Overview
The IPC Acute Food Insecurity projection update, conducted in September 2022, indicates that approximately 17 million people, or over half of the population in Yemen, will likely experience high levels of acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 3 or above) between October and December 2022. The primary concern is the 6.1 million people classified in IPC Phase 4 (Emergency). While this projection update shows that IPC Phase 5 (Catastrophe) has been prevented, close monitoring remains essential. Overall, 184 of the 331 analyzed districts are classified in IPC Phase 4 (Emergency), and 140 districts in IPC Phase 3 (Crisis). Only seven districts are classified in IPC Phase 2 (Stressed).

This projection update indicates similarly high levels of food insecurity compared to the first half of the year (January-May 2022); however, the update shows an improvement in the food security outlook compared with the projection June-December 2022 from the previous IPC analysis conducted in February 2022. In particular, the update indicates a decrease of 2 million people in IPC Phase 3 or above (7% of the population), and by 1.2 million people (4%) in IPC Phase 4 or above. As anticipated, the update also indicates the absence of people in IPC Phase 5 (Catastrophe) in the last quarter of 2022. The 161,000 people previously classified in IPC Phase 5 (Catastrophe) in the June-December projection period are estimated to have now shifted to lower phases.

Despite the improvement, Yemen remains one of the most food insecure countries in the world. For nearly a decade – even before the war – more than half of the population has consistently been highly food insecure, mainly driven by structural instability, aggravated by human-induced factors and climate change. This update, therefore, emphasizes that the improvement is a temporary reprieve and further efforts need to be put in place to sustain and completely reverse this trend.

Key Drivers

- **Conflict**
  - Despite the historical 6-months truce and lull in hostilities, the impact of Yemen’s conflict – the loss of life, disruption of livelihoods and crippling of the economy – has caused unprecedented levels of acute food insecurity with long-term effects.

- **Climate Change**
  - Despite the above-normal rainfall during the second rainy season (July-September), which caused flooding, destruction of property and loss of livelihoods, the country experienced moderate-to-severe drought conditions between January and June 2022. These were coupled with an unprecedented rise in temperatures, affecting all cropped regions of Yemen. The impact of climate change is becoming a major driver of food insecurity in the country and the region at large.

- **Economic Decline**
  - Yemen’s economy remains frail. According to the World Bank, economic and social prospects for 2022 and beyond remain highly unstable and hinge on a resolution to the conflict.

- **High Food & Fuel Prices**
  - The war in Ukraine has triggered spikes in international prices of wheat and other basic food commodities in addition to fuel commodities. Despite recent easing of these international prices, their high level has contributed to local food inflation with prices of the minimum food basket having increased to very high levels.
Truce: The historical six-month truce was key for a significant reduction in hostilities, increased availability of fuel – particularly in northern areas, improved humanitarian access, promoted human capital mobility in search of better labour opportunities and enhanced access to goods and services due to ease of transport. Although the truce expired at the beginning of October, major implications of potentially reverting the above improvements are yet to be seen. It is important to recognize the fragility of these conditions, and hence, a return to pre-truce conditions would jeopardize the improvements. Without a doubt, maintaining the truce and committing to peace is vital for relief and development efforts in support of eradicating hunger.

Seasonality: The second half of the year experienced above-normal rainfall, leading to improved water and pasture for livestock as well as the production of cash and food crops – mainly fodder, legumes, vegetables, and fruits – providing income to small-scale producers and improving household access to food and non-food expenditure. Seasonal production was also boosted by human capital mobility, with demand for labour increasing from June onwards as farm activities peaked. Increasing demand coupled with availability of seasonal labour opportunities improved incomes and access to food. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that the first half of the year was hit by a prolonged drought, which led to the loss of first-season cereals affecting food availability and incomes.

Humanitarian Assistance: Greater fuel availability to drive the supply chain coupled with increased funding significantly boosted prospects for Humanitarian Food Assistance (HFA) compared to the assumptions used during February. For this analysis (October to December), the HFA assumptions estimate that beneficiaries receiving HFA will be four-fold the estimated number of beneficiaries during the February projection (June-December) from 2.7M to an average of 11M monthly, noting that the February projection was based on confirmed funding at that time. With the actual confirmed amounts today, one in three Yemenis will likely benefit from HFA between October and December, according to the data available at the time of the update. The humanitarian assistance targeting strategy is reflective of severity, prioritizing the most vulnerable districts, and this rationalizes the fall of the large IPC Phase 5 population estimated in the February projection analysis. While the improved funding allows for maintaining the geographical coverage, including an increased frequency of distribution cycles compared to reality in the first half of 2022, food rations remain reduced compared to the assumption used in February for the projection (~300Kcal/per person/per day) against the per capita average minimum requirement of 2,100 kcal. Humanitarian accessibility remains a crucial element in realizing the gains of the scale-up. The truce, and key feature on fuel imports, has helped solidly these gains more broadly. Between April and September, the improved access to districts facing extreme levels of food insecurity in Hajjah, Al Hudaydah and Amran governorates may be a result of this factor.
IPC Acute Malnutrition Projection Update

The IPC Acute Malnutrition (AMN) projection update was conducted only for 125 districts in the governorates under the Internationally Recognized Government (IRG). The reason for the partial update was primarily due to restrictions to conducting virtual analysis in governorates under the Sana’a Based Authorities (SBA). The recommended practice for IPC updates is virtual analyses, which take advantage of multiple participants, in a limited amount of time. This was the case for this update in IRG-controlled districts.

Out of the 125 districts, 26 are classified as Critical (IPC Phase 4), 83 in Serious (IPC Phase 3) and 16 in Alert (IPC Phase 2). The projection update indicates an increase in severity, with 17 districts having changed to a worse Phase compared to the February analysis projection, including nine districts in Al Mah fehr that moved from Alert to Serious, and eight districts in Aden moving from Serious to Critical. In Aden governorate, the deterioration is mainly attributable to an increase in admissions observed as well as flooding that hit wide areas of the governorate. Al Mahrah is threatened by unusual shocks such as cyclones and flash floods with expected impact on malnutrition during the last quarter of 2022.

Limited Projected Impact on Malnutrition

The caseload estimated in the February AMN analysis indicated that approximately 2.2 million children under the age of five were malnourished, including 538,000 severely malnourished, while about 1.3 million pregnant and lactating women were projected to suffer from acute malnutrition over the course of 2022.

Recommended Actions

End Conflict
It is vital that all parties to the conflict in Yemen commit to engaging in long-lasting peace. Investments in recovery and development are the only gateway to eradicating hunger in Yemen as relief alone cannot reverse the food insecurity situation.

Provide life-saving humanitarian assistance
To stop and reverse inexorable deterioration, donors to provide urgently needed resources to enable sourcing and delivery of critical life-saving food assistance to populations facing large food consumption gaps.

Provide livelihood support and diversification
To increase resilience and reduce vulnerability to shocks, close collaboration between humanitarian and development actors is essential, focusing on the rehabilitation of community assets and support to livelihoods.

Improve inter-sectoral programming
Advocate for and support an integrated multisectoral approach for programming focused on the four key sectors: food security, nutrition, health, and WASH. It is vital to continue scale-up of treatment and prevention of acute malnutrition and harmonize nutrition services, and sustained care through seamless referral mechanisms across the different treatment programmes for children with Moderate Acute Malnutrition (MAM) and Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM).

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