Fighting in Sana’a, Marib and Al Jawf governorates displaces 3,825 families in January

Following a 10-month lull in hostilities, fighting broke out in mid-January on several frontlines, including Nihm District in Sana’a Governorate, Sirwah District in Marib Governorate, and Al Maton in Al Jawf. The surge in hostilities came after a series of attacks on military sites that caused over 200 casualties of military personnel. Initial reports indicate that as of 3 February, 3,825 families had been displaced across Sana’a, Marib and Al Jawf governorates. Those displaced are in critical need of shelter and non-food items, health assistance, and WASH and protection services, and some are reported to be living in the open. Partners are responding, though access is restricted because of ongoing clashes in some areas. The Rapid Response Mechanism (RRM), providing a standard relief package that includes food, hygiene materials and other essential items, has been activated and RRM kits have been provided to more than 1,549 new IDPs since 22 January. Humanitarian partners are mobilizing resources across all three governorates and, in collaboration with the Executive Unit, have set up and Emergency Coordination Committee to coordinate the response in Marib. In Sana’a and Al Jawf coordination is led by coordination teams in the hubs, supported by the Operations Centre at the national level. For further details about the situation and the response, see OCHA’s Situation Report on displacement in Marib, Sana’a and Al Jawf governorates.

Areas affected by recent conflict in Sana’a, Marib and Al Jawf

Source: OCHA Yemen
Emergency Relief Coordinator condemns December attacks on INGOs in Al Dhale’e that led to the temporary suspension of humanitarian activities

In a statement released on 23 December, the Emergency Relief Coordinator (ERC), Mr. Mark Lowcock, condemned attacks on the premises of three humanitarian organizations in Al Dhale’e City which resulted in the temporary suspension of aid operations in the governorate.

In the early hours of 21 and 22 December, unknown individuals attacked the premises of three international humanitarian organizations in Al Dhale’e, using rocket-propelled grenades, wounding one person and damaging property. “These events represent an alarming escalation in the risks faced by humanitarian workers in Yemen”, said the ERC, Mr. Lowcock. The ERC called for a thorough investigation of the incidents and expressed grave concern at the ongoing media campaigns in parts of Yemen that spread rumours and incitement against aid operations.

The attacks followed a series of incidents the previous week in Al Dhale’e District, including an attack on a UN agency implementing partner in Sanah and a raid on a partner’s food distribution centre in Al Hasha. An escalation of similar security incidents occurred in the wake of the attacks, including armed men threatening a UN road maintenance contractor, demanding they cease their work because of the association with the UN. There were reports that some community and religious leaders were mobilizing the community against INGOs.

Fourteen organizations were forced to suspend aid programmes in Al Dhale’e, affecting over 217,000 residents, and for three weeks, there was no international staff presence in Al Dhale’e. Minimal life-saving operations continued through local partners while NGOs distributed RRM kits to recently displaced families in Al Dhale’e City. Aid agencies engaged with the authorities to ensure their safe return, which led to a staggered resumption of aid programmes from mid-January. A shooting at a food distribution point in Al Dhale’e on 19 January that injured a displaced man, impeded the return with some agencies again suspending operations. All UN missions were postponed until the end of January.

In other developments, on 29 December, a missile attack at a graduation parade for the Facilities Protection Security Battalion in Al Dhale’e City killed 7 people, including 3 adult civilians and 2 children, and injured 42 others, including 17 adult civilians and 15 children. On 31 December in Aden City, unidentified armed individuals on a motorcycle detonated a sound bomb in front of the gate of an INGO guesthouse under construction in Khormaksar District which reportedly injured a civilian and created a state of panic in the area.

Civilian casualties fall in the year since the Stockholm Agreement

Civilian casualties since the start of the conflict in 2015 are just below 20,000 (19,833 verified casualties between March 2015 and the end of 2019, according to the Office for the High Commissioner for Human Rights – OHCHR). Data collected by humanitarian partners indicates that civilian casualties fell by around one-third in 2019, following the Stockholm Agreement in December 2018 which aimed to bring about a ceasefire in Al Hodeidah.

Sources: CIMP, OHCHR
OHCHR verified 1,942 civilian casualties in 2019, down 29 per cent from 2,712 in 2018, with fatalities down by 32 per cent, from 1,078 in 2018 to 735 in 2019, and child casualties down 22 per cent to 739 in 2019. Actual numbers are likely to be higher but are difficult to verify. Data from the Protection Cluster’s Civilian Impact Monitoring Project (CIMP), based on open sources, recorded a higher number of civilian casualties in 2019, but confirmed a similar overall downward trend. According to CIMP, there were 3,221 civilian casualties in 2019, a 35 per cent reduction from the 4,924 reported in 2018. Of these, 1,104 were fatalities, down 48 per cent from 2,049 in 2018, and 837 were child casualties, down 24 per cent from 1,104 in 2018.

**Humanitarians respond to changing patterns of displacement**

The conflict in Yemen has been characterized by cycles of displacement and return. As many as 4 million people have been displaced and remain displaced since the start of the conflict. Over 2.5 million people were displaced in 2015 and 2016, at the start of the conflict, and another 327,924 were displaced in 2017. Over 730,000 people were displaced in 2018 – conflict on the western coast around Al Hodeidah port in the second half of the year forced 684,948 people to flee, mainly from Al Hodeidah and Hajjah. In 2019, following the Stockholm Agreement and the decrease in hostilities around Al Hodeidah, fighting in Hajjah, Al Dhale‘e and Taiz led to new patterns of displacement.

Humanitarian partners continue to respond to the needs of internally displaced people (IDPs) and provide RRM kits to the recently displaced – comprising ready to eat food, hygiene and transit kits – to meet immediate needs. In 2019, UNFPA provided RRM kits to 176,937 families in 2019 (1,238,599 people), 103 per cent of its target.
Cluster develops a coordinated approach to increasing numbers of eviction threats

As most IDP sites in Yemen are spontaneous rather than planned, evictions are increasingly reported across the country as landowners reclaim their land or property. The Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM) Cluster reports that there are 1,746 IDP sites with a total population of 713,276 people. In northern governorates, primarily in Dhi As Sufan District in Ibb, there are 26 situations categorized as at risk of eviction - 22 are on private land and 4 on public land – affecting 22,323 people. The most common reasons for the eviction threat include the landowner wanting to use the land or restart activities in facilities occupied by IDPs. In southern governorates as of December 2019, there were 12 IDP sites and 3,535 people at moderate to high risk of eviction.

To ensure a coordinated response to evictions threats, the CCCM Cluster is working with the Protection and Shelter clusters on a tri-cluster approach and has developed an implementation and coordination mechanism. Under the mechanism, CCCM partners are responsible for tracking the status of the land ownership of IDP sites and the intentions of the people living there. CCCM holds consultations with the community on threatened sites and records the information. For all sites on private land where there is an indication of an eviction intention, the CCCM partner will establish a site level contingency eviction response plan with all stakeholders at the IDP site.

The first response of CCCM partners is to assess, in collaboration with Protection partners, the intentions of the community and their preferred course of action. The next step is to identify the most vulnerable IDPs so special needs can be addressed. Where the eviction goes ahead, CCCM cluster partners will monitor where people move to and advocate with the Protection and Shelter clusters for assistance including in-kind or rental support. Relocation to another IDP site is a last resort as CCCM policy in Yemen is not to establish new sites due to protection concerns.

**CCCM Cluster Yemen IDP hosting sites with eviction threats**

![Map showing IDP sites with eviction threats in Yemen](source: CCCM cluster)
Ramping up disease prevention and response

Due to the ongoing conflict, health needs in Yemen continue to be high. With only 51 per cent of health facilities fully functional, access to healthcare services is severely limited and efforts to mitigate disease outbreaks and respond to healthcare needs are crucial to the overall health response in country.

Health partners continue to scale up disease prevention efforts. Dengue fever is currently high on the agenda. To reduce the risk of dengue fever across 13 priority districts where a high number of cases were identified, at the end of 2019 health partners worked with local and national authorities to conduct a community mobilization campaign targeting 35,000 people. The campaign covered hygiene promotion, supporting local public health actors, strengthening dengue clinical case management and scaling up community engagement. WHO has also provided intravenous fluid, supportive drugs and laboratory supplies and, with UNICEF, International Medical Corps it has undertaken fogging and an indoor residual spraying campaign. In 2019 there were 76,768 suspected cases across the country and 271 deaths, 71 per cent of all cases were in Al Hodeidah, and in the first two weeks of January, there were 5,524 with 11 associated deaths. The number of suspected cases has reduced in some areas, but there are still hotspot districts, and the highest incidence per 10,000 of the population are in Al Hodeidah (10.7), Aden (2.36), Marib (2.12) and Lahj (1.63). Further response activities are planned, with a particular focus on the situation in Al Hodeidah. A health education, health media and a school health campaign is due to take place in 21 districts of Al Hodeidah, Aden and Taizz. Indoor residual spraying is planned in Al Dhale’e, Shabwah, Al-Mahrah and Hadramout targeting 14,025 households (111,723 people) and case management training is planned in Taizz, Marib and Hadramout for 140 medical doctors.

Other recent preventative health work, includes a three-day nationwide polio campaign run by health partners in December, reaching over 4 million children under the age of 5. The campaign covered 317 out of 333 districts in all 22 governorates across the country. Yemen has been polio free since 2006. In the same month, a national schistosomiasis and deworming campaign was conducted as part of efforts to eliminate neglected tropical diseases (NTDs) which affect tens of thousands of people in Yemen. An integrated large-scale treatment campaign, supported by local health authorities and WHO, covered 101 districts in 11 northern governorates, targeting 3,340,664 people for schistosomiasis and soil-transmitted helminthias. Over 12,000 health care workers in 5,000 teams distributed over 11 million tablets, protecting an estimated 83 per cent of the targeted population. The campaign was funded by the World Bank under the Emergency Health and Nutrition Project and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) and United Arab Emirates (UAE).

Health partners also ramped up support to health facilities in 2019, providing assistance to 137 hospitals across the country. With this support, more than 3 million consultations, 260,000 admissions, 80,000 surgical procedures, 43,000 deliveries and 30,000 caesarean sections were conducted between January and September 2019.

Dengue Fever and Vector Borne Diseases

Week 01 - 52
Cases 76,785 Deaths 271 CFR 0.35%

Week 02, 2020
Cases 8,778 Deaths 11 CFR 0.1%

Sources: WHO
Volunteers, NGOs and UN agencies work together to reach the most vulnerable in Al Hodeidah City

In Al Hodeidah City, the Protection Network finds vulnerable households and links them with UNHCR’s Monitoring and Mixed Solutions project. The Network is made up of community volunteers, many of whom are themselves displaced, which helps them to identify who really needs help.

The Protection Network found Eamon several years after she had been displaced by fighting from Haradh in neighbouring Hajjah Governorate. She had initially stayed with family but after two years she rented a place with her husband and children. Her husband had owned a business in Haradh, but this was bombed and her husband was traumatized by what he saw in the aftermath. In Al Hodeidah City, he earned a little money working as a taxi driver, using a motorcycle Eamon bought after selling her jewelry. Although friends and family helped out and the landlord was patient with the rent, life for Eamon and her family was a daily struggle.

The Protection Network linked Eamon with Social Development Hodeidah Girls Foundation (SDHGF), a local NGO that runs the Protection Monitoring and Mixed Solutions project at its IDPs Centre. The project gave a one-off payment of 100,000 Yemeni rials (about US$180) to Eamon’s family and provided her husband with psychological support. Under another SDHGF programme supported by Oxfam which focuses on women’s empowerment, Eamon learned to sew and was given a sewing machine. Separately, WFP provides a monthly food basket to the family.

Though life continues to be a challenge for Eamon’s family, it is now easier. Remembering how people helped her, Eamon now tries to give back, sharing her money and food and using the sewing machine to make clothes for people who cannot afford to pay. “Life is easier now”, she says, “Hodeidah Girls helped to give me hope”.

UNHCR’s Protection Monitoring and Mixed Solutions to IDPs and Conflict-Affected Individuals started in 2017 and is implemented by SDHGF. It aims to empower the IDP community through providing protection monitoring and other protection services. In 2019, the project provided almost 14,000 households with cash assistance; provided psychosocial and legal support to over 3,438 people; obtained civil documentation for 1,326 individuals, provided 47,045 individuals with awareness raising sessions on protection issues and referred 11,732 people on to other support.

*Names have been changed to protect Eamon’s and her family’s identity

---

For further information, please contact:

Aiden O’Leary  
Head of Office, UN-OCHA Yemen  
E-mail: oleary@un.org

Tapiwa Gomo  
Head of Communication, UN-OCHA Yemen  
Tel: +967 712 222 860  
E-mail: gomo@un.org

OCHA information products are available at:
www.unocha.org/yemen
www.unocha.org
www.reliefweb.int

---

Funding status of the 2019 YHRP  
(AS OF 31 JANUARY 2020)

4.19 bn  
REQUIREMENTS

3.53 bn  
FUNDED

0.67 bn  
STILL NEEDED

84.1%  
% FUNDED

SDHGF provide sewing machines to three women who attended its sewing course. ©SDHGF