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Children in Sa'ada receive child-centred mine risk education

UNICEF Yemen Situation Report

January 2015

Key focus:

**Muhammasheen mapping
update**

Highlights:

- **62,206 children were taught about the dangers of mines in Amanat Al Asma, Al Jawf, Sa'ada and Shabwah Governorates.**
- **3,739 out of school children have taken the mid-year exam in Taiz Governorate.**

Situation Overview

The start of the New Year brought renewed violence, with a car bomb exploding on 7 January, killing dozens of people, and some of the heaviest fighting in the capital since the September takeover. On 19 January, clashes initially erupted near the Presidential Palace, which saw the heaviest fighting and show of force. The conflict quickly led to the resignation of the Cabinet, the President and the Prime Minister and the country remains in a state of flux.

An estimated 5,400 children had their exams interrupted as four incidents of attacks to schools and hospitals were verified, as well as one case of abduction. UNICEF and partners reached communities with a mine risk awareness campaign through public services announcements on TV and radio and by distributing leaflets describing measures to be taken in case a suspicious object is found.

A total of 48 cases of recruitment and use of under 18s were verified in Amat al Asimah, Hodeidah and Ibb. During the clashes in Sana'a on 19th of January under 18s were also observed in active combat role fighting alongside armed groups. The UN CTFMR continues to engage with Al Houthi/Ansar Allah to finalize the action plan currently under discussion, which addresses the prevention and response of recruitment and use of children by the armed group. The group has committed to issue a written order / decree preventing all children under 18 to join them.

Key focus: Muhammasheen Mapping Update

Issue

In June 2014, the UNICEF sitrep focused on the issue of the marginalized community in Yemen, known as Muhammasheen. In this update, we detail the findings of the mapping survey (MMS) conducted last year by the Social Welfare Fund (SWF) and UNICEF Yemen Country Office, in collaboration with Interaction for Development, a national research institution.

The MMS serves as a baseline for the social protection interventions that are being implemented among Muhammasheen communities by SWF and Alamal Microfinance Bank (AMB). This is because there is a dearth of information on Muhammasheen communities, so a comprehensive mapping, to better plan, design and implement social protection programmes for these communities was crucial.

Impact

The survey of 9,200 households (51,406 people) revealed high levels of poverty combined with low levels of literacy and school enrolment. Household living conditions are very poor and access to basic social services is overall very low.

Just one in five people aged 15 or over could read or write and only two in four children aged 6 to 17 are enrolled in school, though the average is nearly twice this figure. Birth registration is low throughout Yemen at just 17 per cent but among the Muhammasheen community, this drops to just 9 per cent.

Three quarters of households surveyed had just one room, but 4/5 of these were home to at least three people. Half of the households were dependent on external water sources such as dams, streams or wells and less than one tenth had piped water. Only two in five Muhammasheen houses had a latrine.

Although one third of the country's citizens receive SWF cash transfers, this drops to just one fifth of Muhammasheen households. This is particularly worrying as only one in ten have income generating sources such as livestock, transport, sewing machine etc.

Action

The mapping was a pre-requisite step to start an integrated package of social protection interventions, mainly, child-sensitive, financial inclusion of Muhammasheen communities, linking households to basic social services, as well as social protection, especially SWF cash transfers. Key implementers are the SWF Office in Taiz Governorate as well as AMB, which is a non-profit organization established to provide financial services to the poorest communities.

The partnership with AMB aims to reach out to Muhammasheen communities in Taiz with child-sensitive financial education and inclusion interventions. SWF will focus on empowering Muhammasheen communities to demand and access basic social and protection services. The financial inclusion aims to open around 20,000 savings accounts for mothers and children aged 10-17 years, conduct social and financial education training sessions for parents and children, and promote the culture of savings for children education, health, and nutrition. SWF will distribute school kits and school uniforms to all children and will advocate with schools to ensure their enrolment. In addition, birth registration cards will be issued to all children in the targeted Muhammasheen communities. The MMS will be repeated after two years to assess the impact of these interventions.

Interagency Collaboration

Volunteers from CPI and INTERSOS handed out information for parents in areas affected by the conflict on protecting children from unexploded ordnance or explosive remnants of war (ERWs) as well as how to understand their children's psychological reaction to the unrest and how to best support them.

UNICEF Yemen Nationwide Response

Education:

3,739 out of school children (1,175 boys, 2,564 girls) have taken the mid-year exam in Taiz Governorate.

9,513 school children from 17 schools in Ibb have been given hygiene kits.

21 people (13 male, 8 female) from education offices and NGOs in Taiz and Ibb have been trained in education in emergencies.

500 teachers (410 female) were trained on the convention on the rights of the child (CRC) from Child Friendly Schools in Aden in January 2015.

WASH facilities were rehabilitated in 3 schools and handed over in Aden city

Sites for the construction of 175 classrooms have been selected as part of the Educate a Child project.

Health:

146 health workers and community midwives were trained in integrated management of childhood illnesses (IMCI) and other aspects of midwifery, while 60 were trained in EPI.

129 pregnant women received antenatal support through the community midwives in Sa'ada, while 101 births were attended by skilled birth attendants and 94 postnatal visits were conducted. 230 children under 2 and 199 pregnant or lactating women were screened for malnutrition by these community midwives.

668 outreach sessions were conducted through 100 outreach teams providing mainly EPI, IMCI and ANC services.

WASH:

10 local hygiene promoters (5 males, 5 female) from Sa'ada have been trained on WASH, communication for development, and health matters. They have gone on to train community volunteers, who will in turn conduct hygiene awareness activities with 12,000 people.

36,447 IDPs, host community and children at schools have continued to receive a daily water supply in Hajjah, while 28,305 IDPs have adequate sanitation and hygiene promotion activities.

1,048 basic hygiene kits have been distributed to 7,088 IDPs (1,048 families) while 6,059 school hygiene kits have been distributed to students in 15 schools in Haradh.



Trained health workers give tetanus vaccine to pregnant women in Mahweet.

546 families in Hairan and Mastaba have received ceramic water filters and monthly consumable hygiene kits.

12 schools latrines have been maintained in two local community schools for 1,236 students, while 77 latrines have been maintained for 111 IDP families in and outside camps.

Nutrition:

969 community health volunteers were trained on infant and young child feeding (IYCF) and community management of acute malnutrition (CMAM) in Taiz, Rayma, Mahweet, Amman, Dhamar, Shabwa, Dhale and Al Jawf Governorates. With this training, the number of outpatient therapeutic programmes (OTPs) in Taiz has increased to 28 fixed and 4 mobile.

1,967 children under 5 were screened for malnutrition in conflict areas of Al Bayda, with 179 cases of severe acute malnutrition detected, 39 per cent of which were girls.

Child Protection:

84,781 people including 62,206 children (30,014 girls, 32,192 boys) received mine/UXO risk education both in partnership and under the leadership of YEMAC in Amanat Al Asma, Al Jawf, Sa'ada and Shabwah Governorates.

6,413 people including 5,894 children (2,792 girls and 3,102 boys) received psychosocial support services (PSS) through community and school based child friendly spaces in Abyan Governorate.

47 community volunteers (19 women, 28 men) were trained on protection of children in emergency and psychosocial support. Thirty-five of these were trained as trainers for child protection minimum standards in humanitarian interventions.

67 unaccompanied Yemeni children (62 boys, 5 girls) were identified and provided with interim care at the MoSAL run Child Protection centre in Haradh supported by UNICEF: 59 of these children have been reunited with their families and returned safely to their community of origin. In addition, 22 unaccompanied migrant boys were assisted with safe voluntary return to Ethiopia thanks to a joint collaborative effort between UNICEF, DRC and IOM.

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