

PROTECTION CLUSTER IN YEMEN – April 2016

The report is produced by Yemen Protection Cluster in collaboration with humanitarian partners and incorporates figures taken from the 8th Report of the Task Force of Population Movement (5 April 2016).

Key Figures

2.7 m

Internally Displaced Persons

14.1 m

People in Need for Protection Assistance

5.6 m

Targeted by Protection Cluster for Assistance

19

Protection Partners

USD 84.1 M

Funding requested

Situation Overview

The conflict in Yemen has exacted a dreadful toll on civilians who urgently require assistance to protect their lives and fundamental rights. One year after the eruption of the conflict in March 2015, 21.2 million people, 82% of the population in Yemen, are in need of some form of humanitarian assistance. With continued volatility and insecurity in many parts of Yemen, civilians are increasingly facing challenges to survival and violations of international human rights and humanitarian law.

The 8th report of the Task Force of Population Movement published on 5 April 2016 estimates that the number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Yemen is 2.7 million – this constitutes 10% of the population and is six-fold of the number of IDPs at the same time last year. Some 66% of IDPs have sought refuge in Taizz, Amran, Hajjah, Sana'a and Abyan governorates. Displacement strains on scarce resources, driving needs for food, water and other basics, particularly shelter, healthcare, education and essential household items. Also, assessments conducted by the Protection Cluster partners indicate multiple challenges faced by IDPs, which include lack of safety and security, family separation, limited freedom of movement, harassment, lack of access to services, early marriages and pregnancies, child recruitment, gender-based violence and lost documentation. In addition, IDPs often have little information about the situation in their areas of origin or their area of internal displacement, including how to access protection and humanitarian assistance.

Civilians in Yemen are facing a wide range of problems and three key causes are identified:

Lack of Safety due to Armed Conflict

The ongoing conflict has resulted in a lack of safety for most of the population in Yemen. Since the eruption of the conflict in March 2015 to the end of February 2016, casualty figures mount to over 6,400 dead and 30,000 injured. More than 600 health facilities and 1,100 school buildings are damaged or no longer functional. There are numerous reports of violations of international humanitarian and human rights law committed by all parties to the conflict in Yemen, including direct and indiscriminate attacks on civilians and civilian residential areas. This has taken a severe toll on civilians in particular children. Airstrikes, ground fighting and explosive remnants of war (ERWs) are all major causes of harm to civilians.

Limited Access to Basic Services

The current conflict has put serious restrictions on service infrastructure in Yemen, including health, education and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) services. Restrictions on freedom of movement have not only negatively affected the livelihoods of people in Yemen, but have also hampered the ability to provide humanitarian assistance to people in need. The situation is aggregated by scarcity of critical supplies as a result of reduced imports, such as fuel, food and medicines. Women,



Amran © UNHCR/A.Alsabri

older persons, minorities, persons with disabilities, as well as others with specific needs have been particularly affected with the loss of male family members, family separation and the breakdown of community support network structures. Consequently, many affected persons have no option but to resort to adverse coping mechanisms, such as child labour, early marriages, incur debts, or sell assets and, hence, become heavily indebted.

Weakened Rule of Law and State Protection

Lack of central or consistent authority has weakened the rule of law in Yemen. Even community-based dispute resolution mechanisms have been negatively affected by the current conflict and people often do not know how to obtain assistance for a number of issues such as forced eviction, harassment, physical or other abuse, gender-based violence (GBV) or other human rights violations.

Response & Coordination: Monitor protection risks and rights violations, provide protection service and advocate for the rights of the affected

The 2016 Humanitarian Response Plan for Yemen has four strategic objectives: (1) save lives; prioritizing the most vulnerable; (2) protect civilians and incorporate protection across the response; (3) promote equitable access to assistance for women, girls, boys and men; and (4) ensure humanitarian action supports resilience and sustainable recovery.

In order to address the concerns of IDPs, in line with these strategic objectives, it is essential that the response is based on a good understanding of the problems and that protection and humanitarian principles are at the core of all humanitarian assistance and response. The Protection Cluster, together with the Child Protection and Gender Based Violence (GBV) Sub-Clusters, prioritises protection mainstreaming across the humanitarian community and leads the strategic direction of IDP protection work in Yemen. In addition, the Protection Cluster coordinates and scales up protection activities to respond to ongoing identified needs, strengthen activities addressing protection, child protection and GBV challenges, establish referral pathways, strengthen case management, and increase the provision of legal aid and psycho-social support. Ongoing work and planned priorities for the Protection Cluster include those activities set out below.



Protection Monitoring – Meeting with IDP community leaders © UNHCR/A.Alsabri

- Unify and strengthen collection of protection data for ongoing context analysis and evidence-based advocacy.
- Undertake the displacement tracking with continuous efforts to improve the methodology and widen the network of coverage.
- Improve identification of individual cases for targeted direct protection and community services interventions, such as psycho-social support, legal assistance, or cash assistance.
- Map protection services/assistance throughout the country to identify gaps, minimise duplication and establish strengthened referral pathways.
- Provide support to all clusters to mainstream protection in all activities.
- Increase the two-way communication between the IDPs and affected populations and the humanitarian community, such as the Tawasul call centre, where the former can obtain critical information such as how to access protection and humanitarian aid and the latter can obtain information on the needs amongst the IDPs and the affected as well as provide an avenue for complaints, criticism and feedback on the quality and impact of services being provided.
- Undertake capacity development and awareness raising on protection among protection partners, persons of concern and relevant authorities.