

Daily Key messages

Parties to the conflict have an obligation to protect civilians and civilian infrastructure. Reports of civilian casualties due to ongoing conflict are unacceptable.

Overview

Yemeni authorities report that at least 30 people have been killed and up to 300 injured in Sana'a City after an airstrike set off a huge explosion in Faj Attan suburb earlier today. The airstrike may have targeted a munitions depot in the area. Nearby homes were damaged, trapping people in rubble. Ambulances took the wounded to hospital. Parties to the conflict have an obligation, under international humanitarian law, to protect civilians and civilian infrastructure.

In the last 24 hours, airstrikes have hit targets in Aden, Lahj, Sana'a, Sa'ada and Marib governorates. In Sirwak district, Marib governorate, an airstrike hit a health facility in Al Juhlan area. This was the only medical facility in the area. In Sahar district, Sa'ada governorate, one civilian was reportedly killed and seven others injured in an airstrike on a petrol station.. In Amran governorate, the districts of Huth and Khamir were hit, with casualties reported.

In Aden, armed clashes and mortar shelling continues amid clashes between militants in Khormakser, Crater, Al Mualla, Al Qalowa, Dar Sad and Ash Sheikh Othman districts. The security situation remains very tense. Today, clashes intensified for hours in the vicinity of President Hadi's residence and the Russian consulate. In Lahj governorate, militants continued their advance towards Aden governorate. Armed clashes were also reported in Al Dhale'e governorate.

The rapidly deteriorating security situation in Yemen will exacerbate food insecurity especially in Hajjah, Sa'ada, Abyan, Al Dhale'e, Lahj, and Shabwah governorates, according to the Famine Early Warning System (Fews Net). Most areas are expected to face a crisis (IPC Phase 3) as a result of increasing needs. Continued conflict, market disruption, and limited humanitarian access could lead to Emergency outcomes (IPC Phase 4) in some areas in the coming months. Already, according to WFP, the average retail prices of wheat grain and flour rose by 42 and 44 per cent in April, respectively, compared with February 2015, reflecting the increased wholesale prices.

Displacement and casualties

A large number of families have reportedly been displaced by ongoing clashes between militants in Taizz governorate. Humanitarian partners estimate that at least 150,000 people have been displaced by violence across Yemen since mid-March, when conflict escalated. Many of the displaced people need urgent aid.

In Shabwah governorate, the Yemen Red Crescent has reported 603 households (4,117 people) as displaced from Aden, Lahj, Abyan, Hadramaut and Shabwah governorates. They are spread over several districts in Shabwah, namely Rawdah, Mayfaa, Jordan, Nisab, Al Saaed and Marka Al Olya.

Updated numbers compiled by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights show that at least 436 civilians have been killed in conflict in Yemen from 26 March to 18 April. Those killed include 29 women and 86 children. Those injured are believed to be 817 people, including 34 women and 65 children.

WHO estimates that total health facility-reported deaths between 19 March and 13 April were 767 people, and health facility-reported injuries were 2,906 people. Data on casualties remains difficult to collect. In Aden, for example, the Emergency Health Operations Centre closed after it was attacked on 5 April. As a result, no new data on casualties is being received.

Access and humanitarian response

Response

The Yemen Humanitarian Pooled Fund is now focused on responding to the impact of escalating conflict in Yemen, and will operate within the reserve allocation mode for the next three months. OCHA has opened the allocation window for the first grant applications until 26 April. Allocations will follow the highest priority lifesaving needs in the health, water and sanitation, protection, food security, nutrition, logistics, shelter and non-food items sectors. The estimated envelope is US\$10 million, based on pledges made by donor partners. The Advisory Board has raised the allocation ceiling to US\$1 million, with a minimum of \$200,000.

In Aden, IOM distributed non-food items to 60 households, and to IDPs in 30 November school and Al Fajr school. IOM also provided and installed a water pump in Al Fajr school and rehabilitated the water tank there, and also installed two water tanks of 2,000 litres to Al Qalao health facility. In Lahj, UNICEF has supported water pumps in two villages (Al Wadi village and Sufyan) to benefit 800 people. In Abyan, IOM distributed non-food items to 15 households living in the open in Khanfar district and continues to truck water to IDPs living in schools in Khanfar, Zinjubar, and Lawder.

Humanitarian partners in Djibouti fear that the influx of people from Yemen may worsen already existing hardship in Obock, a region with the worst social indicators in the country. A refugee camp is being established in Markazi and water bladders installed to cover the needs of up to 1,050 refugees – corresponding to planning figures for the first month. Most of the 431 people who have arrived in Obock are sheltered in two temporary transit centres. Yemeni nationals constitute 95 per cent of new arrivals (children are 37 per cent, including 46 per cent girls and 54 per cent boys, while women constitute 41 per cent).

Immediate gaps

In Sana'a, 850 patients in Al Thawrah public hospital are at grave risk because the hospital is likely to become inoperative in 48 hours due to the critical shortage of fuel and oxygen. Al Thawrah is the largest hospital in Yemen, and is a referral facility that provides ambulatory care for about 4,000 outpatients each day.

Widespread shortages of medicines in the local market in Yemen have been reported. According to WHO, prices of essential medicines have increased by more than 300 percent, placing patients with noncommunicable diseases at risk of being unable to receive timely, life-saving treatment. These increased prices also challenge the ability of health partners to locally procure medicines for distribution to health facilities.

Water is a critical need in Sa'ada after the supply system to the city was damaged in ongoing violence. Some private water trucks have also stopped due to shortage of fuel, worsening the water shortage. According to WHO, shortages of clean are also affecting the functionality of health facilities. The electricity supply in Sa'ada has also been disrupted.

For further information, please see:

<http://www.humanitarianresponse.info/operations/yemen>,
<http://www.unocha.org/yemen>

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