

YEMEN

IPC ACUTE FOOD INSECURITY ANALYSIS

JULY – SEPTEMBER 2019

HOTSPOT ANALYSIS: SEVERE ACUTE FOOD INSECURITY PERSISTS IN 29 DISTRICTS IN YEMEN

Issued in July 2019

CURRENT JULY – SEPTEMBER 2019

1,246,500
in 29 of the 45 most food insecure districts according to the December 2018 IPC*

People facing severe acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 3+) IN NEED OF URGENT ACTION

Phase 5	0 People in Catastrophe
Phase 4	406 000 People in Emergency
Phase 3	840 500 People in Crisis
Phase 2	770 000 People in Stress
Phase 1	364 500 People minimally food insecure

PREVIOUS IPC DECEMBER 2018

1,552,000
people in the same 29* districts with 44 000 of the population in Catastrophe (IPC Phase 5)

*Data was not available for all 45 districts facing severe acute food insecurity for analysis

Phase 5	44 000 People in Catastrophe
Phase 4	658 000 People in Emergency
Phase 3	850 000 People in Crisis
Phase 2	556 000 People in Stress
Phase 1	273 000 People minimally food insecure

Overview

In December 2018, food insecurity in Yemen was at its worst. For the first time, nearly a quarter of a million people were estimated to be experiencing catastrophic food consumption gaps (IPC Phase 5) without Humanitarian Food Assistance (HFA). The severity was reported in 45 districts spread in 12 governorates out of the 22 governorates of Yemen. In the aftermath, all humanitarian partners – UN, INGOs, Governments and Donors – put together concerted efforts to scale up humanitarian assistance to the most vulnerable populations in the worst affected districts. The humanitarian assistance also included other sectors such as WASH, Protection, Nutrition, Health, shelter, etc.

Although the TWG planned for continuous monitoring of these 45 districts, with the possibility of updating the food security situation in March 2019, several logistical impediments hampered the possibility of collecting food security data for all the districts. In April, the TWG was only able to access 29 districts for assessments. Access to the remaining 16 districts was impossible and they were excluded from this IPC analysis.

Key Drivers



Protracted armed conflict

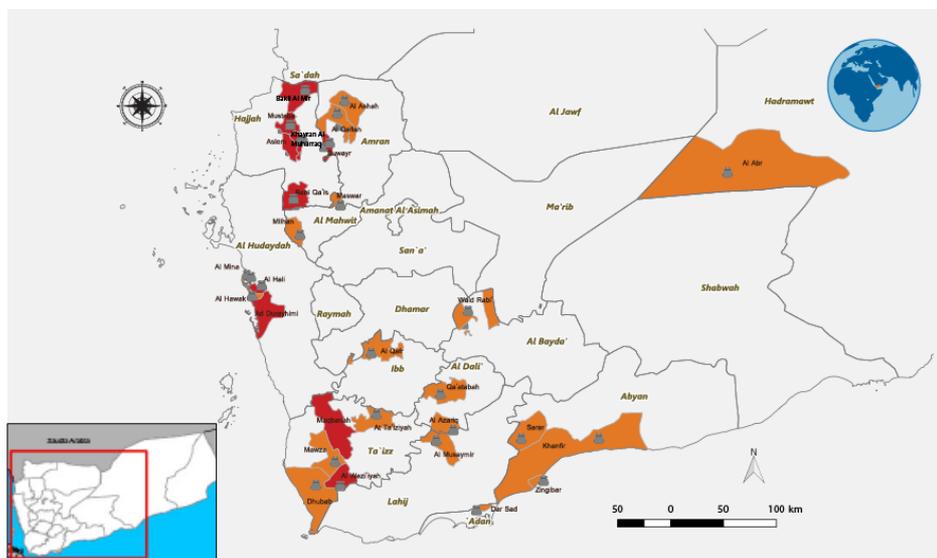
Yemen's conflict remains the main driver of food insecurity in the analysed districts, curtailing food access for both the displaced and the vulnerable host communities.



Economic Decline

High levels of unemployment coupled with extremely high food prices, devaluation of the Yemeni riyal against the USD and liquidity crunch, lead to low household purchasing power.

ACUTE FOOD SECURITY SITUATION IN 29 DISTRICTS IN YEMEN JULY – SEPTEMBER 2019



Key for the Map IPC Acute Food Insecurity Phase Classification

- 1 - Minimal
- 2 - Stressed
- 3 - Crisis
- 4 - Emergency
- 5 - Famine
- Areas with inadequate evidence
- Areas not analysed

Map Symbols

- Urban settlement classification

Classification takes into account levels humanitarian food assistance provided

- ≥ 25% of households meet > 50% of caloric needs through assistance
- > 25% of households meet 25-50% of caloric needs through assistance

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

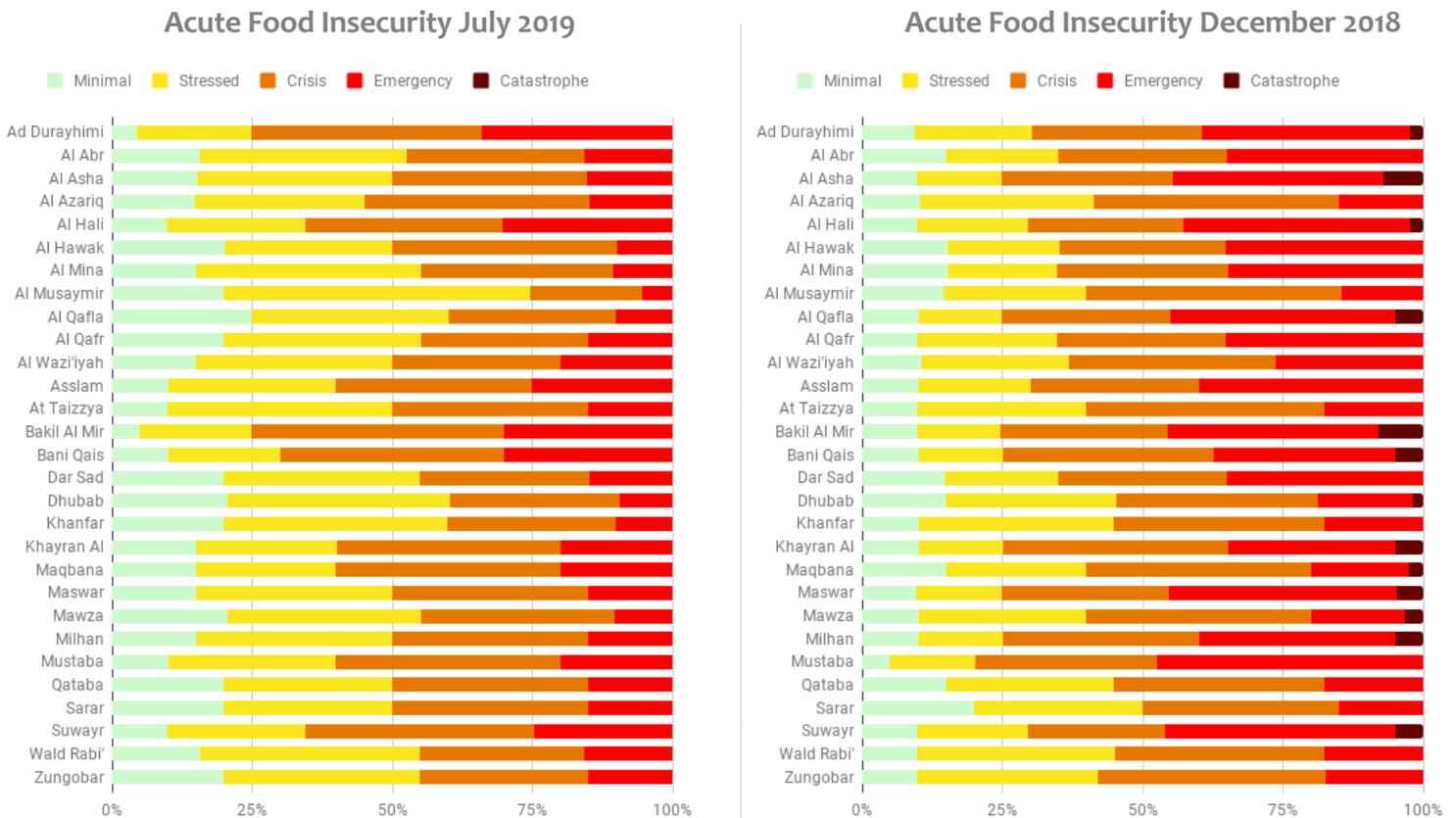
How severe: Four years after conflict dramatically escalated in Yemen, the food security situation continues to be unstable. The country has a strong culture of communal sharing, family support, external remittances and *zakat* (almsgiving), and this has indeed provided a significant cushioning effect for many of the vulnerable groups of the populations such as the displaced and the poor. Yet the crumbling macroeconomic environment, destruction of agricultural productive assets, loss of livelihoods, population displacement, and diminished purchasing power have increased the pressure on these social support mechanisms. In turn, this has amplified the communities’ exposure to risks and hazards.

With rising basic food commodity prices, reduced labour opportunities, wages plummeting and agricultural production dwindling, more households are increasingly relying on humanitarian assistance for their survival. In 2019, humanitarian food assistance doubled or even tripled in the worst affected districts that had populations facing a food security Catastrophe (IPC Phase 5) in December 2018, providing a great reprieve to households’ food availability and access. It is, however, important to note, that there are still large food consumption gaps, and this is leading to an accelerated depletion of essential livelihood assets for most households.

How many and when: In December 2018, a total of 1, 552, 500 people were severely food insecure in 29 of the 45 most-affected districts. This included 658,000 people in IPC Phase 4 (Emergency), 44,000 in IPC Phase 5 (Catastrophe), and the remaining falling under IPC Phase 3 (Crisis). The current analysis indicates that in the analyzed districts, there are no populations in IPC Phase 5, however, 1, 246, 500 people are still severely food insecure (IPC Phase 3 and 4 combined).

Who and Where: Food insecurity is more severe in the areas with active fighting. This is particularly affecting the ability of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and the host communities to access essential services and to conduct livelihood activities. In terms of severity, all 29 districts analysed are classified in either IPC Phase 3 (Crisis) or IPC Phase 4 (Emergency). 11 districts are classified in IPC Phase 4 (Emergency) and are located in Al Hudaydah (3), Amran (1), Hajjah (5) and Taiz (2) Governorates. The remaining 18 districts are classified in IPC Phase 3 (Crisis).

IPC Classification July 2019 compared with December 2018 in 29 districts



KEY DRIVERS & LIMITING FACTORS

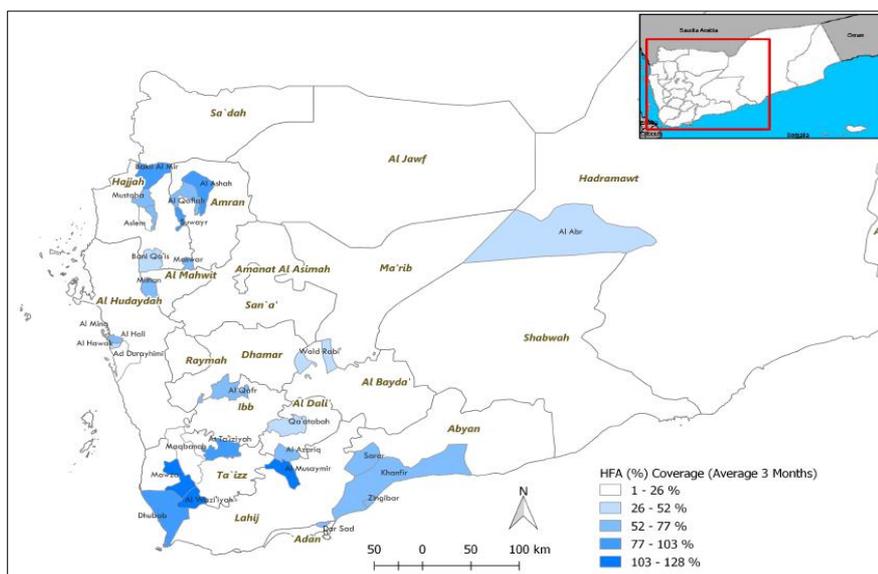
The food insecurity situation in Yemen has been a chronic problem for a long time, but it has deteriorated to alarming levels over the past few years. Conflict remains the main driver worsening the situation, reaching its peak in December 2018. For the first time, 45 districts out of 333 districts were classified as having pockets of households experiencing catastrophic food consumption gaps. The accumulated shocks and increase of different food and livelihood coping strategies, as well as very low economic activities, absence of public services, and high food prices, led to a significant loss of income and livelihoods. Some of the worst affected districts, such as Qa’atabah, Azariq, Al Hali, Mustaba and Khayran Al Muharraq, are in circular conflict situations and have experienced displacement and are highly vulnerable to shocks, including high food prices and disease outbreaks.

The economic situation and food access for the majority of the affected households is further exacerbated by the high food prices. The cost of a minimum/survival food basket remains unaffordable for many households, leading to over-dependency on humanitarian food assistance. Despite the government’s actions and interventions to improve the currency crisis, including the application of a preferential exchange rate to importers of basic food commodities, the prices of basic food commodities still remain high. The resumption of payment to pensioners from November 2018 as well as recent payment of salaries to health sector workers and payments of Social Welfare Fund (SWF) beneficiaries from January - February 2019, have slightly contributed in improving the purchasing power and to cover other nonfood needs.

Disease Outbreak: A total of 38,042 suspected cases of cholera were reported in the 29 analyzed districts between January 1 and June 14, 2019. The top five districts with the highest reported cases of cholera were Al-Hali with 6,243 suspected cases, Al Taizya (4876), Al Hawak (3734), Milhan (3557) and Qataba (2393). Moreover, Al-Hali, Al Taizya, Al Hawak and Milhan also have the highest suspected cases for children under five years. The recent flash flood in late May and early June 2019 will increase the risk of cholera spreading, in particular in districts affected by it, such as Khayran Al Muharraq in Hajjah, Al Qafr in Ibb, Darsad in Aden, Khanfar in Abyan and Al Abr in Hadramout.

The current IPC analysis shows a slight improvement in the acute food insecurity situation in the districts analyzed. This is mainly attributable to two main contributing factors; (i) massive scale-up efforts of humanitarian food and livelihoods assistance with more focused attention to the 45 worst affected districts, and (ii) household food availability from seasonal production. Despite a slight improvement in food security outcomes, the situation remains at an alarming level in the conflict-affected districts, and hard to reach due to different levels of access and clearance bureaucracies. Additionally, considering that the analysis only covered 29 out of the 45 worst affected districts, this analysis does not assume that the 16 unassessed districts have the same levels of improvements. A thorough assessment and analysis of all districts is required in Yemen to evaluate the current food security status.

Humanitarian Food Assistance Coverage Map (Average February-April 2019)



The Role of HFA

The overall HFA coverage for the 29 districts is good at 55%, reaching an estimated 1.3 million people on average for three months (February, March and April 2019). The previous IPC analysis (December 2018) coverage was very low, with less than 20% in the majority of the districts. The current food basket covers 80% of the households’ calorific needs. A disaggregated analysis of food insecurity shows that the households targeted with HFA have less severe levels of acute food insecurity.

Source: Food Security and Agriculture cluster (FSAC)

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

Response Priorities

- **Cessation of conflict and provision of a solution to the economic crisis:** HFA alone will not prevent the further deterioration of food insecurity, if not accompanied by actions addressing the key drivers of food insecurity. It is imperative that the parties to conflict halt the conflict, facilitate delivery of humanitarian assistance, and address the macroeconomic crisis, such as the currency depreciation and the liquidity crisis in the Yemeni economy. Special attention should be given to those districts where active fighting is taking place, in particular to the districts of Hodaidah, Hajjah, Taiz, Al Dhale, and Al Baidhaa.
- **Continued provision of assistance to save lives and livelihoods:** With large-scale humanitarian assistance, the current IPC analysis has shown improvement in the severity of food consumption gaps in districts which had some households in IPC Phase 5 (Catastrophe) in December 2018. Continuous uninterrupted actions are required to save the lives and livelihoods and to continue reversing the food security trends. HFA has been critical in shifting 18 out of 29 districts from IPC Phase 4 (Emergency) in December 2018 to IPC Phase 3 (Crisis) in July 2019.
- **Scale up acute malnutrition treatment and prevention:** Services aimed at the identification, prevention and treatment of malnourished children under the age of five, as well as pregnant and lactating women should be prioritized and scaled up. This should be primarily implemented through outreach and Community-based Management of Acute Malnutrition and preventive Blanket Supplementary Feeding Programmes, the expansion of health surveillance systems, and the increased screening and referral of pregnant and lactating women and acutely malnourished children.
- **Promote sustainable livelihood activities and provision of safety nets:** The drivers of food insecurity and malnutrition are multi-faceted and humanitarian response has to be integrated with livelihood restoration to revitalize livelihoods and support basic services. The four-year protracted conflict has continued damaging the lives and livelihoods of the population and unless sustainable livelihood support and resilience building mechanisms are integrated with food assistance, the increasing trend of food insecurity and malnutrition will continue. The humanitarian community, donors and partners should advocate and promote implementing the twin-track approach of providing humanitarian assistance together with activities that enhance sustainable livelihood resilience and economic access, including sufficient and sustained social protection, livelihoods training and income-generating activities. Sustainable Livelihood protection and restoration is essential in promoting household food availability and prevent malnutrition.

Plans for the Next Analysis

The country-wide 2019 Yemen IPC analysis will be conducted in October 2019 for all the 333 districts. The IPC results are anticipated to feed the Yemen Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO) and Humanitarian Response Plans (HRP) for 2020, especially for the FSAC cluster. Data is expected to be provided by partners prior to the analysis from Extended Famine Risk Monitoring data (EFRM), SMART Nutrition Surveys, WASH data, and others.

PROCESS, METHODOLOGY AND LIMITATIONS

Process and Methodology

The Yemen IPC TWG brought together available food security data and information in a systematic manner to produce the analysis of the food security situation. The analysis went through multiple layers of technical, logistical, administrative, coordination, analytical and review processes. With the overall management and coordination provided by the FAO-FSIS program, the Yemen IPC TWG conducted a series of consultative and technical meetings with different stakeholders.

The preparation process started in early February 2019, with plans to carry out Famine Risk Monitoring (FRM) assessments for food security indicators for the 45 districts. The process faced several administrative and logistical challenges during the preparation and field data collection processes. Due to those challenges, the FRM data collection had delays until the second half of April, when actual data collection commenced.

Unfortunately, not all of the 45 districts could be reached and the assessment teams only managed 29 of them. Thereafter, collected data was analyzed and made available for use for IPC analysis in June 2019. After receiving the FRM assessment results, the Yemen IPC TWG developed a matrix of all available data and mapped it ready for IPC analysis.

The analysis was conducted using the IPC Version 3.0 Acute Food Insecurity Classification Protocols, in two hubs (Sana'a & Aden), from 23rd June to 9th July 2019. Each hub analysis was preceded by a 1-day refresher training to analysts.

Limitations of the Analysis

The analysis faced a number of challenges. The main challenge was failure to conduct FRM assessments in all 45 district classified with pockets of households facing catastrophic food consumption gaps in the December 2018 IPC analysis. 16 districts were inaccessible mainly due to conflict. Other challenges were related to the availability of the nutrition data for the majority of the districts. The analysis team had to use the available MUAC mass screening data provided by UNICEF as indirect evidence for drawing the nutrition conclusion in the analyzed districts. In addition, mortality data was not available for all districts.

Sources of Data

The main source of data was the Famine Risk Monitoring (FRM) data collected during April 2019 through joint efforts by FAO, WFP and the FSAC cluster. The FRM provided the IPC with direct evidence data for food consumption (Food Consumption Score, Household Dietary Diversity Score, Household Hunger Score, food-related reduced Coping Strategies and Livelihood Coping Strategies).

The FRM assessments tools are designed according to the global standards using WFP's/FAO's/FSAC's corporate level technical protocols taking special considerations of data requirements for the IPC analysis. FRM assessments also contributed indirect evidence through Focus Group Discussion notes, summarized for all assessed districts. Market related data was also provided by WFP's VAM market monitoring system, and through the FSTS/ FAO-FSIS Monthly Market monitoring data.

Additional data/information was available from OCHA Reports including accessibility, UNICEF/MoPHP SMART surveys data per districts for 3 Governorates (Abyan, Taiz and Hajjah) and MUAC mass screening data for the analyzed districts, WHO/MoPHP (eDEWS), FSAC, FEWSNET rainfall data, government institutions including the Agriculture Production assessment done by MAI and recent TFPM Reports.

All these data/information were made available to the IPC analysis team in both soft copies and summaries in Excel format. In addition, the latest reports from the different Governorates and the local knowledge from different expertise from NTWG members contributed to the systematic IPC analysis and classification of the districts using Acute Food Security IPC protocols Version 3.0.

The analysts included experts in agriculture, livestock, nutrition, food security, statisticians, engineers, economists, markets, water & sanitation, and other persons familiar with the districts/governorates including representatives from the analyzed areas as local knowledge. A total of 82 analysts were involved and contributed to systematic IPC analysis and classification of the 29 districts in the two analysis hubs Sana'a and Aden.

What is the IPC and IPC Acute Food Insecurity?

The IPC is a set of tools and procedures to classify the severity and characteristics of acute food and nutrition crises as well as chronic food insecurity based on international standards. The IPC consists of four mutually reinforcing functions, each with a set of specific protocols (tools and procedures). The core IPC parameters include consensus building, convergence of evidence, accountability, transparency and comparability. The IPC analysis aims at informing emergency response as well as medium and long-term food security policy and programming.

For the IPC, Acute Food Insecurity is defined as any manifestation of food insecurity found in a specified area at a specific point in time of a severity that threatens lives or livelihoods, or both, regardless of the causes, context or duration. It is highly susceptible to change and can occur and manifest in a population within a short amount of time, as a result of sudden changes or shocks that negatively impact on the determinants of food insecurity.

Contact for further Information

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Classification of food insecurity and malnutrition was conducted using the IPC protocols, which are developed and implemented worldwide by the IPC Global Partnership - Action Against Hunger, CARE, CILSS, EC-JRC, FAO, FEWSNET, Global Food Security Cluster, Global Nutrition Cluster, IGAD, Oxfam, PROGRESAN-SICA, SADC, Save the Children, UNICEF and WFP.

Yemen IPC Analysis Partners in July 2019

