

HIGHLIGHTS

- Demining operations slowed down by a budget shortfall of \$7.9 million
- Food insecurity likely to be worse in 2013
- Food rations for IDPs and returnees in large families temporarily reduced due to funding shortfall
- High levels of chronic malnutrition call for integrated approach to long-term effects
- More than 140,000 formerly displaced people have returned home to Abyan
- New fighting in the south creates new small-scale displacements

FIGURES

People without access to safe water and sanitation	13.1 m
Food insecure people	10.5 m
People without access to health care	6.4 m
Acutely malnourished children	998,000
Internally displaced people	350,000
Returnees	175,000
Refugees	238,000
Vulnerable migrants	100,000
Migrant/Refugee arrivals in 2013	7,518

Source: YHRP 2013, UNHCR

FUNDING - 2013

716 million
requested (US\$)

2% funded



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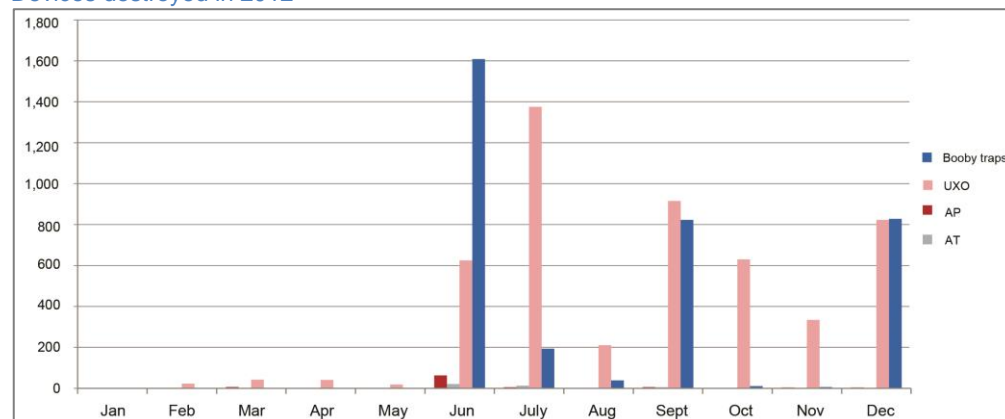
Demining operations slowed by funding shortfall

Urgent capacity needed to deal with improvised explosive devices

Yemen is having a considerable problem with explosive remnants of war (ERWs), including landmines, unexploded ordnance (UXOs) and improvised explosive devices (IEDs). Clearing ERWs is critical in facilitating the safe return of internally displaced persons (IDPs), ensuring safe access for humanitarian agencies and restoration of livelihoods. These operations are in danger of being delayed by a budget shortfall of some US\$7.9 million.

Currently, operations are ongoing in five out of 15 districts in the northern Sa'ada Governorate and eight out of 11 districts in Abyan in the south. However, only 60 per cent of the teams required to ensure an 'impact free' Yemen by 2017/2018 have been recruited. To build the capacity to deal with IEDs, the Yemen Mine Action Programme urgently needs \$0.85 million. This will provide team kits and training in new techniques to detect and destroy IEDs.

Devices destroyed in 2012



(Source: Yemen Mine Action Programme)

The programme has so far destroyed 2,685 IEDs, 4,045 UXOs, 41 anti-tank mines and 76 anti-personnel mines. In total 4,398 km² of the initial 10,057 km² of suspected contaminated land in Abyan Governorate has already been released to the population. However, some 34 km² in Abyan has been confirmed as being contaminated by ERWs and is in need of clearance. More than 75 per cent of the estimated 140,000 formerly displaced people who have returned to Abyan Governorate depend on agriculture for their livelihoods. Whilst most urban areas, connection roads and public areas have been cleared of ERWs, the majority of the area still requiring clearance is agricultural land. In Sa'ada, which is also largely dependent on agriculture, at least 1,390 km² has been investigated by a technical team and more than 127 km² still needs to be cleared. In Hajjah Governorate, 31,287 people benefitted from mine risk education in January 2013.

WFP urgently needs more funding to restore the food pipeline for IDPs and returnees

There is a serious risk that people returning to these areas will be forced to resume work on potentially contaminated land in order to meet their basic needs. If land is not cleared, farmers will be at great risk of death or injury. Children are particularly at risk when herding livestock. In 2012, the number of children killed or maimed by ERWs doubled to 75 (14 killed, 61 maimed) compared to 37 (28 killed, 9 maimed) in 2011. Given adequate funding, the programme aims to clear the land quickly to avoid further casualties from ERWs, especially of children.

High food insecurity and malnutrition to persist

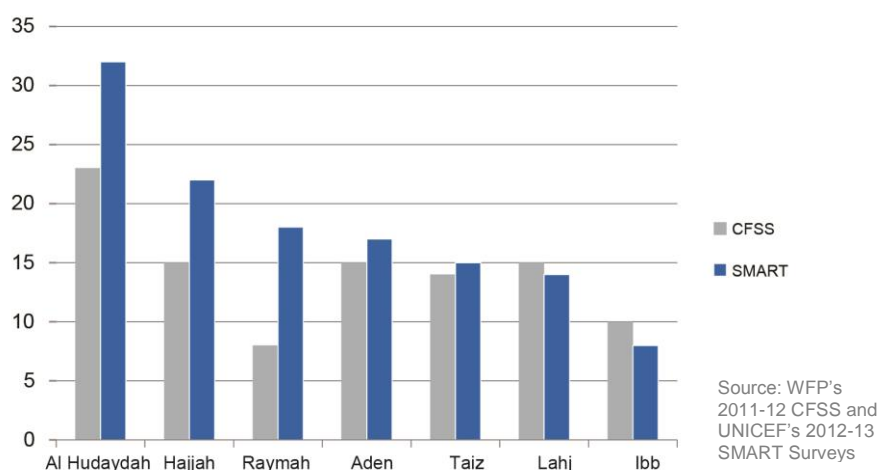
Food security outlook for 2013 worse than in 2012

In a new survey of 11 governorates with high food insecurity levels, the World Food Programme (WFP) found that food insecurity levels have remained the same or slightly improved since the 2012 Comprehensive Food Security Survey (CFSS), carried out in November and December 2011. The total percentage of severely food insecure households, however, declined from 31 per cent in 2011 to 27 per cent in 2012. This improvement is being attributed to continued humanitarian assistance, lower food prices and increased use of credit by households to purchase food. In December 2012, approximately 45 per cent of households purchased food using credit – an increase from 33 per cent in December 2011.

WFP reports that the food security outlook for 2013 is slightly worse than in 2012, when an estimated 10.5 million people were considered food insecure. The causes of food insecurity will likely persist and be aggravated by poor prospects for the local agricultural production, which is estimated to be about 8 per cent lower than in 2012.

Meanwhile, levels of acute malnutrition have deteriorated in most of the surveyed governorates, compared to last year. This is being attributed in large part to the limited access to adequate water and sanitation facilities, as well as poor hygiene practices.

Global Acute Malnutrition rates for selected governorates



Inadequate harvests in Hudaydah and Hajjah Governorates

The food harvest in Hudaydah and Hajjah Governorates is insufficient to meet household needs, and will only last for three months, according to a survey undertaken by the NGO *Action Contre La Faim (ACF)*. Food is the single biggest monthly expenditure for 78 per cent of families in Hudaydah and for 80 per cent in Hajjah. During the survey period, 27 per cent of families in Hudaydah and 19 per cent in Hajjah experienced difficulties finding enough food to eat.

While there is a need for immediate emergency response to reduce mortality from acute malnutrition, an integrated approach is required to address the longer-term effects of chronic malnutrition

The survey indicated that most families rely on less preferred foods, purchased food on credit, limited portion sizes at meal times or sent household members to beg as coping mechanisms. The most significant coping mechanism (26 per cent in Hudaydah and 20 per cent in Hajjah) was migration away from areas of origin.

The survey results showed very high food aid dependency ratios, exceeding 60 per cent, in both governorates. Yemen imports most of its food, including 95 per cent of its main staple wheat. Annually, about 2.6 million tonnes of wheat is imported commercially against total domestic utilization of 2.7 million tonnes. As a result, households are highly vulnerable to price fluctuations in global food markets.



Humanitarian agencies are continuing to provide life-saving food assistance to conflict-affected persons (OCHA/ Eman Al-Awami).

Food rations reduced due to lack of funds

Due to funding shortages, WFP has had to temporarily reduce monthly food rations by 50 per cent for displaced and returnee families of seven or more people. This will not affect families of six people or less, who are already receiving half of what the larger families receive. The measure is expected to last throughout February, March and April.

The humanitarian team in Yemen is concerned that unless donors urgently fund WFP's food pipeline, the reduction in rations could negatively affect internally displaced persons (IDPs) and returnees, particularly in Hajjah and Abyan Governorates. Up to 295,000 people are likely to be affected, including IDPs in Sana'a and Amran Governorates.

WFP has been providing 100 kg of wheat flour, 10 kg of beans and five liters of vegetable oil for large households. Rations for households of six or less members remain at 50 kg of wheat, 5 kg of beans and 2.5 liters of oil per month.

High levels of chronic malnutrition point to long term needs

In Abyan Governorate, a Standardized Monitoring and Assessment of Relief and Transitions (SMART) survey undertaken by UNICEF and the Ministry of Public Health and Population (MoPHP) in January 2013 found that 28.8 per cent of the population in conflict-affected areas was chronically malnourished and 16.1 per cent was acutely malnourished, above the global acute malnutrition (GAM) emergency threshold of 15 per cent. In areas not affected by conflict, acute malnutrition was estimated to be 11.3 per cent, but chronic malnutrition was significantly worse at 36.5 per cent.



A community volunteer examines a malnourished child in Hudaydah Governorate. (UNICEF/M. Hamoud)

Preliminary findings of a UNICEF/MoPHP survey conducted in Aden Governorate in September 2012 found the GAM to be 18.9 per cent. More than 24 per cent of the children were underweight and 16.7 per cent stunted.

In Ibb Governorate, preliminary findings of a UNICEF/MoPHP survey from December 2012 showed poor acute malnutrition levels for children 6-59 months old of 7.6 per cent in the eastern highlands and 8.5 per cent in the western highlands. While these acute malnutrition levels are lower than the national level of 15.7 per cent, and much lower than the levels in neighbouring Hudaydah Governorate where global acute malnutrition is 31.7 per cent, the results do indicate a poor nutrition situation in the both areas. The survey also found alarming levels of stunting in children - above the WHO 'critical' levels threshold of 40 per cent. The stunting rates in the highlands were above 55 per cent, with severe stunting being at 24.4 per cent in the eastern highlands and 25.8 per cent in the western highlands. While showing the severity of chronic malnutrition, these results call for an integrated response to reduce the prevalence and the resultant longer-term effect of stunting. Chronic malnutrition does not only affect the physical development of children but also irreversibly affect their potential for intellectual development.

While IDPs in the south have been returning to their homes in large numbers, the large scale protracted displacement crisis in the north continues

Efforts to meet needs of IDPs and returnees

Almost 140,000 formerly displaced people have returned to Abyan

In the southern governorate of Abyan, security was seen as one of the primary obstacles to IDP returns. Since July 2012, as hostilities subsided and security conditions began to improve, almost 140,000 IDPs have returned to their homes, according to UNHCR. This brings the total number of registered IDPs in the south down to 30,000 people.

The returnees are receiving shelter, basic household items and food assistance to help rebuild their lives. However, for the returns to be sustainable urgent assistance is required to restore damaged infrastructure and basic services, including water and sanitation facilities, health care and education, as well as to re-establish law and order.

Given the level of destruction and lack of services in Abyan, the pace and scale of the return process was unexpected. The key considerations of displaced people deciding to return home to Abyan included high levels of rent for accommodation and difficulty maintaining an existence in temporary shelters. Government assistance for return is also seen as a contributing factor for people returning. There have also been some reports of pressure from host communities. Many of the displaced were cut off from income-generating activities during their displacement. Moreover, a number of people returned because they were concerned that they would not be able to protect their land or property in their areas of origin.

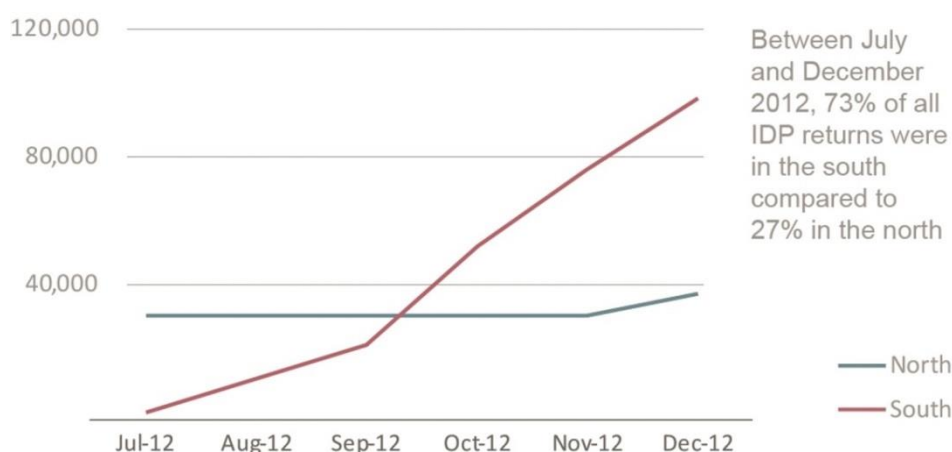
Partners negotiate access to address protracted displacement in the north

The large-scale, protracted internal displacement crisis in northern Yemen continues. Almost 320,000 people remain displaced in the northern governorates of Sa'ada, Hajjah, Amran, Dhamar, Al-Jawf and Sana'a – the vast majority of them have fled the repeated rounds of fighting in and around Sa'ada Governorate since 2004.

Despite overall improvement in the security environment in northern Yemen, only a small fraction of northern IDPs – around 37,000 people have returned to their homes. On-going security concerns, damage to homes and infrastructure, lack of basic services and disruption to livelihoods remain significant obstacles for IDP returns. Some IDPs are also reluctant to return home over fears of persecution.

There are currently two camps (Al-Mazrak 1 and 3 in Haradh, Hajjah) hosting about five per cent of the IDPs in the north. The remaining 95 per cent of the IDPs live with host communities or in informal settlements. Humanitarian partners are continuing to negotiate with Al-Houthis for improved access to the IDPs. UNHCR is providing technical assistance to the Government to develop a national IDP policy to address and resolve internal displacement throughout the country.

Comparison of Cumulative IDP returns between north and south Yemen



Source: UNHCR

Even as the vast majority of IDPs in the south are returning home, the situation remains volatile with new outbreaks of fighting resulting in small scale displacements

Pockets of instability create new displacements in the south

The recent return of IDPs in the south brings the total number of displaced people in Yemen to about 350,000 people - down from half a million mid-last year. Despite the overall improved stability, the situation remains volatile with new outbreaks of fighting resulting in new but small-scale displacement. This has been happening particularly in the south of the country, driven by clashes between Government forces and Islamists armed groups.

In early February, 750 households were displaced from Al-Khubr district in Abyan Governorate to neighbouring villages, when the Government conducted four days of airstrikes in the area, reportedly targeting Ansar Al-Sharia. Basic household supplies were provided to some 400 households and food aid to 350 households. IOM also put in place temporary measures for water provision. All those displaced have now returned to Al-Khubr.

In Al-Bayda Governorate, several thousand people were displaced by fighting in late January and early February 2013. Many of the displaced sought shelter with host families, in farm sheds and caves in Rada'a District and Dhamar Governorate. A joint assessment mission to Dhamar on 3-4 February found urgent non-food needs, including basic household supplies, mattresses, blankets etc.

Local residents interviewed indicated that fighting had destroyed their homes, farms and other property. The full extent of the damage is yet to be determined and registration of IDPs is ongoing. An estimated 200 families are believed to be living in caves. So far, UNHCR, Islamic Relief and other partners have provided food, basic household supplies, shelter and hygiene kits for the displaced and host families.



Fighting has displaced thousands of people, many of whom sought shelter with host families, in farms and in caves. (OCHA/ Eman Al-Awami)

In Brief

The UK announces GBP 70 million in humanitarian aid over two years

On a visit to Sana'a on 25 February, the United Kingdom Minister of State for International Development, Alan Duncan, announced that the United Kingdom will provide GBP 70 million (US\$106 million) in humanitarian aid to Yemen over the next two years. The funds will provide emergency food assistance, shelter, access to clean water and help for people recovering from conflict. Mr. Duncan said that the UK funding will help to meet basic needs in the run up to open elections in February next year and through the first year of the new government, making a successful transition more viable, as well as saving lives.

"Critically, by providing support to the agencies we work with on a two-year basis, we will give them the predictable funding they need to plan the longer term support programmes that will address the root causes of the humanitarian crisis, rather than simply tackling the symptoms", Mr. Duncan said.

Security Councils calls for humanitarian support

Following a Security Council mission to Yemen on 27 January 2013, UK Ambassador Mark Lyell Grant and Morocco's Mohammed Loulichki told a New York Security Council session that Yemen faces a 'troubling humanitarian situation'.

The co-leaders of the mission highlighted that half of the population has no access to clean water and sanitation, 10 million people need food aid, six million need access to health care and six million young people aged 15-28 are unemployed. "The 2013 Yemen humanitarian response needs further support," they said.

Ambassador Grant said President Hadi had called on Friends of Yemen countries to transform the US\$8 billion pledged at two successive conferences in 2012 into concrete assistance ahead of its next meeting in London on 7 March 2013.

US\$4-5 million are urgently needed to improve the water supply in four Governorates

Urgent need to improve water supply in Hudaydah, Hajjah, Amran and Raymah Governorates

Following a survey conducted in the four Governorates of Hudaydah, Hajjah, Amran and Raymah in October 2012, the WASH Cluster estimates that it will require \$4-5 million for urgent interventions to improve the water supply.

The cluster found that 64.1 per cent of the population gets drinking water from unimproved sources and that only 53 per cent of the population drinks water from safe water sources. The survey found that 28.3 percent of the population did not have access to the globally recommended minimum of 15 litres of water per person per day.

HIV/AIDS awareness in Haradh, Hajjah

Yemen has relatively low HIV/AIDS infection rates, but local authorities in Haradh, Hajjah Governorate, have raised concerns about a lack of awareness among displaced people.

In response, health partners have launched an awareness-raising programme on HIV, sexually transmitted infections and life skills. The programme will train 20 youth peer educators on HIV prevention, sensitize religious and community leaders, and provide voluntary counselling and testing services.

“We know that HIV is escalating and can grow into a major epidemic—as we have seen this happen in other countries,” Majed Al Gonaid, Yemen’s Deputy Minister of Health said. According to UNAIDS, most people in the camps are not aware of their increased vulnerability to HIV infection. In 2011, an estimated 22,000 Yemenis were living with HIV.

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