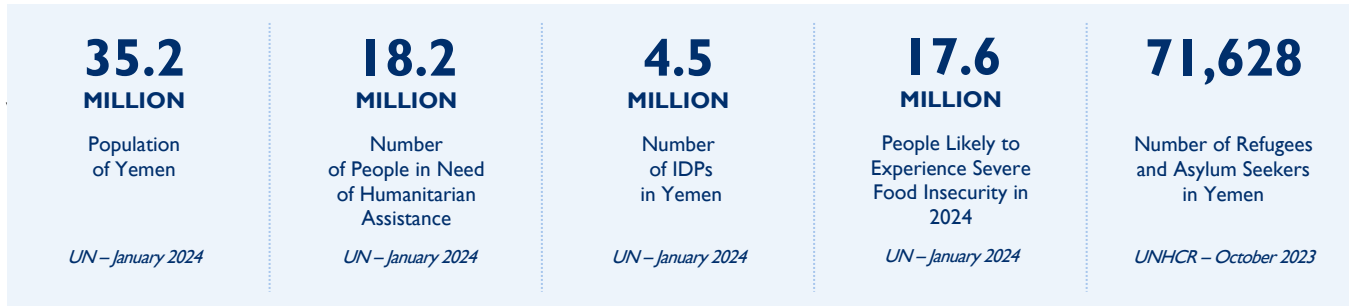


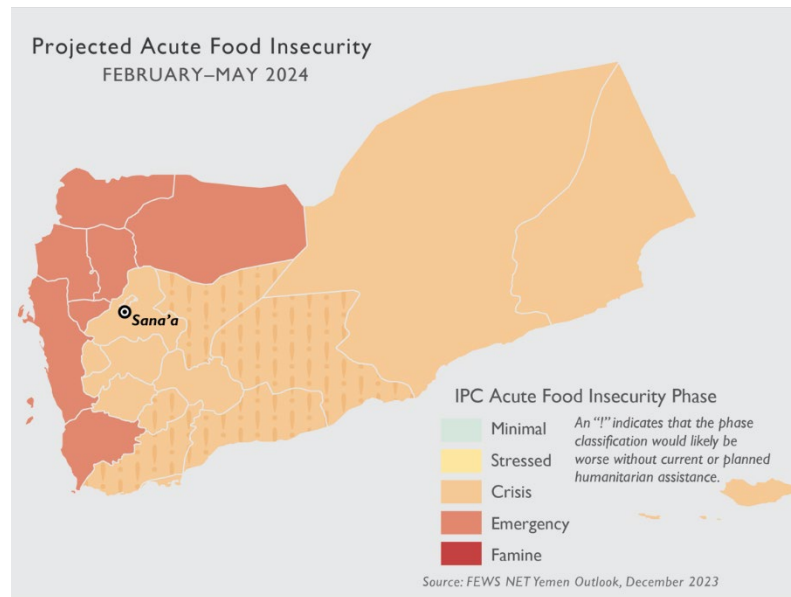
Yemen – Complex Emergency

FEBRUARY 2, 2024

SITUATION AT A GLANCE



- Al Houthi hostilities in the Red Sea, in conjunction with joint United States and United Kingdom airstrikes on Al Houthi targets in northern Yemen, prompted USAID/BHA partners to enhance contingency planning activities in mid- to late January to ensure the continued provision of humanitarian aid.
- Acute food insecurity in seven governorates in Al Houthi-controlled northern Yemen is projected to decline to Emergency—IPC 4—or worse levels during the February-to-May period, according to FEWS NET.
- The UN warns that the decline in cholera cases in Yemen during December 2023 was likely due to colder weather, rather than sustained health care improvements. Health actors are bolstering preparedness measures ahead of the April–May rainy season in the event of a resurgence in suspected cases.



Note: FY 2024 funding for the Yemen Complex Emergency will be included in future products when committed/obligated. For information on the U.S. Government (USG)'s funding toward the response in FY 2023, refer to Yemen Complex Emergency Fact Sheet #12 released on September 30, 2023, available on the USAID website at <https://www.usaid.gov/humanitarian-assistance/where-we-work>.

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

USG Monitors Impacts of Red Sea Hostilities, SDGT Designation on Humanitarian Operations in Yemen

Al Houthi attacks against maritime transport in the Red Sea since November 19, 2023, continue to disrupt commercial trade in Yemen, prompting concerns among relief actors for potential adverse effects on humanitarian operations, according to international media. In response to the ongoing attacks, the United States and United Kingdom—with support from Australia, Bahrain, Canada, the Netherlands, and New Zealand—began conducting joint airstrikes on Al Houthi targets in northern Yemen, including military sites and Al Houthi-controlled seaports, in mid-January. Some USAID Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (USAID/BHA) partners subsequently implemented temporary mitigation measures, including minimizing non-essential staff movements in northern Yemen. In addition, USAID/BHA partners continue to strengthen contingency planning activities—including pre-positioning relief commodities—to ensure the continued provision of critical humanitarian aid in the event of increased access constraints and supply chain disruptions from further escalation of hostilities in the Red Sea and in northern Yemen.

Following the escalation of Al Houthi attacks, U.S. Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken announced on January 17 the designation of the Al Houthis as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist (SDGT) group, effective February 16. While relief actors previously expressed concern in early 2021 that similar designations could impede the importation of food, fuel, medical supplies, and other necessities to Yemen, the SDGT designation incorporates exemptions to minimize negative impacts on populations in need of humanitarian assistance. Humanitarian organizations, including USAID/BHA partners, continued to monitor the impacts of the SDGT designation on relief operations and the safe passage of vessels carrying humanitarian commodities to ports in Yemen amid the recent hostilities as of early February.

Seven Governorates Projected to Face Emergency Levels of Food Insecurity

Approximately 3.9 million people in Republic of Yemen Government (RoYG)-controlled southern Yemen likely faced Crisis—IPC 3—or worse levels of acute food insecurity between June 2023 and January 2024, according to the Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS NET).¹ Additionally, deteriorating economic conditions driven by more than nine years of conflict and compounded by a temporary pause in food assistance to approximately 9.5 million people in Al Houthi-controlled areas of northern Yemen beginning in December 2023 will likely widen food consumption gaps and increase the number of households facing Emergency—IPC 4—or worse levels of acute food insecurity in seven governorates across Yemen between February and May 2024. However, FEWS NET anticipates the deterioration of food security to occur gradually, as stocks from Yemen's October-to-January cereal harvest and charitable support, or *zakat*, during the Ramadan and Eid holidays in March and April are expected to provide some temporary seasonal support. Notably, more than half of the population in the affected governorates—Amran, Hajjah, Al Hudaydah, Al Jawf, Al Mahwit, Sa'dah, and Ta'izz—received food assistance from the UN World Food Program (WFP) prior to the pause in food aid that has been ongoing since December in northern Yemen and relied on the distributions to meet basic food needs. Meanwhile, WFP continues to distribute food aid in southern Yemen, and WFP and other USAID/BHA partners are providing food assistance across the country via cash for food and multipurpose cash assistance (MPCA). USAID/BHA partners also continue to deliver multi-sector assistance, including essential nutrition services, to vulnerable populations in northern and southern Yemen.

¹ The Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) is a multi-partner initiative that developed a standardized scale to classify the severity and magnitude of food insecurity. The IPC scale, which is comparable across countries and time, ranges from Minimal—IPC 1—to Famine—IPC 5—for acute food insecurity. IPC Phase 5 is referred to as “Catastrophe” when classifying a household and “Famine” when classifying an area. Famine conditions occur when at least 20 percent of the population in a given area face an extreme lack of food; the Global Acute Malnutrition prevalence, measured by weight-for-height z-score, exceeds 30 percent; and the mortality rate exceeds two people per 10,000 individuals per day.

IDPs Increasingly at Risk of Forced Eviction Across Yemen

As a result of protracted conflict in Yemen, in 2023 alone nearly 59,600 individuals—more than 9,900 households—experienced displacement at least once, adding to the approximately 4.5 million people displaced overall in the country as of January 2024, according to the International Organization for Migration (IOM). Internally displaced persons (IDPs) are increasingly at risk of forced eviction from IDP sites and rented accommodations by local authorities and landlords, heightening their exposure to protection violations and increasing shelter needs, according to a joint December 2023 analysis by nongovernmental organization (NGO) ACAPS and the Protection Cluster.² Between January and October 2023, the Protection Cluster and Camp Coordination and Camp Management Cluster recorded nearly 61,400 cases of eviction or eviction threats, with forced eviction rates increasing by an estimated 10 percent in 2023 compared with 2022. Notably, in 2023, landlords and local authorities evicted the highest numbers of IDPs from Ta'izz Governorate's Al Ma'afer district and Marib Governorate's Marib city, contested areas marked by high levels of insecurity where evicted IDPs may face significant protection risks.

Inadequate access to shelter solutions has prompted many IDPs to seek shelter in makeshift collective centers, such as schools, and on publicly and privately owned land without legal documentation of residence, according to the joint analysis. Meanwhile, limited access to income-generating opportunities, loss of livelihoods, and reduced purchasing power due to Yemen's deteriorating economy are exacerbating IDPs' needs and hindering their ability to afford rent, further increasing their risk of eviction. Many IDPs also lack access to civil documentation, which local authorities often confiscate during forced eviction, as well as legal and protection services. Older people, persons with disabilities, and women- and child-headed households remain particularly at risk of forced evictions due to a lack of legal protection, the analysis notes. Furthermore, IDPs at risk of forced eviction from their location of displacement are often unable to return to their place of origin due to conflict-related housing damage, insecurity, and a lack of basic services and livelihood opportunities. USAID/BHA partners continue to provide critical assistance—including camp management and shelter support, legal services, MPCA, and water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) services—to support populations at risk of forced eviction.

GoE Resumes Verification of Ethiopian Migrants for Voluntary Return

Following a nearly five-month pause in official efforts to identify migrants wishing to return to Ethiopia, the Government of Ethiopia (GoE) began a two-week identity verification exercise for migrants in Yemen on January 15. USG partner IOM, which operates the Voluntary Humanitarian Return (VHR) program, reported that the GoE had successfully verified nearly 3,000 migrants as of January 29, with four late-January VHR flights returning nearly 590 migrants to Ethiopia's capital city of Addis Ababa from southern Yemen's Aden city in Aden Governorate. With U.S. Department of State Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (State/PRM) support, IOM supported the return of more than 3,900 migrants from Yemen to their countries of origin in 2023. An estimated 43,000 migrants remained stranded in Yemen as of late January despite their desires to return to their areas of origin, IOM reports. In response, IOM plans to increase the frequency of VHR flights in 2024 to accommodate up to 16,000 migrants, depending on available funding and conditions in countries of origin.

Migrants in Yemen—who are primarily from Ethiopia and Somalia—face heightened protection risks, including exploitative labor conditions and violence perpetrated by smuggling or trafficking groups, exacerbating already-high levels of humanitarian need among migrants, according to relief actors. A lack of access to adequate health and WASH services among migrant communities also renders them

² The coordinating body for humanitarian protection activities, comprising UN agencies, NGOs, and other stakeholders.

disproportionately at risk of outbreaks of communicable diseases, such as cholera. In January, State/PRM partner the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and local officials launched a solarization project to improve essential facilities in Lahij Governorate’s Kharaz Refugee Camp, Yemen’s sole remaining refugee camp, which hosts nearly 9,800 households primarily from Ethiopia and Somalia. The initiative installed solar power in the camp’s essential facilities, including distribution pumps, water wells, and the sole health clinic, enhancing health, protection, and WASH conditions for more than 2,300 households residing in the camp.

MoPHP Records a Decline in Cholera Cases, Likely Attributable to Weather Conditions

Cholera cases in Yemen declined in both northern and southern Yemen during December following a localized outbreak that began in mid-October 2023, according to the UN. Between October 16 and December 31, the RoYG Ministry of Public Health and Population (MoPHP) recorded more than 1,000 suspected cholera cases and six associated deaths across more than 20 districts in nine governorates—Abyan, Aden, Ad Dali’, Hadramawt, Al Hudaydah, Lahij, Al Mahrah, Shabwah, and Ta’izz—in southern and eastern Yemen. Notably, children ages five years and younger represented nearly one-third of the total cases. However, the UN warns that actual figures are likely much higher due to poor access to laboratory equipment and rapid diagnostic tests that result in underreporting, particularly in Al Houthis-controlled northern Yemen. While the data indicate a gradual improvement of the cholera situation, the UN noted the decline in cholera cases during December is likely temporary, attributed to seasonal colder weather. The UN warned of a possible resurgence of the disease in early 2024 resulting from the start of the rainy season in April and the endemic nature of cholera in Yemen.

Humanitarian actors, including USAID/BHA partners, are bolstering cholera prevention measures—including conducting community-level hygiene promotion activities and improving water supply and quality—ahead of the upcoming April–May rainy season, during which cholera can spread more easily. In RoYG-controlled areas of Yemen, the MoPHP and the UN World Health Organization (WHO) continue to conduct daily monitoring of cases with support from district and governorate health offices. In addition, WHO and other Health Cluster partners have developed an action plan to respond to a potential outbreak during the rainy season that accounts for more than 9,000 additional cholera cases in ten high-risk governorates. However, health actors reported experiencing challenges due to insufficient funding and a shortage of rapid diagnostic tests and oral cholera vaccines in Yemen.

KEY FIGURES



5.2 Million

People in Yemen reached with WFP general food assistance in November 2023

U.S. GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

FOOD SECURITY

To address acute food insecurity in Yemen, USAID/BHA supports WFP and seven NGOs to implement food assistance activities. USAID/BHA partners are providing emergency food assistance through in-kind food aid, including U.S.-sourced commodities, and cash and vouchers for individuals to buy food in local markets. With USAID/BHA and other donor support, WFP reached more than 5.2 million people with in-kind food assistance and approximately 17,700 people with cash-based transfers across Yemen in November.



15

USG partners supporting health interventions

HEALTH

The USG supports IOM, UNHCR, the UN Population Fund (UNFPA), WHO, and 11 NGOs to conduct life-saving health interventions in Yemen. USG partners provide primary health care services—in conjunction with nutrition and WASH programming—through static health facilities and mobile medical teams serving hard-to-reach areas throughout Yemen. USG partners also support local health volunteers to provide health services at the community level, thereby promoting better health outcomes. In addition, USAID/BHA partners equip health facilities with medical supplies and pharmaceuticals to expand access to quality medical services. In November, a USAID/BHA NGO partner provided primary health care services—including antenatal and postnatal care, immunizations, integrated community case management, and family planning services—through more than 20 static health facilities and five mobile teams across the country.



5

USG partners supporting MPCA programming

MPCA

With USG support, IOM, UNHCR, and three NGOs provide MPCA to conflict-affected households in Yemen to meet their basic needs and reduce the use of negative coping strategies, while also supporting local markets. By providing MPCA, USG partners enable households to procure cooking gas, food, hygiene items, and other essential commodities. USAID/BHA partners distribute MPCA to vulnerable households, including conflict-affected, newly displaced, and other at-risk households, to help meet basic needs and develop linkages with longer-term programming.



14

USG partners supporting nutrition programming

NUTRITION

USAID/BHA-supported nutrition assistance aims to identify, prevent, and treat wasting—the deadliest form of malnutrition—across Yemen. Through support for the UN Children’s Fund (UNICEF), WFP, WHO, and 11 NGOs, USAID/BHA helps reduce morbidity and mortality resulting from malnutrition, particularly among children and pregnant and lactating women (PLW). USAID/BHA partners provide nutrition support through static facilities and mobile teams by integrating health, nutrition, and WASH interventions to comprehensively assist vulnerable populations. USAID/BHA also supports the nutrition stock pipeline for moderate and severe acute malnutrition cases. With USAID/BHA funding, an INGO partner’s community health and nutrition volunteers supported health workers to identify patients experiencing acute malnutrition, visiting nearly 3,100 households in southern Yemen’s Ad Dali’ Governorate in December to conduct mid-upper arm circumference measurements for children ages five years and younger and PLW. Following the screening process, the USAID/BHA partner referred acutely malnourished individuals to specialized nutrition services.



10

USG partners supporting protection interventions

PROTECTION

The USG is responding to critical protection needs across Yemen through support to IOM, UNFPA, UNHCR, and seven NGOs. Through community mobilization activities, risk mitigation efforts, and specialized case management services, USG partners address child protection and psychosocial support (PSS) needs, prevent and respond to gender-based violence, and respond to other protection risks and violations. In November, a USAID/BHA NGO partner reached approximately 380 children with PSS activities through structured sessions and group activities and conducted 16 awareness-raising sessions on child protection, targeting an estimated 230 individuals in Ta'izz.



14,400

People reached with IOM-supported WASH services in December

WASH

The USG supports IOM, UNICEF, and 16 NGOs to expand access to safe drinking water and prevent and respond to communicable disease outbreaks in Yemen. USG partners conduct critical WASH interventions, including distributing hygiene kits, promoting improved hygiene practices, providing water trucking services, and rehabilitating water systems damaged by conflict, for IDPs and other at-risk populations across Yemen. In December, IOM's WASH teams continued to respond to new and protracted IDP influxes in Yemen. With USG and other donor support, IOM reached nearly 140,400 individuals with emergency WASH services and the expansion and rehabilitation of water supply infrastructure during the month.

CONTEXT IN BRIEF

- Between mid-2004 and early 2005, conflict between the RoYG and Al Houthi opposition forces in northern Yemen generated widespread and repeated displacement and exacerbated humanitarian needs. The southward advance of Al Houthi forces in 2014 and 2015 expanded the scope of the armed conflict, further aggravating the humanitarian crisis. In March 2015, a Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA)-led coalition began conducting airstrikes against Al Houthi and allied forces to halt Al Houthi southward expansion, damaging and destroying public infrastructure, interrupting essential services, and reducing commercial imports to a fraction of the levels required to sustain the Yemeni population.
- A UN-brokered truce between Al Houthi authorities and the KSA-led coalition from April through October 2022 resulted in a significant reduction in conflict that has persisted; however, the situation on the ground remains fragile and humanitarian needs remain high due to the economic crisis, high levels of unemployment, protracted instability, and rising food and fuel prices. Approximately 18.2 million people require humanitarian assistance, according to the 2024 Humanitarian Needs Overview. Moreover, approximately 4.5 million people remain internally displaced in the country since 2015, while an additional 1.9 million IDPs have returned to their areas of origin. The volatility of the current situation has impeded relief agencies' ability to obtain accurate, comprehensive demographic data on conflict-affected populations.

- On October 9, 2023, U.S. Ambassador Steven H. Fagin reissued a declaration of humanitarian need for Yemen for FY 2024 due to continued humanitarian needs resulting from the complex emergency and the impact of the country's economic and political crises on vulnerable populations.

PUBLIC DONATION INFORMATION

- The most effective way people can assist relief efforts is by making cash contributions to humanitarian organizations that are conducting relief operations. A list of humanitarian organizations that are accepting cash donations for disaster responses around the world can be found at [interaction.org](https://www.interaction.org).
- USAID encourages cash donations because they allow aid professionals to procure the exact items needed, often in the affected region; reduce the burden on scarce resources, such as transportation routes, staff time, and warehouse space; can be transferred very quickly and without transportation costs; support the economy of the disaster-stricken region; and ensure culturally, dietarily, and environmentally appropriate assistance.
- More information can be found at:
 - USAID Center for International Disaster Information: [cidi.org](https://www.cidi.org)
 - Information on relief activities of the humanitarian community can be found at [reliefweb.int](https://www.reliefweb.int).

USAID/BHA bulletins appear on the USAID website at [usaid.gov/humanitarian-assistance/where-we-work](https://www.usaid.gov/humanitarian-assistance/where-we-work)