



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations

Yemen

Famine Prevention Plan

January–June 2019

Contributing to improved food security and nutrition



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Abbreviations

FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FRM	Famine Risk Monitoring
FSAC	Food Security and Agriculture Cluster
IFRR	Integrated Famine Risk Reduction
IPC	Integrated Food Security Phase Classification
WASH	Water, sanitation and hygiene
WFP	World Food Programme

Overview



to assist

1.6 million people



FAO requires

USD 83.2 million



period

**January–June 2019
(6 months)**

The conflict in Yemen has escalated dramatically since nearly four years ago and is compounding an already severe protracted humanitarian crisis. Some 67 percent (20 million people) of the country's total population of 29.9 million would be in need of urgent assistance to save their lives and livelihoods. The ongoing conflict has led to a severe economic decline and collapsed essential services, taking an enormous toll on the population and exacerbating existing vulnerabilities. The expansion of the conflict has also led to large-scale displacement of 3.3 million people and high rates of malnutrition. Malnutrition is affecting 3 million people including 1.5 million children, 1.1 million pregnant and lactating women, and 400 000 acutely malnourished children. The agriculture sector is among the worst hit by the current crisis and local food production has been severely compromised.

Conflict and insecurity remain the main drivers of food insecurity and malnutrition that have pushed the most vulnerable households to the brink of famine. They include a significant loss of income and disrupted livelihoods, huge population displacement, restricted access, shrinking imports and continuing depreciation of the Yemeni Rial, which deepens the currency and economic crisis.

Preventing the country from slipping into famine requires a significant political and economic engagement at all levels from all sides on finding peaceful solutions to end the conflict and an immediate cessation of hostilities. It also requires immediate high impact programmes to bolster and revive disrupted livelihoods for vulnerable rural communities.

The Famine Prevention Plan, which is within the framework of the Yemen Famine Prevention Roadmap and the Yemen Famine Prevention Strategy, is just one of the actions that need to be implemented by stakeholders to prevent famine from occurring in the country. The Plan stipulates key interventions that the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) will implement between January and June 2019 to prevent the most vulnerable and at-risk households from sliding into famine.

Though the Plan's interventions are short term and quick impact in nature, they are not mutually exclusive but rather supplementary to interventions of the Emergency Livelihoods Response Plan 2019, which is a twelve-month plan developed within the framework of the Humanitarian Response Plan 2019.



Situation analysis



Without Humanitarian Food Assistance, **20 million** people would be severely food insecure, and **238 000 people** would be in Catastrophe (IPC Phase 5) spread over 45 districts in 13 governorates



3 million people malnourished, including **1.1 million** pregnant and lactating women and more than **400 000** severely acutely malnourished children

The ongoing conflict, now in its fourth year, has led to a severe economic decline and collapse of essential services, taking an enormous toll on the population and exacerbating existing vulnerabilities. Since the conflict escalated in mid-March 2015, the humanitarian and food security situation in Yemen have significantly deteriorated. People have exhausted their coping mechanisms, leading to widespread food insecurity and malnutrition in the country. The conflict has severely compromised food production, disrupted economic activities, destroyed people's livelihoods and reduced their purchasing power, making it difficult for them to meet their minimal food needs.

Before the conflict, significant underlying vulnerabilities made Yemen prone to food insecurity and famine.¹ They include decades of underdevelopment, chronic malnutrition and aggravating environmental factors, such as severe water scarcity.² Yemen relies on imports for more than 70 percent of the food consumed at household level and 90 percent of the main staple food (wheat), while the supply of fuel imports only covers approximately half of national requirements. More than 80 percent of Yemenis live below the poverty line, out of pocket expenditures have been on a steady rise over the past years and critical public services have remained underdeveloped for decades. Even pre-2015 conflict, 70 percent of the population had no access to safe drinking water and 40 percent had no access to basic health services. Moreover, Yemen was in dire need of strengthening its agriculture sector, specifically revitalizing crop and livestock production. While only a small proportion of food is produced domestically, nearly two-thirds of Yemenis derive their livelihoods from agriculture.

Three million people are malnourished, including 1.1 million pregnant and lactating women and more than 400 000 severely acutely malnourished children. Stunting levels remain high, with recent surveys showing increases in the last two years. In the absence of Humanitarian Food Assistance, 67 percent of the population would be experiencing Crisis or worse levels of food insecurity and would require urgent assistance to save their lives and livelihoods. Of great concern is a quarter of a million people who would be in Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) Phase 5 spread over 45 districts in 13 governorates in the country³ – their situation could worsen if no urgent action is taken. The worst affected governorates are Al Hudaydah, Amran, Hajjah, Taiz, Al Jawf, Marib and Sa'ada.

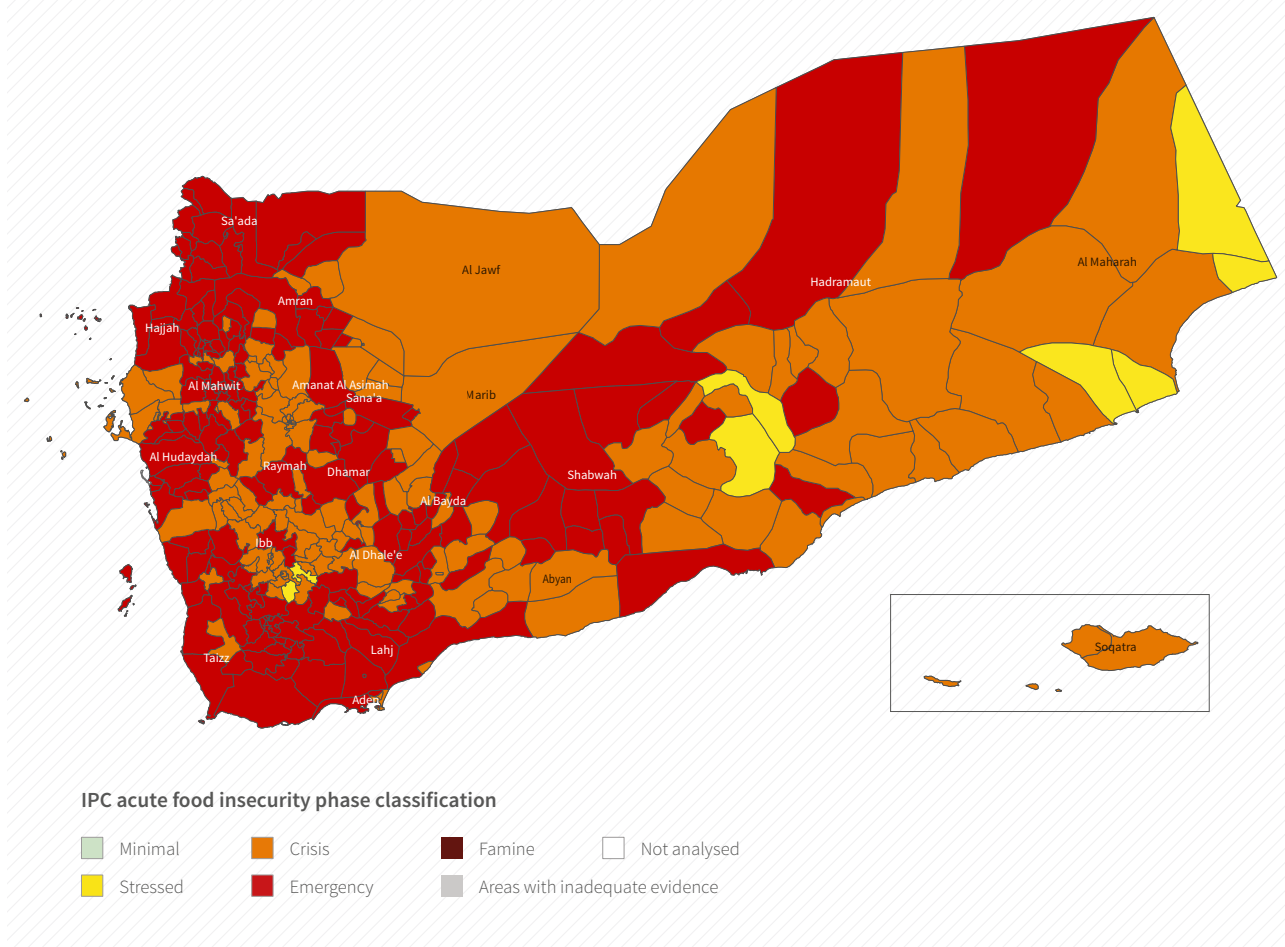
The continuing depreciation of the Yemeni Rial is another major factor impacting food security. In the past year, the Rial has depreciated 47 percent against the United States dollar. Since September, it has

¹ Famine is a catastrophe when substantial deaths occur due to lack of food consumption alone or its interaction with disease. A series of events between severe food deficits, acute malnutrition and high mortality (more than two deaths per 10 000 people per day).

² Yemen is currently the seventh most water scarce country in the world, with the per capita share of renewable water resources of only around 80 m³.

³ The 45 districts are not classified under IPC Phase 5. The aim is to indicate the whereabouts of the people in a situation of catastrophe.

Figure 1. Acute food insecurity situation (December 2018–January 2019)



Source: IPC Yemen Technical Working Group, December 2018

lost 20 percent of its value. The impact of this depreciation affects every family in Yemen. In October/November 2018, the price of the basic food basket had increased by 25 percent of the pre-crisis levels. Hundreds of thousands of families are being forced out of local markets and more are likely to be forced out unless the currency stabilizes. Prices of agricultural inputs have also doubled. The currency crisis has also led to an almost complete collapse of public services (agriculture extension, veterinary services, irrigation, health and water) and collapse of national systems (social protection) due to lack of public funds for salaries and operational costs, driving humanitarian needs and food insecurity. The currency crisis has also forced the price of fuel up by 45 percent. Soaring fuel costs are already impacting transport, water, electricity, health and sanitation services.

FAO's work in Yemen

Since 1990, FAO has been working to strengthen agricultural livelihoods and the resilience of the most vulnerable and food insecure households in Yemen by supporting local food production.

FAO's presence in Yemen dates back to 1990 when Yemen became a member of the Organization. Even with the escalation of the conflict, FAO remained on the ground to work with counterpart institutions and partners to strengthen agricultural livelihoods and the resilience of the most vulnerable and food insecure households. FAO is present in all the hubs (Sa'ada, Al Hudaydah, Ibb, Aden and Sana'a) and has the technical expertise and experience in implementing the planned interventions given its mandate and experience in implementing similar famine prevention interventions in Somalia, South Sudan and northeastern Nigeria.

FAO has been part of the massive scale up of humanitarian assistance over the last years to prevent the onset of famine in Yemen, but the combination of loss of livelihoods, depleted coping mechanisms, collapsing public services, conflict and the current economic shock is pushing millions to the brink of famine.

Since the beginning of the conflict, FAO has been supporting local food production to ensure food access and availability in the country through provision of emergency staple crop and vegetable kits, animal feed, poultry production kits, emergency fishing gear and equipment, livestock production and protection inputs and services, and creating opportunities for rural income generation. In addition, FAO has been involved in the effective, timely and coherent coordination of all food security and agriculture related responses in the country through co-leading the Food Security and Agriculture Cluster (FSAC)⁴, food security information generation, analysis and dissemination through the Famine Risk Monitoring (FRM) assessments and IPC, and institutional capacity building for early warning and actions.

⁴ FSAC is co-led by FAO and the World Food Programme (WFP).



FAO's strategic approach



to assist
1.6 million people



FAO requires
USD 83.2 million



period
**January–June 2019
(6 months)**

Objective

The overall objective of the assistance is to improve food security and nutrition of 228 080 vulnerable households (1.6 million people) in Yemen through cash transfers and quick-impact emergency agricultural livelihoods assistance.

Planned interventions

Proposed interventions will target the most vulnerable and food insecure households in famine risk districts that have been identified and prioritized through the December 2018 IPC update. The focus of the assistance will mainly be on households in displaced, marginalized and host community settings with the following characteristics:

- households with pregnant and lactating mothers
- children under five with severe acute malnutrition and moderate acute malnutrition
- female-headed households
- child-headed households
- elderly-headed households
- and households with chronically ill and physically-challenged members

Rationale

Agriculture is one of the mainstay and key sectors in Yemen, providing employment to more than 50 percent of the labour force. The majority of Yemen's rural population, which accounts for about 70 percent of the total population of 29 million, relies on agriculture for their livelihoods. Over the years, crop production has declined mainly due to conflict and other factors such as drought, water scarcity, insufficient and erratic rainfall, declining soil productivity, poor crop management practices and shortage of inputs. The most recent threat to crop production, especially of cereals, is the fall armyworm, which was first identified in Yemen in July 2018. The invasive pest has a wide host range and, if not controlled, has the potential of dramatically causing huge yield losses, thereby affecting the country's food security. FAO and partners are currently putting in place measures to manage the pest.

The livestock sub-sector has been significantly affected by the conflict and yet it is one of the main sources of income of the rural population, as it is considered as one of repositories of wealth and a cushion against shocks for at least one in every three households owning livestock in the country. Many animals have been killed by attacks on farms and agricultural facilities. Conflict has aggravated the already reduced livestock productive capacity caused by low investment, limited access to livestock production inputs and veterinary services, inadequate availability and access to quality animal feed, and epidemic and infectious diseases.

FAO plans to support the most vulnerable and food insecure households with cash-based assistance and quick-impact emergency agricultural livelihoods interventions as a contribution towards the integral humanitarian efforts being put in place to avert famine in the country.

Like the crop and livestock sub-sectors, the fisheries sub-sector is vital for the coastal population who have greatly suffered from the brunt of the ongoing conflict. Fisheries is the third sub-sector, in order of importance, that contributed up to 3 percent share of the country's gross domestic product before the conflict⁵. It has significant potential to diversify Yemen's economy, creating more employment opportunities for socioeconomic development of the country, considering that 71 percent of the fishers' community is very poor, 21 percent poor and only 8 percent above the poverty line. The fisheries sub-sector used to account for 1.5 percent of the national labour force supporting the livelihoods of 3.2 percent of the population. In fact, it used to be the major source of employment, income and food security throughout the coastal areas.

It is also important to note that the destruction of Yemen's natural resources base is being exacerbated by the conflict. Conflict is compounding the existing challenges of demographic pressure, weak governance and institutions, poor management and the consequences of climate change. The natural vegetation and forests have been degraded and have almost disappeared due to overcutting for construction, fuelwood, fodder and concentration of displaced people in some locations.

Against the above background and given that agriculture is one of the most hit sectors by the conflict compromising local food access and availability, FAO plans to support the most vulnerable and food insecure households with cash-based assistance and quick-impact emergency agricultural livelihoods interventions as a contribution towards the integral humanitarian efforts being put in place to avert famine in the country.

The assistance is expected to boost the purchasing power of the most vulnerable households, stimulate local demand, boost market functioning, and improve availability and access to food. The cash-based interventions (cash+ and cash for work) are expected to strengthen the purchasing power of the most vulnerable households by enabling them to improve household agricultural production, food consumption, dietary diversity, income and livelihoods diversity, economic empowerment and food security as a whole. The cash+ programme will also ensure that vulnerable households are able to meet immediate food needs, as they await proceeds emanating from production activities (crops, livestock and fisheries). The assistance will also help in rehabilitating community agricultural infrastructure/productive assets such as irrigation facilities, water harvesting and storage facilities, erosion control dikes, improvement of pasture/rangeland and livestock watering points for enhanced and sustainable agricultural production. This will also set the foundation for economic and agricultural recovery in Yemen.

⁵ The International Fund for Agricultural Development: Fisheries investment project for Yemen (2010).



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In order to address the critical needs of households at risk of famine, **FAO urgently requires USD 83.2 million to support 228 080 most vulnerable households (1.6 million people)** for a period of six months to bolster their purchasing power and economic access to food, as well as rehabilitate community agricultural infrastructure/productive assets.



Outcomes

The Plan aims to reduce acute food insecurity and malnutrition in Yemen through cash transfers and quick-impact emergency livelihoods assistance. The main outcomes with specific outputs, set of targets and indicators, and assumptions are outlined in the Logical framework.



to achieve
Outcome 1



FAO requires
USD 82.2 million



period
**January–June 2019
(6 months)**

Outcome 1.

Improved availability and access to food for the most vulnerable and food insecure households

Output 1.1. Improved purchasing power, food production and income diversity of 228 080 most vulnerable and food insecure households

Cash+ assistance will target 208 080 most vulnerable and food insecure households to strengthen their purchasing power and enable them to address their immediate food needs, while supporting their livelihoods and productive capacity. The assistance is also expected to improve household agricultural production, food consumption, dietary diversity, income generation, economic empowerment and food security. The support will include a combination of unconditional cash transfers and quick-impact emergency agricultural livelihoods inputs broken down as follows:

- **Unconditional cash transfer** in the amount of USD 45 675 625 will be provided to 208 080 most vulnerable and food insecure households for at least five months at a rate of USD 54 per household per month⁶.
- **Quick-impact emergency agricultural livelihoods inputs** will also be provided to the same households who will be receiving unconditional cash. The following inputs will be provided at an estimated cost of USD 30 068 720:
 - 153 tonnes of vegetable seeds and 85 000 requisite tools will be provided as a kit for home gardening
 - 11 470 emergency fisheries kits to improve access to food and income
 - 19 350 poultry production inputs (i.e. birds, feed, watering pans) for backyard poultry production of eggs and meat as well as income generation
 - 71 730 animal feed kits provided to save and protect small ruminants of the most vulnerable households

Cash for work will target 20 000 moderately food insecure and able-bodied households to boost their purchasing power and economic access to food. At the same time, households will be able to rehabilitate community agricultural infrastructure/ productive assets for enhanced and

⁶ This amount, which corresponds to the estimated value required to cover the monthly multi-sectoral needs of an average household, will be adjusted on a regular basis, based on areas of implementation, evolution of the USD/Rial exchange rate, fluctuation of the prices of basic commodities as well as the Cash Working Group's guidance.

sustainable agricultural production. This is expected to set the foundation for economic and agricultural recovery in the country. The breakdown of agricultural/community infrastructure and facilities to be rehabilitated will be done through:

- **Conditional cash transfer** in the amount of USD 6.5 million will be required to rehabilitate 500 agricultural infrastructure, landing sites and other facilities that will be identified in consultation with local authorities and communities.⁷



to achieve
Outcome 2



FAO requires
USD 1 million



period
**January–June 2019
(6 months)**

Outcome 2.

Coordinated and integrated famine risk reduction actions

Output 2.1. Identification of high priority locations and activities for famine risk reduction actions

- Conduct FRM assessments and/or IPC to identify districts at heightened risk of famine for informed decision making.
- Undertake prioritization to identify districts for joint FSAC, water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), nutrition, and health cluster programmes.
- Scale up cash+ programmes as part of IFRR actions by FSAC, nutrition, health and WASH clusters.

Output 2.2. Improved monitoring capacity of partners and counterpart institutions for early warning and actions

- Undertake regular monitoring of key food security and nutrition outcomes for early warning and actions.
- Strengthen capacity of partners and counterpart institutions in food security and nutrition information generation, analysis and reporting.
- Coordinate all food security and agriculture related response to ensure effective, efficient, coherent and timely response to vulnerable communities.

⁷ This amount, which corresponds to the estimated value required to cover the monthly multi-sectoral needs of an average household, will be adjusted on a regular basis, based on areas of implementation, evolution of the USD/Rial exchange rate, fluctuation of the prices of basic commodities as well the Cash Working Group's guidance.



Implementation arrangements

Within the framework of the Yemen Famine Prevention Roadmap (global and over-arching framework) and the Yemen Famine Prevention Strategy (inter-cluster operations plan), the proposed plan is expected to guide stakeholders' interventions with the aim at preventing the most vulnerable and food insecure households from slipping into famine.

The assistance is expected to complement responses of other cluster partners and United Nations sister agencies⁸ to address the main dimensions of food insecurity and nutrition in the country in an integrated way.

For the cash-based component of this strategy, FAO will liaise and collaborate with the Yemen Cash Working Group and other actors implementing cash-based transfers in the country. Local markets have so far been able to support cash-based interventions in Yemen, but some ongoing issues (i.e. high inflation rate, rapid and strong exchange rate depreciation, oligopolistic structure of markets, threats of port closure, etc.) may generate tensions at local markets in the near future. Local prices and market functioning will be assessed initially and carefully monitored in the course of the implementation of the strategy and alternative assistance modalities will be considered for districts/areas where market situation and/or access may deteriorate.

In designing, implementing, assessing and reporting “impact” of interventions on target beneficiaries, gender and age dimensions will be consistently factored in and reported, to ensure that the differentiated needs of men, women, boys and girls are well understood and captured. In line with Accountability to the Affected Population principles, FAO will ensure that all activities will promote the safety, dignity and equitable access of affected people to humanitarian assistance. Field activities will revolve around community engagement and participation, and will importantly seek the feedback of beneficiaries on the support received through a beneficiary feedback mechanism already established in support of ongoing interventions.

⁸ WFP, the United Nations Children's Fund and the World Health Organization.

Monitoring

Interventions

Implementation of interventions will be monitored in all target districts to ensure it is in accordance with the Plan. FAO will collect information on performance of the interventions and provide updates on a regular basis through FSAC and other fora. Resource partners and other stakeholders will also be briefed and updated on the progress of the Plan's implementation as and when required.

Food security situation

Monitoring of the food security and nutrition in the famine risk districts will be based on the monitoring framework developed within the framework of the inter-cluster⁹ Yemen Famine Prevention Strategy. FRM assessments will be carried out regularly in order to provide early warning for early actions by stakeholders.

⁹ FSAC, WASH, nutrition and health clusters.

Logical framework

Outcome	Indicators and targets	Budget (USD)	Assumptions
Outcome 1.		82 244 345	
Improved availability and access to food for the most vulnerable and food insecure households	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage of households with increased purchasing power Average yield per household 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improvement in the security situation allows for more access to the affected governorates and to factors of production by target beneficiaries Willingness of national and international Non-governmental Organizations to work with FAO in hard-to-reach areas Security situation will allow timely recruitment, procurement and delivery of project inputs Presence of staff is not impeded by travel bans or blockades Weather conditions will be favourable for project implementation
Output 1.1. Improved purchasing power, food production and income diversity of 228 080 most vulnerable and food insecure households			
Outcome 2.		1 000 000	
Coordinated and integrated famine risk reduction actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Timely interventions by stakeholders to avert famine 		
Output 2.1. Identification of high priority locations and activities for FRM actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Locations at highest risk of famine IFRR actions Well-informed stakeholders on the situation of famine in the country 		
Output 2.2. Improved monitoring capacity of partners and counterpart institutions for early warning and actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular monitoring of key food security and nutrition outcomes Early warning and actions to avert famine 		
Total		83 244 345	

Saving livelihoods saves lives

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