European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations

Yemen

Introduction

Yemen remains the world’s largest humanitarian crisis. After more than 4 years of a deadly conflict, millions of Yemenis suffer the consequences of intense fighting compounded with looming famine, outbreaks of epidemics and preventable diseases. Civilians face constant threats to their lives, safety, well-being and basic rights. The conflict has been marred by repeated violations of international humanitarian law, including mass civilian casualties and widespread destruction of infrastructure.

What are the needs?

Imports and distribution of food, fuel and medicine remain restrained, insufficient and costlier. This is due to the restriction of access to humanitarian assistance and the constant deterioration of the economic situation. In various parts of the country, water and power plants, factories, markets and shops have stopped functioning.

In 2019, an estimated 24 million people, 80% of the population, are in need of humanitarian assistance or protection. Currently, more than 20 million people lack sufficient food and 7.4 million people are at risk of famine.

The public health situation is dire, with several epidemics reported by health organisations. The country has been struggling with a record cholera outbreak since 2017; in 2019, more than 10,000 suspected cases were reported on a weekly basis in the 5 most affected governorates. The depreciation of the Yemeni rial has worsened the crisis. Unless the economy stabilises, an additional 3 to 5.6 million Yemenis risk food shortages in the coming months. In July 2019, more than 4 million people in acute need of assistance lived in 83 remote and hard-to-reach districts where humanitarians face access constraints.

The United Nations and humanitarian partners report that around 70,000 people have been killed since 2016. During the conflict, more than 4 million people have been forced to flee their homes. More than 680,000 people have been displaced in 2018, mostly because of the fighting in Hodeidah governorate and along the west coast. In addition, more than 100,000 people were displaced in 2019 due to the intensification of fighting in al-Dhalee governorate. Reports of grave violations against women and children have spiked dramatically.
How are we helping?

Since the beginning of the conflict in 2015, the European Union has allocated €440 million in humanitarian aid to the Yemen crisis. In 2019, a total of €115 million has been allocated to humanitarian organisations to boost lifesaving efforts.

The EU’s humanitarian aid programmes provide life-saving assistance, such as food, water, emergency shelter, and hygiene items, to people in war-affected areas and to displaced populations.

EU-funded projects also treat severely malnourished children, as well as provide emergency healthcare and food assistance. In response to the cholera epidemic, the EU funds treatment centres and prevention activities, while also supporting emergency outbreak response in areas affected by measles and diphtheria.

In addition, the EU supports the United Nations Humanitarian Air Services (UNHAS), which provides critical and reliable air and sea transport to humanitarian aid workers and cargo.

In June 2018, fighting started around the city port of Hodeidah, which still is estimated to host around 250,000 civilians and is a critical facility for both commercial and humanitarian imports to the country. Around 500,000 people have been displaced from the city and require sustained humanitarian aid. Despite access and security challenges, the EU’s humanitarian partners continue to provide assistance to the affected population in the area as well as in other active war fronts in the north and south of the country.

In July 2019, aid agencies are implementing the world’s largest humanitarian operation in Yemen, with as many as 12 million people receiving life-saving assistance every month.