



Currently more than 2 million people are still displaced in Yemen with women and children representing three quarters of IDPs Photo Credit Christine Cool1 February 2018 – In just one week, Asrar Saeed, a mother of 2 children, lost her husband and her home. As tensions escalated 3 years ago, Asrar fled with her children from Taiz – a city she had never left before.

“My husband was killed, leaving me with 2 children and no money. We used to live together with dignity but the war changed everything,” she said letting out a deep sigh of sorrow.

Now, Asrar lives in a small makeshift tent inside an unfinished building in Ibb governorate, a place 300 other internally displaced persons (IDPs) call home. Most rooms in the building are comparable to a small studio apartment. They are cramped with multiple family members, accommodating sometimes up to 13 people.

“We cannot drink safe water or eat proper food. The food we eat is not fit for human consumption. We spend most of our time in the street begging for food and oftentimes we use the remnants of bread and rice to satisfy our children’s hunger,” said Asrar.

“We’re going through diseases, displacement, cold, fear and hunger. We don’t even have mattresses and blankets to protect ourselves from cold.”

Unimaginable suffering □

The health problems are another dilemma Asrar is suffering from.

“I have hypertension and other diseases I have no idea about. When we get sick, we have no money to go to health centres or buy medicines,” she explained.

Asrar is one of more than 500 000 IDPs living in Ibb. This number represents around 25% of all IDPs in the country. Currently, more than 2 million people are still displaced in Yemen, with women and children representing three quarters of IDPs.

“The suffering of the displaced people in Yemen is severe and unimaginable. They have gone through very tough times which gravely affect their health and psychological conditions,” said Dr Nevio Zagaria, WHO Representative in Yemen.

“This protracted crisis has triggered great hardship for millions of Yemenis, particularly for IDPs who are bearing the brunt of this conflict.”

Never-ending war

Hundreds of thousands of IDPs from Taiz, like Asrar, are unable to return home due to sustained clashes in different parts of the city. As the financial situation keeps deteriorating, most IDPs also find it difficult to find jobs or regular sources of income. Asrar is one of them.

“I tried to work, but there are no job opportunities. I would rather die instead of living such a life.”

In Yemen, the number of people in need for humanitarian aid has increased dramatically. Around 22.2 million people need some kind of humanitarian assistance.

“Together with health partners, WHO is scaling up its interventions in the affected governorates, including Ibb, to respond to persistent health needs, through providing essential medicines and

medical supplies to health facilities,” said Dr Zagaria.

With support of the Government of Japan, WHO has dispatched 13 mobile medical teams in Yemen to provide primary health care services for those in need, including thousands of IDPs.

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