

SITUATION OVERVIEW

The ongoing conflict in Yemen, compounded with cholera and pockets of famine, continues to increase the protection needs of an already vulnerable population. With the increasing impact of the armed conflict, a critical priority remains ensuring the protection of civilians and accountability by all state and non-state actors to comply with international humanitarian and human rights law. At the same time, the stress and loss on the conflict-affected and displaced population continues to mount, particularly on the most vulnerable segments of the population, necessitating urgent and immediate protection and assistance to those in need.



Displaced women under the shade of a makeshift tent at Dharwan settlement. UNHCR / M. Hamoud.

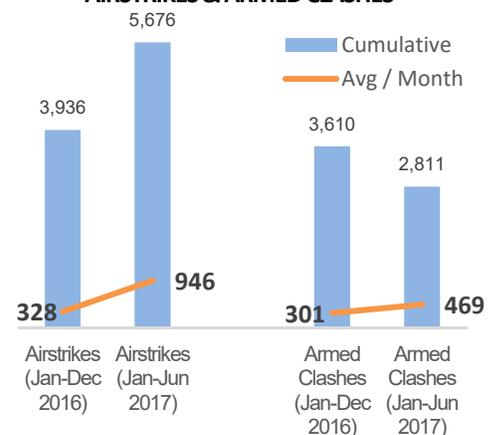
Protection of Civilians

The volatile security situation and military operations along conflict lines continues to impact civilians throughout Yemen. According to UN and open source reporting, through the first half of 2017, the number of reported airstrikes has already exceeded the total for all of 2016, with the monthly average almost three times higher in 2017. The pace of reported armed clashes in 2017 is also 56% higher per month in 2017 compared to 2016. Taizz, Sa'ada, Hajjah, Sana'a, Al Jawf and Marib remain the most affected by military operations, clashes and airstrikes, while major incidents resulting in civilian casualties have occurred recently in Taizz (July) and Sa'ada (June and August).

Internal Displacement

As of June 2017, there were 2 million internally displaced persons (IDPs) and 946,000 IDP returnees in Yemen, representing 10.4% of the population either displaced or facing the immediate challenges of return.¹ Since the beginning of 2017, conflict has resulted in 104,658 IDPs newly displaced, mostly from Taizz (46%) and Sa'ada (25%), while other governorates with new displacement include Al Hudaydah, Al Bayda and Al Jawf. New internal displacement surged early in 2017 during the escalation of conflict in Mokha, declining in the months thereafter but increasing again in May. Among IDPs, some 23% reside in collective centres or spontaneous shelters, for which a baseline assessment is currently being conducted by the Shelter-NFI-CCCM Cluster to identify inter-cluster needs, including protection.

AIRSTRIKES & ARMED CLASHES



Source: UN and open source reports

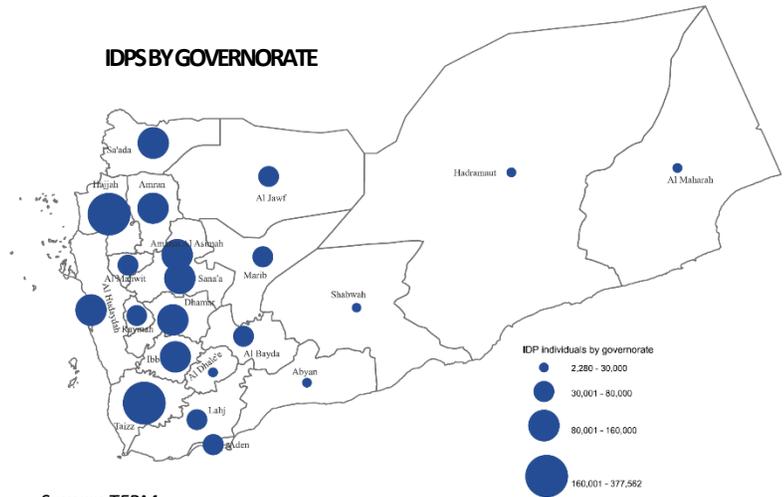
¹ Report of the Task Force on Population Movement, TFPM – Yemen, 15th Report, July 2017.

Vulnerability and Persons with Specific Needs

Conflict and displacement, compounded now with cholera and famine, have created new vulnerabilities as a result of, among others, loss of heads of households, family separation and the breakdown of community structures, increasing resort to adverse coping mechanisms as well as increasing the mental health and psycho social support needs of the population. The most recent multi-cluster location assessment identified more than 1 million IDPs and host community members with specific needs, including malnourished children (27%), elderly (22%), pregnant / breastfeeding women (18%), chronically ill (8%), female heads of households (6%), minor heads of households (6%), persons with disabilities (7%) and separated and unaccompanied children (3%).² An updated multi-cluster location assessment is currently underway.

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

Taizz has continued to be the governorate most contested along conflict fronts, with civilians being severely impacted by intense, armed clashes, rocket fire and shelling and air strikes connected with military operations around the besieged city of Taizz as well as westward in Maqbanah, Mawza and Mokha Districts, not least the worsening humanitarian conditions due to lack of access to basic needs and services. Reports by UN and other sources reported multiple civilian casualties in May, June and July as a result of shelling, mortar attacks and airstrikes by all parties to the conflict. Notable among these was an aerial attack in Mawza on July 18 which resulted in the deaths of at least 20 internally displaced persons (IDPs), including women and children. Conflict has resulted in more than 524,000 IDPs from Taizz, more than half of which remain in the embattled governorate. The main reported needs of IDPs in Taizz, 72% of whom are women and children, are overwhelmingly food security (68%) and WASH (10%), as well as a significant number living in spontaneous settlements such as schools, health facilities, public buildings as well as rural settlements.



Saadeh remains among the governorates most affected by airstrikes since 2016, as well as ongoing battles along the border involving missiles and heavy weaponry which have resulted in some civilian casualties. On 17 June, at least 23 civilians were reported to have been killed in an airstrike, helicopter attack and shelling on a market and nearby house in Sa'ada, while on 5 August, at least 10 civilians were reported to have been killed in an airstrike on a house. Conflict in Sa'ada, together with nearby Hajjah Governorate, has resulted in 293,000 and 374,000 IDPs, respectively, representing some 34% of all IDPs in Yemen.

While contingency planning remains in place in case of an escalation of conflict in Hudaydah, continued airstrikes have been reported to affect civilians, including near the Taizz border and along the seaside. In the south, ongoing fighting and counter-terrorism operations continue to result in some displacement. At the same time, protection partners are following up on reports of IDPs facing problems accessing southern governorates. In urban areas such as Aden and Sana'a, priority needs include access to justice and the vulnerabilities of protracted IDPs and IDP returnees.

² Task Force on Population Movement, Multi-Cluster Needs Assessment of IDPs, Returnees and Host Communities in Yemen, February 2017.

PROTECTION RESPONSE HIGHLIGHTS

Despite gaps in funding and constraints on humanitarian access, Protection Cluster partners continue to respond to the protection needs of the conflict-affected and displaced population. Recent highlights include:

- The Protection Cluster established a thematic working group on the Protection of Civilians in order to further the cluster's strategic advocacy and response on this issue, together with key stakeholders.
- In response to the cholera outbreak, addition to supporting WASH and Health partners on community awareness, the Protection Cluster, including the Child Protection and Gender-Based Violence Sub-Clusters, have developed key protection guidance for cholera response actors on protection-sensitive issues such as avoiding family separation, child-appropriate messages and services, accessibility for persons with disabilities, outreach to vulnerable minorities and other protection concerns.
- Following increased arrivals of IDPs and IDP returnees in southern governorates, a community engagement study found that most conflict-affected persons cited the need for information on where to access assistance and eligibility criteria. As part of the Protection Cluster accountability commitments for 2017, OXFAM conducted a multi-sector services mapping exercise in Aden, Al Dhalee and Lahj to increase awareness of available services, strengthen community-based protection mechanisms, facilitate delivery of humanitarian assistance and support inter-agency referrals for those in need.
- OHCHR organized five awareness raising sessions reaching 142 community members, including 46 females, across Marib, Al Jawf, Aden, Lahj, Abyan, Amran and Sa'adah where community members were informed of services available to the victims of human rights violations and established a referral mechanism. Recent workshops by OHCHR include those on the legality of continued imprisonment and prisoner rights, and on human rights violation monitoring and documentation.
- CSSW conducted rapid assessments of the protection concerns and needs of populations displaced by conflict in Taizz, Marib and Al Jawf. In addition to assistance gaps, the assessments highlighted how 50% of respondents in Al Jawf exposed to harassment or threats during displacement, as well as needs for psychosocial support and mental health services, legal assistance and mine and UXO awareness.
- Participatory assessments in the south identified lack of ID documentation as a key problem across all age and gender groups among conflict-affected populations, largely due to civil



CSSW protection staff consult with displaced family in Taizz. Credit: CSSW.

PROTECTION CLUSTER STRATEGY

Monitor key protection issues (including violations of IHL/IHRL, displacement, vulnerable populations, gender-based violence and child protection) in order to **identify persons in need of assistance**, inform the humanitarian response and advocate for the protection of civilians

Provide **life-saving protection assistance and services** to vulnerable, conflict-affected individuals, including children and gender-based violence survivors

Develop **community-based responses** in order to prevent, mitigate or address protection needs and risks, and enhance individual and community coping strategies and conflict resolution

Strengthen the capacity of partners, service providers, civil society and authorities on protection

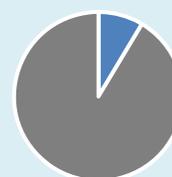
Mainstream and integrate protection into all sector and cluster-specific humanitarian responses

registration offices being closed, damaged or unable to issue documentation and resulting in serious protection risks. In consultation with the governorate, ministerial and civil registration authorities, UNHCR supported two civil registration offices in Aden and Lahj with repairs, solar electricity and office equipment. As a result, the offices are now able to (re)issue approximately 100 ID cards per day, in addition to birth certificates.

- In Taizz, Yemen Family Care Association (YFCA) has now established four joint child-friendly and safe spaces for women, offering psychosocial support activities for beneficiaries. The centers have been operating through volunteers since May.
- The Aden Sub-National Protection Cluster launched a campaign against discrimination targeting IDPs, returnees and marginalized groups in urban areas of Aden, including information and awareness sessions in schools, child-friendly spaces, religious institutions and mixed neighborhoods on inclusion of marginalized groups, as well as radio spots, youth discussions, posters and flyers.
- UNHCR, in partnership with Intersos, is piloting a revised in-depth protection monitoring assessment tool developed in coordination with the Protection Cluster, in Lahj, Aden and southern Taiz. The assessment will also be used to identify and refer cases for service provision, including legal counseling, psycho-social support and financial assistance. As of 30 June, 6,457 individuals have been reached and 556 individuals referred for other services, such as rental assistance, health care and provision of NFIs, depending on need. Roll-out of the protection monitoring assessment tool to cluster partners is planned in September 2017.
- OCHA, together with the Protection Cluster and partners, delivered community engagement workshops in Sana'a and Aden in July and August to strengthen capacities on accountability to affected populations, conflict sensitivity and protection mainstreaming.
- The Aden Sub-National Protection Cluster in coordination with OCHA, ADRA and OXFAM conducted two training workshops for national NGOs and partners on Protection, IDP Guiding Principles, Protection Mainstreaming, Gender Mainstreaming, rules working in the field, cluster system and Coordination.

KEY FIGURES

PEOPLE IN NEED	11.3 M
PEOPLE IN ACUTE NEED	2.9 M
IDPs	2.0 M
IDP RETURNEES	0.9 M
PERSONS TARGETED	3.5M
PERSONS REACHED ([7]%)	0.9M
FUNDING REQUESTED	72.2M
FUNDING MET	7.8M
UNMET NEEDS	64.4M



11%
FUNDED

IN FOCUS: ADRA IDP COMMUNITY CENTER

ADRA's IDP Community Centre was first established in 2010 to respond to the needs of IDPs fleeing conflict from Sa'ada and the surrounding areas, providing social and psychosocial services and child-friendly spaces. As the conflict persisted and more IDPs arrived in Sana'a, the centre expanded its services to include protection, shelter and educational services. Psychosocial counselling is available for adults and children, where PTSD and anxiety have been a focus, especially for young children. As part of its community mobilization efforts, IDP youth provide educational tutoring to IDP children. Legal services have been in high demand, particularly for female IDPs coming from rural areas who often lack any form of documentation. Social counselling involves referral for service providers based on regular mapping and coordination with partners providing food, secondary health and others. In partnership with IOM, the centre's health clinic provides primary health consultations and medication for IDPs and vulnerable host communities.

Community centres such as these are an integral part of the Protection Cluster's community-based strategy to empower conflict-affected and displaced communities and ensure that they remain at the center of service provision and community activity, including for women, girls, boys and men.



IDP family at ADRA community center. UNHCR / S. Mantoo

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