



Department
for International
Development

Operational Plan 2011-2016

DFID Yemen

Updated December 2014

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Introduction

In 2013 the UK became the first G7 country to meet the United Nations target of spending 0.7% of gross national income on international development. The Department for International Development (DFID) uses that investment to help countries to lift themselves out of poverty and leave poverty behind. Operational plans set out to the public how we plan to deliver results across policy areas and for every country we work in. These plans clearly explain why, and how, DFID is targeting its resources and what we expect to achieve, covering the period up until March 2016.

DFID is focused on spending in the right ways, on the right things, in the right places. The portfolio of our projects is already shifting to deliver a more coherent, focused and ambitious approach to economic development. We are helping to build strong and investable business environments in developing countries and improving access to finance for entrepreneurs.

Improving the prospects for girls and women in developing countries is a priority. Investing in girls and women is the smart thing to do, as well as the right thing to do. By unleashing their potential, we see returns for girls and women themselves, their families and communities, and for their economies and countries. No country can successfully develop if it leaves half its population behind.

Life-saving humanitarian assistance remains one of DFID's most fundamental responsibilities. When disaster strikes or conflict erupts, we are first on the ground to support the most vulnerable people. We are also increasing our efforts to help those countries that are at higher risk of natural disasters to become more resilient in the first place.

DFID continues to drive value for money in everything we do on behalf of the British taxpayer. We have improved our procurement and programme management, increased our internal audit oversight, and we are ensuring that staff have the skills to deliver the Department's priorities.

On the international stage we are working hard to agree a new set of global development goals to replace the Millennium Development Goals when they expire next year. We are determined to secure a clear and inspiring set of goals for the post 2015 development framework that leave no one behind.

Increasingly we will take new and innovative approaches and we will work with new partners. This will include businesses who are increasingly major development players. During the Secretary of State's time as co-chair of the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation, DFID played a key role in encouraging different development actors to work together and use internationally agreed principles for aid and development effectiveness.

As our operational plans set out, our approach to international development is ambitious and innovative. We are determined to ensure that every pound DFID spends has the biggest possible impact on the ground. Ultimately by investing in developing countries, we can end aid dependency for good and build a better, more prosperous world for us all.

Context

The Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region has experienced unprecedented change since the start of the Arab Spring in 2010. The vision of political and economic reform held out by the Arab revolutions flared briefly but was quickly followed by widespread instability and conflict, and the rise of violent extremism particularly in the Syria-Iraq neighbourhood. Several countries in MENA remain at severe risk of instability and in danger of moving into deeper crisis. The immense costs of growing instability in the region, and increased risks to the UK of further deterioration, justify upfront engagement by the UK and international partners with MENA countries, focused on dealing with ongoing crises, addressing the drivers of conflict, and tackling longer-term causes of poverty.

Yemen, the only low income country in this region, is experiencing widespread instability and conflict, as a result of a set of inter-linked political, economic and development challenges. A multi-faceted tribal conflict in the north and a separatist movement in the south threaten future peace and prosperity: thousands of civilians have been displaced, already low state capacity has been weakened, and some areas of the country are beyond effective state control. Elite control and patronage continue to threaten and undermine government accountability, sound economic management, social cohesion and an effective civil society. Poverty and inequality have both increased over the last 15 years, with the result that 10% of the population live on less than \$1.25 a day and 37% on less than \$2 a day (World Bank, 2005 – latest available), most of them in rural areas. Girls and women suffer severe discrimination, including high rates of early marriage and genital mutilation. Fifteen million Yemenis - more than half the population - require humanitarian assistance (United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA), 2014) and almost half of all children under 5 years old are chronically malnourished (Global Nutrition Report 2014).

Despite modest growth over the last 2 decades (averaging less than 5%), the economy is beset by fundamental weaknesses: limited economic diversification beyond hydrocarbons (90% of exports, World Bank 2012 figures), state control of economic opportunities, a toxic investment climate, limited competition, endemic corruption and high unemployment, particularly among Yemen's youth. Oil revenues account for 60% of government revenues but production is forecast to decline sharply in the next decade. In addition, Yemen faces major challenges from declining water resources (second only to Eritrea globally for water security) and rapid population growth (joint highest outside of sub-Saharan Africa). Provision of basic services is limited and the country is highly vulnerable to natural shocks. It is unlikely to meet any of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

The security situation is still serious in many parts of the country, with targeted attacks on political and military personnel and infrastructure increasing. Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), which has a major presence in the south and east of Yemen, represents a significant local, regional and international threat. The threat from terrorism and kidnapping, and consequent limits on staff and access, means that implementing and monitoring our programmes in Yemen is very difficult.

The next year will be critical. A political transition deal - brokered by the Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC) following widespread unrest and demonstrations in 2011 - is the best chance in a generation to make progress towards a more secure and prosperous future for Yemen; but it is fragile and far from assured as violent confrontations in the summer of 2014 show. The Peace and National Partnership Agreement (PNPA) signed on 21 September 2014 – which is based on the outcomes of the National Dialogue Conference and aligned with the GCC Initiative – offers an important roadmap for Yemen going forward. By June 2015, the interim government of Yemen needs to draft a new constitution which sets out and enshrines a new political settlement; put it to public referendum; and hold national and local elections. It also needs to keep the economy afloat, including by keeping on track with the recently agreed International Monetary Fund (IMF) programme.

The UK is one of the leading donors to Yemen and will continue to play its part in supporting Yemen over the next year, including by helping to co-ordinate the support of the international community, particularly through the Friends of Yemen process co-chaired by the UK and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Yemen's regional neighbours, particularly the Gulf Cooperation Council, and the broader international community also have a critical role to play in supporting Yemen to address its political, economic and development challenges.

Vision

The UK government's long-term vision for MENA is a prosperous, stable region based on open, democratic societies with greater social, economic and political participation of its people. In support of this goal over the short to medium term, DFID is working to promote regional stability in line with the UK government's Building Stability Overseas Strategy. Across the region DFID is supporting countries to manage current conflict and crises, tackle the drivers of instability and conflict, and where possible, support political and economic reform alongside longer-term development.

In line with this, **the UK government's vision is for a more stable, secure and prosperous Yemen. DFID's goal is to help Yemen prevent and manage crises and address the drivers of conflict and poverty** by addressing urgent humanitarian needs, delivering basic services, and supporting political and economic reform. Our 3 objectives are:

1. Respond to and manage conflict by addressing immediate and underlying humanitarian needs, building resilience, and delivering basic services.

We will deliver multi-year assistance to chronically vulnerable people in urgent need, including refugees and migrants, those affected by conflict, and those suffering from acute poverty, hunger and malnutrition. We will improve the capacity of international and national agencies in Yemen to respond to emergencies and deliver basic services. We will increasingly work on laying the foundation for a national service delivery and social protection system that protects Yemenis from shocks, equips them to build a better life, and increases resilience to future humanitarian crises. Throughout, we will focus in particular on girls and women.

2. Tackle the drivers of instability by supporting the political transition and political reform.

We will provide specialist advice to the government of Yemen to support the National Dialogue, constitution drafting process and elections. We will increasingly seek to strengthen local government to improve service delivery and support the development of a new federal structure (through the UK Conflict, Security and Stability Fund (CSSF)); and empower civil society to help poor people hold their government to account.

3. Support economic reform to increase citizens' confidence in government and lay the groundwork for longer-term development.

We will support the private sector by providing micro, small and medium-size enterprises with access to finance to develop their business ideas, invest to grow and create jobs across the economy. We will increasingly support economic policy reform and better financial management by the government of Yemen, including through the delivery of Yemen's IMF programme.

Because good data underpins any successful development efforts, we will also **improve national surveys, data collection and economic analysis** to support better policy making and use our innovative new independent monitoring programme to track, validate and improve the delivery of our programmes.

Given the current context, the principal focus of DFID's programme is on meeting immediate needs and delivering basic services. Should the context improve, over the next few years we will increasingly focus our efforts on supporting political and economic reform to lay the groundwork for longer-term stability and development.

Alignment to DFID and wider UK Government priorities

DFID's approach to Yemen is aligned with the Building Stability Overseas Strategy, the Humanitarian Emergency Response Review and the UK Government's Humanitarian Policy. Our work will be taken forward as part of the National Security Council strategy for Yemen and we will play an active role in delivery of the CSSF. DFID's programme in Yemen is well aligned to DFID priorities of leading in emergencies, changing the lives of girls and women, and ending aid dependency through jobs.

Results 2011/12-2015/16

Headline results (those with a * directly attributable to DFID. In all other cases, DFID is contributing to the results)

Pillar	Indicator	Baseline	Progress towards results	Expected Results
Humanitarian	Number of people receiving emergency and early recovery assistance through DFID support*	300,000 (2011/12)	502,983 in 2013/14	N/A ¹
Poverty, Hunger and Vulnerability	Number of people receiving DFID-supported cash transfers (including public works employment)*	1,603 (2011/12)	OFF TRACK 36,000 in 2013/14	42,000 people directly benefitting from public works income each year, for 3 years, to 2015
Poverty, Hunger and Vulnerability	Number of women and children reached through DFID's nutrition programmes*	0 (2011)	ON TRACK 682,000 from 2012/13 to 2013/14	1.45 million (2012/13 to 2014/15)
Governance and Security	Number of people who vote in elections supported by DFID	6.6 million voted in 2012 elections	OFF TRACK No date for elections has been announced. Not expected to happen before mid-late 2015. Constitution drafting and voter registration are behind schedule (prerequisite to the presidential and parliamentary elections).	Similar levels of voter turnout are maintained for planned constitutional referendum in 2014 and next round of presidential elections in 2015.
Wealth Creation	*Number of people provided with new access to finance (deposit accounts) (and the % of these who are female) through DFID support*	11,700 (54% female) (2011)	ON TRACK (BUT OFF TRACK ON % FEMALE) 24,000 (35% female) from 2012/13 to 2013/14	44,700 (60% female) (2012/13-2014/15) 27,000 (2015/16)
Wealth Creation	Number of jobs indirectly created through DFID support ^{2*}	1,500 (2011)	OVER ACHIEVING 4,000 from 2012/13 to 2013/14	2,700 (2012/13-2014/15) 3,300 (2015/16)

¹ As this is a humanitarian programme, there are no milestones or targets in line with DFID guidance.

² Based on the International Finance Corporation's (IFC) model of jobs indirectly produced through access to finance and business training

Headline Results

In light of continuing humanitarian and poverty needs, we will seek to support additional people to receive emergency and early recovery assistance, receive cash transfers (including public works employment) and benefit from nutrition programmes. We will also develop new programmes to support tax reform, increase government accountability and help adolescent girls.

Evidence supporting results

There is a critical lack of timely, comprehensive data in Yemen. No national household survey data has been published since 2006 due to serious security, capacity and funding issues, which have been exacerbated by the recent crises. Despite the lack of up-to-date data at a national level, Yemen's short-term and underlying development challenges are well known. There is overwhelming evidence from experts on the ground, from humanitarian reporting and a range of data collection and analytical work such as the Joint Social and Economic Assessment of a serious deterioration of the situation since 2011 and acute need for assistance to the Yemeni population. High quality, timely data at a national level is needed to prioritise, plan, monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of development interventions, including those supported by DFID; and to report on progress.

Projecting the level of results to be delivered in a fragile and changing context is difficult. The results we can deliver are highly dependent on the performance of the small range of partners with whom we can work in country. DFID and our partners need to be able to adapt to changing priorities on the ground.

DFID response:

- We are building the statistical capacity of the government of Yemen by funding with others the collection and dissemination of a broad set of national data including a Population and Housing Census, a Household Budget Survey and a Demographic and Health Survey. As a result of DFID support the Demographic and Health Survey data will be published soon and the data collection work for the Household Budget Survey is nearing completion.
- We launched this year a new independent monitoring programme to verify results across the Yemen programme portfolio, assess what works in Yemen, and build up the evidence base.
- We will monitor results frameworks closely, amending as necessary as the context changes.

Delivery and Resources

Instruments of delivery

Given the difficult and unpredictable operating environment in Yemen and the high risk to our staff's safety, our strategy for delivery is to maintain a **mixed portfolio**, with around 90% of our programme resources spent through reliable implementing partners who can deliver results even in challenging security and political environments; and around 10% spent through riskier but potentially more transformative medium-term governance and economic reform programmes. We seek to spread the risk as much as possible by using partners who have the institutional capacity to deliver results but the security risks in Yemen mean that there are a limited number of implementing partners for us to work with. It is also difficult for us to leave Sana'a in order to monitor our programmes; we will use our independent monitoring programme to monitor and validate the impact of our programmes. The government of Yemen has weak institutional and public financial management capacity, and national and international civil society organisations have weak capacity and poor national reach. DFID Yemen has published an anti-corruption strategy which sets out what we do to minimise the risk of corruption on our programmes and to tackle corruption within the Yemeni economy and society.

We channel the majority of our support through:

- Trusted **multilaterals** such as the World Bank and UN, informed by the 2013 Multilateral Aid Review (MAR) Update. Where organisational weaknesses have been identified, we will seek to mitigate them through programme design, and influence our partners to address these weaknesses.
- **International nongovernmental organisations (NGOs)**, including Oxfam, Save the Children, Care and the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES).
- The **Social Fund for Development (SFD)**, a Yemeni organisation with a good track record of delivering basic services across Yemen (and with financial management systems separate from the government of Yemen's).

Other country activity

We are at the forefront of **effective partnership working** in Yemen, as the first donor to provide multi-year funding to humanitarian agencies and a leader in encouraging donors to pool support to the government through World Bank or UN-administered funds. We are engaging closely with the transitional government of Yemen to support them in delivering a successful transition and to ensure that our programme is consistent with Yemen's priorities. We will continue to work with our partners in the region, and in particular Gulf donors, to influence them to co-ordinate their support to Yemen with the international community and to focus on Yemen's short and long-term development challenges. With the World Bank and the government of Yemen, we have established the Executive Bureau, a government agency responsible for delivering aid-financed projects to support Yemen's transition and long-term development. The UK is also a co-chair of the Friends of Yemen process which seeks to galvanise international support to Yemen and was key to generating \$7.8 billion of aid pledges to Yemen at the donor conference in September 2012. We are now working closely with donors and the government to translate those commitments into concrete projects which benefit Yemen's people.

Maximising the impact of our people

To ensure we can continue to operate effectively in Yemen, it is critical that all our staff are appropriately trained in **personal security and safety**, which we will continue to prioritise. We will also continue to focus on improving **programme management, delivery and accountability**.

Planned Programme Spend

Pillar/Strategic	2011/12		2012/13		2013/14		2014/15		2015/16 (provisional*)
	Resource £'000	Capital £'000	Resource £'000	Capital £'000	Resource £'000	Capital £'000	Resource £'000	Capital £'000	Total Resource and Capital £000
Climate Change			790						
Conflict Pool									
Education									
Global partnerships	287		562		198				
Governance and security	1,971		7,223		5,130		3,870		
Humanitarian	19,957		31,394		25,846		30,510		
Multiple Pillars									
Poverty, hunger and vulnerability**	8,275		15,000		43,390		39,380		
Unallocated Budget									
Water and Sanitation									
Wealth Creation	1,225				1,003		4,240		
Health			4,144		5,808				
Total	31,715		59,113		81,375		78,000		72,000

*Expenditure figures for 2015/16 are indicative. DFID works in a variety of challenging environments, including fragile and conflict affected areas. Humanitarian work is often reactive and can be scaled up or down. An element of flexibility within funding allocations is necessary to ensure that we can balance the need for long term planning alongside the ability to respond where necessary to changing requirements.

**Includes spend on education, health, water and sanitation and economic development/wealth creation which cannot be disaggregated.

Planned Operating Costs

	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16 (provisional*)
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Frontline Delivery Costs – Pay	438	639	715	892	
Frontline Delivery Costs – Non Pay	194	209	132	216	
Administrative costs - Pay	457	336	309	182	
Administrative costs – Non Pay	140	119	144	341	
Total	1,229	1,303	1,300	1,631	1,631

*Expenditure figures for 2015/16 are indicative. DFID works in a variety of challenging environments, including fragile and conflict affected areas. Humanitarian work is often reactive and can be scaled up or down. An element of flexibility within funding allocations is necessary to ensure that we can balance the need for long term planning alongside the ability to respond where necessary to changing requirements.

Delivering Value for Money

Maximising the impact of every pound that we spend in DFID Yemen on poor people's lives

The Yemen team is dedicated to delivering value for money (VFM) in all aspects of its work and has to date demonstrated its ability to deliver good VFM. This has been achieved through careful selection of partners and by considering VFM in all decisions, whilst also taking into account the difficult security situation which increases unit costs in Yemen and curtails our ability to monitor and evaluate our programme.

The Yemen Team has made good progress in ensuring continuously improved VFM in the work we do by:

- Introducing a multi-year humanitarian programme, increasing VFM through resilience-building, community outreach and a longer-term strategic planning horizon for humanitarian response.
- Developing an anti-corruption strategy to support efforts to ensure integrity and VFM across the portfolio.
- Developing an independent monitoring programme to allow us to evaluate the VFM of our support to partners on the ground better.
- Working with partners that have robust monitoring systems with a record of strong delivery in Yemen.
- Investing in statistical capacity building in Yemen to provide better baseline data for assessing the VFM of new and existing projects.

We will continue to improve VFM, our risk management and financial performance by:

- Refreshing our VFM strategy. Key principles will include continuous review of the VFM of our operations and our programmes; and ensuring we and our partners have the capabilities to deliver VFM through smarter ways of working and delivering projects.
- Challenging ourselves on our existing portfolio and our pipeline to ensure VFM is maintained.
- Ensuring all new business cases for DFID Yemen programmes have undergone a VFM appraisal in line with corporate guidance. All business cases are available on the DFID website.
- Ensuring all DFID Yemen staff understand the latest corporate guidance on VFM, including through conducting in-house VFM training
- Improving risk management of financial performance and increased quality of forecasting and variance analysis through improved usage of systems and identifying champions within the team on financial management and performance and risk management.
- Using our quarterly risks and results portfolio reviews to help ensure programme quality.

The security situation in Yemen has inevitably led to an increase in some operating costs; for example staff allowances, travel costs, security costs (e.g. additional cars and drivers) are higher than they would otherwise be. However, the cost of operating in Yemen compares favourably with other fragile environments.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring

The security threat in Yemen means it is virtually impossible for DFID staff to monitor directly programme delivery outside Sana'a. **To increase our assurance over programme delivery, we have launched an innovative independent monitoring programme** delivered by a consortium led by the British Council. This will monitor programmes, independently from delivery partners, through visits to project locations across all governorates in Yemen. It will include the collection of beneficiary feedback, validation of project results, geo-tagging of photographs and collecting other qualitative or contextual data.

How: Each programme has a monitoring framework with robust quantifiable indicators and targets which are sex-disaggregated where appropriate and monitored annually. In addition, all programmes scoring consecutive Bs or a C in their annual review, or which cause concern for other reasons, will have a detailed Performance Improvement Plan. Through the independent monitoring programme we will monitor and validate results for key programmes, for example the SFD, nutrition, humanitarian and our support to elections.

Who: Primary monitoring responsibility falls to our programme partners. Where possible, we undertake joint monitoring with government and other donors to ensure harmonisation and to reduce workloads. Our evaluation adviser quality assures monitoring and evaluation arrangements and logical frameworks for all new projects, and checks annual reviews to ensure accuracy and consistency. Independent monitoring is delivered through a specialist data collection and survey company that is part of the British Council-led consortium.

When: Programme level monitoring is continuous with formal reporting through annual reviews. Due to the high risk context, we monitor both country and specific programme level risks on a quarterly basis. Results and performance across the programme are also monitored quarterly. Independent monitoring will be delivered according to an agreed work plan with key and/or high spending programmes prioritised.

What: We use a range of methods to monitor results. Our detailed results framework has been compiled from individual logical frameworks and provides an overarching framework for the programme. The information is used to both measure the impact of programmes and also to determine the future direction of work.

Evaluation

We will evaluate programmes which are high spending, innovative or where there is limited robust evidence that a particular intervention works. Yemen's cash transfer programme (the Social Welfare Fund) was included as a case study in a DFID-wide study on cash transfer programme beneficiary perceptions. The study was finalised in 2013 and published by DFID centrally.

Building capacity of partners

There is limited reliable data for Yemen. The country scores 52/100 in the World Bank Statistical Capacity Building Indicator survey (2013) compared with an average score of 62/100 for the MENA region. This reflects both the poor availability of data, and the limited use of internationally agreed methodologies. Poor availability of data affects DFID's ability to plan, monitor and evaluate our projects and programmes.

DFID is supporting the Yemeni Central Statistical Office (CSO) to improve its capacity both through a regional programme with the Islamic Development Bank and a bilateral programme to improve the availability of statistical data. DFID will use its evaluation work in Yemen to share learning with partners, for example the United Arab Emirates, who have signed an agreement with DFID committing us to work together on evaluation, in order to jointly build up the evidence base in the countries in which we both work.

Due to travel restrictions, DFID and other donors rely heavily on local partners for monitoring and evaluating programmes and projects. This includes local monitoring and evaluation consultancy firms and NGOs. By commissioning local partners to undertake this work and pairing them with international organisations to train and mentor the local implementers, we will build up national capacity in monitoring and evaluation. Our independent monitoring programme will also support building national capacity through the inclusion of a local Yemeni specialist data collection and survey company as part of the British Council-led consortium.

Transparency

Transparency is one of the top priorities for the UK government. It helps people see where money is going and for what purpose. It helps improve value for money and makes governments everywhere more accountable to their citizens. DFID is a world leader in aid transparency and has an ambitious vision for both DFID and its partners. We will ensure that we play our part in continuing to work towards that vision – set out in a suite of commitments including the Aid Transparency Guarantee (ATG), Aid Transparency Challenge (ATC) and DFID's Open Data Strategy.

Actions to ensure DFID meets its commitments in the ATG

We are committed to being transparent about our work, except in circumstances where release of information could put DFID staff or others at risk. We will support DFID's transparency commitments by:

- Ensuring that all project documentation is published on the Development Tracker;
- Ensuring that all information in the public domain is comprehensive, accessible, accurate, timely and written in plain English;
- Publishing a summary of this Operational Plan and all project summaries in English and Arabic.

Supporting transparency in our work

- We will increase opportunities for those directly affected by our projects to provide feedback on project performance.
- We will seek similar levels of transparency from our partners (CSOs, contractors, other donors). For example, we will continue to encourage SFD to use innovative methods for communicating their work.
- We will use our influence to encourage the transitional government of Yemen to become more transparent to its own citizens about its budgets and the aid which it receives, for example through improved and more transparent public financial management. The government of Yemen has made only modest progress so far, with their score in the bi-annual Open Budget Initiative (survey evaluates whether governments give the public access to budget information and opportunities to participate in the budget process at the national level) increasing from 9% in 2008 to 11% in 2012.¹

¹ International Budget Partnership , Open Budget Survey 2010

Annex A: Changes to Operational Plan

Page Number	Change made to operational Plan	Reason for change
3/4	Drafting changes	To reflect latest situation in Yemen, new DFID analysis, and Middle East and North Africa Division regional Operational Plan.
5	No humanitarian targets included	Consistent with current cross-DFID policy, humanitarian targets are not included in this Operational Plan.
5	Change to baseline for cash transfers target	To reflect accurate baseline for DFID-supported cash transfers through the SFD in 2011/12.
5	Change to expected results for, and wording of, nutrition indicator	Change to expected results due to a change in the end date of the programme (from Dec 2015 initially to March 2015) and to match language in the DFID Departmental Results Framework.
5	Change to wording of expected result on elections	To update given delays in Yemen.
7	New text on 2015/16 pipeline programmes	To reflect plans for new phases of support or new programmes.
11	Drafting changes	To reflect the latest situation in Yemen and new DFID analysis.
12	Drafting changes	To reflect progress on VFM, monitoring and transparency.

Annex B: Human Rights Assessment

Human rights context

Yemen is party to 8 of the 9 core international human rights treaties. However, it has a poor record of fulfilling its commitments and significant violations of human rights persist. The recently completed National Dialogue, undertaken as part of Yemen's political transition process, included many positive commitments that, if implemented, would enhance human rights in Yemen.

Economic and social rights: Yemen is ranked 154th out of 187 countries in the Human Development Index (2013), a slight improvement from 160th in 2012. According to an assessment in 2010,¹ it remains seriously off-track in achieving most MDGs. Yemen has one of the highest rates of stunting in the world (49%)² and high rates of food insecurity (41%).³ Yemen is currently listed by the UN Secretary General as one of 8 countries whose national security forces recruit and use children.

Non-discrimination: Although Yemen has demonstrated slight improvements on the Gender Inequality Index, it ranks only 146th out of 148 countries listed. Rates of female genital cutting (23%) and early marriage (14% below age of 15; 52% below 18 years) are among the highest in the region. Yemen has one of the world's worst ratios of female to male parliamentarians (1 woman in a parliament of 301 members) as well as female to male secondary school completion rates (3 women for every 10 men). Forced marriage, rape and sexual slavery by armed actors have been documented in the recent Secretary General Report on Conflict Related Sexual Violence (2013).⁴ Migrants and refugees crossing from the Horn of Africa face serious protection risks, especially kidnapping for ransom, trafficking and detention by human traffickers.⁵

Civil and political rights: Yemen continues to score a 6 on Freedom House's civil and political liberties scale. Article 103 of the Press and Publications Law bans direct personal criticism of the head of state and publication of material that "might spread a spirit of dissent and division among the people."⁶ Freedom of the press has become more restricted in recent years.

Direction of travel

Progress towards fulfilling Yemen's human rights commitments continues to be slow and limited. Little progress has been made on taking forward NDC recommendations on key human rights issues. During its Universal Periodic Review (UPR) in June, Yemen made commitments to address a range of human rights recommendations raised by other UN member countries. It has, however, yet to issue a response to 25 of the recommendations, most of which focus on the death penalty.⁷ Despite agreement in 2012, the establishment of a commission to investigate the alleged human rights violations in 2011 has also been delayed.

Future progress on human rights will depend to a large extent on the success of Yemen's political transition. If successful we could see gradual but significant improvement. Should the transition break down we would be unlikely to see any improvement and, if accompanied by serious violent conflict, would likely see widespread serious breaches of human rights.

UK Approach

To improve human rights in Yemen the UK government will:

- Work with a range of partners to monitor implementation of human rights commitments
- Continue to raise human rights concerns with senior members of the Yemeni government
- Support the political transition and seek to boost the voice and inclusion of marginalised groups and to improve the rights and status of girls and women
- Work to improve social and economic rights, including programmes to reduce poverty and malnutrition.

¹ This 2010 assessment (latest available) assumed current trends would persist and may therefore be out of date given events since 2011.

² UNICEF 2012 National Social Protection Monitoring Survey Baseline Report

³ Preliminary results of the WFP 2014 Comprehensive Food Security Survey

⁴ Sexual violence in conflict, Report of the Secretary-General, 14 March 2013, A/67/792-S/2013/149

⁵ OCHA Humanitarian Bulletin issue 30 Aug-Sept 2014

⁶ Freedom House

⁷ FCO 2014 Annual Human Rights Report

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