Background
The current level of hunger and malnutrition in Yemen is unprecedented, leading to severe hardship and negative humanitarian consequences for millions of Yemenis, particularly affecting vulnerable groups - 3.3 million children and pregnant and breastfeeding women are acutely malnourished and require urgent treatment. With up to 67 percent of children under five years chronically malnourished (stunted), and rates of acute malnutrition (wasting) exceeding 25 percent in some governorates, the physical and mental development of Yemeni children is severely at risk, a disadvantage from which they cannot recover if appropriate actions are not undertaken in the critical period from conception to the first two years of life. The nutrition situation for women of reproductive age (15 to 49 years) is equally serious: 25 percent are underweight and more than four-fifths are anaemic, which can lead to maternal death and disabling morbidities.

The nutrition crisis in Yemen is multi-faceted, originating in conflict, food insecurity and poverty and resulting in inadequate growth and ill-health for millions of children. In addition to poor food consumption, factors contributing to these critical levels of undernutrition are poor infant and young child feeding and care practices, limited access to improved (safe) drinking water, and a high disease burden.

An estimated 14.8 million people lack access to basic healthcare; only 45 percent of the 3,507 health facilities surveyed by the World Health Organization (WHO) in November 2016 were fully functional and most face severe shortages of medicine, equipment and staff.

Activities
Under its Emergency Operation 201068, WFP will target 1.9 million children and women through its nutrition activities. Targeted supplementary feeding programmes will treat moderate acute malnutrition in children 6 to 59 months with a ready-to-use supplementary food, Plumpy'Sup, which provides 535 kcal per day for an average of 90 days. Acutely malnourished pregnant and breastfeeding women will receive a monthly 6 kg take-home ration of a fortified blended flour, SuperCereal, from the beginning of the second trimester through to six months of breastfeeding.

Through blanket supplementary feeding programme activities, children 6 to 23 months will receive preventative monthly 1.5 kg entitlements of a lipid-based nutrient supplement, Plumpy'Doz, which provides a daily 281 kcal and essential micronutrients. Pregnant and breastfeeding women will receive a monthly 6 kg entitlement of SuperCereal to prevent under nutrition and micronutrient deficiencies, and support healthy maternal and neonatal outcomes.

Implementation
WFP is prioritising its assistance in consultation with other humanitarian partners targeting people in highest priority governorates and districts. To avert a looming nutrition catastrophe, WFP, in collaboration with its key partners – UNICEF, WHO and the Nutrition Cluster partners – will provide an integrated package of nutrition and food assistance with complementary activities that use limited resources by focusing on areas at the highest risk in order to meet the immediate needs of the most vulnerable and respond to the needs of each Yemeni family as a whole.

In April 2017, 16,356 moderate acutely malnourished (MAM) children 6 to 59 months- out of the planned 72,575 children 6 to 59 months- and 14,839 acutely malnourished pregnant and lactating women (PLW) -out of the planned 46,040 - were admitted into WFP’s targeted supplementary feeding programmes (TSFP) through 561 health facilities and 99 mobile clinics in 13 governorates. WFP’s blanket supplementary feeding programme (BSFP) for prevention of acute and chronic malnutrition admitted 142 children 6 to 23 months out of the planned 20,945 in the same governorates. In the TSFP, 82 percent of MAM children were discharged as cured, 17 percent defaulted, and less than 1 percent died, while 97 percent of PLW admitted in March were discharged as cured, 2 percent defaulted and no deaths were recorded. The cumulative 2017 total for TSFP is 94,788 children and 59,917 PLW admitted, and for BSFP 43,041 children admitted.