

HUMANITARIAN UPDATE

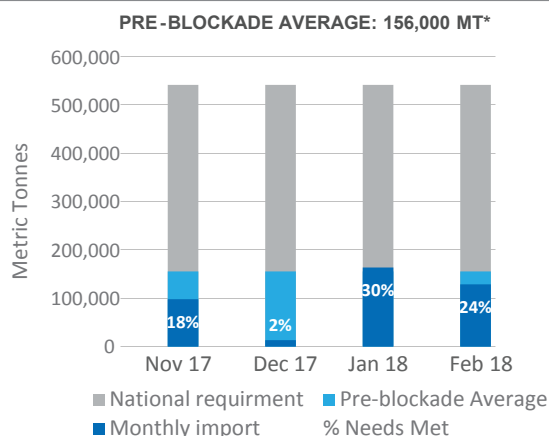
Covering 19 March – 25 March 2018 | Issue 8

COOKING GAS AND FUEL SHORTAGES

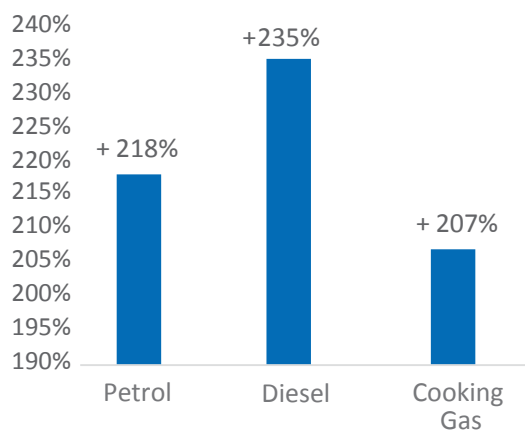
The shortage of cooking gas in several northern governorates has entered the second month. Available gas is retailing at about 8,000 YER per 20-litre cylinder, compared to about 5,000 YER three weeks ago. The official price is 3,000 YER per 20-litre cylinder. In Al Hudaydah, Sana'a and Sa'ada, the authorities are distributing gas through local leaders to lessen congestion at gas stations and distribution points. In Sa'ada, black market gas costs 8,000-10,000 YER per cylinder. Many families and bakeries are now cooking with firewood. Fuel shortages are reported in southern

governorates following the break-up of an earlier import monopoly. In February, average prices of diesel and petrol increased by two per cent across Yemen. In Shabwah governorate, the increase was significant – 17 per cent for diesel and 13 per cent for petrol. UNVIM data shows that before the November 2017 blockade of Yemen's ports, nearly one-third of the monthly fuel import requirements of about 544,000 MT were being met. Since then, monthly imports have dropped by nearly a half. In the first two weeks of March, just 92,560MT of fuel was imported.

Fuel imports



December fuel prices vs pre crisis



UPDATES FROM THE HUMANITARIAN HUBS

Sa'ada Hub: Conflict has escalated in Sa'ada governorate, with a high level of civilian impact incidents and casualties, including women and children. According to the Protection Cluster, airstrikes, shelling and ground fighting have impacted homes, farms and civilian infrastructure; and increased the risk of unexploded ordnances. In neighbouring Al Jawf governorate, escalated fighting is reported in several districts, with casualties. The violence has affected humanitarian movements, access and response within Al Jawf and Sa'ada governorates.

The ongoing violence in Sa'ada and Al Jawf has triggered new displacement, according to local authorities. Humanitarian partners report an urgent need to provide shelter, non-food items and food to at least 20 newly displaced households that are living in an open area in Rajwaza district in Al Jawf. There is also need to assist about 200 newly displaced families in Sa'ada and an estimated 500 households that have returned to their areas of origin in Sha'da and Al Dhaher districts in Sa'ada governorate.

Ibb Hub: Humanitarian partners are concerned about access challenges in Taizz governorate, including disruptions of movement along the Aden-Taizz city road. This road is a key transport route for humanitarian

supplies, civilians and commercial goods. On 19 March, heavy clashes in Al Beirain area of Al Maafer district temporarily closed the road for six hours. Discussions are on-going with local parties about the option of using another road from Ibb to Taizz to enhance civilian movement and the delivery of humanitarian supplies.

Violence in Taizz governorate has displaced increasing numbers of civilians. In the last three weeks, clashes in Al Mukha district displaced about 126 families from Al-Zahra sub-district to Wadi Kabeer area in Al Mashaleha sub-district. This week, clashes were reported in Naqueel As Silw and in the southern areas near Khaled military camp.

Aden Hub: Recent assessments in Abyan governorate show that there is space for partners to respond to growing needs of displaced people in Khanfir and Zingibar districts. The needs vary from food, water, shelter and education. About 74 per cent of the assessed population were food-insecure and 57 per cent severely food-insecure. As of 13 March, UNHCR assistance had reached 5,710 IDPs in Khanfir district and 2,540 IDPs in Zingibar district. In Shoqra district, a rapid WASH assessment of 430 recently displaced households from Al Hudaydah found drinking water to be a major problem.

Since December, humanitarian partners operating in the southern governorates have recorded at least 8,670 displaced households; of whom 54 per cent originated from Hudaydah. An assessment by an international partner found that 42 per cent of the total population of Hays and Al Khawkah districts in Hudaydah have moved out, mostly to Al Mukha, Aden and Abyan.

Al Hudaydah Hub: Fighting in Hays, Al Tuhayat and Al Garrahi districts of Al Hudaydah continues to displace hundreds of families. This week, local authorities reported that 223 families were displaced to Jabal Ras district, 59 to Al Hudaydah city and 13 to As Salif district. In Al Hudaydah city, local authorities are accommodating newly displaced families in a residential compound. Humanitarian partners have raised concerns over the legality of accommodating IDPs in private property, but will provide basic assistance to the affected families.

Local authorities are establishing a camp in Zabid city and have put up tents to accommodate new IDPs. The authorities have requested support from the humanitarian community in Al Hudaydah. In Abs district

in nearby Hajjah governorate, OXFAM is supporting 7,111 vulnerable families from both displaced and the host community with cash assistance amounting to 29,500 YER per household.

Sana'a Hub: A recent mission to Bani Hushaysh district in Sana'a governorate found that the district has a large number of IDPs coming from Nihm district. Most of the IDPs are renting accommodation at an average monthly rate of 20,000-25,000 YER which is beyond what they can afford, given that most of them lack stable income.

Protection partners report an increase in civilian impact incidents in the Sana'a hub, from five last week to eight this week. These were primarily in Marib, specifically in Sirwah district. Although the number of incidents increased, civilian casualties fell, dropping from eight to four. Twenty houses and 25 farms were damaged as the result of airstrikes or shelling.

SUSPECTED CHOLERA CASES AND RESPONSE

Reported suspected cholera cases have decreased or are stable in most governorates and the weekly proportion of severe cases has significantly reduced. As of 18 March, 132 out of 305 affected districts in 22 governorates had not reported any suspected cases for the third consecutive week. As of 18 March, the cumulative total reported suspected cases since April 2017 were 1,081,420 with 2,267 associated deaths.

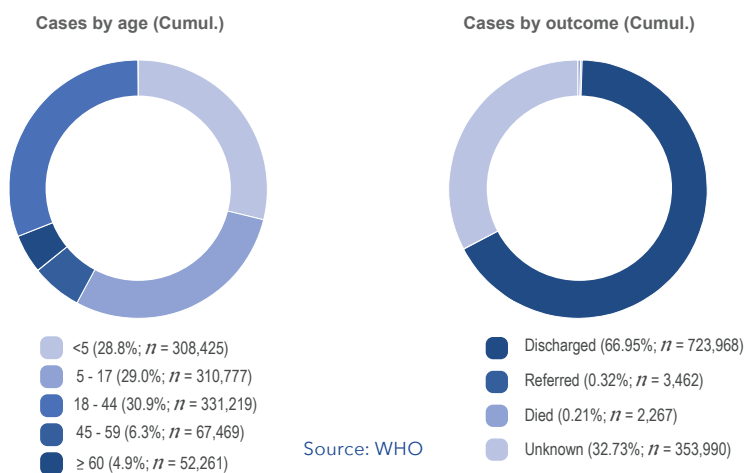
Cholera preparedness

A new wave of cholera epidemic is expected around April with the arrival of the rainy season. In anticipation of this occurrence, the Health and WASH clusters have begun to implement the first phase (Preparedness Phase) of the Integrated Cholera Strategic Plan. The plan builds on the Clusters' lessons learnt from the past epidemic.

The preparedness phase started with a prioritization of districts based on a cholera risk assessment which identifies 100 districts with the highest risk to start an epidemic. Those districts were subsequently divided into four priority areas which will be sequentially covered by the Oral Cholera Vaccine (OCV) campaign. The first phase of the OCV campaign is rolling out in the highest risk districts of Aden governorate targeting 350,000 people.

The preparedness phase includes prepositioning and warehousing of stocks (ORS, fluids, antibiotics, etc.); a mapping of resources between Health and WASH clusters; training; surveillance; laboratory support; communication campaign and Oral Cholera Vaccines (OCV). The prepositioning of critical stocks has included 45 cholera kits in 13 governorate health offices while over 1,000 are in production as well as the provision of medical supplies to NGOs, including antibiotics, and IV fluids. Cholera laboratory kits are being distributed to all 22 laboratories with culture capacity and 30,000 rapid diagnostic tests are being provided with 90,000 more in stock. Other supplies in stock include 150,000 Oral Rehydration Salts; 400,000 aquatabs and 10,000 jerry cans. The prepositioned WASH supplies can cover a caseload of 500,000 people for a three to five months period.

A critical component of the Cholera Strategic Plan is the deployment of the Rapid Response Teams (RRTs) across the country. 307 RRTs covering all 22 governorates have been trained with each team including a person trained in epidemiology, a nurse, and WASH and health educators. To ensure that the RRTs have access to those in need, 100 motorbikes are currently being distributed to the most affected districts out of 1,000 motorbikes procured.



Growing burden of non-communicable diseases

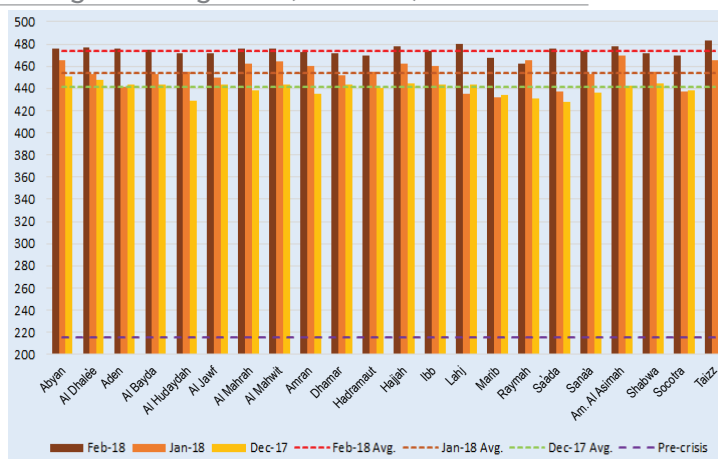
Treatment for non-communicable diseases such as cancer, diabetes and hypertension is available in only about 20 per cent of health facilities, according to WHO. The closure of Sana'a airport to commercial traffic has limited travel for those who could seek treatment abroad. As a result, these chronic conditions now account for 39 per cent of all reported deaths, as per WHO estimates. In the last three years, four of

Yemen's 32 kidney treatment centers have closed. At least 60,000 cancer patients (12 per cent children) who used to receive treatment every year from the Sana'a National Oncology Centre, no longer get adequate treatment. WHO plans to provide anti-cancer and chemotherapy medications to the centre worth US\$2.5 million, enough for almost 30,000 patients.

CURRENCY EXCHANGE RATES

The Yemeni Rial (YER) strengthened by nearly 10 per cent against the US\$ after Saudi Arabia signed an agreement on 15 March to transfer \$2 billion to the Yemen Central Bank. However, the new rate lasted only a few days before it dropped back to the previous rate of about 480 YER/US\$. In February, data compiled by FAO and the authorities in Sana'a showed wide variations in exchange rates across Yemen, with the highest unofficial exchange rate reaching 481 YER/US\$ in Abyan governorate and Al Mukalla city. Across 13 governorates, the average rate was 478 YER/US\$ - an increase of three per cent compared to January and of 122 per cent compared to the pre-crisis period of February 2015 when the rate was 215YER/US\$.

Average exchange rate (YER/USD)



Source: WFP

CASH TRANSFERS

The World Bank reports that the second cash transfer payments for former Social Welfare Fund (SWF) beneficiaries will be delivered this month. Over 1.33 million families, totaling almost nine million Yemenis, benefited from cash transfers in the first cycle that ended in October 2017. Women represented almost half of the direct recipients. According to the World Bank, nine out of 10 beneficiaries spent the money to buy food, cover medical expenses or to pay debts.

The SWF used to support about 1.5 million of the most vulnerable and disadvantaged families in Yemen, with 45 per cent of beneficiaries being women, but has not been able to effectively operate since the end of 2014. In response, the World Bank and UNICEF partnered to provide cash transfers to the former beneficiaries, with support of a US\$200 million World Bank grant.

UNVIM, SHIPPING AND FOOD STOCKS UPDATE

Since the end of the temporary blockade on 22 November 2017 until 21 March 2018, some 77 vessels and four dhows have discharged cargo at Al Hudaydah and Saleef ports, according to WFP. These include four WFP-chartered vessels carrying 69,360 MT and one carrying four mobile cranes, 35 commercial vessels carrying 892,078.9 MT of commercial food items, 35 commercial vessels carrying 405,503 MT of commercial fuel and coal, and the dhows carrying 638 MT of medical items. As of 21 March, eight other commercial vessels carrying 106,988 MT of gas oil were waiting to berth at Hudaydah, as was one vessel carrying 31,000

MT of bulk wheat. One vessel carrying 33,000 MT of bulk wheat was waiting to berth at Saleef port. WFP estimated that commercial food commodities that were available in-country, as of 21 March, included 750,000 MT of cereals in the market sufficient for 90 days, and 101,000 MT of rice sufficient for 86 days. Commercial fuel that was available or expected included 16,000 litres of petrol and 41,000 litres of diesel in the Red Sea ports and an expected 108,000,000 litres of diesels and 17,000 litres of petrol to Red Sea Ports. There were also 11,000 litres of petrol in Aden and 17,000 litres of diesel in Mukalla.

Between 14 - 20 March 2018, five vessels discharged 52,323 metric tonnes of goods in Yemen's Red Sea ports.



53,323 mt



0 mt

Source: UNVIM

For further information, please contact:

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