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Contact Info

Stephen Anderson

stephen.anderson@wfp.org

Country Director

Stephen Anderson

Further Information

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SPR Reading Guidance



Provision of Humanitarian Air Services in Yemen

Standard Project Report 2018

World Food Programme in Yemen (YE)

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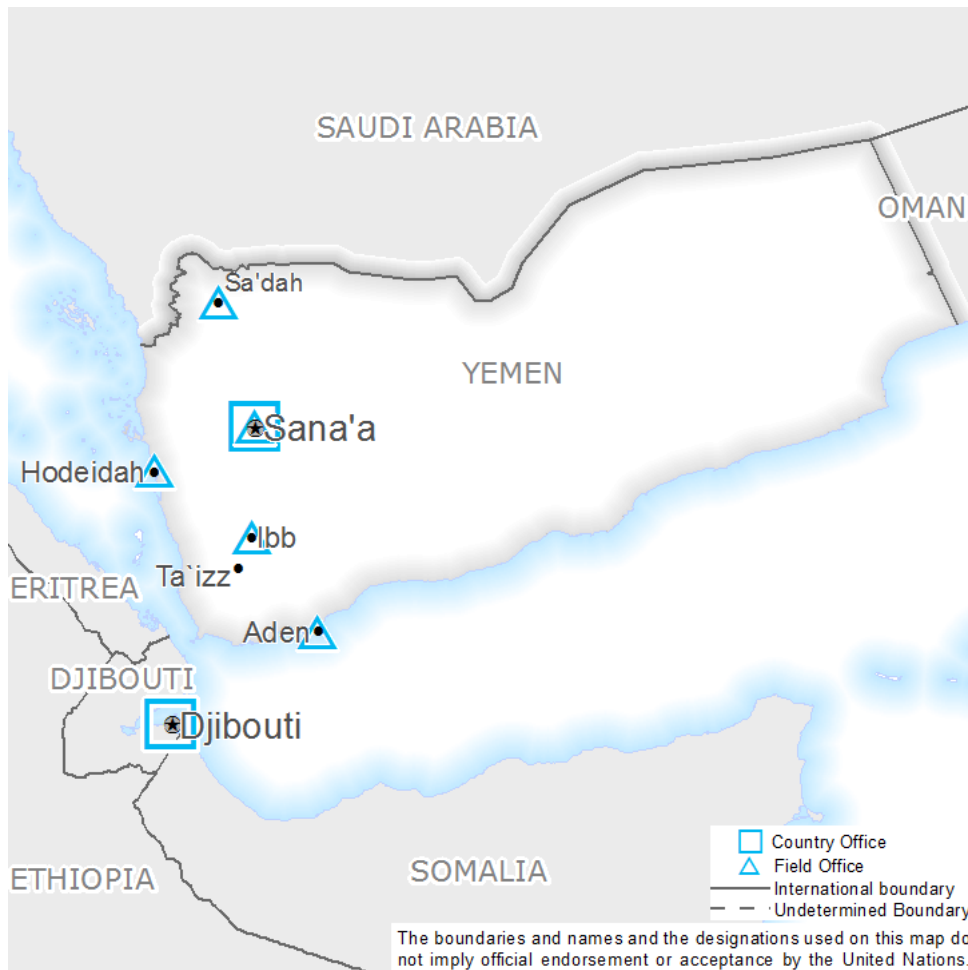
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Country Context and WFP Objectives



Achievements at Country Level

In the context of persisting conflict, coupled by the effects of an economic decline, the destruction of public infrastructure and livelihoods, as well as the deterioration of social services, WFP's life-saving food assistance played a crucial role in meeting the immediate food needs of food insecure populations, alleviating human suffering and thus mitigating the devastating impacts of several consecutive years of conflict. These achievements were undertaken in a challenging and complex operational environment marked by critical levels of insecurity, access restrictions to areas under active conflict, administrative impediments such as limited availability of slots for international staff (for security-related reasons), and difficulties in obtaining visas from the de-facto authorities in Sana'a.

Despite alarming levels of food insecurity triggered by ongoing conflict, WFP sustained its emergency response, assisting 9.8 million food insecure people (4.8 million women and girls and 5 million men and boys) throughout 2018. WFP's assistance focused on providing life-saving food assistance to 7.8 million people (3.8 million women and girls and 4 million men and boys) through in-kind food assistance and commodity vouchers as well as nutritional support targeting the needs of specific groups (malnourished children below 5 years of age, children below 2 years of age and pregnant and lactating women). WFP also implemented livelihoods support and school feeding interventions with the objective of contributing to the early recovery of conflict-affected communities, alleviating short-term hunger, and improving school enrollment and retention rates among school children. Thanks to confirmed contributions, WFP's school feeding programme was resumed in April 2018, widening social safety net coverage and to contribute to education indicators. Despite the challenges faced, WFP also implemented a joint resilience programme jointly with FAO, ILO and UNDP in 2017-2018 (Enhanced Rural Resilience in Yemen), and

introduced Food Assistance for Assets (FFA) under the emergency operation.

Throughout 2018, WFP assisted food-insecure populations in twenty governorates of Yemen, including seven governorates [1] that were classified in Phase 4 (Emergency) of the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) analysis. WFP's overall response was in close alignment with the 2018 Yemen Humanitarian Response Plan (YHRP 2018). WFP emphasized providing life-saving food and nutritional assistance in conflict-affected areas where needs were identified as the highest [2]. WFP Supply Chain operated at full capacity to ensure the swift delivery of food commodities to beneficiaries against programme targets in the required locations. The majority of essential food items were available in all governorates except in Hudaydah, where basic commodities were scarce and where intensified fighting in June disrupted markets and restricted the movement of traders. In particular, markets in Al Durayhimi and At-Tuhayta districts of Hudaydah governorate were disrupted as a result of escalated conflict since June 2018, leaving WFP unable to deliver humanitarian supplies for several consecutive months due to the widespread insecurity.

In 2018, WFP successfully continued to pursue its strategy of leveraging existing food supply networks of local suppliers by using the Commodity Vouchers through Traders Network (CV-TN) modality to provide food assistance to 1.2 million food insecure people in eight governorates of Yemen [3]. The CV-TN modality, which is part of WFP's general food assistance (GFA) programme, allows beneficiaries to receive commodity vouchers that can be redeemed from WFP-partnered commercial suppliers.

Introduced in 2017, the Famine Risk Monitoring (FRM) mechanism was implemented throughout 2018 by the Food Security and Agriculture Cluster (FSAC). Under the umbrella of FSAC, WFP played a key role in the FRM mechanism by leading the process. The main objective of the FRM was to assess the current food security situation across all districts to identify those at high risk of famine, and more specifically, analyse key food security indicator trends, generate evidence for advocacy, contribute to humanitarian response planning, as well as to inform the IPC analyses. WFP Yemen continued the phone-based data collection and food security monitoring using the mobile Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping (mVAM) approach. The data collected through mVAM also contributed to the IPC analysis.

Despite severe movement restrictions and limitations imposed on humanitarian staff, WFP staff conducted monitoring missions to distribution sites in these areas, along with the monitoring of activities outsourced to independent Third-Party Monitors (TPM). As per the findings of all monitored activities, food security trends indicate that since the beginning of the emergency operation in 2017, WFP's assistance has proven critical in contributing to improving beneficiaries' food security status. When analyzing the Food Consumption Score (FCS) of WFP recipients of assistance, a decrease in the percentage of beneficiaries with a poor FCS was observed for beneficiaries assisted with both in-kind food assistance and CV-TN during the last quarter of 2018, as compared to the beginning of WFP famine prevention response in early 2017.

In response to high moderate acute malnutrition (MAM) and severe acute malnutrition (SAM) rates among children aged 6-59 months, WFP implemented the Treatment of Moderate Acute Malnutrition programme, assisting 406,977 malnourished children aged 6-59 months (197,195 female and 209,782 male) as well as 324,316 pregnant and lactating women (PLW). To prevent the further deterioration of the nutritional status of highly vulnerable groups, WFP reached 321,010 children aged 6-23 months (157,453 girls and 163,557 boys) and 450,479 PLW as part of the Prevention of Acute Malnutrition component. Taking into consideration the high level of nutrition-specific needs and increased funding availability, nutrition programmes were scaled-up towards the end of the year. In close coordination with other nutrition partners such as UNICEF, WFP ensured that the same health facilities were able to provide continuum of care treatment for children suffering from Moderate Acute Malnutrition (MAM) and Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM).

Throughout 2018, the Logistics Cluster continued to fill logistics gaps by facilitating access to a common logistics service platform for the humanitarian community working in Yemen. The primary activity of the Logistics Cluster was the facilitation of air transport of humanitarian supplies from Djibouti to Sana'a on WFP-chartered aircrafts, with the support of the WFP-led United Nations Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS). Another critical activity was the facilitation of maritime transport on board of two WFP-chartered vessels: VOS Apollo (between Djibouti and Aden) and VOS Theia (between Djibouti and Hudaydah). Both vessels also served as emergency rescue and evacuation contingency options. In addition, the Logistics Cluster facilitated access to overland transport in Yemen reaching 288 locations in Yemen on behalf of 23 organisations; this includes the deliveries carried out under the inter-agency Rapid Response Mechanism (RRM) umbrella.

Overall, the WFP-led Emergency Telecommunications Cluster (ETC) provided critical security telecommunications (radio), power solutions and internet connectivity services in five common operational areas of Yemen, namely Sana'a, Sa'ada, Ibb, Aden, and Hudaydah.

Under WFP's coordination, UNHAS continued to provide access for the humanitarian community to vulnerable and conflict-affected populations in Yemen, transporting international and national humanitarian workers, as well as

urgent light cargo. By providing humanitarian actors with an essential transport link into Yemen, UNHAS preserved the operational integrity of the international humanitarian response in Yemen. In 2018, a new route Aden – Sana'a – Aden was established, allowing direct travel between the two locations, eradicating the need to travel through Djibouti and thus providing a more timely and efficient service to clientele. Moreover, UNHAS played a crucial role in undertaking 40 medical evacuations from Sana'a and Aden in 2018.

In 2018, WFP Bilateral Service Provision (BPS) facilitated the distribution of diesel with the establishment of a revolving fuel facility in Yemen. This facility secures the minimum requirement fuel stock in Yemen, ensuring the continuity of operations and improving the overall emergency response of the humanitarian community within the country.

[1] The governorates of Lahj, Taizz, Abyan, Sa'ada, Hajjah, Hudaydah and Shabwah were classified in Phase 4 (Emergency) phase.

[2] Conflict-affected areas where humanitarian needs were identified as highest included Taizz, Hudaydah, Marib, Raymah, Sa'ada, Hajjah, Shabwa and Lahj governorates.

[3] WFP provided food assistance through the CV-TN in Sana'a, Amanat Al Asimah, Taizz, Hudaydah, Marib, Dhamar, Al Jawf and Lahj governorates.

Country Context and Response of the Government

Following the outbreak of hostilities between forces of the Internationally Recognized Government (IRG) of Yemen, backed by forces of the Saudi-led Coalition, and the de-facto authorities in 2015, Yemen has been transformed into one of the world's most complex man-made humanitarian crises. Conflict and violence escalated in 2018, further worsening the economic situation, eroding social services and creating access restrictions which hamper the timely delivery of humanitarian assistance.

Fighting intensified in Hudaydah governorate in June 2018 and was followed by the postponement of peace talks planned in Geneva in September 2018. Northern Yemen was targeted by airstrikes and many southern governorates were marked by the detonations of improvised explosive devices. According to the The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, from March 2015 to November 2018, 17,640 civilian casualties; 6,872 dead and 10,768 injured were reported. Since June 2018, some 685,000 people fled intensive fighting and airstrikes mainly from Hudaydah, thereby increasing the overall total number of internally displaced people (IDP) in Yemen to an estimated 3.3 million. Through considerate international dialogue, peace talks held in December 2018 led to the Stockholm Agreement being established and a subsequent ceasefire agreement in Hudaydah governorate, including the sea ports.

According to the 2018 Yemen Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO), as of early 2018, an estimated 22.2 million people were in need of some form of humanitarian assistance in 2018, including 17.8 million food insecure people (61 per cent of the population)[1]. The Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) conducted in December 2018 estimated that in the absence of humanitarian food assistance, 20.1 million people or almost 70 percent of the Yemeni population are food insecure (IPC Phases 3, 4 and 5), a 14 percent increase compared to the beginning of the year. Among them, 10.2 million are in IPC Phase 3 (Crisis), 9.6 million are severely food insecure IPC Phase 4 (Emergency), and nearly 240,000 people are in IPC Phase 5 (Catastrophe) and facing catastrophic food shortages. For the first time since the crisis began, close to a quarter of a million people were identified as in IPC Phase 5 (Catastrophe) signifying that they had exhausted all emergency coping strategies and were facing extreme food shortages and potential starvation. The worst affected areas where the most food insecure were identified were Hudaydah, Sa'ada, Taizz, Hajjah, Al Jawf and Marib governorates, which experienced intensified armed conflict. In response to the increasing number of people in need of humanitarian assistance and the potential of a another cholera outbreak, WFP began taking measures in late 2018 to scale up its life-saving food assistance to reach 12 million food insecure people in 2019.

In 2018, the island of Socotra and parts of the eastern mainland were affected by the tropical cyclone Mekunu which made landfall in Oman on 26 May, causing flooding, casualties and damages to infrastructure. After a declaration of a state of emergency by the IRG, WFP supported the provision of food assistance to the affected populations. On 14 October, another tropical cyclone Luban made landfall on the eastern coast of Yemen (Al Maharah province). In response to this sudden-onset natural disaster, WFP supported the affected populations through the distribution of Immediate Response Rations (IRR).

Since 2015, Yemen has experienced a series of sharp increases in poverty levels with an estimated 52 percent of its population living below USD 1.90 a day (purchasing power parity) or 81 percent at an income rate of USD 3.20 a day [2]. In terms of economic performance, the economy has contracted by 50 percent since the outbreak of conflict

in 2015. In 2018, GDP growth was reduced by 2.6 percent in comparison to 5.9 percent in 2017 [3].

Since 2015, an estimated 600,000 jobs have been lost, mainly in the agricultural and service sectors and a decline in the wages of daily unskilled labour has been observed throughout the country [4]. Furthermore, around 1.2 million civil servants have not been receiving their salaries/pensions or on an irregular basis, since late 2016, affecting up to 9 million people who rely on this income as a source of livelihood [5]. Remittances, estimated at 3.4 billion USD in 2017, provided income to approximately nine percent of the population [6].

In 2018, the Yemen Riyal sharply depreciated against the US dollar, recording 370 YER/USD in January 2018 at its lowest, and reaching 800 YER/USD at its peak (September). As compared to the pre-crisis period, during which the YER was relatively stable at 215 YER/USD, the YER depreciated by 272 percent in 2018 (YER 800/USD). Given that Yemen is a net importer of 85 percent of the food consumed at household level (90 percent of wheat), acute shortages of foreign exchange exerted pressure on the local currency. This trend led to steep increases in food and fuel prices coupled with a decrease in the population's purchasing power, already under severe strain due to limited employment opportunities and the suspension of salaries.

Notwithstanding the challenges encountered, commercial imports through Hudaydah and Saleef sea ports increased since the temporary blockade was lifted at the end of 2017. However, monthly import volumes remained below pre-blockade levels. In 2018, food and fuel commodities continued to be scarcely available throughout the country and Hudaydah governorate suffered most from the scarcity of commodities as it was one of the epicentres of the conflict.

Despite the life-saving food assistance provided by WFP - reaching 7.9 million beneficiaries on a monthly basis towards the end of 2018 - as well as progress made in improving the food security status of assisted populations as compared 2017, post-distribution monitoring during the third quarter of 2018 indicated a decrease of 16 percent in the percentage of beneficiaries with an acceptable food consumption score (FCS). Emergency coping strategies such as purchasing less preferred foods, reducing the frequency of meals and portion sizes, as well as borrowing money for food, were also reported. This trend could be attributed to the fact that households did not consistently receive full WFP entitlements of pulses, vegetable oil and sugar due to port congestion and late arrival of shipments, increased sharing of food entitlements and limited economic access to food in markets. It was also observed that a higher number of beneficiaries resorted to selling part of their food assistance to meet other basic needs such as healthcare and other non-food items due to inflation.

The intensification of armed conflict and economic decline also had repercussions on the nutritional status of the population. According to the Yemen Humanitarian Needs Overview 2018, the nutritional situation remained critical with 7 million people in need of nutrition services. It is estimated that 3.2 million pregnant and lactating women and girls and children aged 6-59 months were acutely malnourished, including 462,000 severely acute malnourished children (a 57 percent increase since late 2015). The governorates of Hudaydah, Lahj, Taizz, Aden and Hadramaut were classified as having acute malnutrition prevalence rates exceeding the World Health Organization (WHO) emergency threshold of 15 percent. The total number of districts classified with critical levels of acute malnutrition increased from 79 in 2017 to 91 in 2018, out of the 333 districts of Yemen. The main drivers of malnutrition in Yemen continued to be the lack of access to food and/or poor use of available foods, inadequate child feeding and care practices, poor access to water and sanitation and limited access to health services.

The conflict has also severely impacted the education sector limiting children's access to schools and exposing them to risks of exploitation, abuse, child marriage, and recruitment by armed groups. According to the latest UNICEF report, some 500,000 children have left schools since the outbreak of conflict in 2015, bringing the number of out-of-school children to 2 million. The non-payment of teachers for extended periods and damages caused to school infrastructure also contributed to constraining children's access to education.

Significant efforts were undertaken by the entire humanitarian community to increase health, nutrition and education support and to maintain hospitals and water treatment facilities functioning to the extent possible, given that only 45 percent of health facilities are fully functional and numerous schools are either occupied by IDPs or severely damaged. To support the delivery of basic social services, humanitarian organizations explored the possibility of paying activity-related incentives to health and education workers.

WFP continued to liaise with the authorities of the IRG and the de-facto authorities in Sana'a on programme implementation (central and local levels), food security assessments, new beneficiary targeting and the roll-out of biometric registration. An agreement was reached with the IRG on biometric registration which started in Aden in late 2018 in support of food assistance using cash-based transfers. In December 2018, approximately 28,000 households were biometrically registered in WFP's SCOPE platform. In 2019, WFP plans to expand the use of SCOPE, to register a greater number of beneficiaries. By the end of 2018, negotiations progressed with the de-facto authorities on the introduction of biometric registration of beneficiaries in Sana'a and the northern parts of the country. The use of biometric registration will enable WFP to ensure that beneficiaries that were targeted based on vulnerability criteria receive their entitlements, thus reducing the risk of food misappropriation and diversion, as well

as minimising any overlap of assistance provided by partners.

Partnerships with the Ministry of Public Health and Populations (MoPHP) and the Ministry of Education (MoE) of the de-facto authorities in Sana'a were strengthened to facilitate programmes, including the treatment and prevention of malnutrition and to resume the school feeding programme which was implemented in partnership with MoE in the North (with the de-facto authorities) and the South (with IRG). Both entities were involved in different phases of the programme. WFP also played an active role in the Education Cluster which is a major education coordination platform.

WFP worked closely with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) to jointly provide assistance to IDPs from Hudaydah through the Inter-Agency Rapid Response Mechanism. WFP, UNHCR, and UNFPA worked with the same partners to ensure complementarity of interventions and to harmonise assistance.

In December 2018, peace talks resumed in Sweden between the IRG and the de-facto authorities, which resulted in an agreement on a ceasefire in Hudaydah governorate, a proposed exchange of prisoners, and a statement of understanding on Taizz. On December 21, the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 2451[8] endorsing the agreements reached between the two parties and authorizing the UN Secretary-General to establish and deploy a monitoring team that would facilitate the implementation of the Stockholm Agreement for an initial period of 30 days. It is expected that the conclusions of peace negotiations would result in the better functioning of the Hudaydah port, which plays a critical role in importing food commodities, given the high dependency of the country (over 90 percent) on food importation.

The sharp rise in absolute poverty, high levels of food insecurity and malnutrition, coupled with the deprivation of the population from social services since the outbreak of hostilities pose a significant threat to peace-building, thus reinforcing the vicious cycle of poverty and insecurity. Overall, peace and political stability being prerequisites for economic growth and poverty reduction, the ceasefire between the two parties in Hudaydah offers cautious optimism for the improvement of socio-economic conditions.

[1] OCHA, Yemen Humanitarian Needs Overview - YHNO 2018

[2] Yemen's Economic Outlook - October 2018, World Bank

[3] Ibid

[4] Yemen Socio-Economic Update, Issue 35, July 2018

[5] Yemen Socio-Economic Update, Issues 30-35, 2017/18

[6] Yemen Socio-Economic Update, Issue 32, February 2018

[8] UN Security Council Resolution 2451 on Yemen

WFP Objectives and Strategic Coordination

Given the increasing severity of Yemen's humanitarian crisis in 2018, WFP enhanced its engagement and performance on all fronts, providing life-saving food and nutritional assistance to populations in need as part of the Emergency Operation (EMOP 201068), and facilitating access to common services for the entire humanitarian community in the framework of two Special Operations. WFP continued to implement the emergency operation in order to prevent the onset of famine in Yemen, whilst supporting longer-term recovery efforts in areas of relative stability. Aligned with WFP's Strategic Objectives 1 and 2, the operation aimed to save lives and support livelihoods by ensuring sufficient access to food.

WFP, through its operations in Yemen, continuously contributed to humanitarian objectives, in close alignment with plans of the humanitarian and development communities. WFP contributed to the Yemen Humanitarian Response Plan 2018 (HRP) in the framework of the joint multi-sectorial response for famine prevention in areas jointly identified and prioritized by humanitarian actors. WFP also supported humanitarian cluster plans and the Humanitarian Response Plan, in collaboration with other UN agencies, national partners and donors. In order to better support Yemen's achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), particularly SDG 2, WFP prepared an Interim Country Strategic Plan (2019-2020) which was approved by the WFP Executive Board in November 2018.

The operation further aimed at addressing the specific nutritional needs of children aged 6-23 months and pregnant and lactating women (PLW) who were at risk of moderate acute malnutrition using blanket supplementary feeding. The prevention of MAM component aimed to prevent further deterioration of the nutritional status of these groups. Moderately acute malnourished children aged 6-59 months and PLW were assisted through a targeted

supplementary feeding programme for the treatment of moderate acute malnutrition (MAM).

WFP's emergency operation was revised in March 2018 to scale-up the outreach of general food assistance (GFA) in accordance with the 2018 HRP recommendations and to resume school feeding in areas prioritized by the Education Cluster. The revised operation included a contingency component for newly-displaced people as a result of the conflict and envisaged an adaptable response mechanism where food assistance was provided through in-kind, cash-based transfers and Commodity Voucher through Traders Network assistance (CV-TN) modalities. WFP was able to initiate a beneficiary re-targeting exercise for the in-kind food assistance modality and initiate the roll-out of biometric beneficiary registration in the southern governorates of Yemen.

Towards the end of 2018, WFP was able to further expand its outreach of the treatment of MAM programme through mobile clinics, increasing the number of health facilities that benefit from WFP nutrition interventions (3,028 health facilities in 2018, representing 68 percent of functional health facilities at national level). This was achieved in partnership with the health authorities and in close coordination with UNICEF, international and local Non-Governmental Organizations (I/LNGOs) and other partners in order to enhance screening of children under the age of five to facilitate the prevention and treatment of malnutrition programmes. To ensure complementarity with other nutrition interventions, WFP emphasised its support to health facilities already providing nutrition services for severely malnourished children (77 percent of all health facilities supported provide integrated services provided by WFP and UNICEF). WFP nutrition interventions were supported by 13 international NGOs, 8 national NGOs and by the Ministry of Public Health and Population (MoPHP). WFP continued to strengthen and build the capacities of health staff and community health volunteers jointly with MoPHP on the Community-based Management of Acute Malnutrition (CMAM).

In June 2018, the escalation of fighting in Hudaydah governorate and the western coastal areas of Yemen, including heavy shelling from air, sea and land caused another wave of population displacement. As a result, an estimated 685,000 people were displaced from Hudaydah and Hajjah governorates, bringing the total number of internally displaced people to 3.3 million people. In response, WFP provided food assistance via the active participation in the inter-agency Rapid Response Mechanism (RRM), aimed at facilitating the timely provision of humanitarian assistance to populations in need, led by the UN Humanitarian Coordinator. As part of the RRM, humanitarian service points (HSPs) and transit points (TPs) were established across Hudaydah and neighbouring governorates. From which, RRM kits containing food assistance (ready-to-eat immediate response rations), hygiene kits and dignity kits were distributed to internally displaced households. From June 2018 onwards, and in the framework of the inter-agency response, WFP provided ready-to-eat immediate response rations (IRRs) sufficient to cover the food needs of 175,967 displaced families for an initial period of five days, followed by a one-off general food assistance ration, once the families had settled in new locations. The Logistics Cluster, led by WFP, supported this response by consolidating and delivering RRM kits from the common cluster warehouses located in Hudaydah/Bajil, Sana'a and Aden to Cooperating Partners (CP) to designated HSPs and TPs. In addition, WFP continued to provide life-saving food assistance to all households remaining in Hudaydah city to enable the population to meet their essential food needs amidst intensified fighting and insecurity. To this end, two rounds of blanket food distributions were organised in Hudaydah city, covering 280,000 conflict-affected people during each round of assistance.

The outreach of EMOP, both in terms of general food assistance and nutrition support, was further scaled up towards the end of 2018 based on the results of the IPC assessment (conducted by the WFP co-led Food Security and Agriculture Cluster (FSAC)), and a joint Nutrition Strategy presented to the United Nations General Assembly. Due to the alarmingly high humanitarian needs, WFP continuously advocated vis-à-vis the international donor community and pursued a consistent resource mobilization strategy in order to provide uninterrupted life-saving food assistance to food insecure and conflict-affected populations.

As a result of intensified fighting in Hudaydah from September 2018 onward, WFP lost its milling capacity at the Red Sea Mills which threatened to hamper WFP's ability to continue providing an uninterrupted response. To mitigate such logistical challenges, WFP opened a new supply corridor through Salalah, Oman in October 2018, while stepping up advocacy for unimpeded access for humanitarian personnel and supplies to support the emergency scale-up. The opening of the Salalah corridor in Oman also aimed to mitigate the impact of congestion at the southern ports and increase the capacity of the operation in terms of milling and the handling of containerized cargo.

In 2018, the WFP-led Logistics Cluster continued to fill critical logistics gaps by facilitating access to a common logistics services platform for the humanitarian community working in Yemen. The main activities of the Logistics Cluster included air transport of humanitarian supplies from Djibouti to Sana'a, Aden and Socotra on WFP-chartered aircraft, as well as the transport of both passengers and cargo on board the WFP-chartered vessel VOS Apollo between Djibouti and Aden, which also serves as an emergency rescue and evacuation vessel. Additionally, the Logistics Cluster facilitated overland transport and storage in Yemen throughout the country. Meanwhile, the WFP-led Emergency Telecommunication Cluster continued to equip new offices and guest houses with emergency telecommunications.

UNHAS continued to operate regular air transport for humanitarian workers and relief supplies from Amman and Djibouti to Sana'a and Aden. Given the high demand, UNHAS exceeded its annual target of providing air transport to 10,000 humanitarian passengers to and from Yemen by November 2018; in addition, the new flight route Aden – Sana'a – Aden was established, which was warmly welcomed by the user group.

WFP Bilateral Service Provision provided diesel fuel to UNICEF and WHO to ensure the uninterrupted functioning of water/sanitation and health facilities through a revolving fuel stock project. Furthermore, engineering and construction services were provided to WHO for the rehabilitation of Therapeutic Feeding Centres (TFC) and hospitals, as well as for the construction of Diarrhoea Treatment Centres (DTCs), and services provided to facilitate the distribution of Oral Rehydration Salt (ORS) in priority districts identified by WHO. The provision of these bilateral services to some members of the humanitarian community for improving water supply systems, rehabilitation of infrastructure and distribution of medical items played a critical role in ensuring the continuity of essential services for the Yemeni population.

Country Resources and Results

Resources for Results

Due to the prevailing humanitarian crisis that continues to threaten the lives of millions of people in Yemen and the high level of needs in 2018, the WFP Yemen Country Office, in coordination with the Regional Bureau and Headquarters, pursued its advocacy and resource mobilization efforts at global, regional, and local levels. As a result, WFP received unprecedented support from a significant number of donors. The level of funding received increased from USD 747.6 million in 2017 to USD 1.13 billion (66 percent increase) in 2018, covering 98 percent of WFP's 2018 funding requirements in Yemen. Thanks to these donor contributions, WFP succeeded in providing uninterrupted life-saving food assistance to food insecure populations, despite significant logistical constraints, access issues, and a highly volatile security context. WFP provided food assistance to an average of 7.5 million food insecure people on a monthly basis, coupled with nutritional assistance for the prevention and treatment of moderate acute malnutrition, school feeding and livelihoods support. A total of 879,000 mt of food were distributed via the in-kind food assistance modality, and another 159,920.6 mt through the Commodity Vouchers through Trader Network (CV-TN) modality.

Flexible cash contributions represented 84.7 percent of the total funding received and allowed WFP to programme funds where needs were highest, allowing for a flexible and adaptable operational response, and allowing WFP to quickly allocate funds without delay. The swift responsiveness of donors to advocacy efforts and funding appeals enabled WFP to mobilize the resources that were required to provide lifesaving assistance to food insecure and vulnerable populations. In 2018, WFP also received multi-year and flexible funding from several donors which enabled an effective use of funding whilst maximising the duration of funding and avoiding pipeline breaks, when confronted with operational challenges and inaccessibility of food stocks.

With the financial support received throughout 2018, WFP was able to transition from providing reduced entitlements (60 percent) to half of the prioritised beneficiary figure, which were identified based on vulnerability criteria, to providing full entitlements of certain commodities to the entire prioritised beneficiary figure from July 2018 onward. The provision of reduced in-kind food assistance was mainly due to resource and logistical challenges and difficulties in accessing severely conflict-affected areas.

With the financial support received throughout 2018, WFP was able to transition from providing reduced entitlements (60 percent entitlements) to half of the prioritized beneficiary figure (living in priority 2 districts) to providing full entitlements of certain commodities to the entire prioritised beneficiary figure (priority 1 and 2 districts) from July 2018 onward. The provision of reduced in-kind food assistance was mainly due to resource and logistical challenges and difficulties in accessing severely conflict-affected areas.

Typically, WFP was constrained by the limited predictability of the level and timing of funding which posed some challenges to WFP's planning processes. However, in 2018, while the majority of contributions were unpredictable, a significant contribution was received during the first quarter of the year, enabling WFP to respond to emergency needs. WFP was able to plan in advance and had sufficient funds to establish a buffer stock for two months of food assistance. This was particularly critical during the escalation of conflict in Hudaydah in June 2018; WFP was able to use existing stocks to respond to the urgent food needs of IDPs and replenish stocks with other contributions. This buffer stock played a crucial role in allowing WFP to sustain overall distribution levels despite losing access in September 2018 to 51,000 mt of wheat stored at the Red Sea Mills in Hudaydah as a result of conflict and insecurity. Sustaining this funding trend will play a critical role in ensuring adequate planning. Furthermore, in response to the tropical cyclone Menaku that hit the island of Socotra and Yemen's southern coast, WFP was able to make use its existing food stocks to provide relief food assistance to the affected populations in the framework of an inter-agency emergency response.

WFP implemented cost saving measures and significantly improved internal control processes of its operation. Since the beginning of the emergency operation (EMOP), WFP relied heavily on procuring food requirements through the Global Commodity Management Facility (GCMF), where GCMF had these commodities purchased and stored at hubs near Yemen (or on the arrival to these hubs). WFP would then charter a vessel to bring the commodities into Yemen and/or use liner services.

In 2018, Yemen was the largest customer of GCMF, with 485,905 mt of food purchased from the facility for the EMOP, as compared to 338,000 mt purchased in 2017. Food purchased from the GCMF accounted for 45 percent of the total volume of food handled by WFP in Yemen (60 percent considering food purchased from cash contributions). When Yemen purchased commodities from GCMF 2018, food was delivered to handover locations within an average of 23 days, a saving of 81 percent when compared to the estimated 120 days needed under conventional procurement processes. This lead-time gain was critical in addressing urgent humanitarian needs in

the country, especially in light of the scale-up of food assistance following the deterioration of the food security situation in 2018. More favourable market price and timeliness of purchases contributed to making economies of scales on purchases.

Purchasing food commodities from the GCFM also contributed to reducing commodity costs by about 20 percent, enabling WFP to purchase a higher amount of food and thus able to serve a greater number of people with the savings. WFP also made use of internal loan mechanisms to enable programming of funds that were still at forecast stage. Furthermore, WFP supply chain made savings amounting to USD 60 million mostly through establishing Long Term Agreements (LTAs) with suppliers.

The unrestricted contributions that were confirmed by donors helped WFP Yemen to access WFP's corporate internal loan facility, thereby enabling WFP to purchase against these contributions in advance. In 2018, WFP received over USD 80 million from the Internal Project Lending Account (IPL) which was entirely reimbursed by the end of the year.

Continued advocacy vis-à-vis the international donor community was undertaken at various levels, ensuring that donor governments and other stakeholders and partners were kept abreast on food assistance needs, the various modalities used to deliver humanitarian assistance, the funding situation, and any arising challenges faced. WFP increased communication with donors, including through regular donor briefings in Amman, meetings, and bilateral conference calls. Furthermore, special attention was paid to ensuring donor visibility at project sites and donor-specific bag markings (as deemed appropriate depending on the context), despite the fragile and volatile security context. Maintaining regular contact with the international donor community and providing information on the food security situation and funding needs helped mobilise additional support.

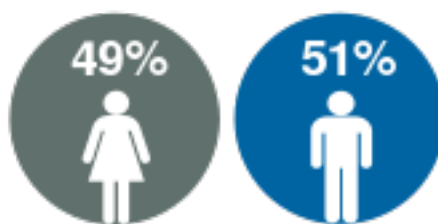
WFP made use of a variety of communication channels, including print and online media as well as digital platforms and social media to build continuous engagement with donors and the public. Several high-level visits, including by the WFP Executive Director and WFP Regional Director were conducted to raise further awareness on the plight of conflict-affected populations of Yemen. In terms of advocacy support, a number of donor missions were made to Yemen to raise awareness on the dire humanitarian situation.

WFP received significant support from the international community for the Logistics and ETC Cluster related activities and the United Nations Humanitarian Air Services (UNHAS). The WFP-led UNHAS service and Logistics Cluster continuously engaged in information sharing with the international community which led to sustained funding levels to ensure the continuation of the services required to provide humanitarian assistance. As part of the Special Operation 200841 (Logistics Cluster) and Special Operation 200845 (UNHAS), USD 44.8 and 11.7 million were mobilised respectively, including the transfer of resources from 2017. Special Operations 200841, 200845 were fully funded in 2018.



Annual Country Beneficiaries

Beneficiaries	Male	Female	Total
Children (under 5 years)	828,851	801,139	1,629,990
Children (5-18 years)	1,817,967	1,703,032	3,520,999
Adults (18 years plus)	2,357,752	2,298,751	4,656,503
Total number of beneficiaries in 2018	5,004,570	4,802,922	9,807,492



Annual Food Distribution in Country (mt)

Project Type	Cereals	Oil	Pulses	Mix	Other	Total
Single Country EMOP	846,105	65,834	88,674	20,416	15,375	1,036,403
Total Food Distributed in 2018	846,105	65,834	88,674	20,416	15,375	1,036,403



Cash Based Transfer and Commodity Voucher Distribution (USD)

Project Type	Cash	Value Voucher	Commodity Voucher
Single Country EMOP	342,000	-	86,650,731
Total Distributed in 2018	342,000	-	86,650,731

Supply Chain

In 2018, WFP Yemen continued to rely on a complex supply chain set-up utilising a network of corridors, logistical staging areas and modes of transport, which formed the basis of WFP's large-scale food and nutritional assistance programme.

Yemen requires approximately 3 million mt of wheat and 420,000 mt of rice on an annual basis, of which approximately 70 percent used to be imported through the Red Sea ports of Hudaydah and Saleef, and the remaining through Aden port. In 2018, humanitarian cargo was mainly imported through the ports of Hudaydah, Saleef and Aden. The commercial sector also used overland corridors from Saudi Arabia and Oman. The Logistics Cluster used Djibouti as a logistics hub to provide both air and sea transport services for the delivery of humanitarian supplies as well as for sea passenger transport.

In order to implement the large-scale operation, WFP Supply Chain used a forward hub supply chain concept whereby all food procured was moved to warehouses in six hubs located in Aden, Ibb, Hudaydah, Sa'ada, Sana'a and Salalah operated by logistics service providers from the private sector.

In 2018, WFP imported 932,934.98 mt of different food commodities, including fortified vegetable oil, wheat, sugar and pulses. Approximately 485,905 mt of these commodities were purchased from the Global Commodity Management Facility (GCMF). Cereals (wheat) were procured from Russia, Ukraine, Romania and the Black Sea region, pulses from Turkey and Ukraine, fortified vegetable oil from Indonesia, and sugar from the United Arab Emirates and Morocco. WFP also received in-kind food donations, amounting to 224,378 mt, including 176,640 mt

of wheat grain, 5,000 mt of wheat flour, 21,310 mt of vegetable oil, 20,700 of green split peas and 728 mt of dried fruits (dates).

To contribute to stimulating local economies by supporting local markets, WFP purchased 180,546 mt of wheat flour from commercially operated silos in Aden, Hudaydah and Saleef. WFP used the food supply agreement procurement modality (FSA) to maintain food reserve stocks, which could be utilised at any given time. WFP signed Long Term Agreements (LTA) with a number of suppliers which were selected on a competitive basis.

Food commodities were dispatched from 42 locations to 6,537 Final Distribution Points (FDPs) located in different areas of the country. Adherence to a strict programming schedule was required to enable a steady flow of commodities in the most challenging districts. Appropriate tracking tools and standard operating procedure (SOPs) were developed to this effect.

While the lead time for programming financial contributions was one week, the delivery lead time was one of the main delay factors for the majority of international purchases. On average, commodity lead times from procurement to delivery at FDPs for essential commodities (commodities which are dispatched as part of life-saving food assistance) were between two to four months. For Specialized Nutritional Foods (SNF), commodity lead times were longer than those of the essential commodities.

The long commodity lead times of 2 to 4 months for nutritional products can be mainly attributed to the fact that WFP Yemen relies solely on liner shipments for these commodities, while for other food commodities, WFP has local and regional FSAs that are utilized to compensate for any shortage in the pipeline. Nutritional products also require more time to obtain the necessary clearances from the Yemen Standardization and Metrology Organization (YSMO), compared to other commodities that WFP imports.

Due to access constraints and the non-granting of Evacuation and Humanitarian Operations Committee approval for liner vessels and containerized cargo calling on Hudaydah port, all containerized cargo and vessels (humanitarian and commercial) were diverted to Aden port, which led to significant congestion and import delays. The diversion of all liner cargo from Hudaydah to Aden port, which has poor infrastructure combined with a recent intensified inspection mechanism resulted in increased congestion in the port of Aden, causing liner cargo delays and additional costs for port storage and container demurrage. In 2018, WFP opened a new corridor through Salalah, Oman, in order to maintain its life-saving food pipeline for an increasing number of people in need. The opening of the Salalah corridor was also part of the contingency plan, to be used in the event that access to Hudaydah port and the Red Sea Mills silos was restricted due to the security situation. In 2018, a total of 30,300 mt of WFP wheat flour was transported overland through the Salalah corridor.

Whilst importing food commodities, significant delays were encountered for obtaining clearances from the YSMO, the main entity in charge of providing clearance for imported food commodities at entry points. In some instances, while food commodities were already in the country and under the custody of WFP, the absence of clearances led to WFP being unable to distribute these commodities. These administrative impediments and clearance delays also had repercussions on the timeliness of relief food assistance.

WFP's network of transporters ensured the movement of an average of 150 large trucks (30 mt capacity) per day to deliver food commodities to 6,537 distribution points (FDPs). As the southern districts of Hudaydah governorate and the coastal zones were significantly affected by armed conflict (mined roads, airstrikes, shelling and artillery), WFP was obliged to make use of alternative routes which increased commodity lead times. Furthermore, the deteriorated state of some bridges and narrow roads did not allow larger trucks to transit from these zones. To overcome these obstacles, food commodities were taken to centres of districts and then loaded to smaller vehicles to allow for efficient and timely distributions. In collaboration with the Deconfliction Liaison Team (DLT) led by OCHA, WFP ensured the deconfliction of all zones where trucks carrying WFP commodities operated. However, deconfliction requests must be made at least 48 hours in advance and a restriction on the movement of trucks during the night was imposed. The implications of such measures means that that trucks transporting WFP food commodities had 30 percent less time to travel.

In addition, requests for the movement of commodities from areas controlled by the de-facto authorities (north) to areas under the control of the IRG (south) were rejected, therefore leaving WFP unable to transport food to the south to fill certain commodity gaps. In parallel, trucks transporting humanitarian assistance from Aden to the northern regions of the country were routinely held at custom checkpoints located at the first entry points of northern governorates for an average of two days. Moreover, on several occasions while delivering food to the designated FDPs, deliveries were delayed due to interference by the local authorities in these districts, leaving WFP's commodities exposed to high risk and considering the volatile security situation, WFP transporters were required to undertake significant efforts to ensure the safety of WFP food until its delivery as per WFP's approved distribution plans. To mitigate the above constraints, supply chain maintained an updated access transport network which helped WFP overcome access constraints. These challenges created additional, unnecessary delays in the delivery of food commodities to FDPs.

In 2018, commodity post-delivery losses represented 0.033 percent of the total quantity of food commodities delivered, which is significantly below the corporate threshold of 2 percent. This was successfully achieved by ensuring transporters' strict adherence to the WFP-established road transport network, as well as WFP procedures for transporting humanitarian cargo. To minimize post-delivery losses, mechanisms were established to hold transporters accountable for losses incurred en-route from WFP warehouses to FDPs.

With the expertise of supply chain, the Commodity Vouchers through Trader's Network (CV-TN) modality was utilised to deliver food assistance. The commodity voucher modality relied on a network of retailers that were able to import food commodities and deliver them to Sana'a, Amanat Al Asimah, Taizz, Hudaydah, Marib, Dhamar, Al Jawf and Lahj governorates. As part of this approach, large commercial importers guaranteed the steady supply of food commodities to WFP beneficiaries. Commodity vouchers were distributed to beneficiaries by WFP's cooperating partners and redeemed by beneficiaries at the closest retail outlets linked to the WFP-contracted Yemeni food suppliers. Thus, CV-TN complemented WFP's in-kind supply chain and ensured the availability of food commodities to beneficiaries. WFP also worked together with retailers that supported the implementation of the CV-TN modality to enhance gender considerations. Retailers were responsible for ensuring separate redemption lines for men and women, recruiting female staff in the outlets, and establishing beneficiary verification teams composed of females members (31 teams were formed). The measures taken ensured that women could safely and confidently approach voucher outlets to receive their food entitlements without any socio-cultural barriers.

To ensure that food distributed through the CV-TN modality met quality standards, quality and quantity inspections, including visual checking and laboratory tests were performed by a specialized company. Regular visits were made by supply chain experts to outlets at different stages (completion of prepositioning and during the distribution cycle) to ensure compliance with the contract's terms and conditions including quality and quantity of food, availability of extra services to beneficiaries (latrines, drinking water and shades), shop opening hours, visibility items, and the storage conditions of food commodities. A mobile application with predetermined parameters was developed by the WFP Yemen supply chain unit to facilitate the collection of information during field visits. The evaluation of retailers was conducted on a monthly basis. In addition, clauses related to liquidated damages were introduced to reduce the risks of deviation from the terms and conditions of issued contracts.

The main challenges encountered while using the CV-TN modality included the lack of access to some districts for security reasons, cooperating partners and suppliers facing difficulties in obtaining permits to access the targeted zones in a timely manner, delays in prepositioning of stocks due to food shortages, payments of customs fees to both authorities by the suppliers, as well as coordination issues among suppliers and CPs.

The Logistics Cluster continued to ensure coordination and information management services in Sana'a, Aden, Hudaydah and Djibouti to maximize the use of available resources in-country and avoid duplication of efforts. In addition, the Logistics Cluster facilitated access for humanitarian organizations to common logistics services such as overland transport, air cargo transport from Djibouti to Sana'a, and sea cargo transport from Djibouti to Aden and Hudaydah; sea passenger transport between Djibouti and Aden, as well as Djibouti and Hudaydah; access to temporary storage facilities; and fuel provision.

Through its Bilateral Service Provision (BSP), WFP continued to assist humanitarian actors by providing engineering and construction support, provision of fuel, logistics augmentation and IT services.

In order to strengthen Cooperating Partners' logistics capacities in the field of emergency preparedness, WFP and the Logistics Cluster jointly organized several training sessions in 2018. These training sessions aimed at creating a readily deployable team of experts in Mobile Storage Unit (MSU) installation, capable of delivering and installing MSUs when and where required, in addition to providing guidance on appropriate storage practices and emergency storage. A total of two training sessions were held in Sana'a and Aden benefitting 54 staff members (12 women and 42 men) from 33 organizations (including WFP, 4 UN Agencies, 18 INGOs and 11 National NGOs).



Annual Food Purchases for the Country (mt)

Commodity	Local	Regional/International	Total
Beans	4,140	-	4,140
Canned Fish	557	-	557
Canned Pulses	1,700	-	1,700

Commodity	Local	Regional/International	Total
Chickpeas	29	-	29
Halawa	109	-	109
High Energy Biscuits	657	1,662	2,319
Iodised Salt	2,040	-	2,040
Lentils	1,694	-	1,694
Rice	-	17,000	17,000
Split Peas	1,000	5,046	6,046
Sugar	-	3,042	3,042
Vegetable Oil	3,300	-	3,300
Wheat	-	1,125	1,125
Wheat Flour	180,546	176,845	357,391
Wheat Soya Blend	-	9,160	9,160
Total	195,771	213,880	409,651
Percentage	47.8%	52.2%	

Annual Global Commodity Management Facility Purchases Received in Country (mt)

Commodity	Total
Canned Chicken	75
Canned Fish	120
Canned Pulses	300
Chickpeas	300
Halawa	45
High Energy Biscuits	335
Lentils	12,000
LNS	4,739
Peas	6,200
Ready To Use Supplementary Food	475
Split Peas	42,199
Sugar	15,456
Vegetable Oil	41,135
Wheat	356,141
Wheat Soya Blend	6,386
Total	485,905

Implementation of Evaluation Recommendations and Lessons Learned

In Yemen, WFP operates in a highly complex and constantly evolving environment. Conflict-affected areas that host the most vulnerable communities are often difficult to access by WFP staff, partners and other stakeholders. Despite having several layers of control, including a triangular monitoring mechanism and safeguards that aim at reducing the risks of food diversion, a number of contextual factors such as interference of different parties in key stages of programme implementation are likely to affect the operation. One such negative consequence of interference is the politicisation of humanitarian aid and resulting restricted access, which led to instances of food diversions in 2018.

Through WFP's monitoring system, a Third-Party Monitor (TPM) identified seven distribution centres in Sana'a governorate where food was reported to have been misappropriated. A WFP detailed survey conducted in the last quarter of 2018 analysed distributions that took place in August and September 2018, the survey concluded that some food may have been removed from storage and distributed or sold to people who were not targeted for food assistance. WFP phone interviews with targeted beneficiaries in these specific locations showed that 60 percent of those who responded to a WFP phone call had not received their entitlements. In response, WFP requested the de-facto leadership in Sana'a to urgently intervene to halt such practices and to take action against perpetrators. Moving forward, WFP will continue to work with TPM partners to assess the efficiency of targeting as well as detecting and preventing any potential instances of food diversion.

WFP is also increasingly focusing on the biometric registration of beneficiaries. During the second half of 2018, around 28,000 households were registered in WFP's beneficiary identity and benefit management system (SCOPE platform). The biometric registration of beneficiaries is being expanded to other governorates of the South and WFP is in discussion with the authorities in the North on the initiation of beneficiary registration in areas under their control. The progressive registration of beneficiaries will enable better monitoring and risk control, and contribute to effective programme cycle management, through the provision of on-time data for decision-making and targeting.

The extremely sensitive socio-political context of Yemen requires a cautious and deliberate approach using thorough evidence gathering on any food diversion allegations. While WFP maintains a zero-tolerance policy on these matters, any allegation without sufficient evidence to back it up can endanger the entire portfolio of WFP's activities in Yemen, depriving millions of individuals from humanitarian food and nutritional assistance.

One of the most important lessons learned as part of programme implementation, which was also highlighted in the conclusions of 2018 Evaluation of WFP Policies on Humanitarian Principles and Access in Humanitarian Contexts, was the necessity to conduct independent food security assessments and thorough targeting exercises to ensure that the most vulnerable and food insecure segments of the population, including marginalized groups such as the *muhamesheen* (social outcasts) and IDPs are always prioritized for receiving life-saving food assistance. Given the scale of the operation and the technical and human resources required to materialize this, WFP proceeded with a two-fold approach. WFP strived to strengthen its internal systems and processes with regard to targeting whilst seeking institutional-level solutions through advocacy vis-à-vis the authorities in order to have their buy-in, with a particular focus on coordination with other humanitarian actors for information sharing on vulnerable groups. This two-fold approach, developed based on past experiences, resulted in important achievements in 2018 including the establishment of a dedicated beneficiary targeting taskforce at the WFP Country Office level, the signature of an agreement with the de-facto authorities on the revision of the targeting and selection processes, as well as the in principle acceptance of biometric registration by the de-facto authorities in the northern parts of the country (agreement was formally signed in mid January 2019), which had been pending for more than one year.

In 2018, WFP introduced the use of differentiated entitlements in priority 1 and priority 2 areas given that at district level, priority 1 districts were more severely affected by food insecurity. This signified that beneficiaries living in priority 1 districts received full entitlements, and those living in priority 2 districts received half entitlements. While this decision was made taking into account the necessity to support districts with higher needs, it created unintended consequences and misunderstandings among the authorities and communities and did not have a significant impact on the food security of priority 1 districts, due to the sharing of food entitlements within the communities. Following this experience, WFP harmonized all food entitlements and focused on improved targeting rather than entitlement differentiation.

In parallel to the advancements made in terms of beneficiary targeting, as the co-lead of the Food Security and Agriculture Cluster (FSAC), WFP also made significant efforts in improving the geographical targeting of areas at high-risk of famine. By conducting district-level analysis of the food security situation as well as deepening geographical targeting to reach village-level prioritization, beneficiaries in need of life-saving food assistance are better allocated throughout the territory. The internal audit exercise conducted in late 2017 with the report released

in early 2018 confirmed that WFP Yemen had significantly improved its control procedures and environment. One of the key recommendations of the audit was to further strengthen the beneficiary targeting process. The targeting criteria which will be used in 2019 for beneficiary selection is based on lessons learned in 2018 and guided by the findings of food security assessments.

In terms of programmatic improvements that are based on lessons learned, WFP has been increasingly focusing on the integration of life-saving food assistance with the prevention of acute malnutrition programme, targeting the same food insecure populations to better meet their essential needs. Furthermore, in order to mitigate the impact of logistical challenges on the timely delivery of food assistance, WFP is actively exploring and implementing market-based modalities such as cash-based transfers.

Story Worth Telling

When four-year-old Rahmah's family was forced to flee their home, finding enough food to prepare the next meal became a daily struggle.

In June, intense fighting in her home city of Hudaydah forced her parents and eight siblings to leave their home. They ended up in Yemen's southern governorate of Lahj.

"We were scared," said Rahmah's mother Zainab, "Our children could not sleep at night."

Zainab knows that the move was the only way to protect her family. But when the family of 11 first arrived in Lahj, accessing basic necessities, including food, was a constant worry.

But in July the family started receiving monthly food assistance from WFP. Each food parcel includes fortified wheat flour, fortified vegetable oil, and pulses, providing enough food to Rahmah and her family for a month.

"Before we started receiving food assistance from WFP, Rahmah and her brothers and sisters would go to sleep hungry. Now, they have enough food to cover daily needs," said Zainab.

When the fighting in Hudaydah sparked a surge in the number of IDPs, WFP responded by including these displaced families in its general food assistance programme.

"The food that we receive every month from WFP has helped us tremendously," added Zainab, "While it is our dream to return home, I am happy that my children are safe and sound and well-fed."

Project Results

Activities and Operational Partnerships

Special Operation (200845) aims to provide safe and reliable air transport services through the United Nations Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS) and provide stand-by capacity for evacuation of humanitarian staff as and when required. The Special Operation was launched in 2015 to address the severe constraints on humanitarian staff to enter and exit Yemen in the context of an escalating conflict. Through this Special Operation, WFP, in its capacity as the custodian of UNHAS, supports operational continuity for humanitarian actors to respond to the crisis in Yemen, in line with WFP's Strategic Objective 1: saving lives and protecting livelihoods in emergencies.

Since its launch in 2015, UNHAS has seen a constant increase in requests for flights in and out of Yemen, as United Nations agencies and international non-governmental organisations (INGOs) progressively increased their number of staff and missions into Yemen. In addition, the lack of commercial airlines, as well as the closure of Sana'a air space since August 2016, make UNHAS the only common air service transporting passengers to Yemen, besides air services provided by MSF and ICRC.

In 2018, UNHAS continued serving Sana'a from Amman and Djibouti, and Aden from Djibouti. In addition, in 2018 UNHAS scaled up its operation by adding a fourth route in September, a direct connection between Sana'a and Aden; initially, two flights per month were performed on this new route but following the high demand the route was served once a week, and finally twice a week. Throughout 2018, UNHAS adjusted its schedule to meet the requests by users, settling on three flights a week between Amman and Sana'a; two flights per week between Djibouti and Sana'a; two flights per week between Djibouti and Aden; and two flights per week between Sana'a and Aden. This schedule allowed UNHAS to provide flights serving Sana'a 5 days a week from three different locations (Amman, Djibouti, Aden), and to provide flights serving Aden three days a week from two locations (Sana'a and Djibouti). UNHAS operates according to standard operating procedures, which are approved and shared among the UNHAS user group, and its Emergency Response Plan, which serves the Yemeni context. While all UNHAS flights are free-of-charge, since February 2017 the Steering Committee approved that all bookings requests are subject to a USD 100 non-refundable booking fee.

The main challenge UNHAS faced in 2018 is the lack of aviation fuel at Sana'a airport, which might have led to halt the flights to Sana'a from Amman if UNHAS had not managed to secure a regular aviation fuel supplier, this allowing UNHAS to keep the route active.

Overall, 72 organisations used the United Nations Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS) in 2018, including 16 United Nations agencies and 56 international non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to ensure a continuous humanitarian response to the crisis in Yemen. The WFP UNHAS User Group Committee, composed of 16 United Nations agencies and 40 international NGOs, met regularly to discuss and agree upon standard operating procedures, flight rates and schedules. The User Group Committee was central to ensuring the cost recovery or free of charge service provided by UNHAS to humanitarian organisations, and further facilitated advocacy and resource mobilisation in order to sustain the service.

Given the very limited options available to the humanitarian community for moving critical humanitarian cargo into Yemen (mainly done through highly time-consuming sea transportation), in 2018 UNHAS collaborated with the Logistics Cluster to provide combined airlifts for humanitarian cargo from Djibouti to Sana'a, Aden, and from Aden to Socotra.

Results

Through this Special Operation, the humanitarian community was able to maintain its access to vulnerable and conflict-affected populations in Yemen through the transportation of international and national humanitarian staff and urgent light cargo. By providing humanitarian actors with a critical transport link into Yemen, the operation preserved the operational integrity of the international humanitarian response in Yemen.

In 2018, UNHAS transported 12,078 passengers on behalf of 72 organizations. An increase in the volume of passengers throughout the year translated into increased activity compared to the previous years, with 2,561 passengers transported in 2015, 6,670 passengers transported in 2016, and 9,184 passengers transported in 2017. An average of 1,006 passengers were transported per month (compared to 765 in 2017, 549 in 2016 and 320 in 2015) on an average of 33 flights per month (compared to an average of 27 flights in 2017, 15 flights in 2016 and 13 flights per month in 2015). UNHAS was able to operate its flights despite ongoing operational challenges related to

the political and security situation in Yemen, and UNHAS flights continued to take place subject to operational window slots granted by Saudi Arabia-led Coalition and the securing of landing permits. In addition, UNHAS continued to play a crucial role in providing medical evacuations for humanitarian staff in medically urgent cases, and in 2018 facilitated 40 safe and rapid medical evacuations from Yemen.

In addition, UNHAS succeeded to shift the operation airport base in Amman from Marka civil airport to Queen Alia International Airport in Amman. This major shift took place on 01 July 2018, and it was implemented to address the requests from the user group and Steering Committee to facilitate the connecting flights of humanitarian staff travelling to and from Yemen. In view of increased demand by humanitarian aid workers and problems of JetA1 fuel availability in Sana'a, in 2018 UNHAS has requested a larger aircraft to service Amman – Sana'a; the aircraft will start to operate from January 2019.

UNHAS also supported the additional flights requests that were received in August and September, when the Logistics Cluster's sea passenger service between Djibouti and Aden suffered an interruption due to administrative issues at Djibouti level.

UNHAS was able to achieve these significant results in 2018 despite continued numerous operational challenges. In addition to the lack of aviation fuel at Sana'a airport, the operational windows for UNHAS flights were granted by the Saudi-led Coalition only on short notice (on average 12 hours or less before each planned flight), which allowed only a limited time for complex flight preparations to be made. This makes the UNHAS Yemen operation unique among worldwide UNHAS operations for not being able to confirm departure dates, departure and arrival times until only a few hours before planned flights. However, UNHAS successfully managed to cope with these constraints through a strong control and communications systems and procedures. Despite the ability of UNHAS to successfully overcome these difficulties, a prolonging of these challenges may potentially limit the ability of UNHAS to provide reliable air transportation services to the humanitarian community in Yemen.

The success of the UNHAS operation was possible also thanks to timely and adequate donor funding.

Performance Monitoring

WFP and the United Nations Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS) continued to monitor the performance of the air passenger service through regular interaction with user organizations, particularly through Logistics Cluster coordination meetings in Djibouti, Sana'a, and Aden. UNHAS carried out an aviation field safety and security operation at the end of December for all Yemen destinations; in addition, a Security Risk Assessment was completed in Sana'a in June 2018. Two satisfaction surveys were completed in 2018, which provided an overall satisfaction rate of 80 percent with UNHAS services, in line with the previous years.

In addition to these monitoring mechanisms, UNHAS conducted regular inspections of the runway at Sana'a and Aden airports in order to ensure the safety of flights. Regular meetings of the WFP UNHAS User Group Committee also allowed a continued monitoring of standard operating procedures, flight rates, and schedules. Overall, five Steering Committee meetings took place in 2018.

Figures and Indicators

Data Notes

***Output Indicator table:** Output indicator “average weight of light cargo transported” was 0.5 metric tons (mt), against a target of 0.5 mt in 2018. UNHAS succeeded in achieving 100 percent of its target. Due to the systematic rounding of decimal values, 0.5 was rounded to 1 in the Output Indicator table of Special Operation 200845.

Project Indicators

Output Indicators

Output	Unit	Planned	Actual	% Actual vs. Planned
CRF SO5-SR8: Service Delivery General				
Average no. of passengers transported monthly by air	individual	833	1,006	120.8%
Average weight of light cargo transported monthly	Mt	1	1	100.0%
Number of agencies and organizations using transport services	agency/organization	70	72	102.9%
Number of aircrafts made available	aircraft	2	2	100.0%
Number of assessments/surveys conducted	assessment	2	2	100.0%
Number of passengers transported	individual	10,000	12,078	120.8%
Number of requests for air transportation (cargo) fulfilled	instance	90	80	88.9%
Percentage of passenger bookings served	%	100	100	100.0%
Percentage response to medical and security evacuation	%	100	100	100.0%
Quantity (mt) of cargo transported	Mt	6	6	100.0%
Utilization of the contracted hours of aircraft	%	100	100	100.0%