

2015, International Medical Corps mobile medical teams were able to deliver care in underserved areas within Taizz's besieged Salh District. However, entering besieged areas of Taizz City with medical supplies remains a key challenge for health actors. International Medical Corps is redoubling efforts to reach Al Thowra Hospital in Taizz City with critical supplies. Located in a besieged area, the hospital has been difficult for International Medical Corps teams to access for several months. Relief organizations also note that there is significant ground fighting in and around entrances to Taizz City, and accessing besieged areas has not yet been possible, despite the ceasefire.

On April 13 and 14, heavy rains produced flash floods in western Yemen, compounding an already fragile humanitarian situation in Aden, Al Hudaydah, Al Mahwit, Amran, Hajjah, Marib, and Sana'a governorates. The floods resulted in at least 24 deaths and affected 20,000 to 30,000 people. Communities sustained damage and destruction to crops, livestock, and infrastructure. Relief organizations are responding to needs that include food, health, and water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) support. Internally displaced persons (IDPs) in affected communities also require shelter assistance, as their tents were either damaged or lost in the flooding.

INTERNATIONAL MEDICAL CORPS RESPONSE HIGHLIGHTS

Mitigating the Impact of Yemen's Water Shortages

According to the UN, approximately 19.3 million people in Yemen require some sort of WASH assistance, including 9.8 million as a result of the ongoing conflict. IDPs in Yemen are particularly vulnerable, as many lack access to safe drinking water, sanitation facilities, or other existing WASH resources. In January, International Medical Corps began trucking water to communities hosting large concentrations of IDPs, filling storage tanks established in coordination with local authorities and community leaders. During February and March, International Medical Corps delivered more than 10 million liters (L) of water to approximately 19 community water points in Sana'a and Aden, scaling up deliveries to the points in response to reported water shortages. In Taizz and Ibb, International Medical Corps WASH teams established 11 water points in districts with large IDP populations, and delivered 506,500 L of water to the points during February. International Medical Corps delivered more than 2.7 million L of water to health centers in Sana'a, Taizz, Ibb, Aden, and Lahj during February and March to help ensure health facilities and hospitals have adequate water supply for health service provision, infection prevention and control measures, laundry, and other critical functions. WASH teams also began hygiene kit distribution, providing family kits to 2,825 households in Aden, Taizz, Ibb, and Sana'a. In addition, 7,552 people in Taizz, Ibb, and Sana'a participated in hygiene awareness activities that included group discussions, demonstrations of improved hygiene practices, and question and answer sessions.



International Medical Corps provides water supply and a storage tank at a community water point in Ibb Governorate.

Providing Families with Food and Livestock Support in Taizz and Lahj

In Taizz and Lahj, International Medical Corps is providing access to basic food items for vulnerable families, particularly those with malnourished children under five or with pregnant and lactating women. International Medical Corps is assisting 950 households in Lahj and 1,190 households in Taizz through a voucher program that enables families to obtain wheat flour, rice, sugar, beans, salt, and vegetable oil from local vendors. During the month of March, International Medical Corps completed final rounds of food distributions in Lahj's Al Maqatirah District for 91 families and in Al Musaymir District for 89 families. International Medical Corps provided a total of 155.61 metric tons (MT) of food for families in Lahj over the course of three months. In Taizz's Mawiyah District, 459 families received and used their one-time vouchers, collectively receiving a total of 40.53 MT of food. Another 217 families in Mawiyah received vouchers in March, while voucher provision was planned for 232 families in Maqbanah District.

International Medical Corps has also launched a new activity in Taizz to improve access to food and help stabilize livelihoods by supporting households who rely on livestock assets, particularly in host communities. International Medical Corps is working with local agricultural and livestock authorities to conduct mass vaccination, de-worming, and treatment campaigns for small livestock—primarily sheep and goats—in Dimnat Khadir and Maqbanah. In addition, International Medical Corps plans to implement a voucher program to assist households with restocking small herds. The livestock program also includes organizing local livestock fairs that are designed to improve access to healthy animals, particularly for female heads of household.

Expanding Access to Primary Health Care

As fighting further strains Yemen's already fragile health system, International Medical Corps continues to implement health programs that expand access to medical care by helping facilities address shortages in supplies and using mobile teams to serve people who cannot reach health facilities safely. In Sana'a Governorate, International Medical Corps mobile teams deliver care in Sanhan, Bilad Ar Rus, Bani Matar, and Al Haymah Al Kharijiyah districts. From March 1 to 31, mobile teams in Sana'a conducted 1,381 medical consultations, primarily for acute respiratory infections and intestinal parasites. Mobile teams also provided reproductive health services, including prenatal care for 84 females and postnatal care for 104 females. Mobile health teams screened 359 children for acute malnutrition, 55 of whom were enrolled in targeted supplementary feeding programs to treat moderate acute malnutrition (MAM). Twelve children under five were enrolled for treatment of severe acute malnutrition (SAM). International Medical Corps also currently supports the operation of one stabilization center in Sana'a, where children with SAM and related medical complications can receive treatment. In Nihm District, International Medical Corps provided one-off support—pharmaceuticals and medical supplies—to the district health office during March, as Nihm has experienced increased caseloads due to a surge in conflict-related injuries.

In Taizz, mobile teams are active in At Ta'iziyah, Dimnat Khadir, Maqbanah, and Mawiyah. During March, mobile teams conducted 3,523 medical consultations, the majority for children between the ages of one and five who were suffering from acute—primarily lower—respiratory tract infections. Among the reproductive health services delivered, mobile teams conducted antenatal 436 consultations and 215 postnatal consultations. A total of 737 children under five years of age were screened for malnutrition, of whom 32 were newly enrolled for MAM treatment and 62 for SAM treatment. During March, mobile teams observed a worsening of women and children's nutritional condition in villages of Maqbanah District, where mobile teams operate. North of Taizz, International Medical Corps is expanding mobile medical and nutrition service into Ibb Governorate's Sabrah and Hubaishi districts. Ibb's southern districts are hosting a large number of IDPs who have fled fighting in Taizz.

In Lahj, mobile teams operating Al Milah, Al Maqatirah, and Al Musaymir conducted 6,116 medical consultations from February 28 to March 30. Reproductive health services included 448 consultations for antenatal care and 114 consultations for postnatal care. Teams also provided nutrition assistance for SAM cases in targeted areas; however, shortages of nutrition commodities in southern Yemen are affecting the provision of MAM treatment in Lahj.

International Medical Corps also directly supports more than 90 health facilities and hospitals in Sana'a, Taizz, Aden, and Lahj with medicines, supplies, and nutrition commodities. In Taizz, four of the nine primary health clinics supported by International Medical Corps stopped operating during the second half of March; hospital staff had left the area due to deteriorating security conditions.

For additional information, please contact:

Chris Skopec, Senior Director Emergency Preparedness and Response

Response Management Team Leader

cskopec@internationalmedicalcorps.org

Giorgio Trombatore, Yemen Country Director

Emergency Team Leader

gtrombatore@internationalmedicalcorps.org