Yemen

The humanitarian situation in Yemen has deteriorated following the escalation of conflict beginning on 26 March, 2015, an associated breakdown in commercial supply pipelines for fuel and food, and a breakdown in the provision of basic social services. In the first 4 weeks of the crisis an estimated 150,000 people have been displaced, over 760 killed and 2900 injured (including at least 115 children killed and 172 injured). Civilian infrastructure has been hit during the fighting, including schools, hospitals, airports, power stations, bridges, factories, farmlands and mosques. Power cuts are increasing, communication networks are down, access to banking and cash is intermittent and prices for key commodities are skyrocketing. Negotiating safe humanitarian access is challenging due to ongoing insecurity and unpredictable changes in control over territory.

The current conflict in Yemen is unfolding in the context of a pre-existing large-scale humanitarian crisis. In January 2015, some 15.9 million people in Yemen (61 percent of the population) were in need of humanitarian assistance, including 7.4 million children. The current crisis is exacerbating the vulnerabilities of these populations, as well as creating new humanitarian needs for people not previously in need of assistance. For example, prior to the conflict, 847,445 children under 5 suffered from acute malnutrition, and 160,629 children from severe acute malnutrition. If food shortages brought on by the current crisis are not addressed, malnutrition rates are likely to rise. Prior to the conflict an estimated 13.4 million people had no access to safe drinking water, and 12 million people had no proper sanitation facilities. Crisis-induced shortages in fuel and electricity have affected water pumps and access to clean water, as a result, water-borne diseases are at risk of spreading. Basic services were near collapse prior to the crisis - some 8.4 million people lacked access to basic health care services. The recent conflict has seen the closure of health and nutrition facilities in some areas. Some 2 million children have been affected by the closure of over 3,700 schools. Child rights violations continue to be on the rise, with alarming trends in the recruitment and use of children in conflict. Priority humanitarian needs include medical supplies, safe drinking water, fuel, food assistance. Mass casualty management is critical and protection remains a grave concern. Reports of IHL violations are emerging, although difficult to verify with limited presence on the ground.

Humanitarian Strategy

Despite the challenges, UNICEF and partners continue to deliver life-saving assistance inside Yemen, and have been involved in conducting assessments and responding to priority needs wherever security conditions permit. In April, 2015, the UN launched a Flash Appeal for Yemen to provide urgent humanitarian assistance and protection to 7.5 million affected people over a three month period. UNICEF is operating under the framework of the Flash Appeal to address life-saving priorities stemming, from the current crisis. In light of the rapidly changing humanitarian context, UNICEF will further review and revise its 2015 Humanitarian Response Plan for Yemen (HRP) after this acute phase of the crisis is over, in coordination with...
the UNCT. This will take into consideration new humanitarian needs, pre-existing needs which have been exacerbated by the current conflict, medium-term needs to address some of the chronic underlying variables of humanitarian vulnerability in Yemen, as well as projected medium and longer-term needs for recovery and reconstruction following the most recent crisis. UNICEF will continue taking a leading role in the nutrition, WASH and education clusters, as well as in child protection activities.

In health, as part of the Flash Appeal, UNICEF will provide mother, newborn and child health services including routine and mass immunization, treatment of childhood illnesses, maternal antenatal, delivery and post-partum care at household and population level (through outreach and mobile services) and support to referral facilities. Mobile teams will provide a package of health and nutrition services in areas with displaced populations with no access to health facilities. Communication and social mobilization efforts have been adapted to promote healthy behaviours in emergencies to prevent the spread of disease.

In nutrition, as part of the Flash Appeal, UNICEF will expand treatment services to severely acutely malnourished children under 5 and deploy mobile treatment teams to distribute micronutrients. As per the 2015 HRP, UNICEF supports community-based management of acute malnutrition, with an emphasis on the provision of nutrition services. This includes providing a comprehensive package of curative and preventative services in districts with serious levels of wasting and stunting. Community volunteers and health workers are trained to provide an integrated life-saving package of health services for maternal, newborn and child care.

In WASH, as part of the Flash Appeal, UNICEF will provide water trucking and public water storage tanks to IDPs (in camps and public places) in need, and provide fuel, spare parts and maintenance to local water corporations to keep water systems and sewage treatment operational. As per the HRP, UNICEF supports IDPs and host communities with a focus on implementing a full WASH package, including improving water quality, access to water sources, and basic sanitation as well as hygiene promotion.

In child protection, as part of the Flash Appeal, UNICEF will provide children and community members living in high priority conflict-affected areas with life-saving mine risk education and with appropriate referrals to child-friendly victims assistance programmes. UNICEF will also provide psychosocial support through child-friendly spaces, as well as support the continuation and maintenance of existing MRM networks in affected areas and expand to newly affected areas. As part of the HRP, the UNICEF-supported community-based child protection approach is addressing child trafficking, gender-based violence, monitoring and responding to grave violations of child rights, and mine-risk education. Preventing and responding to the recruitment and use of children under the age of 18 years by armed forces and armed groups is a priority.

In education, as part of the HRP, UNICEF is working to improve access to safe learning environments and providing education supplies, teacher training on psychosocial support and peacebuilding activities to affected school children, in addition to bolstering psychosocial support at the community level.

### Funding Requirements

Following the escalation of conflict on 26 March 2015, UNICEF revised its 2015 Humanitarian Action for Children appeal requirements for the overall humanitarian response to US$88.1 million. This amount includes US$27.98 million for UNICEF’s life-saving priorities stemming from the current crisis, as outlined in the 90-day interagency Flash Appeal, as well as US$60.1 million needed to respond to pre-existing immediate and medium-term humanitarian needs, as outlined in the 12-month 2015 inter-agency Humanitarian Response Plan for Yemen. The latter document will be reviewed and revised following the acute phase of this current context to take into account the new humanitarian needs.

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