

OVERVIEW

YEMEN 2017–2018 / MULTIPLE CRISES

CRISIS	Yemen Conflict, March 2015–onwards
TOTAL PEOPLE IN NEED¹	24.1 million individuals
TOTAL PEOPLE DISPLACED¹	3.3 million internally displaced
TOTAL SECTOR NEEDS¹	6.7 million (4.5 million in acute need)
TOTAL PEOPLE REACHED²	2.28 million individuals with Shelter-NFI and CCCM assistance in 2017–2018



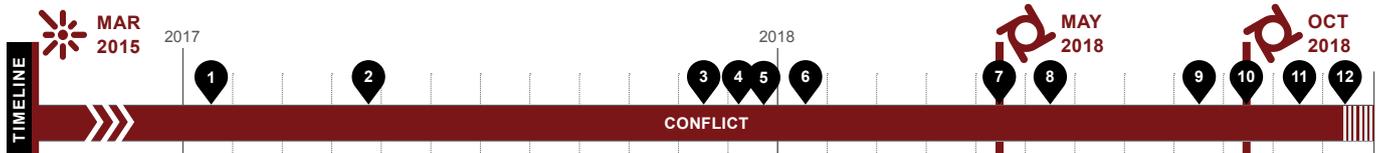
RESPONSE ACHIEVEMENTS (2017–2018)²

- 71,952** households – emergency shelter
- 179,374** households – NFIs
- 85,371** households – cash for rent
- 44,728** households – winterization NFIs
- 3,332** transitional shelters built
- 2,328** houses rehabilitated

¹ Figures as of Feb 2019. Yemen Humanitarian Response Plan 2019.
² Shelter/NFI/CCCM combined dashboards for Dec 2017 and Dec 2018.

SUMMARY OF THE RESPONSE

In 2017 and 2018, the humanitarian crisis in Yemen remained the worst in the world, with nearly 75 per cent of the entire population requiring assistance. People with shelter and NFI needs increased 17 per cent in two years, and needs were compounded by the food crisis, intense fighting, cholera and a cyclone. The shelter and NFI response focused on the distribution of emergency shelter and NFI kits and, to a lesser extent, on rental support, transitional shelter and housing rehabilitation. Activities were implemented using cash whenever possible.



- 1 Jan 2017: Conflict intensifies leading to significant displacement.
- 2 27 Apr 2017: Second wave of cholera outbreak in Yemen.
- 3 Nov 2017: All Yemeni air, land and sea ports closed.
- 4 Dec 2017: Heavy clashes in Sana'a and other governorates in the central and northern region.
- 5 20 Dec 2017: Yemen's ports opened for a 30-day window.
- 6 Jan 2018: Southern Yemeni separatists seize control of Aden.
- 7 May 2018: Cyclones Mekunu and Sagar cause displacement, flooding and damage to houses and public infrastructure.
- 8 Jun 2018: Fighting escalates in Hodeidah requiring shelter and NFI assistance.
- 9 Sep 2018: The economy is impacted by severe currency depreciation.
- 10 14 Oct 2018: Cyclone Luban causes displacement and flooding.
- 11 Nov 2018: International community calls for cease-fire.
- 12 Dec 2018: Reduction in hostilities allows Shelter and NFI partners to scale up response.

CONTEXT

See overview A.37 in *Shelter Projects 2015-2016* for more background information.

Yemen relies on imports for around 90 per cent of its staple food and for nearly all fuel and medical supplies. Already ailing before the escalation of the conflict in March 2015, the Yemeni economy contracted sharply since the conflict began.

The climate in Yemen varies greatly depending on the geographical region. The range of temperature in winter can go from 22°C to below 0°C at its coldest.

In the fourth year of the humanitarian crisis, conflict, severe economic decline and collapsing essential public services took an enormous toll on the population, exacerbating existing vulnerabilities. Yemenis faced multiple crises, including armed conflict, displacement, natural disasters, risk of famine and disease outbreaks, which created the worst humanitarian crisis of recent years. By the end of 2017, 75 per cent of the population – 22.2 million people – needed humanitarian assistance. This figure reached 24.1 million by the end of 2018.

The unique combination of all these factors created an extreme challenge to the provision of life-saving and life-sustaining shelter solutions and non-food items (NFIs) for the most vulnerable.



Air strikes in civilian neighbourhoods caused massive damage and loss of life.

DISPLACEMENT AND RETURNS

As of June 2018, 2.3 million people were internally displaced across the entire country, mostly due to the ongoing conflict. By the end of 2018, there were 3.3 million people displaced. The escalating conflict in the Al Hudaydah region alone (June to September 2018) displaced some 685,000 individuals. Eighty-one per cent of IDPs were displaced for more than a year, creating a prolonged burden on the host communities and on those paying rent. This situation was even worse for the 72 per cent who were displaced for more than two years.

On top of those who were displaced, one million people returned back to their place of habitual residence, requiring additional support to rebuild their lives.

Two major types of displacement occurred:

- **Families that moved pre-emptively** before the conflict reached their location. These were normally in a slightly better situation and could be reached with assistance (both in-kind and cash).
- **Families that tried to flee when the conflict had already reached their location.** These were normally out in the open or caught behind the front lines, only accessible through a humanitarian pause in the conflict, and could only be assisted with in-kind blanket distributions.

DISPLACEMENT LOCATIONS

The majority of IDPs in Yemen lived with host families for protracted periods of time. Therefore, the capacity of the hosts was extremely stretched. Others lived in rented accommodation with often significant strains on their economic situations.

An increasing proportion of families lived in IDP sites as an option of last resort. These families were considered most in need, due to lack of services and management, as well as the generally poor shelter conditions.

SHELTER AND NFI SITUATION

An estimated 5.4 million people in 2018 required emergency shelter or essential household items, and 2.6 million people were in acute need of this type of assistance.¹ As of late 2017, shelter remained the third most critical need for both IDPs and returnees, after food and access to income.²

Delivering immediate emergency assistance for newly displaced families was challenging, as the majority lived in precarious situations for several weeks before they could receive basic emergency shelter and NFI support.

NATIONAL SHELTER STRATEGY

Shelter activities were coordinated under a joint Shelter/NFI/CCCM Cluster. Shelter and NFI partners had to continually adapt their methodologies to ensure that – when access was possible – responses could be inclusive and integrated.

The Cluster operated six hubs across the country to ensure a granular understanding of the context and the needs.

In line with the coordinated response and the Humanitarian Response Plan structure, the Cluster operated a three-tier response strategy:

- **First-line response (prioritized):** basic kits, rental and transitional shelter support to newly displaced and highly vulnerable families, rehabilitation of damaged houses and site management and coordination activities;
- **Second-line response:** improved living conditions for families living in transitional shelter arrangements through maintenance, upgrade and provision of winterization kits;
- **Full-Cluster response:** increased sustainability of shelter arrangements by providing cash grants to reconstruct damaged houses.

¹ Yemen Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO) 2018.

² Task Force for Population Movement (TFPM) report, September 2017.

CLUSTER RESPONSE ACTIVITIES AND COSTING

Line of Response	Standard Activity	Sub-activity	Unit cost (without ops)	Unit cost (incl. operations)		
				In-kind	Cash	Voucher
FIRST-LINE Provide basic kits and support to newly displaced and highly vulnerable families	Household kits, emergency shelter kits and tents	Non-food items	\$ 177	\$ 230	\$ 204	\$ 204
		Emergency shelter	\$ 233	\$ 303	\$ 268	\$ 268
	Rental subsidies and cash grants to rehabilitate damaged houses	Cash for monthly rental subsidies	\$ 100	-	\$ 135	-
		Housing rehabilitation	\$ 2,000	-	\$ 2,300	-
	Construct and help to manage transitional shelters where needed	New transitional shelter	\$ 523	\$ 680	\$ 601	\$ 601
		Rehabilitation of transitional shelter	\$ 500	\$ 650	\$ 575	\$ 575
		Steps to ensure emergency and transit sites meet minimum requirements	Site with site management structure	\$ 3*	-	\$ 30*
	Site monitored on monthly basis		\$ 1*	-	\$ 15*	-
	Site covered by Baseline Assessment		\$ 1*	-	\$ 2*	-
SECOND-LINE Upgrade living conditions for families in transitional shelter arrangements	Maintenance support and shelter upgrades	Shelter upgrade	\$ 50	\$ 65	\$ 58	\$ 58
		Shelter maintenance (basic)	\$ 50	\$ 65	\$ 58	\$ 58
	Winterization kits	Winterization NFIs	\$ 230	\$ 299	\$ 265	\$ 265
		Shelter winterization support	\$ 230	\$ 299	\$ 265	\$ 265
FULL-CLUSTER Increase the sustainability of shelter arrangements	Cash grants to reconstruct damaged houses	Housing reconstruction	\$ 5,000	-	\$ 5,345	-

Shelter/NFI/CCCM Cluster Technical Guidance Note for the 1st Standard and Reserve Allocations for the Humanitarian Pooled Fund (HPF) for 2018.

* Costs per individual beneficiary. All other costs are per household.

SCALE OF THE RESPONSE

Between 2017 and 2018, shelter-related activities reached over 160,000 households and NFI distributions reached 220,000 households. Achievements and funding grew significantly in 2018 compared to 2017, with Shelter-NFI partners receiving a total of about USD 76 million versus the USD 20 million of the previous year. In 2018, Yemen received the highest humanitarian funding for a single country in the world, and the second highest after the Syria Crisis for Shelter-NFI only.

TARGETING AND INCLUSIVE PROGRAMMING

Broadly, targeting was a two-stage process led by Cluster members. Indicators from the Humanitarian Needs Overview were ranked to identify the governorates with the most acute needs and then Cluster members agreed beneficiary identification criteria based on protection vulnerabilities.

Steps were also taken to ensure projects were more protection and gender sensitive. Key resource persons were accountable for protection and gender mainstreaming, helping ensure that projects did not inadvertently exclude any groups from assistance. Activities included collecting disaggregated data, ensuring that complaints and feedback mechanisms were in place and used, and that teams were gender balanced.

INTEGRATED APPROACH

In 2017 and 2018 there was an emphasis on integrated programming and a more holistic approach to meeting people's varied needs.

An example of this was the Information Counselling and Legal Assistance programme which looked at confirming ownership and legal tenure for rental property, as well as land provided for transitional and other shelter solutions.

To improve coordination and promote an integrated response, the Site Management Coordination initiative was launched, in which the Shelter/NFI/CCM Cluster coordinated the identification and verification of gaps, the multi-sector response, and the monitoring of the implementation. In 2018, with the collaboration of the Inter-Cluster coordination mechanism, the initiative was piloted in 88 IDP settlements.



Displaced children stand amid ruins in Sana'a. By the end of 2018, 3.3 million people were displaced and 24.1 million needed humanitarian assistance.

CASH-BASED INTERVENTIONS

To gauge the appropriateness of multi-purpose cash, the Yemen Cash and Markets Working Group conducted an inter-sector market study in December 2017, looking at the functionality of different types of market systems and the communities' preference for various response options. The study found that, based on availability, pricing, and restocking times, food commodities, cooking gas, water trucking and hygiene items were suitable candidates for unrestricted cash-based interventions (CBI) across the country. Markets for other commodity groups (houseware, building materials, and wheelchairs and crutches) were found to be not consistently functioning well at the district level, and CBI for these items were unlikely to be a suitable option in remote areas.

As part of its strategy to improve reach and increase coverage, the Cluster developed cash-for-shelter guidelines in 2017 and systematically promoted the use of CBI in its activities. The Cluster programmed 70 per cent of its response to be implemented through CBI. By the end of 2018, 45 per cent of the budget received had been implemented through CBI. In some remote locations, in-kind distribution continued to be used. Cash grants were also used to support returnees with the rehabilitation or reconstruction of damaged or destroyed houses.



Al Habbari IDP informal settlement in Sana'a. In 2017 and 2018, more and more displaced people settled in these sites, where living conditions were very poor.



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Women, children and female-headed households were disproportionately affected by the crisis. One of the objectives of the Cluster was to improve targeting of aid.

MAIN CHALLENGES

Challenges to the response in Yemen included currency depreciation and increase of fuel costs, flooding that caused further damage and displacement, as well as strict import limitations on raw materials. Complex displacement patterns and access constraints due to insecurity and poor road network severely hampered partners to reach the most vulnerable affected populations.

Additionally, limited funding and capacity of partners to implement hampered the response (just 19% and 39% of funding requirements were received in 2017 and 2018 respectively).

Lack of income sources on the part of affected households was one of the main challenges to ensuring sustainability of the response, promoting economic self-reliance and reducing vulnerabilities amongst the affected people. To counter this, Shelter partners formed a collaboration with the Emergency Employment and Community Rehabilitation Cluster for livelihood and income-generating opportunities, and the Food Security and Agriculture Cluster for agriculture-related activities.

LESSONS LEARNED

ENGAGEMENT OF NATIONAL NGOS. Over the years since the beginning of the crisis, more and more national NGOs were engaged in the response, especially helping in hard-to-reach areas. However, there was only limited donor support for national actors, so this became a priority going forward.

IMPROVED TARGETING. In 2018, emphasis was placed on improving ways to identify the most vulnerable, given the limited available resources. Nonetheless, beneficiary selection was not free from challenges. This process needed to be undertaken carefully to ensure assistance was provided to the right people in the right locations. More independent checking of beneficiary lists and robust feedback mechanisms were needed to ensure the effective use of resources.

CHALLENGES IN MEASURING IMPACT. Despite an improvement in data collection and analysis, the constantly evolving context and displacement rendered measuring impact difficult. These challenges were also amplified due to access issues. In hindsight, real-time need indicators could have been set up to monitor response progress and impact, rather than relying solely on the main figures from the Humanitarian Needs Overview.

RESPONSE EFFICIENCY. In order to ensure that emergency shelter and NFI responses are timely and efficient, investment is needed in logistics, Standard Operating Procedures and forward planning.

LOOKING FORWARD

In 2019, the Cluster planned to focus more on supporting host families, engaging affected people and local authorities, as well as using CBI as the main modality. Scale-up of long-term shelter solutions identified by the people themselves was also a priority. Site management and coordination teams (managing IDP sites) started to include representatives of the national authority counterpart to the Cluster. Finally, capacity-building activities for national NGOs were going to be prioritized.



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An increasing proportion of families lived in IDP sites and were considered most in need, due to lack of services and management, as well as poor shelter.