Hunger and displacement:
Views and solutions from the field

Yemen

OVERVIEW HUMANITARIAN CONTEXT

Conflict

- Yemen is the world’s largest and most severe man-made humanitarian crisis today, with 20.7 million Yemenis now in need of some form of humanitarian aid (75.5% of the total population), of whom 9.8 million are in acute need of emergency assistance;

- The internationalization of the conflict that started in March 2015, has led to the near complete collapse of public services - including health and sanitation systems - a major displacement crisis and brought part of the Yemeni population to the brink of famine. Those multiple and interconnected emergencies only result in constantly deteriorating protection, food and health crises, including the worst cholera outbreak ever witnessed with now more than 900,000 suspected cases and 2,100 fatalities;

- While the humanitarian community provides emergency aid, humanitarian access remains a major concern, as parties to the conflict are continuously impeding access to and within Yemen. Overall, access has not improved over the years, which requires tireless effort from aid agencies to ensure aid reaches the population in need;

- The complete closure of the main sea, air and land access points enforced by the Saudi led coalition on November 6th will have devastating consequences on the population, and could ultimately plunge the country into famine if not fully lifted, while also preventing desperately needed aid and commercial supplies from reaching the country. Prices of basic commodities have already spiked following the closure. Although it was
announced by the coalition that Aden, Mocha and Al Mukala seaports will be reopened, those southern ports do not have the adequate capacity to rapidly offload vessels and handle imports for the entire country. Therefore, they cannot be a viable alternative to the reopening of Hodeida, Yemen’s largest seaport that handled almost 80% of the country’s import before March 2015, which remains closed as of today.;

- The current near total closure of Yemen’s borders, which amounts to a de-facto blockade, only aggravates the suffering of the population by denying access for humanitarian aid and staff, and the importation of consumer goods.

**Hunger**

- 17 million people are food insecure, equivalent to 60% of the total population;
- Around 10.2 million are in IPC Phase 3 ‘crisis’ and 6.8 million are on the brink of famine, in IPC Phase 4 ‘emergency’;
- In the seven governorates where the food insecurity situation is the most severe, Global Acute Malnutrition rates (GAM) range from 6,2% to 25,2%, and Severe Acute Malnutrition rates (SAM) range from 0,7% to 5,3%;
- Food insecurity levels continue to increase due to the lack of access to food – linked to the loss of livelihoods - lack of income or employment opportunities, physical access to markets, a decrease in the cultivated area and production by 38% compared to the pre-crisis period. As Yemen imported 90% of its food and basic commodities before the conflict, the near complete closure of the main sea and air commercial routes has drastically impacted food security;
- Conflict and displacement have already severely disrupted agriculture-based livelihoods, affecting food availability and household stocks for both IDPs and Host Communities, resulting in extensive crop and livestock losses and destroyed inputs that are needed to restart food production.

**Displacement**

- Since the beginning of the conflict, more than 10% of the population have experienced displacement;
- As of October 2017, nearly 2 million Yemenis remain displaced by the conflict people across the country, 85% of them from just 5 Governorates: Taiz, Hajjah, Sana’a City, Sa’ada and Sana’a Governorates where the conflict was intense (IPC 2017);
- IDPs have been especially impacted by the loss of livelihoods as 80% are farming and sharecropping families or agricultural labourers, and nearly one-third own livestock. The protracted displacement, which is expected to continue in 2018, is placing increased pressure on already scarce natural resources and basic services, impacting IDPs, returnees and host communities alike;
- According to UNHCR’s figures of September 2017 - from the beginning of the crisis – 1,980,510 persons are internally displaced and 946,044 formerly displaced have now returned to their areas of origin across Yemen. 279,211 persons have also been officially registered as refugees and asylum seekers within Yemen.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

**Stability and peace as a priority**

- Focus on peacebuilding efforts, put pressure on the conflicting parties for an immediate cessation of the hostilities and call upon key stakeholders to help ensure a permanent ceasefire is respected and actively support peace negotiations and a long-term, inclusive political solution and;
- Ensure an inclusive long term political solution allows for a swift return to peace and enables a conducive operational environment for early recovery, rehabilitation and development programming;
- Ensure that those responsible for attacks on civilians, civilian infrastructure and other indiscriminate attacks are held responsible and accountable for IHL and IHRL violations; and call upon an immediate end of these attacks.

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2 OCHA, November 2017
In that regard, the EU and its member states should support the establishing of the Group of Eminent International and Regional Experts and the implementation of its mission.

- Integrate humanitarian action into efforts to address the underlying causes of vulnerability, including recovery interventions and long-term structural support to basic social infrastructure, livelihoods and services so that national stability can be achieved and sustained.

**Humanitarian access**

- Engage at high level with authorities in Yemen, including at governorate level, to facilitate prompt, safe, unimpeded and consistent access for humanitarian staff and supplies to and within Yemen by urging them to eliminate bureaucratic and logistical impediments, restrictions of movement including travel authorizations and cumbersome visa process, and interference in humanitarian activities;

- Pressure and obtain guarantees from the Saudi Led Coalition and the Government of Yemen to immediately lift all restrictions on sea, land and air trade routes and commercial airspace, as well as the de-facto blockade of ports to enable the UNVIM to fulfil its original mission of ensuring the continual supply of vital commodities such as food, fuel and medicines, as well as to facilitate and guarantee access to and out of Yemen for humanitarian personnel and supplies.

**Funding**

- Adopt of a resilience based approach – to addressing the current, medium and long-term food security of IDPs, returnees, vulnerable communities and host families, comprising marginal and smallholder farming and fishing families, prone to extreme weather events and degradation of natural resources;

- Increase financial contributions in 2017 to cover the needs expressed in the 2017 Yemen Humanitarian Response Plan and in the 95 districts at risk of famine with high IDP populations through multi-sectoral integrated response packages;

- Ensure that pledges are transferred to beneficiary organizations rapidly, while also urgently provisioning funding for the next 2018 appeal and multiyear flexible funding;

- Increase funding contributions to humanitarian-plus/early recovery activities in Yemen. Although Yemen is still in the middle of a tragic chronic emergency, Yemenis that either stayed or have returned to their homes, and who are living away from active conflict zones are in dire need to restart their lives in a dignified manner. They cannot rely solely on humanitarian assistance, or be put at risk of slipping into poverty for the lack thereof. This would also reduce pressure on humanitarian resources that are already stretched.

**TESTIMONIES**

**Action Against Hunger:** As part of its action to counter hunger and malnutrition in Yemen, Action Against Hunger is providing water and sanitation services to communities to tackle cholera as well as other diseases. At community level, Action Against Hunger implements water trucking and key structures to ensure access to a minimum of 7.5 liters/person/day of safe water for drinking and cooking purposes. Action Against Hunger currently deliver chlorinated water to 28,165 people on a daily basis. In parallel, Action Against Hunger will rehabilitate and disinfect community water tanks to increase the number of taps available, and reduce queuing time at collection points. These activities are accompanied by hygiene promotion campaigns, aiming at raising the community’s awareness to the importance of safe and clean drinking water.
different methods of disinfection, the preparation and use of ORS at home, cholera symptoms and prevention, and the mechanisms for dealing with cholera-affected individuals or any other diarrheal disease.

Danish Refugee Council: Aicha and her parents, two sisters and four brothers, of whom two are married with three children amongst them, receive monthly food assistance from DRC through a WFP-funded project. “I am very thankful for food assistance from DRC”, says Aicha. She explained that prior to receiving assistance, everyone in the family was often hungry. Without food, she was unable to prepare meals for her family. For her, it was a source of constant worry not to be able to feed her family regularly and wonder where the next meal would come from. DRC’s emergency food assistance provides households with monthly rations that include 100 kg cereal, 10 kg beans, 6 kg oil, 5 kg sugar, 10 kg WSB, and 1 kg salt in order to meet daily food needs. In addition to Aicha and her family, DRC targets 4,358 households (30,500 beneficiaries) with emergency food assistance in Abyan governorate this year alone. DRC is providing similar food assistance to approximately 15,000 households (100,000 people) in Sa’ada governorate in northern Yemen, while approximately 1,000 small landholders have also been assisted with seeds, fuel, and fertilizer so that they are able to secure food from their irrigated farming as well as re-gain more dependable and longer-term access to food.

OPERATIONS AT A GLANCE

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<th>Action Against Hunger</th>
<th>Danish Refugee Council</th>
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<td>Operating in Yemen since 2012</td>
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<td>In 2016, more than 189,000 Yemenis were assisted with an integrated emergency response</td>
<td>In 2016, DRC supported 1,193,743 Yemeni IDPs, refugees and persons of concern with multi-sectoral interventions. Protection is mainstreamed and informs the selection criteria of beneficiaries.</td>
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<td>Present across Hajjah, Al Hudayda, Abyan, Lahj, and Aden governorates</td>
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**Health & nutrition:** nutrition surveillance, support of health facilities and cholera treatment centers, care provision for treatment of severe acute and moderate malnutrition of children under five and pregnant and lactating women and hygiene/health education for caretakers and PLWs.

**Food security & livelihoods:** unconditional cash transfer

**WASH:** water trucking, construction and rehabilitation of water points, distribution of hygiene kits, hygiene promotion

**Emergency food distribution:** different modalities are being used i.e. general food distribution, unconditional cash grants, multiple purpose cash grants, vouchers and supplementary feeding to target lactating and pregnant women, children under 5-year old, acute and severely malnourished

**Social protection and safety nets:** agriculture and livelihoods recovery inputs, cash-for-work, food for work, food for assets, conditional cash transfers

**Nutrition-distribution of nutrition supplements:** plumpy nut and other products of high nutritional value