



1 July 2015 – The crisis in Yemen has been designated a “Level 3” emergency by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee, signifying the highest level of humanitarian emergency and triggering a system-wide mobilization of financial, human and technical resources to ensure a more effective response to the needs of affected populations.

More than 20 million people in 20 out of Yemen’s 22 governorates are currently in need of humanitarian assistance and 15.2 million people in need of basic health care, an increase of more than 40% since March. More than one million people have been internally displaced (double the numbers since early May).

Health system failure

Serious shortages of medicines and medical supplies, as well as acute fuel shortages, have resulted in a gradual collapse of the health system. Medicines for diabetes, hypertension, cancer and other forms of chronic diseases are no longer available and there are acute shortages in critical medical supplies – trauma kits, medicines, blood bags and other necessities.

Reproductive health services are also in jeopardy. If current conditions persist, an estimated 257 000 pregnant women will face significantly greater difficulty in accessing antenatal and emergency obstetric care. Without swift resumption of commercial and humanitarian imports of fuel and medical supplies, many pregnant women will face dramatically increased risks of death during childbirth.

Food insecurity

Nearly half the population is food insecure, an increase of almost 2 million people since the conflict escalated in March. Some of the areas hosting the greatest numbers of internally displaced persons (IDPs) were also the most food-insecure areas pre-crisis. Since March, the number of malnutrition admissions has increased by 150%, and 10 out of 22 governorates are classified at the "emergency" level for food security – one level below "famine."

An estimated 9.4 million have no or limited access to safe water due to fuel shortages, and local water corporations are struggling to secure fuel supplies to power piped networks.

Disease outbreaks

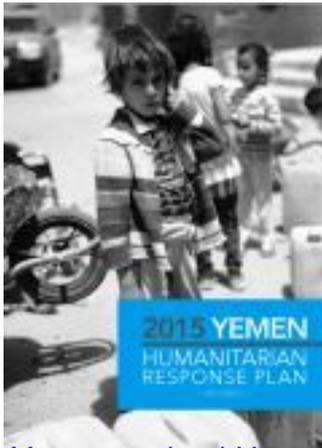
Communicable disease outbreaks caused by cramped living conditions, disruption to vaccination programmes and lack of sanitation, coupled with reduced surveillance and a collapsing health care system, are major concerns. Surges in cases of malaria and suspected dengue fever have been reported, and significant incidence of diarrhoeal diseases and pneumonia also continues to be reported. The insecurity is preventing preparedness and control activities for malaria season, which is expected to begin in July. Restricted access is preventing the transportation of suspected samples of dengue fever and acute flaccid paralysis for laboratory testing.

Health sector funding

While the humanitarian needs have grown immensely over the last 3 months, the funding situation for WHO and the Health Cluster remains a key limitation to a successful response. Under the revised Humanitarian Response Plan, released in June 2015, the health sector requires US\$ 152 million of which WHO seeks US\$ 70 million. WHO has so far received US\$ 13 million and has a remaining gap of US\$ 57 million (81.4% funding gap).

Additional funding is urgently needed to support the effective scale-up of WHO and health sector staff and operations in line with the Level 3 grading.

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