

HUMANITARIAN UPDATE

Issue 1 / January 2021

Aden city, Al Sadaqah hospital - 18 March 2020.
A doctor attends to a little girl suffering from malnutrition. ©Ayman Fuad/YPN for WHO

HIGHLIGHTS

Preventing famine is the most urgent priority now

P 02

2020 Response round up

P 03

WHO supports COVID-19 national response plan

P 03

Restrictions on official fuel stations continue in northern governorates while the unofficial market flourishes

P 04

Civilian casualties fall for a second year, but increase in the fourth quarter of 2020

P 05

Yemen Humanitarian Fund to address acute needs

P 08



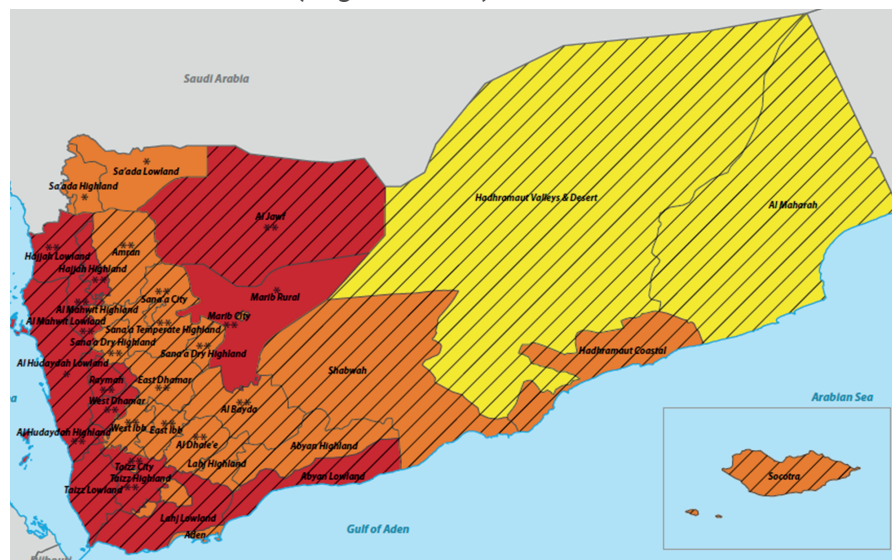
OCHA

YEMEN

ACUTE MALNUTRITION AMONG CHILDREN UNDER AGE 5 IN YEMEN HITS HIGHEST LEVELS EVER RECORDED

Intensifying conflict, a protracted economic blockade, a depleted health delivery system and a shortage of humanitarian funding in 2020 have combined to push already exhausted communities to the brink. It is more critical than ever to scale up assistance in Yemen to avert the worst. On 14 January, the Emergency Relief Coordinator (ERC), Mr. Mark Lowcock, warned the UN Security Council that, “the most urgent priority in Yemen right now ... is to prevent a massive famine.”

Malnutrition situation (Aug-Dec 2020)



Source: Integrated Phase Classification - January 2021

Key figures

Jan-Aug 2021



2,254,663

Number of cases of children aged [0:59] months acutely malnourished

IN NEED OF TREATMENT

• **395,195**

Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM)

• **1,859,468**

Moderate Acute Malnutrition (MAM)



1,155,653

Pregnant or lactating women acutely malnourished

IN NEED OF TREATMENT



16.2M

54% of the population analysed

People facing high acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 3 and above)

IN NEED OF URGENT ACTION

Phase 5	47,000 People in Catastrophe
Phase 4	5,058,000 People in Emergency
Phase 3	11,042,000 People in Crisis
Phase 2	8,644,500 People Stressed
Phase 1	5,258,000 People in Food Security

The latest Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) Acute Malnutrition report released in February by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), the World Food Programme (WFP), the World Health organization (WHO) and partners, makes it clear that preventing acute malnutrition is also a most urgent priority.

Acute malnutrition among children under age 5 in Yemen has hit the highest levels ever recorded as the humanitarian crisis continues to exert a terrible toll on young children. Nearly 2.3 million children under age 5 in Yemen are at risk of acute malnutrition in 2021, according to the new IPC report.

Among these, nearly 400,000 children under age 5, an increase of 22 per cent from 2020, are projected to be at risk of dying if they do not receive urgent treatment as severe acute malnutrition levels reach some of the highest levels recorded in Yemen since the conflict escalated. Malnutrition damages children's physical and cognitive development, especially before age 2.

PREVENTING FAMINE IS THE MOST URGENT PRIORITY NOW

The IPC malnutrition report follows the IPC Acute Food Insecurity Analysis in December 2020 which showed that 13.5 million people (45 per cent of the population) were already facing acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 3 and above), including 16,500 in famine-like conditions (IPC Phase 5-Catastrophic), in the last quarter of 2020, with the worst hunger clustered in conflict-affected areas. Numbers are predicted to increase in the first six months of 2021, when 16.2 million (54 per cent of the population) are expected to experience acute levels of food insecurity – 11 million at crisis level (IPC Phase 3), 5 million at emergency level (IPC Phase 4) and 47,000 at catastrophic level (IPC Phase 5) in famine-like conditions.

While rates of malnutrition and food insecurity spiral upwards, the

It is largely irreversible, perpetuating illness, poverty and inequality. Preventing the devastating impact of malnutrition starts with maternal health, but around 1.2 million pregnant or breastfeeding women are also projected to be acutely malnourished in 2021.

“The increasing number of children going hungry in Yemen should shock us all into action,” said UNICEF Executive Director Henrietta Fore. “More children will die with every day that passes without action. Humanitarian organizations need urgent predictable resources and unhindered access to communities on the ground to be able to save lives.”

Acute malnutrition among young children and mothers in Yemen has increased each year since the start of the conflict with a significant deterioration during 2020 driven by high rates of disease, such as diarrhoea, malaria, measles and cholera, and rising rates of food insecurity. The worst hit governorates are Al Hudaydah, Taizz, Lahj, Hajjah, Aden and Abyan, which account for nearly half of expected acute malnutrition cases in 2021.

humanitarian response remains hugely underfunded. By the end of January 2021, only \$1.9 billion, 56 per cent of the \$3.38 billion needed for the 2020 response, had been received, compared with 2019, when \$4.06 of the \$4.19 billion appeal was received. Aid agencies were forced to scale down and shut down some essential programmes last year and the numbers of people assisted each month fell from 14 million people at the end of 2019 to about 10.3 million in the last quarter of 2020. In his January address to the Security Council, the ERC indicated that, the 2021 response plan would be released in February, costed at similar level to 2020, and urged donors “to pledge generously and to disburse funds quickly.”

2020 RESPONSE ROUND UP

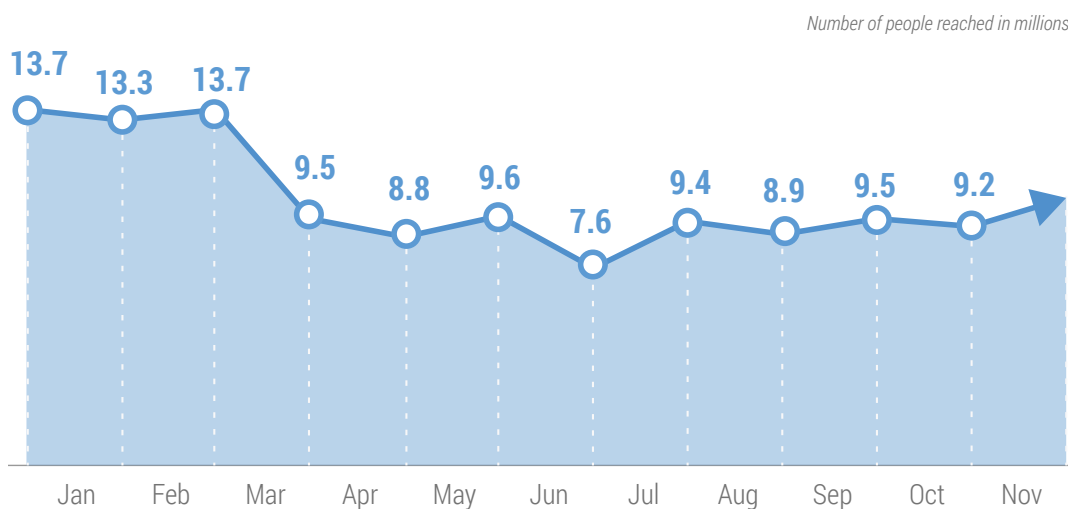
In Yemen, 2020 was a challenging year – the severity of humanitarian needs deepened, driven by escalating conflict and a protracted economic blockade which fueled the ongoing economic crisis. Torrential rains, a fuel crisis and COVID-19 exacerbated the humanitarian situation. The operating environment has been extremely restricted since the second half of 2019, hindering a principled aid operation, and the humanitarian response was crippled by a huge funding shortfall as some donors withheld and others reduced funding, due to lack of assurances of a principled aid operation.

By March 2020, it became clear that cluster capacity to deliver was affected by five key factors: increasing humanitarian access restrictions, an acute funding shortage, reduced partner presence particularly

in hard-to-reach areas, and risk and programme re-calibration as clusters implemented accountability mechanisms to ensure a principled effective and efficient response. By mid-2020, Yemen had returned to alarming levels of food insecurity and acute malnutrition.

Precautionary measures introduced in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and a fuel crisis since June 2020 also affected the aid operation. The impact of such factors reduced cluster reach while the humanitarian situation was deteriorating. The number of people reached each month fell to a low of 7.5 million people in July 2020 before picking up and an average of 10.2 million had been reached each month by November 2020, falling short of the 14 million average monthly reach in 2019.

Monthly reach across all clusters



Source: Clusters

WHO SUPPORTS COVID-19 NATIONAL RESPONSE PLAN

WHO continues to support the COVID-19 national response, including providing technical support for the roll out of COVID-19 vaccines received through COVAX and bilateral agreements. WHO will also provide advice on the safety and efficacy of vaccines irrespective of the procurement source.

Yemen is among about 180 countries that have signed an agreement with the COVAX facility – a ground-breaking global collaboration to accelerate the development, production, and equitable access to COVID-19 tests, treatments, and vaccines. COVAX is co-led by WHO, Gavi the Vaccine Alliance, and the Coalition

for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations, and will provide fully donor-subsidized doses of COVID-19 vaccine for the most vulnerable and at-risk population (about 20 per cent of the population in

participating countries). The vaccines will be delivered progressively throughout 2021. COVAX is intended to support all governorates across Yemen and operational planning is already underway.

RESTRICTIONS ON OFFICIAL FUEL STATIONS CONTINUE IN NORTHERN GOVERNORATES WHILE THE UNOFFICIAL MARKET FLOURISHES

The fuel crisis, which started in June 2020 with a dispute over the use of revenue from fuel imports, has continued for a seventh month. The situation eased briefly in November, but there has generally been a reduction in the number of ships allowed to transport fuel to Al Hudaydah over the last seven months. Although less fuel is entering the country through the Al Hudaydah ports, a steady supply continues to arrive on the informal market, where it sells at much higher prices than on the official market.

The Yemen Petroleum Company's (YPC's) Emergency Plan, launched in November to regulate official fuel sales, remains in place. The YPC regularly changes the number of official fuel stations permitted to open in each governorate, the amount of fuel that can be sold and frequency with which vehicles can be refilled.

By the end of January, petrol was being sold at between YER12,000 and YER15,000 for 20 litres on the unofficial market in many northern governorates, in contrast to YER5,900 on the official market. In Sana'a City many official fuel stations were either closed, and long queues had formed at those that remained open. A similar situation was reported in Ibb Governorate where dealers on the informal market reported receiving a reduced supply from areas controlled by the Government of Yemen in the south and the crisis has affected the provision

of public services and access to services as the cost of transport has increased. The humanitarian operation has also been affected, for example there have been delays in the provision of shelter assistance and to a few camp coordination and camp management activities, particularly in remote areas of Ibb. In Sa'ada, which was previously less affected by the crisis, the cost of petrol has now reached YER15,000 but remains at YER10,500 for 20 litres in neighbouring Al Jawf, where fuel supplies arrive via Marib.

Humanitarian partners are largely reliant on fuel from the informal market which has pushed up the cost of operations. There are reports that WASH services in remote areas have been particularly affected, mainly in areas where water wells and treatment plants rely on fuel and many are now functioning at less than 50 per cent capacity with some having completely stopped mainly in Sa'ada Governorate.

In January, [5 fuel vessels discharged](#) about 81,000 metric tons (MT) of fuel derivatives at Al Hudaydah port. This is an increase on December when 4 vessels discharged about 76,000 MT in fuel derivatives, but remains well below the average monthly pre-crisis level of fuel imports.

CIVILIAN CASUALTIES FALL FOR A SECOND YEAR, BUT INCREASE IN THE FOURTH QUARTER OF 2020

The Protection Cluster's Civilian Impact Monitoring Project (CIMP), using open sources, recorded 2,087 civilian casualties in 2020 (749 people killed and 1,338 injured), a decrease from 3,224 civilian casualties in 2019 (1,104 deaths and 2,120 injuries), and from 4,934 in 2018 (2,049 deaths and 2,885 injuries). While civilian casualties fell by over a third between 2019 and 2020, the number of casualties increased in the last quarter of 2020 as clashes in Al Hudaydah and Taizz escalated.

According to CIMP, the highest number of civilian casualties in 2020 was in Al Hudaydah Governorate for the third consecutive year – 457 casualties were recorded, a decrease from 768 civilian casualties in 2019 and from 2,040 in 2018. Notably, no casualties from air strikes were recorded in Al Hudaydah in 2020, in contrast with 15 recorded in 2019 and 918 in 2018. The huge reduction in the number of casualties from air strikes over the last two years coincides with the ceasefire agreed under the Stockholm Agreement in December 2018. A similar number of civilian casualties, 454, were recorded in Taizz Governorate in 2020, where figures fell slightly from 2019, but increased between 2018 and 2019. The third highest number of casualties was recorded in Sa'ada Governorate, where casualties fell from 326




in 2019 to 197 in 2020 and the number of casualties from shelling fell by 50 per cent, from 214 in 2019 to 107 in 2020. Civilian casualties from air strikes in Sa'ada dropped dramatically from 785 in 2018 to 53 in 2019 and 46 in 2020.

Other governorates where there were large decreases in the number of civilian casualties in 2020 include Ad Dhal'e – where the frontline remained largely the same – and in Aminat Al Asmah and Hajjah, where the decrease again reflects a reduction in the number of deaths and injuries from air strikes.

Another likely reason for the overall decrease in the number of civilian casualties in 2020 is that new frontlines opened up in less populated regions, for example in remote districts in Al Jawf and Marib governorates. Even so, Marib and Al Jawf, were two governorates where the number of casualties increased, from 66 to 180 between 2019 and 2020 in Al Jawf and from 32 to 119 in Marib. Civilian casualty numbers also increased in some governorates in the south, reflecting ongoing clashes between forces of the Government of Yemen and southern separatists.

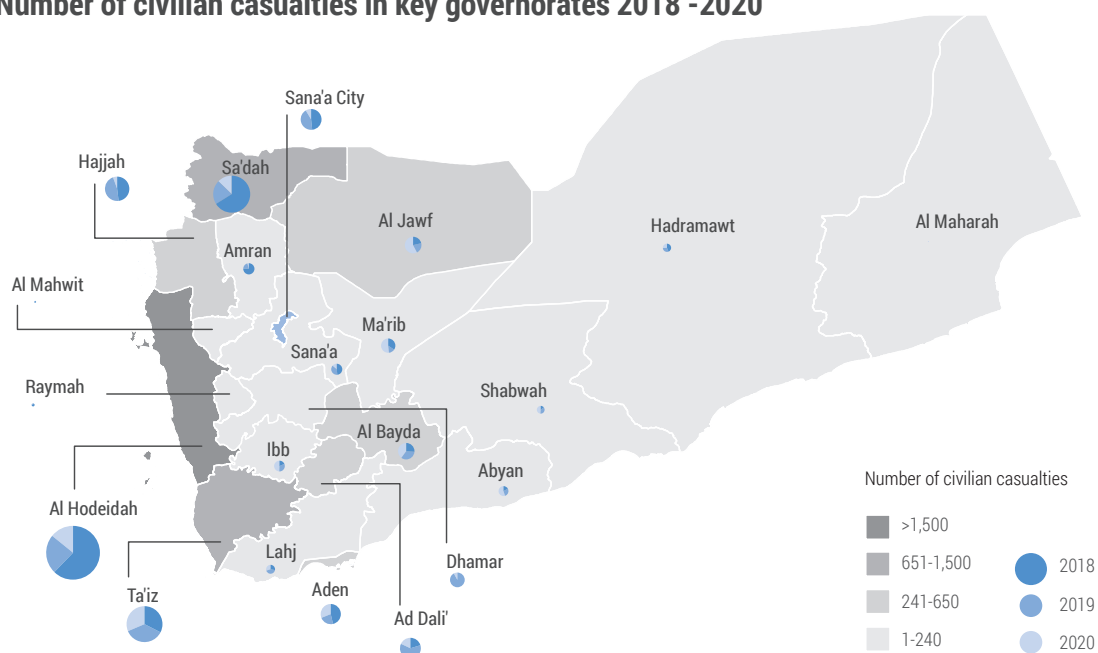
CIMP indicates that shelling caused the highest number of civilian casualties in 2020, though overall numbers have decreased over the past two years.

Number of civilian casualties recorded in Yemen 2018 – 2020

	ALL CIVILIAN CASUALTIES			FATALITIES			INJURIES		
	2018	2019	2020	2018	2019	2020	2018	2019	2020
 Total	4,934	3,224	2,087	2,049	1,104	749	2,885	2,120	1,338
 Children	1,014	828	499	424	276	179	590	552	320
 Women	489	420	298	255	138	112	234	282	186

Source: CIMP

Number of civilian casualties in key governorates 2018 -2020



Source: CIMP

At the end of March 2020, the UN Secretary-General called for a global ceasefire to allow humanitarians to reach people most vulnerable to the spread of COVID-19 and made a separate appeal to the parties to the conflict in Yemen. On 9 April the Saudi-led Coalition called a unilateral two-week ceasefire which it later extended until the end of Ramadan in May. In May, the number of civilian casualties recorded by CIMP fell to 155, and to 143 in June, but were higher

in the last six months of the year. Civilian casualties spiked at 228 in October, following an increase in clashes in Al Hudaydah and Taizz from late September, and there were a series of mass casualty events in the two governorates in the last three months of the year, and one in Aden on 30 December when Aden airport was attacked as the new cabinet were arriving in Yemen.

In 2020, CIMP recorded 994 incidents where armed violence hit houses in

Civilian casualties by type of armed violence 2018 -2020

	2018		2019		2020	
Air strike	2,588		796		216	
Shelling	1,337		1,216		853	
Small arms fire	156		267		342	
SA/LW ¹	256		304		187	
Landmine	255		266		209	
IED ²	94		144		63	
Sniper	81		116		86	
UXO	56		88		75	
Hand grenade	22		19		40	
Naval shelling	50		7		5	
Sea mine	25		-		1	
Drone strike	14		1		10	

1) Small arms/light weapons 2) Improvised explosive device

Source: CIMP

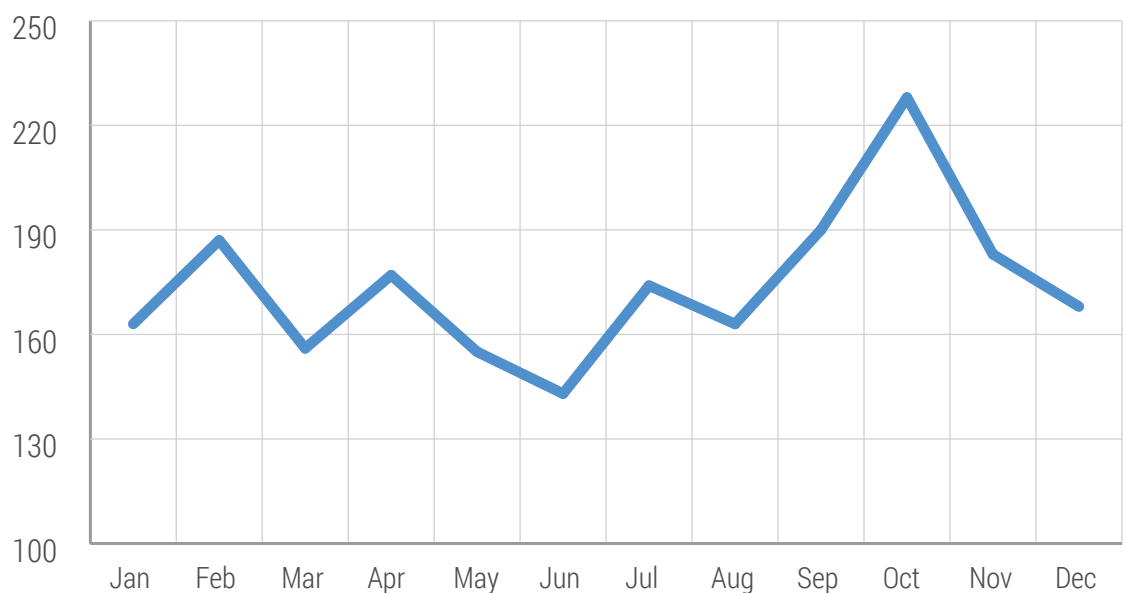
2020, down from 1,268 in 2019, and 249 incidents where farms were hit, a slight drop from 260 in 2019. There was an increase in the number of incidents affecting health facilities, from 14 to 20, while the number of incidents affecting education facilities halved, from 37 to 18. Twice as many incidents were recorded where telecommunications infrastructure was damaged during the year, up from 10 to 20.

Access challenges in Yemen make it difficult to verify civilian casualties and other breaches of international humanitarian law. Nevertheless, OHCHR verified 961 civilian casualties including 329 deaths and 632 injuries in 2020. Victims included 157 men, 47 women, 83 boys and 42 girls killed and 280 men, 97 women and 96 girls injured. OHCHR, like CIMP, found that the highest number of casualties were caused by shelling (123 deaths and 366 injuries). OHCHR verified casualties also show a significant downward trend over the last two years, from 2,712 in 2018, to 1,942 civilian casualties in 2019, and 961 in 2020. OHCHR also verified 12 attacks on schools, 14 attacks on hospitals, 4 attacks on mosques and an attack on a prison.

HC a.i. issues two further statements calling for a halt to indiscriminate attacks in Al Hudaydah

In January, the Humanitarian Coordinator a.i. issued two more statements as clashes and indiscriminate attacks continued to kill and injure civilians in residential areas of Al Hudaydah. Following reports that three civilians were killed and at least four injured in an attack near a wedding hall in the Al Hawak District in Al Hudaydah on 1 January, the Humanitarian a.i., Mr. Ally-Raza Qureshi, called on the parties to the conflict “to stop these indiscriminate attacks, which are causing so many casualties among civilians in clear violation of international humanitarian law.” After an escalation of clashes in southern areas of Al Hudaydah in mid-January, on 28 January the Humanitarian Coordinator a.i., Mr. Auke Lootsma, warned that the “conflict continues to exert misery on millions of lives,” adding “... an immediate end to hostilities is urgently needed to allow humanitarians to conduct needs assessments and provide crucial medical support to wounded civilians and material support to those who have been displaced and lost their livelihoods.”

Civilian casualties by month in 2020



Source: CIMP

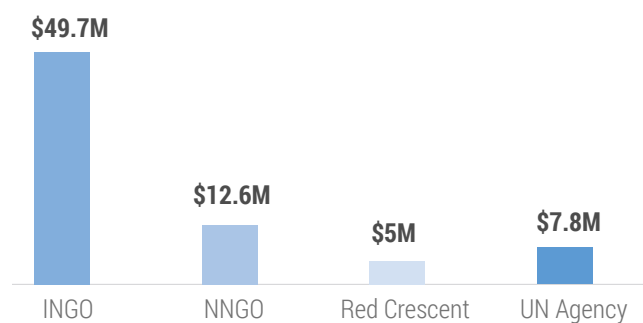
YEMEN HUMANITARIAN FUND TO ADDRESS ACUTE NEEDS

The First YHF Standard Allocation, launched on 19 November, will provide funding to assist people in acute humanitarian need to mitigate the risks of famine and the impact of COVID-19 in Yemen. The allocation strategy focused on two priorities a) activities covering high priority gaps for people in acute needs in Taizz (Al Mukha, Maqbanah, As Silw, and Hayfan districts) and b) activities covering gaps for people in acute needs in the ongoing emergency response.

Following the submission and review process, 58 projects with activities costing at approximately \$75.3m were selected. More than 3.2 million Yemenis will receive life-saving assistance from YHF partners. NGO frontline partners will receive over 83 per cent of the funding. Overall, in 2020, OCHA's pooled fund mechanisms allocated over \$163.5m, including \$98.5m from the YHF and \$65m through the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF).

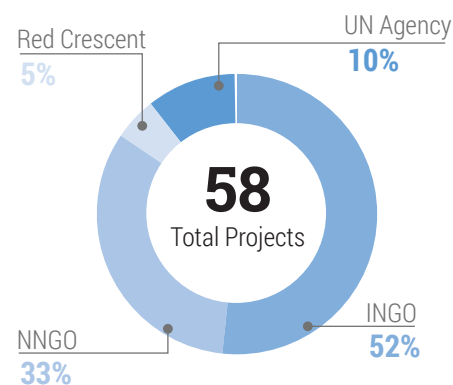
Standard allocation: 1

 **\$75.3** million
Total Budget



*INGO: International Non-Governmental Organization
NNGO: National Non-Governmental Organization*

Source: Yemen Humanitarian Fund



For further information, please contact:

Sajjad Mohammad Sajid

Head of Office, UN-OCHA Yemen
E-mail: sajid@un.org

Tapiwa Gomo

Head of Communication, UN-OCHA Yemen
Tel: +967 712 222 860
E-mail: gomo@un.org

OCHA information products are available at:

www.unocha.org/yemen
www.unocha.org
www.reliefweb.int