

# CRISISINSIGHT

## YEMEN CRISIS IMPACT OVERVIEW

June – August 2019



## ABOUT THIS REPORT

The **Yemen Crisis Impact Overview** is published every two months to provide decision makers with a short, accessible overview of key trends and emerging challenges that may affect humanitarian needs in Yemen.

The product combines trends in key conflict and humanitarian data with daily media monitoring, secondary data review, and ongoing joint analysis with a broad spectrum of Yemen analysts.

This report covers the period from **June to August 2019**.

Read our analysis of January – May trends [here](#).

Have we got anything wrong? Do you have ideas for other issues we should look at? Write to us on [yahinfo@acaps.org](mailto:yahinfo@acaps.org)

## METHODOLOGY

ACAPS develops the Yemen Crisis Impact Overview every two months through:

- Maintaining a core dataset of around 90 cross-sectoral indicators (quantitative and qualitative) at district level (see ACAPS' core data set)
- Conducting analysis of key conflict, displacement, economic, social and humanitarian indicators to identify trends
- Daily monitoring of Yemeni media and, social media in English and Arabic
- Secondary data review of key analysis products published on Yemen (see ACAPS' metadatabase)
- Regular joint analysis with operational and analysis experts working on Yemen to test and refine assumptions
- Quality review by ACAPS' expert readers group to try to identify and address errors and bias.

ACAPS has a high degree of confidence in the reliability of this report as it is based on primary data analysis, secondary data review, and joint review by Yemen experts. However, we do risk availability bias (focussing more on issues where there is information available), and more of our analysis focuses on the western part of the country than the east.

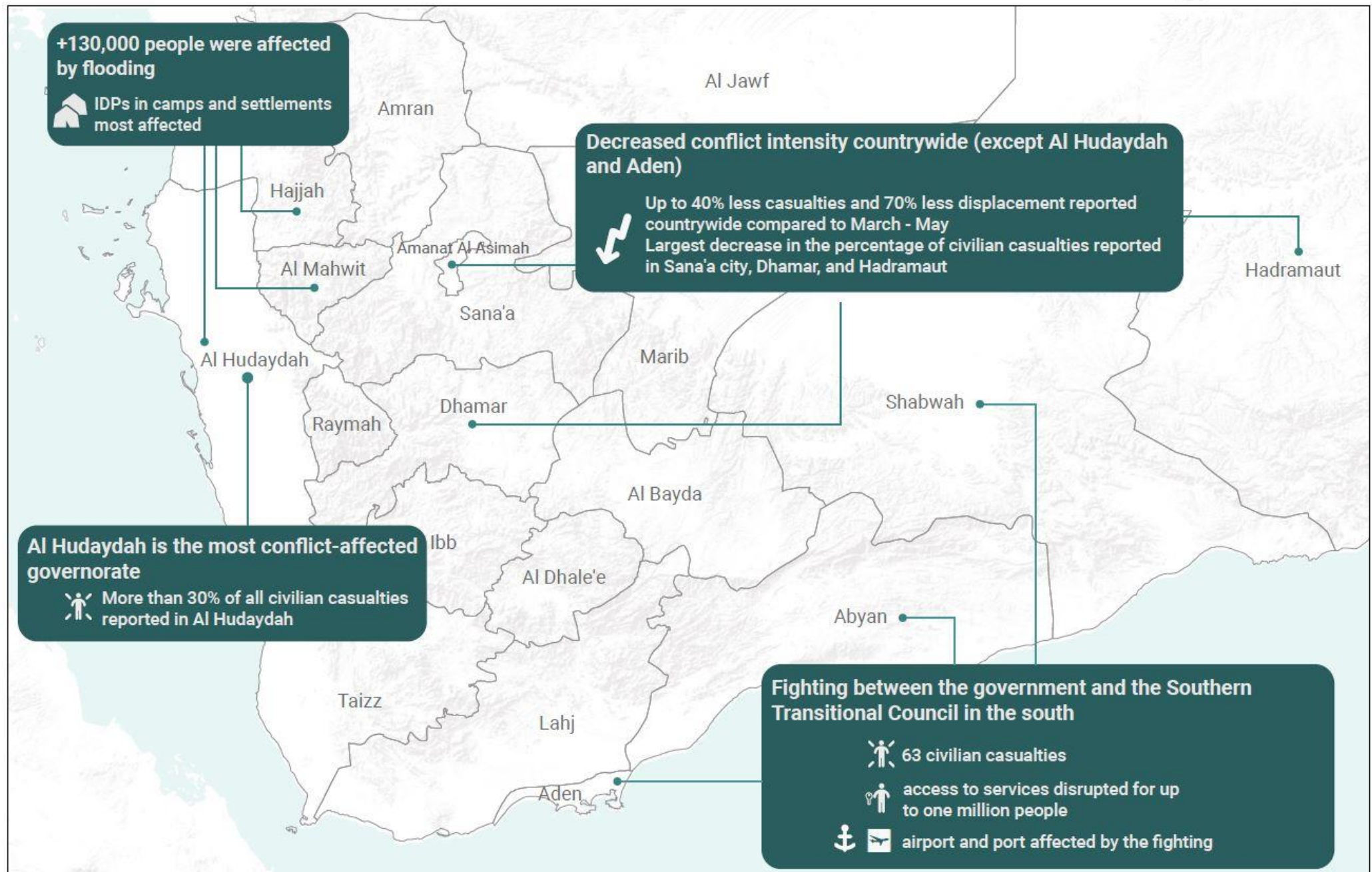
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### RELIABILITY



# Humanitarian developments in Yemen: June - August 2019



# 6

## KEY TRENDS

### JUNE – AUGUST 2019

#### 1. The intensity of conflict and its impact on civilians decreased in most areas of Yemen



Civilian casualties decreased by 37% compared to the March – May period. However, civilian casualties started increasing again in August.

#### 2. The number of newly displaced households decreased by more than 67% compared to March – May



However, IDPs in informal settlements in Hajjah and Al Hudaydah were particularly impacted by heavy flooding.

#### 3. More than 6,300 people displaced due to conflict



Fighting between the Southern Transitional Council (STC) and pro-Hadi forces in Aden, Shabwah, and Abyan in August 2019 displaced 6,300 people (est.) and damaged civilian infrastructure.

#### 4. Heavy rains and flooding



Torrential rain and flash flooding in Yemen's western governorates damaged homes and public infrastructure and caused livelihoods losses, affecting 130,000 people

#### 5. Risk of a disruption in humanitarian activities



Some 22 life-saving programmes are at risk of closing in September and October due to funding shortages. The number of humanitarian programmes at risk of shutting down and the number of programmes already suspended increased since July. Saudi and UAE pledges in September may provide relief, but how quickly can operational partners mobilise the funding?

#### 6. Risk of rapid increase in prices



The economy was relatively stable from June to August 2019. However, economic competition between the Government of Yemen, the STC or the Houthis, or disruptions to Aden port, could trigger rapid price rises, pushing the cost of basic commodities above what many Yemenis can afford.



## MOST AFFECTED GOVERNORATES AND DISTRICTS

June – August 2019



### Most civilian casualties

**Al Hudaydah - 223** civilian casualties

more than 30% of all casualties reported in Yemen (Al Hali, At Tuhayat, Hays districts most affected)



### Most people affected by flooding

**Hajjah – up to 50,000** people affected

(Abs, Al Salam, Aflah Al Yaman, Khyran Al Muharak, Kuhlani Afar, Kushar, Mabyaan districts most affected)

**Al Hudaydah – up to 48,000** people affected

(Al Hali, Az Zaydiyah, Az Zuhrah, Al Hawak, Alluheyah, Al Qanawis, Bajil, Al Khawkhah districts most affected)



### Most displacement

**Taizz – over 17,500** IDPs

(Mawiyah, Salh, Jabal Habashy districts most affected)

**Al Hudaydah – over 14,000** IDPs

(Az Zuhrah, Zabid districts most affected)

**Aden – over 6,500** people displaced

from Aden (about 1,000 families)

## MOST AFFECTED GROUPS

June - August 2019

### Marginalised people of northern origin residing in southern governorates

Conflict in Aden and other governorates in the south dramatically increased the protection concerns for people from the north residing in Aden and other southern governorates. **Since 2 August, 'northerners' were subject to arrest, detention, physical assault, verbal abuse, seizure of personal valuables, forced closure of businesses and deportation by STC aligned forces.** Between 2 and 4 August, 2,400 people from Aden and Tur Al Bahah district in Lahj were forcibly deported from the governorate, and deportations have continued on a smaller scale. As of 19 August, 3,800 people had reportedly fled to Taizz, Lahj, and other governorates in the north. **Those that remained are reportedly too afraid to leave their homes to work or to access essential goods and services such as food, water, fuel, health services, and aid.**

### IDPs living in camps and settlements in flood-affected areas

Heavy flooding in June, July, and August displaced people and destroyed IDP and host community shelters and critical infrastructure. More than 3,000 IDP families were affected by flooding in Aden, Lahj, Taizz, Hajjah, and Hadramaut in early June and 6,200 displaced families were affected in August, mostly in Al Hudaydah and Sana'a. Large numbers of people were internally displaced in Al Mukha district in Taizz (200 families or 1,200 IDPs in June), Merkhah As Sufla district in Shabwah (165 families or up to a thousand IDPs in July), and Az Zaydiyah district in Al Hudaydah (85 families or over 500 IDPs in August).

Heavy rainfall and flash floods continued as of early September in Hajjah. **The shelter situation of IDPs living in camps and settlements on the west coast is dire due to the prolonged exposure to rains and strong storms.** Many IDPs were forced to seek shelter in public buildings, including schools, or with relatives. Estimated more than 30% of the displaced population in Yemen (around 1.2 million IDPs) are living in various IDP sites.

In Sana'a governorate, heavy rains and floods damaged shelters in IDP sites in Hamdan and Bani Hushaysh districts. Several IDP sites in Al Jawf, Al Mahwit, Amran, Dhamar, Ibb, Hajjah, Al Hudaydah and Taizz governorates were also damaged.

## OUTLOOK

Conflict between forces loyal to the Hadi government and the Southern Transitional Council (STC) is likely to continue in Aden, Shabwah, Lahj and Abyan in the next three months. Fighting is likely to last for only a few days at a time, resulting in up to 30 to 50 casualties per day, mostly among fighters. There is a medium likelihood that conflict could spill over to other southern governorates such as Hadramawt or Al Bayda.

However, **sustained urban fighting in Aden or other major cities in the south could cause much more severe humanitarian consequences** due to the impact of urban warfare on civilians (especially mortars and shelling), the breakdown in essential services and, the prolonged closure of Aden airport and port. [Read ACAPS' analysis of the humanitarian impact of conflict in Aden to find out more.](#)

**Northern traders, workers, and IDPs residing in southern governorates are highly likely to need international protection** against execution, deportation, and retaliatory violence. More than 45,000 IDPs from northern governorates currently reside in Aden, along with several thousand northerners working in the services and trade sectors. Since the Government of Yemen pulled out of Aden on 29 August, the STC has raided homes and detained dozens of pro-Hadi activists and politicians. Many humanitarian staff of northern origin are finding it difficult to travel to do their jobs due to the fear of reprisals or arrest at checkpoints.

**Yemen's currency will most likely stay stable around the 550 YER mark for the next few months.** This is at a similar level to previous months, but above what most Yemenis can sustainably afford (food and currency prices in Yemen are closely linked due to Yemen's import dependence). However, if the Government of Yemen decides to use its leverage over fuel and food imports as a tool against the STC or the Houthis, we could see rapid price increases and fuel shortages, which will increase food insecurity for vulnerable households.

### Looking back on the May outlook

As we feared in May 2019, the number of airstrikes in Yemen grew steadily between June and August. However, **contrary to our analysis, the number of civilian casualties due to airstrikes decreased in June and July 2019.** This suggests that parties to the conflict targeted less densely populated areas or took greater care to avoid harm to the civilian population. The numbers of newly displaced people also steadily decreased in line with the reduction of violence, though we continued to see displacement in areas where fighting spiked (particularly in Aden and Al Hudaydah). However, in late August and early September, a number of airstrikes hit civilian targets, causing large numbers of casualties. The temperature of US and Saudi rhetoric against Iran is also rising, which risks seeing Yemen pulled into a broader regional conflict (ACAPS 06/2019). Looking ahead, airstrikes on civilians in Yemen remains a key risk.

As we feared, **cholera caseloads continued to increase in areas affected by flooding** (Al Hudaydah, Shabwah, Taizz). However, cholera caseloads also increased in areas that were not badly flooded as well, like Sa'ada and Al Maharah, which points to the need for a deeper understanding of the drivers of cholera in Yemen.

[Look back on our May 2019 analysis here.](#)

### Who are northerners in Yemen?

So called 'northerners' are Yemenis who originated from governorates that were part of the historic Yemen Arab Republic. Yemen was divided between a republican north and socialist south from 1967 to 1990.

An estimated 45,000 IDPs of northern origin reside in Aden, alongside thousands of traders and service sector workers (IOM 2/08/2019). Northern traders are prominent in the fresh produce and Qat trade centred around the Al Arood markets in Khur Maksar.

Many southern separatist forces retain historic grievances dating back to the violent unification of Yemen between 1990 and 1994 and have incited violent assaults on people of northern origin over the past decade. More recently, STC aligned forces have accused northerners in Aden of colluding with Houthi forces.

[Click here to access a map published by the European Council of Foreign Relations on the historical division of Yemen.](#)

## CONTEXTUAL HIGHLIGHTS

**Displacement and conflict intensity decreased over June – August.** However, the growing political fragmentation of the country, natural hazards, and aid funding shortfalls continued to stretch the coping capacity of many Yemenis.

**Yemen's southern governorates saw the greatest increase in conflict. Fighting between the Southern Transitional Council (STC) and pro-Hadi forces (nominal allies under the Saudi led coalition) in Aden, Shabwah, and Abyan in August and September 2019** killed or injured 63 civilians, trapped people in their homes for several days at a time, damaged civilian infrastructure – including water and health services – disrupted aid programming and pushed the Hadi government out of its temporary capital, Aden (Reuters 29/08/2019)(OHCHR 10/09/2019).

**Aden airport closed intermittently throughout August and September.** The airport is one of only two still functioning in Yemen (along with Sayun in Hadramawt). It is a crucial lifeline for thousands of Yemenis who rely on medical treatment abroad (NRC 5/08/2019, Discussions with operational actors).

**Fighting and administrative challenges also disrupted Aden port, which is a key lifeline for essential commodities and aid.**

The STC clashed with Islah party loyalists in Taizz in August. UAE-backed fighters also clashed with local forces in June in Soqatra – the first incident of political violence reported on the island since the beginning of the current conflict (ACLED 26/06/2019).

As of mid-September, Saudi led ceasefire talks between the government and the STC had failed to find a solution. There is a medium risk the conflict could escalate or spread to other governorates such as Hadramaut or Al Maharah (Security Council Report 31/08/2019, ACLED 26/06/2019, Al Jazeera 23/08/2019, ACAPS Risk Impact Overview (forthcoming)).

Conflict continued between the Houthis and internationally recognised government forces along all major front lines - Al Dhale'e, Taizz, Hajjah and along the Yemeni-Saudi border - throughout the reporting period, but at a lower level than during the first half of 2019.

Al Qaeda in the Arab Peninsula (AQAP) and Islamic State (IS) took advantage of the power vacuum in the south and intensified attacks against pro-Hadi and STC forces in Aden, Abyan, and Al Bayda. **Political violence by non-state armed groups is expected to increase as a consequence of the political situation in the south** (OSESGY 20/08/2019).

The conflict in the south exposed cracks in the Saudi-UAE coalition. On 29 August, the UAE conducted a series of airstrikes on Saudi backed forces in Aden and Abyan, reportedly killing or wounding up to 70 civilians (CNA 30/08/2019, Reuters 29/08/2019).

**Houthi forces continued their cross-border attacks into Saudi Arabia targeting critical infrastructure and military sites by drones, missiles, and border clashes along the Asir,**

Jizan, and Najran regions. The Saudi-led Coalition (SLC) initially responded with intense airstrikes, mainly on Sana'a and Sa'ada, resulting in high civilian casualties (OCHA 30/07/2019). **The intensity of the airstrikes slightly decreased in July. However, Saudi Arabia and the US stepped up their rhetoric on alleged links between the Houthis and Iran,** increasing the risk of a regional crisis (ICG 18/07/2019, ACAPS 06/2016).

**The STC takeover of the south, and divisions between Saudi Arabia and the UAE, made the Stockholm Agreement more vulnerable.** The STC did not participate in the negotiations and it is unclear to what extent they will consider themselves bound by its terms (ICG 30/08/2019).

The UN reported frequent violations of the ceasefire in Al Hudaydah between June and August and fighting broke out in the governorate in June between Saudi led coalition and Houthi forces (Security Council Report 31/08/2019).

**Torrential rain and flash flooding between June to August** affected more than 130,000 people across the country, and damaged infrastructure and livelihoods (USAID 28/08/2019, UNHCR 06/2019, OCHA 19/08/2019).

**The humanitarian community faced bureaucratic and operational barriers.** In May, WFP suspended their food assistance in Sana'a for two months due to access restrictions and concerns about aid diversion.

**The UN-led humanitarian response continued to be seriously underfunded** with only 44% of pledges available at the end of August (OCHA 28/08/2019). Funding shortfalls impacted all sectors. Health, nutrition, and WASH programmes limited their operations, and emergency food assistance was at risk. Of the 34 major UN humanitarian programmes in Yemen, only three are funded for the entire year. Around 20 life-saving programmes are at risk of closing down in September and October unless funding is received (HC 21/08/2019). UAE released \$200 million in funds in mid-September and Saudi Arabia has promised to transfer its \$500 million pledge, but it is unclear how quickly humanitarians will be able to mobilise the funding due to bureaucratic constraints in country (OCHA 16/09/2019).

## TRENDS IN CONFLICT

Conflict continued across the country in the reporting period, but at a lower intensity than the first half of 2019. **Civilian casualties decreased by 37%, from 1,129 in March – May to 713 in June – August. However, civilian casualties started increasing in August because of fighting in Aden and Al Hudaydah** (CIMP 3/09/2019).

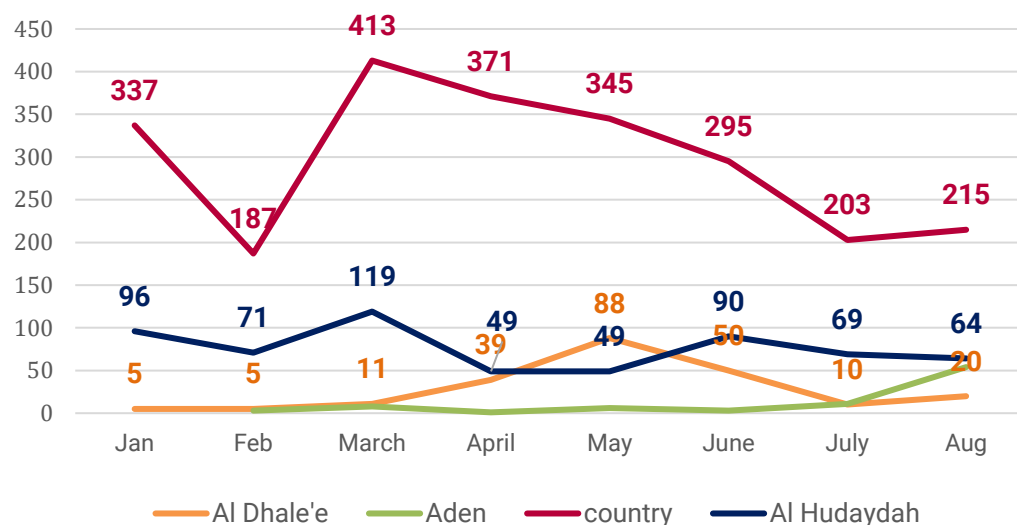
**Al Hudaydah remains the governorate with the highest level of civilian casualties, accounting for more than 30% of all casualties reported country wide.** In June, fighting in Al Hali, At Tuhayat, and Hays districts of Al Hudaydah saw the number of civilian

casualties increase by 84% compared to the previous month. Most of the casualties and damage to civilian infrastructure was due to shelling, with direct gun violence down sharply compared to the first half of 2019 (CIMP 3/09/2019, ACLED 2/07/2019).

**Fighting between the STC and the Government of Yemen in August and September in Aden, Shabwa and Abyan** resulted in up to 400 casualties, including over 50 deaths. **Out of these, 63 casualties were civilians** (OHCHR 10/09/2019). Civilians were trapped in the areas of active fighting, particularly in Craiter district, and couldn't access basic services, food, and water (NRC 9/08/2019, UN 11/08/2019, UN 29/08/2019, CIMP 3/09/2019). The most conflict affected districts were Craiter, Al Mualla, Dar Sad, Khur Maksar, and Al Bureiqeh districts in Aden as well as Zingibar in Abyan and Ataq in Shabwah.

### Trends of civilian casualties in 2019

Source: CIMP 3/09/2019, ACLED 2/07/2019.



Taizz, Al Jawf, Hajjah, and Sa'ada were also affected by heavy clashes between June and August. However, the level of civilian impact in these governorates was much lower or at similar levels to the March-May period (CIMP 3/09/2019). Most of the frontlines between Houthi and anti-Houthi forces have now stalled with little territorial change reported in the second half of 2019.

Civilian casualties decreased in June to August, but **damage to civilian infrastructure increased, particularly in Al Hudaydah (April to July) and Aden (August)**. 79% of affected structures were civilian houses (CIMP 3/09/2019).

Mass casualty events continued to impact on civilian infrastructure, particularly markets, IDP settlements, and health services. An attack on the market in Qatabir district (Sa'ada)

in July resulted in 40 civilian casualties. A strike on a community college building used as a detention facility in Dhamar governorate on 1 September killed an estimated 130 detainees, the deadliest airstrike since October 2016. However, the overall number of events resulting in 10 or more civilian casualties decreased from a total of 18 events and 511 casualties between March and May, to 7 events and 123 casualties between June and August (CIMP 3/09/2019, Yemen Data Project 2/09/2019).

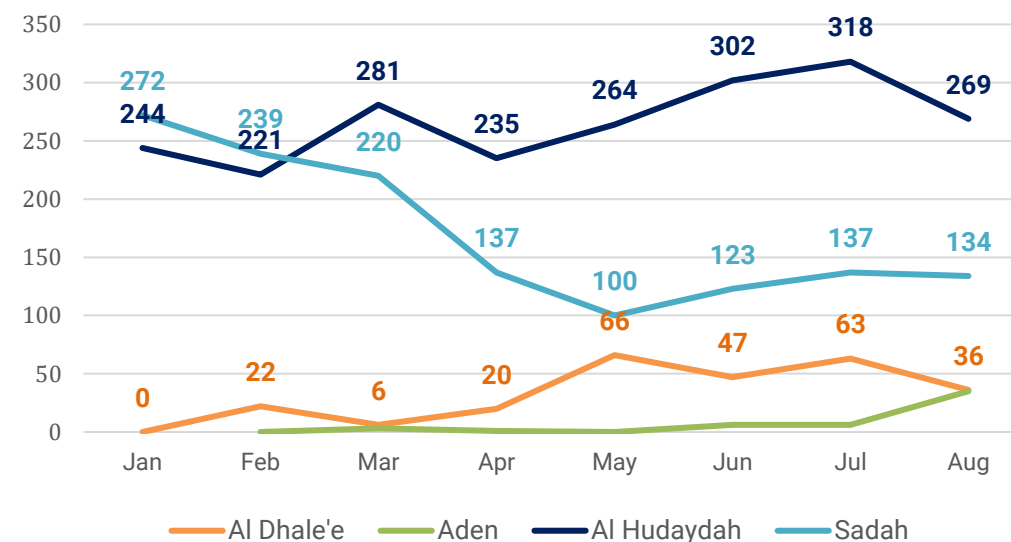
After a steady decline in the first half of 2019, the number of SLC airstrikes increased in June, mostly due to retaliatory airstrikes on Sa'ada and Sana'a. However, the number of civilian casualties reported due to airstrikes decreased significantly, from 93 casualties on average per month between January and May to around 30 casualties reported respectively in June and July - the lowest number in a single month since the beginning of the air war in March 2015 (Yemen Data Project 07/2019, MSF 27/08/2019).

**Shelling accounted for 54% of civilian casualties in June to August 2019.** 386 civilian casualties due to shelling were reported in June – August, compared to 290 in March – May.

**Explosive ordnance incidents (landmines, UXOs, and IEDs) increased significantly in the first six months of 2019,** compared to the same period of 2018. There was a 115% increase in the number of explosive ordnance incidents (57 Jan to June 2019, 123 Jan to June 2019) and a 90% increase in civilian casualties (174 Jan to June 2018, 332 Jan to June 2019) (CIMP 08/2019).

### Trends in civilian structure damage

Source: CIMP 3/09/2019, ACLED 2/07/2019.





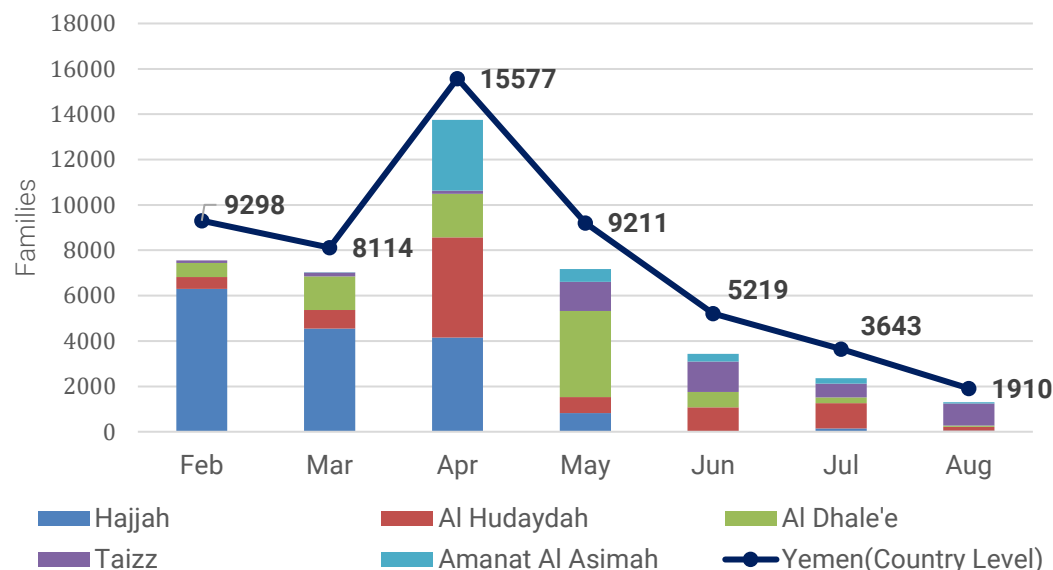
The number of newly displaced families decreased by more than 67% in June-August, compared to the March – May period. However, 10,800 families (est. 65,000 people) were displaced between June and August mainly to or within Taizz, Al Hudaydah, and Al Dhale'e governorates.

Taizz and Al Hudaydah accounted for almost 50% of all new displacement countrywide from June - August. 2,900 households (17,500 people) were displaced in Taizz and over 2,320 households (14,000 IDPs) were displaced in Al Hudaydah, mostly due to conflict (IOM 17/08/2019).

Up to 1,200 households (7,200 individuals) were displaced from Aden, Abyan, and Shabwah as of 24 August, due to conflict. 1,096 families were displaced from Aden, a 3,815% increase on March to May (IOM 24/08/2019). Most displaced people went to Taizz (Jabal Habashy, Ash Shamayatayn, and Maqbanah districts).

Flooding caused new displacement in Al Mukha district, Taizz (200 families or 1,200 IDPs in June), Merkhah As Sufla district in Shabwah (165 families or up to a thousand IDPs in July), and Az Zaydiyah district, Al Hudaydah (85 families or over 500 IDPs in August) (IOM 23/08/2019).

Trends in displacement - 2019 (by host governorate)



Source: IOM Rapid Displacement Tracking 1/02/2019 to 31/08/2019.

## ACCESS

Humanitarian partners reported 299 access incidents in June and July across 109 districts in 19 governorates, down from 375 incidents in April and May (OCHA 06/07/2019). However, the number of people in need affected by access constraints increased by more than 20% to 4.9 million. Restrictions on the movement of humanitarian personnel or goods, and interference in the implementation of humanitarian activities were the main access constraints (OCHA Jun-Jul/2019).

Access of affected population to services and assistance deteriorated in areas impacted by conflict and flooding. In Aden, fighting temporarily disrupted water services and prevented up to one million people from reaching markets, hospitals, schools, and other essential services for several days in August and September 2019. Both civilians and humanitarian workers were trapped in areas of active fighting and were unable to move to safer locations (NRC 9/08/2019).

Humanitarian agencies had to temporarily suspend operations in the south of Yemen due to violence, arbitrary arrests, road closures and forced displacement. Most were able to resume operations after the fighting subsided. However, humanitarian staff in Aden of northern origin (who make up a key part of the international response) face challenges moving freely due to fear or detention or reprisals at checkpoints. Any long term closure of Aden airport or port (longer than two or three weeks) would also have a severe impact on humanitarian operations by hampering the movement of staff and supplies (IRC 9/08/2019)(Logistics Cluster 26/08/2019, ACAPS discussions with operational actors).

Fighting in Aden affected the airport and port, temporarily restricting commercial and humanitarian imports and limiting access to medical services for Yemenis who needed to travel abroad to access medical services (the alternative airport, Sayun in Hadramawt, is over 24 hours' drive on bad roads from Sana'a). The airport was intermittently closed to commercial traffic due to conflict and shifting conflict front lines. Cancellations and delays of commercial and humanitarian flights continued as of early September (Discussions with operational actors, OCHA 06/07/2019, NRC 9/08/2019).

Fighting led to a change of administration and temporary closure of the Aden port. This caused docking problems for vessels leading to delays in imports and administrative and logistical challenges, contributing to fuel shortages in Aden.

Physical access improved in the north of the country in 2019, with the roads around the capital, Sana'a, generally more accessible than in previous years (Logistics Cluster 07/08/2019). WFP resumed food distribution in Sana'a following a two month suspension (WFP 9/08/2019).

However, lengthy delays by the authorities in approving projects continued to obstruct the humanitarian response. As of 31 August, 66 NGO projects had not been implemented,

in part or in full, because the authorities had not approved sub-agreements. The average delay was more than 100 days from the date the sub-agreements were submitted to the authorities (OCHA 06/07/2019).

## SOCIO-ECONOMIC TRENDS

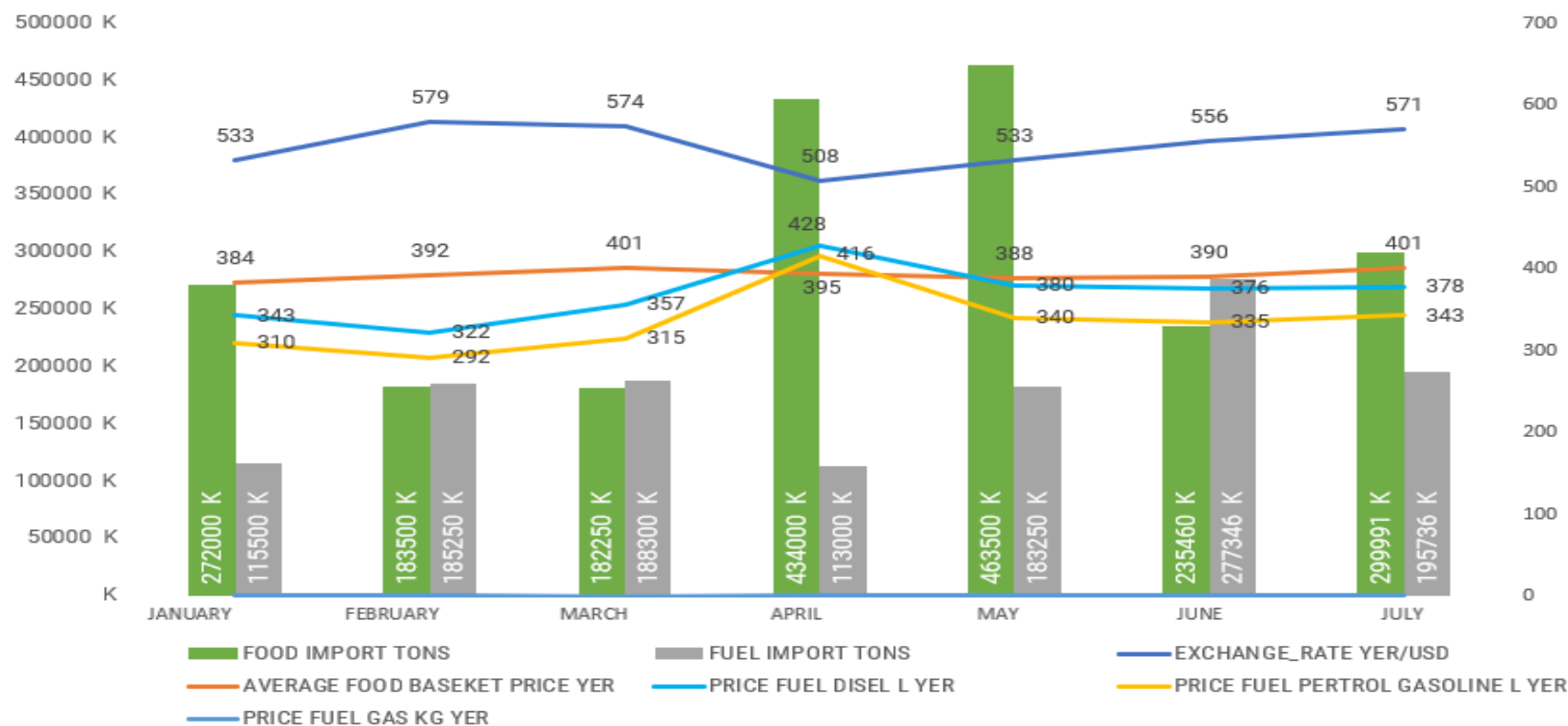
Basic commodity prices were less volatile from June to August 2019, after price spikes in April 2019 and September 2018. However, economic competition between Yemen's fragmented political actors or delays and blockages at Aden port, could spark rapid price rises and food insecurity.

Because Yemen is so highly dependent on imports, **any depreciation in the value of the Yemeni Riyal is reflected almost directly in higher prices for consumers.** Fuel prices are less directly tied to currency fluctuations, as the market is dominated by a small group of importers (Ahmad al-Essi dominates fuel imports in the south for example).

Fuel shortages regularly spark protests and imports are subject to high levels of government intervention. For example, the UAE intervened to deliver 30,000 metric tonnes of fuel stuck off the port of Aden on 22 August 2019 following popular unrest (Drivers of currency instability - October 2019, Sana'a Centre 4/09/2019, International Policy Digest 5/08/2019).

**The STC takeover of Aden increases the risk of economic competition that would push up the price of basic goods.** Currency prices in Aden traded around 10 to 15 YER higher than the north in August, mainly due to concerns about whether the Government of Yemen would continue to pay salaries and finance imports. Saudi Arabia sent special forces to protect the central bank during the fighting in August and made additional payments to the Central Bank account. The Hadi government was also quick to reassure markets that the Central Bank would continue to finance imports. However, if the Government of Yemen decides to use economic levers to pressure the STC – particularly through its control of imports through the Economic Committee – the resulting shortages and increased costs would likely disrupt electricity production and services and cause a spike in prices of basic commodities (Sana'a Centre 4/09/2019, ACAPS social media monitoring, King Forex and Telegram).

Trend - Food/Fuel Import and its prices with exchange rate



Source: WFP VAM 17/09/2019, UNVIM 17/09/2019.

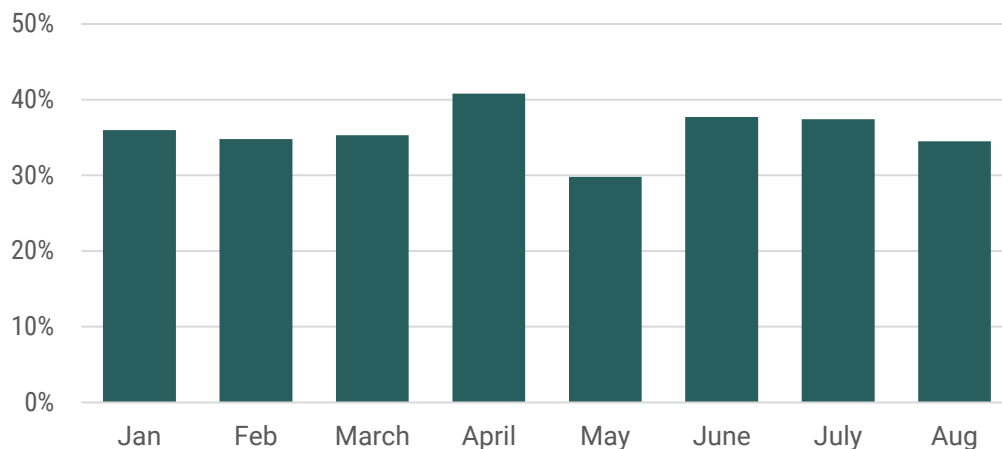
Saudi Arabia's injection of \$2.2 billion in loans and grants to the Central Bank of Yemen to pay for salaries and finance imports in November 2018 played a key role in stabilising the currency (which had spiked at over YER 850 to the USD in September 2018 due to currency speculation led by fuel importers). Without ongoing Saudi stimulus funding, the Yemeni Riyal is likely to continue to steadily deteriorate over the coming six months, **again reaching as low as YER900 to the USD (up from YER590)** (Drivers of currency instability - October 2019).

**In June 2019, the Government of Yemen announced new measures to control fuel imports through Decree 49.** Economic wrangling between the Government of Yemen and the Houthis over fuel imports (through decree 75) sparked price hikes and fuel shortages in April 2019. If the Government seeks to enforce Decree 49 via the Saudi led coalition naval blockade, we are likely to see further spikes in fuel prices and shortages that impact on household purchasing power, water, and health services (Sana'a Centre 05/08/2019, ACAPS 08/07/2019).

After two short periods of intense fighting in August and September 2019, most shops reopened in Aden. However, a large number of businesses owned by people of northern origin remain closed. Their owners have either not returned home from Eid holidays, or are afraid to travel due to arrests and reprisal killings (ACAPS discussions with operational actors).

**Disruptions to Aden port could put upward pressure on prices and contribute to shortages.** The port, located in Ash Shaikh Outhman district, is a critical entry point for humanitarian and commercial imports. It has capacity to handle 100,000 metric tonnes (MT) of non-food items (over 50% of Yemen's total capacity), 80,000 MT of food (16% of Yemen's capacity), and 50,000 MT of fuel (25% of Yemen's capacity).

### Households with inadequate food consumption



Damage to, or closure of, the port would significantly disrupt imports and humanitarian cargo. This would decrease access to food, fuel, and medicine for nine million people living in the south of the country (30% of Yemen's population) (ACAPS 16/08/2019).

**Food insecurity was stable from June to August 2018, but prices of essential commodities remain stubbornly high.** The cost of the Survival Minimum Expenditure Basket (food, water, and essential non-food items) quadrupled from Feb 2015 to early Nov 2018 (YER 17,338 to YER 75,000), while jobs have disappeared. Saudi cash injections and better economic organisation by both sides since November 2018 has helped to stabilise prices. However, basic commodities remain above what most Yemeni families can sustainably afford. Yemen's famous local coping mechanisms – strong systems of extended family and tribal support networks, combined with a rich history of sharing with those in need – is providing some buffer against the worst effects of price rises. But it is unclear how long local systems will be able to provide a buffer against the severe economic downturn (Drivers of currency instability - October 2019).

**Ramadan (May) and Eid Al Adha (August) saw temporary improvements in food security,** largely due to local charitable networks and increased donations from the diaspora. However, food insecurity quickly returned to previous levels after Ramadan. Similar to the previous quarter, Al Jawf, Al Dhale'e and Al Bayda continued to register high levels of inadequate food consumption (peaking at more than 50% of households). Marib also recorded more than 50% of households with inadequate food consumption in July 2019 (WFP VAM, 48, 47, 46, 45).

## HUMANITARIAN IMPACT

Although conflict intensity and displacement decreased in June to August compared to the first five months of 2019, ongoing conflict, flooding, and social marginalisation of vulnerable groups continued to generate humanitarian needs. **The most significant needs were access to health and sanitation facilities, protection for marginalised groups and conflict-affected civilians, and food, water, medicine, shelter, NFIs, and financial support for people displaced because of flooding** (UNOCHA 29/08/2019, USAID 29/08/2019, UNHCR 30/06/2019).

The most vulnerable groups were IDPs living in informal settlements in areas impacted by flooding, marginalised groups such as Muhamasheen, refugees and migrants, and 'northerners' – particularly IDPs living in conflict zones in the south, such as Aden.

**Protection:** Conflict in Aden and other governorates in the south increased protection concerns for people from the north residing in the south. **Since 2 August 2019, 'northerners' were subject to targeted killings, arrest, detention, physical assault, verbal**

abuse, seizure of personal valuables, forced closure of businesses and deportation by **STC aligned forces**. Between 2 and 4 August 2019, 2,400 people from Aden and Tur Al Bahah district in Lahj were forcibly deported, and deportations have continued on a smaller scale. As of 19 August, 3,800 people reportedly fled to Taizz, Lahj and other governorates in the north (UNOCHA 28/08/2019). **Those that remained are reportedly too afraid to leave their homes to work or to access essential goods and services such as food, water, fuel, health services and aid.**

Humanitarian actors report that ‘northerners’, particularly IDPs, are experiencing psychological and mental trauma due to the climate of fear and violence (IOM DTM dataset 31/07/2019, ACAPS discussions with operational actors in Yemen). Currently, movement restrictions are mainly affecting men as they are at a higher risk of being forcibly deported or detained. As a result, there have been reports of women having to travel alone to access services, increasing their risk of gender-based violence on the road or at checkpoints. **Households reported being unable to access cash distributions, as the male head of household was unable to go to the cash point** (ACAPS discussions with operational actors in Yemen).

**Conflict:** Fighting in the south took place in densely populated areas that were hard for civilians to flee from. This resulted in up to 400 casualties, including over 50 deaths (half of them civilians). **The majority of casualties were members of military groups, but 63 civilians were killed (25) or wounded (28) in the fighting** (OHCHR 10/09/2019). Civilians were trapped for days in their homes by fighting, particularly in Craiter district, and couldn’t access basic services, food, and water for several days at a time (NRC 9/08/2019, UN 11/08/2019, UN 29/08/2019, CIMP 3/09/2019). Shelling damaged the main water tanks, temporarily disrupting access to safe drinking water in Aden for several days. Local hospitals reported overcrowding and a lack supplies due to the influx of patients with conflict-related injuries (USAID 29/08/2019).

**Flooding:** Torrential rain and flash flooding in western governorates in early June and late July and August caused widespread damage to homes, public infrastructure, and livestock. An estimated 130,000 people were affected, more than 70,000 in June (primarily from Hajjah governorate) and some 59,000 in July/August, mainly in Al Hudaydah and Al Mahwit (USAID 28/08/2019, UNHCR 06/2019, UNOCHA 19/08/2019). See the map below for more information.

**Flooding caused new displacement** in Al Mukha district, Taizz (200 families or 1,200 IDPs in June), Merkhah As Sufla district in Shabwah (165 families or up to a thousand IDPs in July), and Az Zaydiyah district, Al Hudaydah (85 families or over 500 IDPs in August) (IOM 23/08/2019).

IDPs residing in informal settlements, and host communities located in flood prone areas, were particularly vulnerable because their temporary homes were not able to withstand the severe weather conditions.

**In Al Hudaydah, flooding damaged shelters, destroyed food items, or disrupted access to safe drinking water for more than 7,900 households** (USAID 28/09/2019). The floods also caused significant damage to health and sanitation facilities at several IDP sites and water networks. This resulted in an increased need for water trucking, chlorine tablets, and water containers. Flooded wastewater and stagnant water could spread waterborne or vector-borne diseases (UNOCHA 19/08/2019). Flooded roads also hindered access to many of those affected (FEWS.NET 08/2019).

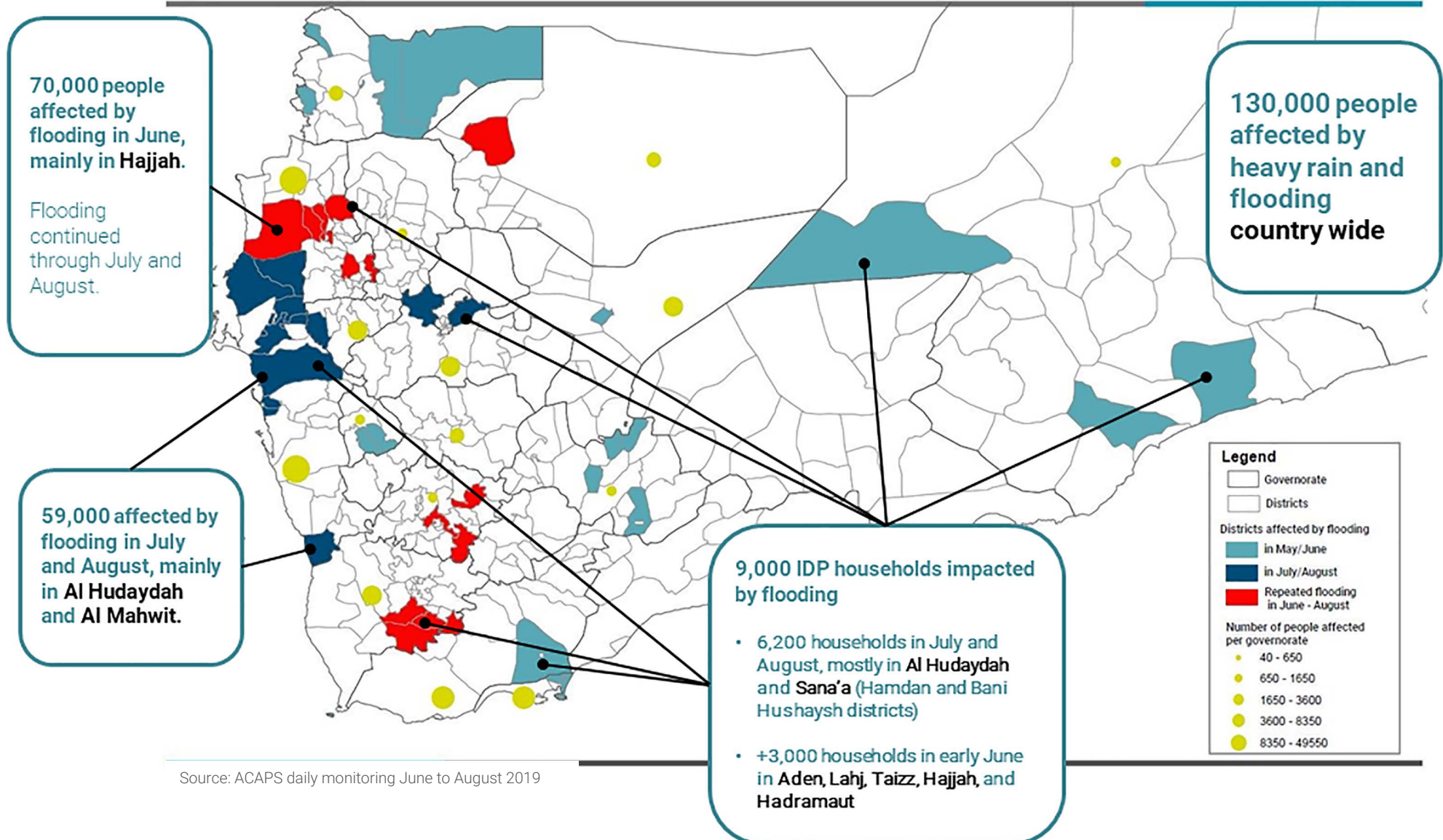
**Flooding also had a heavy impact on people living in IDP settlements on the west coast.** People living in IDP settlements (30% of the displaced population, or 1.2 million people) are vulnerable to extreme weather because of poor standard housing. IDP sites are also forced on to more marginal land. **In June, July, and August, 9,000 IDP households were impacted by flooding, heavy rains and strong storms.** This included 6,200 households in July and August, mostly in Al Hudaydah and Sana’a (Hamdan and Bani Hushaysh districts) and more than 3,000 households in early June in Aden, Lahj, Taizz, Hajjah, and Hadramaut (OCHA 27/08/2019, OCHA 11/06/2019). Several IDP sites in Al Jawf, Al Mahwit, Amran, Dhamar and, Ibb governorates were also damaged. Many IDPs were forced to seek shelter in public buildings, including schools, or with relatives.

**Cholera:** Overall, the number of suspected cases of cholera stabilised across May to July and decreased in August. However, eight<sup>1</sup> out of 22 governorates recorded higher average monthly suspected cases compared to the first five months of 2019. In these districts, the increase in cholera caseloads is attributed to the prolonged conflict and recent flooding, which hindered access to essential health, hygiene and water facilities. There were more than 41,000 suspected cases registered in Al Hudaydah between June and August, a 60% increase compared to March – May (WHO 31/08/2019). The number of confirmed deaths due to cholera stabilised between 59 and 75 deaths and the CFR at 0.08% across all three months, after a significant spike in cases in April and May. The highest number of deaths due to cholera between June and August were reported in Hajjah (28), Dhamar (25), Taizz (22), Ibb (21), Amanat Al Asimah (17) and Al Hudaydah (16) (WHO 31/08/2019).

<sup>1</sup> The eight governorates that have recorded their highest monthly figures since the beginning of 2019 between the months of June- August are: Al Hudaydah, Sa’ada, Lahj, Aden, Abyan, Hadramaut, Shabwah, and Al Maharah.



## Yemen: Areas affected by flooding June - August 2019



Source: ACAPS daily monitoring June to August 2019

# RISK UPDATE

Since the last [Crisis Impact Overview \(July 2019\)](#), ACAPS has adjusted three risks:

## 1. **Prolonged urban conflict between the STC and Government of Yemen in the south (upgraded from on watch to high risk).**

In the last edition of our Yemen Risk Overview (31 July 2019), ACAPS thought there was a high likelihood of increased clashes between the Government of Yemen and the STC. However, we thought fighting would most likely remain confined to localised clashes and increased checkpoints in Aden, Al Mukalla, Hadramawt and Shabwah, with limited impact on civilians. We were wrong. The STC takeover of Aden on 12 August brought conventional armed forces, tribes and UAE and Saudi Coalition air strikes to densely populated urban cities in the south which greatly increased the impact on civilians. Looking ahead, there is a **medium probability** the **Saudi peace talks will fail**, or that external actors will not be able to intervene quickly to end fighting (within three to five days). **This would have a significant impact on the civilian population**, with over 30 to 50 casualties per day of urban conflict and disruptions in access to essential markets and services for over one million people. Closure of Aden airport and port longer than two weeks would also severely disrupt humanitarian operations.

## 2. **Reduced humanitarian funding and shrinking humanitarian space increases Yemeni households' unmet needs (high probability, moderate impact).**

This risk partly materialised over the last two months. Some 22 lifesaving programmes will likely close in September and October without additional funding. Humanitarian space in Yemen is also increasingly shrinking. As of 20 August, more than 100 humanitarian projects were awaiting agreements by Houthi authorities in the north of Yemen only. This is a significant increase compared to 47 projects remaining unimplemented pending approvals, both in the south and in the north, in July. The closure of shelter programmes will affect an estimated 800,000 people across Yemen, and the reduction of food rations in the upcoming months will affect at least 12 million people. An additional 2.5 million malnourished children will suffer from the reduction of nutrition programmes and 19 million people will most likely lose access to healthcare due to the suspension of some UN health projects. The UAE allocation of USD200 million in September 2019, and Saudi's announcement that it will pay its \$500 million pledge on 25 September 2019, will provide relief. However, the dispersals

are coming late in the year and it is unclear how quickly the humanitarian community will be able to mobilise to spend the funds (given average delays in project approvals above 100 days)(Office of the RC/HC 21/08/2019; UN SC 20/08/2019, OCHA 16/09/2019).

## 3. **Increased Houthi attacks on Saudi Arabia and retaliation by the Saudi-led coalition through airstrikes affect security of civilians and access (medium probability, high impact).**

This risk developed slightly differently to how we anticipated. The Houthis greatly increased their attacks on Saudi Arabia (hitting airports and oil infrastructure) and Saudi Arabia increased the number of retaliatory airstrikes. However, civilian casualties due to airstrikes dropped sharply, suggesting fewer attacks on densely populated areas. In late August, the number of casualties due to airstrikes began to rise again. The hardening of Saudi/US rhetoric against Iran also raises the risk that Yemen could be drawn into a regional conflict (ACAPS 06/2019).

Sources: UN Office of Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Affairs 21/08/2019; UN SC 20/08/2019

*Our next risk report is due to be published shortly. Visit our website to get the latest reports. Find our previous risk report [here](#), and our analysis of the impact of prolonged urban conflict in Aden [here](#).*

## LIMITATIONS

- ACAPS analysis is based **predominantly on publicly available reports and datasets**. This makes us susceptible to availability bias. To mitigate this, ACAPS cross-checks information with operational actors and actively seeks out alternative sources to provide the broadest possible basis for analysis.
- The majority of agencies ACAPS consults with engage in humanitarian response **predominantly in the north and west of the country**. We have a less comprehensive understanding of the east of the country and hard to reach areas.

## INFORMATION GAPS

- There is a lack of **consolidated data and information on the impact of flooding**. The numbers of people affected and displaced quoted by ACAPS in this report are based on our best possible compilation of publicly available reports. The numbers are not definitive. More assessment is needed to understand how severely people are impacted by flooding and how quickly they recover, particularly in the areas affected repeatedly in June, July, and August 2019.
- There is very **limited information on the scope of detention or reprisal attacks against northerners living in southern governorates** following the protection crisis in August. Long standing social and political discrimination, combined with the current conflict, poses a considerable risk of violence towards marginalised groups. More risk analysis is needed to anticipate the severity of these dynamics and their potential impact in the event of a further conflict escalation.
- **Yemeni resilience is often spoken about, but little understood**. Further research is needed to look at community/family/tribal level support and response systems, and how humanitarian aid is complementing or undermining them.

At ACAPS we always strive to improve our work and make the best of our products. We kindly ask you to complete a survey about the quality and accuracy of this report. Your feedback is important to us!

Thanks for your collaboration

**Take our survey**