



HIGHLIGHTS

- Fighting between the Government and the Houthis has been ongoing in the Sa'ada governorate over the past few days resulting in the displacement of several thousand people within the governorate, as well as in the neighbouring governorates of Hajjah (Haradh) and Aljouf.
- Based on reports received there has been no electricity or running water over the last few days in Sa'ada city.
- The Governor of Sa'ada has announced that 17 000 families (nearly 120 000 people) have been displaced, including internally displaced persons (IDPS) who were displaced during previous rounds of conflict in Sa'ada.
- In Harf Sofian (Amran governorate) reports suggest that government forces are gaining control of more areas. The intensity of the fighting has decreased.
- A joint government/UN mission is planning to visit Amran on 24 August. The United Nations Resident Coordinator (UNRC), WHO, UNICEF, the World Food Programme (WFP) and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) representatives will join the Minister of Public Health and Population (MoPH and P) in Amran.



HEALTH IMPACT

- Although there are no exact figures on the number of the civilian population injured or killed, today the Minister of Public Health and Population during a meeting chaired by the Minister of Foreign Affairs and attended by representatives of the UN, international nongovernmental organizations and other agencies stated that reports from all field hospitals in Sa'ada, including Sallam Main Hospital, other field hospitals and military hospitals indicate that there have been six deaths among the civilian population and few injuries. During the mission of the UNRC and the WHO Representative to Haradh no war-related injuries among IDPs were noted.
- The first meeting of the Health Cluster was convened on 22 August at the WHO office, chaired by the WHO Representative and co-chaired by Dr Ghazi Ismael, Deputy Minister for Curative Care of the Ministry of Public Health and Population. Relevant ministries, international and national nongovernmental organizations, UN agencies and others participated in the meeting. Experts from the Emergency Humanitarian Action programme in the Regional Office and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) provided technical input during the meeting.
- The UN country team (UNCT) in its meeting yesterday decided to finalize the flash appeal document by 30 August. The appeal will cover only life-saving humanitarian assistance and will last for six months. The Health Cluster, under the chair of WHO, will prepare the health component of the

appeal. The number of the population directly affected is approximately 150 000, and this figure will be used for planning the appeal, particularly for WFP and UNHCR. The health sector will also include populations who have not been displaced from Sa'ada but who have been severely affected by the conflict and require urgent humanitarian assistance. The task force established under the Health Cluster will meet today at the WHO office to discuss and prepare the health component of the flash appeal. Experts from OCHA and the WHO Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean will provide support in this regard.

- UN meeting with ICRC: This meeting was conducted on 23 August, 2009 at the UN Resident Coordinator's Office. Roles and responsibilities between the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and UN humanitarian agencies for the Sa'ada response was discussed and concrete agreement on geographical leadership, as well as operational collaboration was reached.
- The WHO Representative and the UNRC visited Haradh, including the Almazrak area, where most IDPs have been moved to assess the situation and discuss with authorities the humanitarian assistance and access to IDPs who are scattered in many locations.
- While in Haradh (Hajjah governorate) the WHO Representative and the UNRC also attended a meeting of a high-level ministerial committee, recently established by the Prime Minister and chaired by the Minister of Public Health and Population.
- In Sa'ada city and surrounding areas, the provision of humanitarian assistance is still on hold due to the security situation.
- In Haradh, only the UN is providing humanitarian assistance.
- There have been no reports of outbreaks so far but the situation in the Sa'ada governorate is alarming, as based on reports, many of the health facilities are non-functional and public health programmes and activities, including immunization services, are not being delivered to the population in conflict-affected areas in the Sa'ada governorate. There is a high risk of disease outbreaks, such as measles and diarrhoeal diseases.
- Dr Ahmad Soufi, WHO member of a joint UN team (WFP, UNCHCR and WHO) sent the following brief on the situation and described the activities of the joint UN team in the Amran governorate:
- The UN team (WFP, UNHCR and WHO) have had several discussions with local authorities, including the Deputy Governor of the Amran governorate on the situation, access to IDPs and humanitarian assistance.
- After a few days of delay in granting access to the UN team to visit areas to which IDPs have been moved (due to the security situation), the Deputy Governor finally gave the UN team approval to go and visit IDP areas starting from Sunday 23 August. He also appointed Mr Ahmed Al-Radhi, Governor's Office Director, and Mr Yahya Tawaf, General Relations Director of the governorate, as focal points to facilitate the team's mission.
- It was agreed that the team would go to the following locations:
- Day one 23 August 2009: Visit to Khaiwan (2 hours from Amran city) and Bani Suraim (1:30 hours from Amran city)
- Day two 24 August: Visit to Huth (1:30 hours from Amran city) and Khamer (1 hour from Amran city).
- The Deputy Governor estimated the total IDP caseload in the governorate at 300 IDP families.
- The governorate has already sent a joint team with Yemen Red Crescent Society (YRC) to assess the IDP situation and register the IDPs, in order to coordinate with the UN and other international community on ways and means to provide assistance to these people.
- Medical supplies provided by WHO have been received by the governorate's health office and the mobile medical team has been ready for a few days and ready to provide health care to the IDPs as soon as they are accessed.

HEALTH SECTOR RESPONSE

First meeting of the Health Cluster

The first meeting of the Health Cluster was convened on 22 August, 2009. Based on practical and logistic issues, the UNCT decided to split the Health and Nutrition Cluster, previously agreed upon to be co-chaired by WHO and UNICEF, into two clusters: Health chaired by WHO and Nutrition chaired by UNICEF.

UN/International nongovernmental organizations briefing to donors

A high-level meeting between UN agencies, nongovernmental organizations and the donor community was convened by the UN Resident Coordinator on 19 August, 2009. The main purpose of the meeting was to exchange information and inform the donor community on the humanitarian situation and needs.

Joint meeting of government (Minister of Foreign Affairs) with donors, international nongovernmental organizations and UN

A joint meeting of government (Minister of Foreign Affairs) with donors, international nongovernmental organizations and UN was held.

Meeting with newly established Ministerial Committee, chaired by Minister of Public Health and Population

The Minister of Public Health and Population, soon after being appointed as the chair of the ministerial committee on the Sa'ada humanitarian situation, invited representatives of the UN for a meeting to be held in the Haradh district of the Hajjah governorate on the 20 August 2009 with the purpose of assessing and planning for the situation of IDPs from the Sa'ada governorate who fled the heavy fighting between the government armed forces and the Houthy rebels. The WHO Representative, the UNRC and the UN team currently in Haradh attended the meeting on behalf of the UN.

The meeting was also attended by the Minister of Human Rights, the Minister of Public Works, the Governor and Deputy Governor of Hajjah, members of the local council, representatives of different sectors and the Yemen Red Crescent Society. The meeting discussed the urgency in establishing a camp to accommodate 500 displaced families who are currently either scattered on route between Sa'ada and Haradh or are temporarily accommodated by relatives in the town. Division of labour and the assigning of responsibilities among governmental and nongovernmental agencies was discussed. The provision of humanitarian assistance, such as shelter, water, sanitation, food and health services, etc. was also discussed and responsibilities were assigned. The Chair emphasized the need for coordination among the different players and nominated Dr Omer Mujalli, the Assistant Deputy Minister of Public Health and Population, as the focal point to coordinate the provision of the health services in close coordination and cooperation with the health office in Hajjah and WHO.

The following information was shared during the meeting and the following division of responsibilities was proposed by the Government:

- The Government has decided to establish a camp in the Al Mazrak area in Haradh (Hajjah governorate) to initially accommodate approximately 500 families with the possibility of extension to accommodate 1000 families. The Deputy Governor has been assigned to oversee the establishment of the camp. The initial number of tents required is 500. Yemen Economic Cooperation (YECO (a semi-governmental entity)) will provide 300 tents and the Yemen Red Crescent 10 to 20 tents. Local government will draft a budget for the running costs of camp management and submit it to the government. According to UNHCR, the camp site is only 35 km from the conflict-affected area and therefore is unsuitable.

- While the exact number of IDPs is still under review, so far UNHCR is estimating that 2000 families are scattered in different places in Haradh.
- No budget has been allocated from the government side for the establishment of the camp. So far no budget has been allocated to the interministerial committee for relief activities.
- Neither the local authorities nor the Yemen Red Crescent Society have the required capacity in Haradh to play the leading role in the establishment and management of the camp. They are dependent on donor support.
- At present only the UN is providing assistance.
- During the meeting it was proposed by the Minister of Public Health and Population that the Minister of Public Works will clear the identified piece of land designated for the camp and assist in design of the camp; YECO will complement items provided by WFP; UNICEF will coordinate and provide assistance in water and sanitation ; UNHCR and local authorities will provide assistance for IDPs reception; and WHO, the Health Department and the Yemen Red Crescent will provide support on health-related issues.
- Haradh has a very harsh hot and humid climate. There are IDPs currently without shelter and water sources are only found in the valley. There is a real danger of heatstroke and severe dehydration due to the heat. Most IDPs are settled along a wadi. The lack of access to proper shelter, lack of clean drinking-water and sanitation, diarrhoeal diseases, skin rash (due to heat), and some cases of malnutrition among children are the main problems and hazards.
- Shelter, water distribution, water filters, food, bednets and the provision of health care, including the establishment of a surveillance system and disease control are priorities.

WHO RESPONSE

Coordination meeting with UN staff in Haradh

The WHO Representative and the UNRC attended a regular meeting of the UN team currently providing assistance to IDPs in Haradh to share information, assess the overall situation and identify the most urgent and priority assistance needed. Shelter, safe drinking-water and sanitation, food and health services were cited as the top priorities.

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