January – 8 October 2021’](#), 15 October 2021 (available on request)

¹⁴⁰ ACLED Export Tool, [‘Yemen:1 January – 8 October 2021’](#), 15 October 2021 (available on request)

¹⁴¹ ACLED Export Tool, [‘Yemen:1 January – 8 October 2021’](#), 15 October 2021 (available on request)

shelling/artillery/missile attacks, causing 70 fatalities¹⁴². The below graph shows fatalities across Ad Dali between 1 January 2021 and 8 October 2021.



8.7.14 On 13 October 2021 UN OHCA published a situation update following an increase in hostilities since early September 2021 which stated:

‘Renewed hostilities since early September have significantly impacted civilians living in parts of Ma’rib, Shabwah and Al Bayda governorates, inducing casualties and displacement as well as restricting civilians’ movements and humanitarian organizations’ access to people in need.

‘According to the International Organization for Migration (IOM), nearly 10,000 people were displaced in Ma’rib Governorate last month – the highest displacement rate recorded in the governorate in a single month this year. Critical infrastructure such as bridges and roads have also been damaged and destroyed.

‘The situation is most severe in southern Ma’rib Governorate, affecting districts including Al Abdiyah as well as Harib, Al Jubah and Rahabah, with IOM estimating that over 4,200 people fled the latter three districts in September, mostly towards safer areas in Ma’rib City, Al Jubah and Ma’rib districts.

‘...In Shabwah Governorate, hostilities have been particularly pronounced in Ayn, Bayhan and Osaylan districts, and drove the displacement of hundreds of people within Shabwah Governorate and into neighbouring Ma’rib Governorate in September. Unconfirmed preliminary information indicates that six civilians were killed and four civilians were injured due to hostilities in Shabwah Governorate last month – the governorate’s highest number of casualties within a single month. In southern Ma’rib Governorate, initial information indicates that civilian casualties include a woman who was killed and three children who were injured in Harib District on 2 October, as well as

¹⁴² ACLED Export Tool, [‘Yemen:1 January – 8 October 2021’](#), 15 October 2021 (available on request)

¹⁴³ ACLED Export Tool, [‘Yemen:1 January – 8 October 2021’](#), 15 October 2021 (available on request)

two people who were killed and a woman who was injured in Rahabah District on 21 September.

'...Shortages of medicines and electricity are reportedly impeding the functioning of the hospital in Al Abdiyah District, with local sources reporting that the hospital is overcrowded and over capacity, requiring patients to be prioritized in terms of urgency. While verification is still ongoing, unconfirmed preliminary information indicates that some six civilians were killed and some 30 civilians have been injured as a result of shelling in Al Abdiyah District, and that more are expected to succumb to their injuries due to the lack of access to adequate medical treatment. Operations at the hospital in Al Jubah District were reportedly also suspended on 12 October, following intensification of clashes in the area.'¹⁴⁴

8.7.15 On 19 October 2021 Reuters published an article entitled 'UNICEF says 10,000 children killed or maimed in Yemen since 2015' which stated:

'Ten thousand Yemeni children have been killed or maimed since a military coalition led by Saudi Arabia intervened in March 2015 after the Iran-aligned Houthi group ousted the government, the United Nations children's agency UNICEF said on Tuesday.

"The Yemen conflict has just hit another shameful milestone. We now have 10,000 children who have been killed or maimed since ... March 2015," UNICEF spokesperson James Elder told a U.N. briefing in Geneva after returning from a visit to Yemen.

"That is the equivalent of four children every single day," Elder said, adding that many more child deaths or injuries went unreported.'¹⁴⁵

[Back to Contents](#)

8.8 Freedom of movement

8.8.1 The USSD report stated:

'The law provides for freedom of internal movement, foreign travel, emigration, and repatriation; however there were many restrictions on these freedoms.

'In-country Movement: Rebel forces, resistance forces, security forces, and tribes maintained checkpoints on major roads. In many regions, especially in areas outside effective central security control, armed tribesmen frequently restricted freedom of movement, operated their own checkpoints, sometimes with military or other security officials, and often subjected travelers to physical harassment, extortion, theft, or short-term kidnappings for ransom. Damage to roads, bridges, and other infrastructure from the conflict also hindered the delivery of humanitarian aid and commercial shipments

'Women in general did not enjoy full freedom of movement, although restrictions varied by location. Oxfam reported that in areas controlled by radical Islamic groups such as AQAP, men at checkpoints increasingly insisted on adherence to the mahram system, the cultural obligation of women to be accompanied by male relatives in public. The Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) reported that harassment at checkpoints of women and girls not

¹⁴⁴ UNOCHA, '[Yemen Situation Update...](#)', 13 October 2021

¹⁴⁵ Reuters, '[UNICEF says 10,000 children killed or maimed in Yemen since 2015](#)', 19 October 2021

accompanied by a male, as well as inability to afford transport, hampered women's ability to reach health, nutrition, and other services.

'... Local observers reported individuals from Houthi-controlled areas faced increasing discrimination and difficulties when traveling in the southern portion of the country.'¹⁴⁶

[Back to Contents](#)

¹⁴⁶ USSD, ['2020 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices: Yemen'](#), (Section 2D), 30 March 2021

Terms of Reference

A 'Terms of Reference' (ToR) is a broad outline of what the CPIN seeks to cover. They form the basis for the [country information section](#). The Home Office's Country Policy and Information Team uses some standardised ToR, depending on the subject, and these are then adapted depending on the country concerned.

For this particular CPIN, the following topics were identified prior to drafting as relevant and on which research was undertaken:

- Background to the conflict
- Key actors
- Humanitarian situation
 - Numbers who need humanitarian assistance
 - Food security
 - Water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH)
 - Healthcare
 - Education
 - Impact on the economy
 - Humanitarian support
 - Humanitarian access
 - Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)
- Security situation
 - Key developments
 - Nature and levels of violence
 - Control of territory
 - Numbers of casualties
 - Freedom of movement

[Back to Contents](#)

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Version control

Clearance

Below is information on when this note was cleared:

- version **5.0**
- valid from **24 December 2021**

Official – sensitive: Start of section

The information in this section has been removed as it is restricted for internal Home Office use.

Official – sensitive: End of section

Changes from last version of this note

Updated COI and assessment.

[Back to Contents](#)