WFP Yemen Country Brief
April 2018

Operational Context

Yemen is a classified as a low-income, food-deficit country, ranked the 168th out of 188 least-developed countries according to the 2016 Human Development Report. According to this report, at least 50 percent of the population is estimated to be living in poverty, and more than 90 percent of food needs in Yemen are imported.

Limited access to food is compounded by a number of factors, including the effects of low incomes, the depreciation of the Yemeni currency, uncertainty of access to Yemen's Red Sea ports, large family sizes, high unemployment and non-payment of salaries of civil servants.

Present in Yemen since 1967, WFP currently aims to save lives and protect livelihoods in emergencies, and specifically increase food consumption through the scale-up of life saving emergency food assistance (particularly targeting IPC Phase 4 areas), as well as to expand coverage of nutrition interventions to prevent and treat moderate acute malnutrition (MAM).

In Numbers

79,727 mt of life-saving in-kind food commodities distributed in April 2018.

USD 4.8 m six months (May -October 2018)

6.8 m people assisted in April 2018

Operational Updates

- In April 2018, WFP approved Budget Revision (BR) 02 for Emergency Operation (EMOP) 201068: extending the programme until December 2018 and increasing the budget by USD 820 million. BR 02 saw WFP increase the number of people targeted for General Food Assistance (GFA in-kind food) to 7.6 million, making the total target for EMOP 201068 9.8 million Yemenis.

- WFP provided GFA (in-kind food assistance and commodity vouchers) to 6.8 million people in April: 6,188,190 million people received in-kind food and 707,702 million people who received commodity vouchers. Of this, a total of 3.45 million people received full entitlements while 3.4 million people received a reduced 60 percent entitlement.

- WFP is extremely grateful for the USD 442 million contribution from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) which will be allocated through the UN for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). These funds will go towards continuation of WFP's programmes: General Food Assistance, Nutrition, School Meals, and Livelihood programmes. In addition, KSA and UAE have generously provided financial support to WFP Yemen’s two Special Operations: USD 5.35 million has been allocated to SO 200845 to support UNHAS operations and USD 12.47 million has been allocated to SO 200841 for the WFP-led Logistics Cluster.

- During the first two months of 2018, WFP admitted 62,845 new children aged 6-59 months and 46,663 Pregnant and Nursing Women (PNW) into the Targeted Supplementary Feeding Programme to treat Moderate Acute Malnutrition (MAM).

- In addition, in January and February 2018 82,212 children aged 6-23 months and 85,919 PLW have received specialized nutritious foods as part of WFP’s Blanket Supplementary Feeding Programme (BSFP) to prevent acute and chronic malnutrition.

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• According to the April 2018 Yemen Safety Nets Alert Platform, the Yemeni Rial decreased by 0.6 percent in April 2018 and lost 126 percent of its pre-crisis value. While there were improvements in imports of commodities in April 2018, leading to better supply and availability in local markets across most governorates, retail prices increased by one percent between March and April 2018 and are between 37-102 percent higher than the pre-crisis period. In addition, while fuel availability improved in some governorates, scarcity persisted in others resulting in prices being 80-113 percent higher than the pre-crisis period.

Challenges

• On 16 April a fire broke out in a mobile storage unit in one of WFP’s warehouses in Al Hammad (in Hodeidah), the second fire incident in Hodeidah in a two-week period. No significant losses were reported, except for the warehouse itself, as it was used to store used bags and cartons that were in the process of being destroyed. WFP is working with local authorities to determine the cause of the fire. WFP is also establishing additional fire-safety measures to prevent another similar incident from occurring.

• High levels of insecurity were reported throughout Yemen in April 2018. In particular, as of 20 April armed confrontations have intensified in multiple locations in Hodeidah, approximately 70 km from Hodeidah port. WFP has developed a contingency plan for Hodeidah port should it become unusable and has prepositioned ready-to-eat foods—High Energy Biscuits (HEB)—for up to 800 households fleeing violence in the governorate.

• Limited humanitarian access remains a problem for WFP Yemen. WFP suffered substantial delays in receiving customs clearance for distributing 450,000 litres of in-kind fuel from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to hospitals and WASH sites identified by UNICEF and WHO. In addition, almost three-quarters of WFP’s monitoring missions for April 2018 were cancelled due to security reasons while WFP still struggles to receive visas for key international staff.

Monitoring

• According to WFP’s Monitoring and Evaluation Team, monitoring of WFP assisted GFA beneficiaries showed a marked improvement in food consumption scores between January 2017 and December 2017. For GFD beneficiaries, the percentage of households with acceptable food consumption score increased from 48 percent in January 2017 to 57 percent in December 2017. Among Commodity Voucher (CVTN) beneficiaries, the percentage of households with acceptable food consumption score increased from 56 percent to 60 percent over the same period.

Funding Update

• Thanks to the generous financial support from public and private donors, WFP’s pipeline for providing full entitlements of in-kind food is covered until November 2018 while the commodity voucher pipeline for full entitlements is covered through October 2018. The pipeline for cash activities, however, is only covered until the end of July 2018.

Donors

EMOP 201068 (in alphabetical order):
Australia, Belgium, Canada, China, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, European Commission, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Japan, Korea (Rep. of), Lithuania, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Saudi Arabia, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland, UN CERF, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, United States and private sector donors.