

## UNDERSTANDING THE YEMEN CRISIS: OCTOBER 2021 SUMMARY SHEET



This summary sheet is produced by TorqAid – [www.torqaid.com](http://www.torqaid.com) for people wanting to better understand the Yemen humanitarian crisis. It is regularly updated and can be accessed from the TorqAid website on <http://www.torqaid.com/understanding-yemen>

### Key Websites

The BBC and Aljazeera provide a generalised overview of the overall political situation both across the Middle East in general, with specific reports on the Yemen. Both Relief Web and the Humanitarian Response provide comprehensive summaries of what the key UN agencies and international NGOs are doing, in support of national bodies, to try and provide humanitarian assistance to the affected population. ACAPS focuses in on an in-depth study of Yemen, and particularly the humanitarian situation. FEWS-NET focuses in on the food security situation throughout the country, whilst the International Crisis Group also provides in-depth political and strategic analysis.

- BBC - [https://www.bbc.com/news/world/middle\\_east](https://www.bbc.com/news/world/middle_east)
- Aljazeera - <https://www.aljazeera.com/topics/regions/middleeast.html>
- Humanitarian Response - [www.humanitarianresponse.info/operations/yemen](http://www.humanitarianresponse.info/operations/yemen)
- ReliefWeb - [www.reliefweb.int/country/yem](http://www.reliefweb.int/country/yem)
- ACAPS - <https://www.acaps.org/country/yemen/crisis/complex-crisis>
- FEWS-NET (Famine Early Warning Systems Network) - <http://www.fews.net/east-africa/yemen>
- International Crisis Group - <https://www.crisisgroup.org/middle-east-north-africa/gulf-and-arabian-peninsula/yemen>

### Key Facts and Figures for Yemen<sup>1</sup>

- Population 30.8 million
- 20.7 million people in need, including 12.1 million in acute need
- 4.0 + million Internally Displaced People (IDPs)

### Overall Humanitarian Situation in Yemen

#### *Background context<sup>2</sup>*

Yemen is the poorest country in the Middle East, with approximately 70% of people living in rural areas. The BBC Yemen Country Profile, and Chatham House 'Yemen: stemming the Rise of a Chaos state' together give a good introductory background. The capital is Sana'a in the north-west of the country, whilst the two main ports are Hudaydah (for areas mainly occupied by the Houthis), and Aden (for Government of Yemen = GoY held areas). Tribal law in this largely Moslem<sup>3</sup> country remains strong in the absence of a strong centralised legal system. The two separate countries of North and South Yemen were united as the Republic of Yemen in 1990. President Saleh ruled from this date until 2012, when he was replaced by his deputy Abd Rabbuh Mansour Hadi. Increased opposition to the latter, this including from the minority Shi'ite Houthis, led to the instalment of a

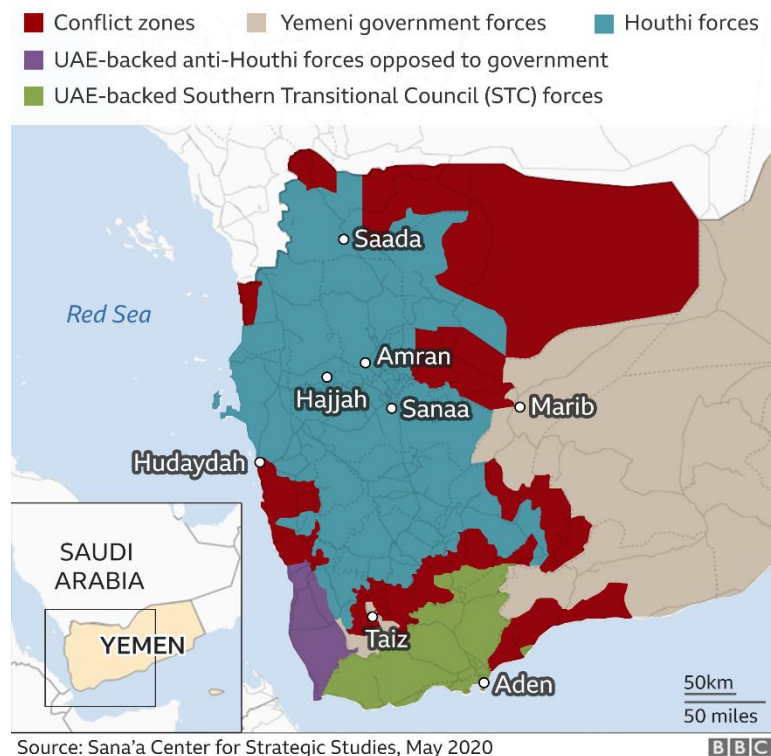
<sup>1</sup> Figures taken from a combination of the UNOCHA 2021 Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) and ACAPS CrisisInsight

<sup>2</sup> More detail can be found in the BBC and Chatham House publications on page 3

<sup>3</sup> Roughly 55% of the country are Sunni, with 45% Shi'ite

Houthi (Ansar Allah) government in early 2015. President Hadi fled south to Aden, and since March 2015 there has been conflict between his Government of Yemen (GoY) forces and Ansar Allah based out of Sana'a. A coalition of nine Arab countries, led by Saudi Arabia, has supported the GoY since 2015. Other protagonists which have opposed the Houthis, have included the UAE-backed Southern Transitional Council (STC), together with al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) and Islamic State (IS). The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) has accused Iran of supporting Ansar Allah, and relationships between these two countries have deteriorated since Houthi forces first launched missile strikes against Riyadh in November 2017. Hudaydah is the main port servicing the Houthi-controlled territory, and a December 2018 UN-brokered ceasefire<sup>4</sup>, has largely prevented the blockade of, and fighting over, this vital logistical hub. Disagreement, and some conflict, between the GOY and STC broke out in August 2019, but difficulties between the two parties were largely resolved as a result of the Riyadh Agreement in 2019 and subsequent protracted discussions<sup>5</sup>. By September 2021, Yemen, was increasingly impacted by the Coronavirus COVID-19 pandemic<sup>6</sup>.

### Yemen: Areas of control and conflict



### Current Humanitarian Situation<sup>7</sup>

The two key UNOCHA documents highlighting the humanitarian needs across the Yemen are the 2021 Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO), and the 2021 Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP). The 2021 budget is USD 3.85 billion, and by the 24<sup>th</sup> September was 54% funded<sup>8</sup>. This targets 16 million of the 20.7 million people in need, with operational support from 167 partners working ideally in close cooperation with both the GOY and Ansar Allah. The three overarching strategic humanitarian objectives for 2021 are:

- Preventing disease outbreaks
- Preventing famine and malnutrition, and restoring livelihoods
- Protecting and assisting civilians

<sup>4</sup> The Stockholm Agreement

<sup>5</sup> Leading to a Cabinet-sharing agreement in December 2020

<sup>6</sup> See the TorqAid Covid-19 Summary Sheet – [www.torgaid.com/coronavirus](http://www.torgaid.com/coronavirus), particularly the Our World in Date material

<sup>7</sup> The clearest sources for this are the ACAPS, ReliefWeb, and Humanitarian Response sites on page 1, and the UNOCHA and WFP references on page 3.

<sup>8</sup> See <https://fts.unocha.org/countries/248/summary/2021>

Much of the country is food insecure, as witness the map in Appendix A below, and the FEWS-Net reference on page 1. Check out also the FEWS-NET video outlining the food security outlook from June 2021 to January 2022. The areas which are most affected are 10 out of the 22 Governorates in the west of the country, where conflict between the GOY and Ansar Allah is most extreme. As in other similar humanitarian situations, it is the vulnerable innocent population which suffers the most, this including women, children, the elderly, and those with disabilities. The key humanitarian assistance priorities remain food security, WASH<sup>9</sup>, shelter<sup>10</sup>, and health care, with outbreaks of diseases such as cholera and diphtheria occurring due to a combination of rainy season (for cholera) and collapse of the health care system.

## Key Publications

### Background Context

- BBC. (2019). *Yemen Country Profile*. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-14704852>
- Chatham House (Salisbury.P). (2016). *Yemen: Stemming the Rise of a Chaos State* <https://www.chathamhouse.org/sites/default/files/publications/research/2016-05-25-yemen-stemming-rise-of-chaos-state-salisbury.pdf>

### Humanitarian Situation

- UNOCHA. (2021). *Yemen: Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) 2021*. Retrieved from [https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Final\\_Yemen\\_HRP\\_2021.pdf](https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Final_Yemen_HRP_2021.pdf)
- UNOCHA. (2021). *Yemen Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO) 2021*. Retrieved from <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/yemen/document/yemen-humanitarian-needs-overview-2021-february-2021>
- UNOCHA. (2021). *HPC Interactive Microsite*. Retrieved from <https://hpc.ochayemen.org/>
- UNOCHA. (2021). *Latest Situation Report*. Retrieved from <https://reports.unocha.org/en/country/yemen>
- FEWS-NET. (2021). *Yemen & Afghanistan Food security outlook, June 2021 – January 2022*. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qqi19-gxOtc>

### Further Information

For further information about Yemen, please contact Chris Piper, the TorqAid Director. Note that the Yemen is taught as a Complex Emergency/Crisis case study both in the TorqAid online, accredited, Participatory Disaster Risk Management (PDRM) program – see [www.torqaid.com/online-pdrm-program](http://www.torqaid.com/online-pdrm-program) and the twelve topic Humanitarian Short Course (SC) program – [www.torqaid.com/short-courses](http://www.torqaid.com/short-courses).

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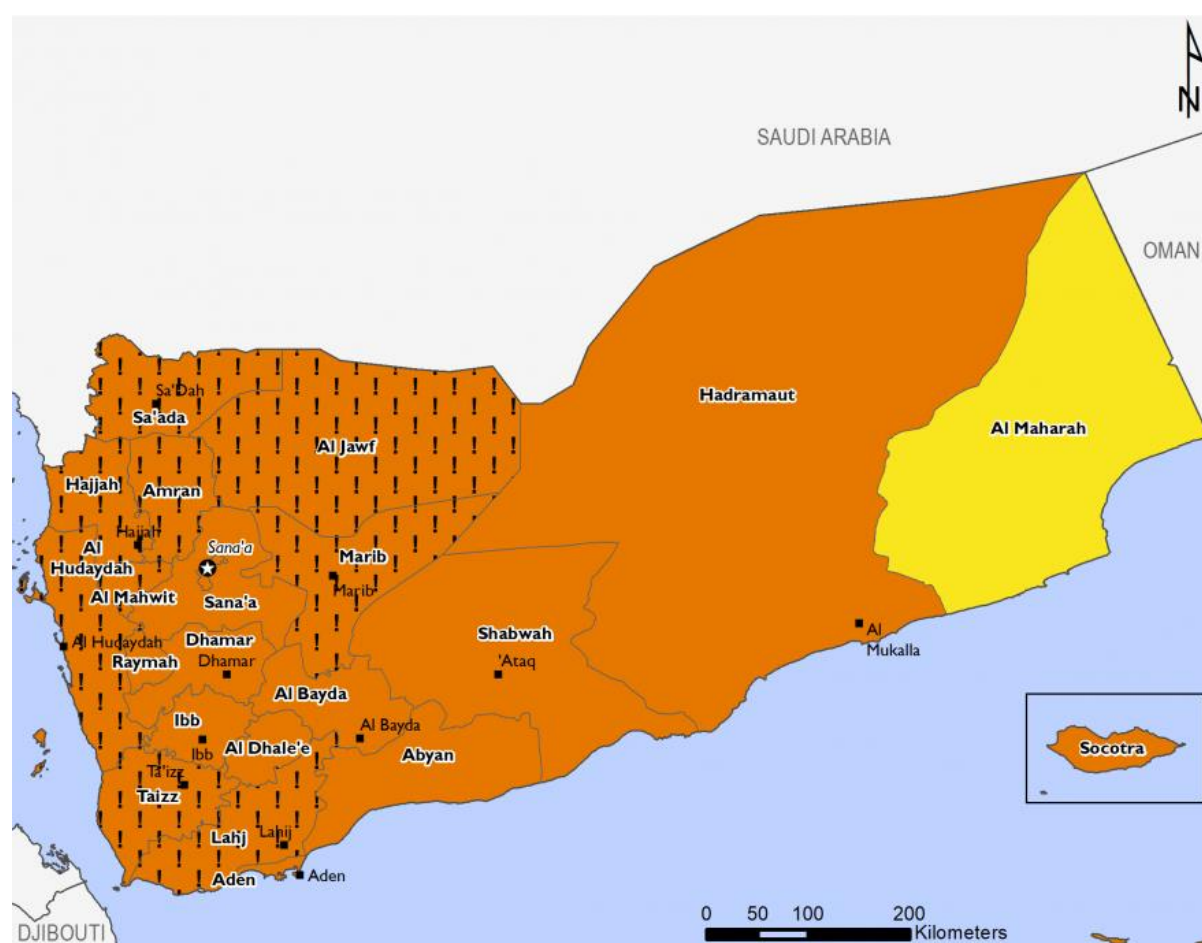
<sup>9</sup> Water, Sanitation & Hygiene

<sup>10</sup> Particularly for Internally Displaced People (IDPs)

## APPENDIX A: FOOD INSECURITY MAP FOR YEMEN OCTOBER 2021 – JANUARY 2022<sup>11</sup>

### IPC Acute Food Insecurity Phase<sup>12</sup>: Colours/Code:

1; Minimal      2: Stressed      3: Crisis (yellow)      4: Emergency (orange)      5: Famine (red)



<sup>11</sup> Map taken from the FEWS-NET website, Sept 2021, <http://www.fews.net/east-africa/yemen>

<sup>12</sup> The **Integrated Phase Classification (IPC) Acute Food Insecurity** grading (from IPC 1 to IPC 5) classification provides strategically relevant information to decision makers that focuses on short-term objectives to prevent, mitigate or decrease **severe food insecurity** that threatens lives or livelihoods