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# Disaster relief emergency fund (DREF) Yemen: Food insecurity

 International Federation  
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

**DREF operation n° MDRYE003**  
**GLIDE n° OT-2012-0000073-YEM**  
**8 June 2012**

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent (IFRC) Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) is a source of un-earmarked money created by the Federation in 1985 to ensure that immediate financial support is available for Red Cross and Red Crescent emergency response. The DREF is a vital part of the International Federation's disaster response system and increases the ability of National Societies to respond to disasters.

**CHF 276,447 has been allocated from the Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) to support the Yemen Red Crescent Society to carry out assessments of food insecure communities, and to deliver assistance and provide health awareness messaging to some 16,000 persons affected by the current food insecurity situation. Un-earmarked funds to repay DREF are encouraged**



Affected families in the rural areas of Yemen: Photo: Copyright: WFP/Maria Fernanda Santamarina

**Summary:** The food security situation in Yemen has reached crisis levels and there is a need for scaled up action. According to OCHA, some 44 percent – 10 million people - of the country's population is food insecure. This includes not only Yemenis, but also migrants and refugees from other countries to whom Yemen is host today. Of these, half are unable to produce or buy enough food and in many areas families are resorting to desperate means - skipping meals and reducing portion sizes. The impact of this is especially worrying for women and children.

Recent reports have stated that nearly one million children in Yemen under the age of five are estimated to suffer from malnutrition. Susceptible to common conditions and diseases such as diarrhoea, malaria and acute respiratory infections, 267,000 children are at risk of dying without proper nutrition interventions. Many more are vulnerable to longer-term and often irreversible health problems.

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Although the focus of the international community has, until recently, been on northern Yemen, further assessments have shown that governorates in the south, west and north of the country are all at a critical level in terms of malnutrition. In a chronically underdeveloped country, characterised by unrest and conflict, water scarcity and poor access to sanitation, as well as a growing population and collapsing state services, the needs are extreme nationwide.

Thus the Yemen Red Crescent Society (YRCS) has requested assistance from the DREF to carry out an assessment of how best to expand its assistance with support from the IFRC and to support ongoing food distributions in areas where it is present. The DREF will also support related health awareness activities carried out through existing YRCS health centres. The assessment findings will inform the launch of an emergency appeal if appropriate. This operation is expected to be implemented over 03 months, and will therefore be completed by 05 September, 2012; a Final Report will be made available three months after the end of the operation (by 05 December, 2012).

[<click here for the DREF budget; here for contact details; here to view the map of the affected area>](#)

## The situation

Across Yemen, at least one in three people are going hungry every day, with 44 percent of the population food insecure. This rate has doubled in two years. Ranking 74 out of 84 in the Global Hunger Index, the situation in Yemen is considered severe and in Al Bayda governorate, over 60 percent of the population is food insecure. Sparked by the protracted political unrest last year, an increase in fuel prices has in turn led to a rise in food prices, which has reduced accessibility and affordability of food, especially in rural areas. Those reliant on producing their own food are finding it ever more difficult to survive, with fuel essential for carrying out crop irrigation. Gas and water prices have also risen, meaning even those able to access food items more freely find that cooking is becoming difficult, thus limiting variety in food consumption.

However, it is not only those in rural areas that are feeling the impacts. The preliminary findings of the recent Comprehensive Food Security Survey (CFSS) conducted by WFP, UNICEF and the Central Statistical Organization of Yemen, showed that more than a quarter of the households in urban areas, where unrest has impacted the greatest, reported that food insecurity had reduced their ability to buy food. In the capital, Sana'a, insecurity was the reason cited for half of the population reporting difficulties in purchasing food. According to the CFS Survey, a quarter of food purchases in Yemen are carried out on credit and this is resulting in debt for one in three Yemenis. Of the ten million food insecure people in Yemen, the food insecurity that 2.9 million people are now facing is severe.

Lack of access to and availability of food is resulting in families resorting to dangerous coping mechanisms. Many are missing meals and reducing portion sizes, with reports stating that some children are eating just one or two meals a day and surviving on rice and bread alone. Reducing the number of meals a child has, and going to bed hungry, is significantly associated with stunting, for which Yemen ranks the second in the world. Food insecure children are also more prone to higher overall morbidity, diarrhoea, acute respiratory infection and fever, conditions that are rife in certain regions of Yemen. With failed markets and many households out of work, families are withdrawing their children from school to help pay for the rising costs. Partly owing to the food insecurity in the country, malnutrition in Yemen is also wide-spread and a growing concern. Although having been faced with malnutrition for years, levels in Yemen today are among some of the worlds highest. Not a single governorate in Yemen is now within the acceptable level of acute malnutrition. According to OCHA, an estimated 966,848 children under the age of five are suffering from acute malnutrition, with 267,000 children at risk of dying without proper nutrition interventions. In the western governorate of Hodeidah, levels of global acute malnutrition are at 32 percent, more than double the emergency rate of 15 percent.

Although believed previously to be a problem primarily in the north of the country, recent assessments have shown that the situation is poor in the north, west and south of Yemen, with Al-Dhale and Al-Mahwit governorates indicating serious levels. As with food insecurity, malnutrition can lead to long-term and irreversible health problems. Yemen is chronically underdeveloped and characterised by unrest and conflict, water scarcity, poor access to sanitation, collapsing state services and a growing population, which includes around 200,000 migrants and refugees from other countries. The needs are extreme nationwide and immediate action is necessary.

Number of severely insecure people in the three governorates in 2011

| Governorates | Number of severely insecure people | Number of children under 5 years affected | Number of affected families |
|--------------|------------------------------------|---|-----------------------------|
| Sana'a       | 477548                             | 95500                                     | 68220                       |
| Hajjah       | 551121                             | 110200                                    | 87730                       |
| Al Baida     | 408545                             | 81700                                     | 58360                       |
| Total        | 1437214                            | 287400                                    | 214310                      |

After meeting in Cairo, Egypt, on the 6 May, a joint statement by international humanitarian actors, including UN agencies, the League of Arab States, and the Organisation of Islamic Conference was issued: "The humanitarian crisis in Yemen has reached a level where it affects millions of people, not only internally displaced people, refugees, and migrants, but also ordinary Yemeni families in all areas." Raul Rosende, the Head of OCHA in Yemen announced that although already bad in 2011, the situation in the country in 2012

is worse. With a need to improve the international community's humanitarian response and increase inclusion of Yemeni civil society, recommendations from the Cairo meeting will be presented to governments at the Friends of Yemen conference in Saudi Arabia later this month, in an attempt to ensure that activities implemented in Yemen do not allow for the mistake made in the Horn of Africa of 'too little too late.'

## Coordination and partnerships

The National Society will take the lead role in implementation, while the Federation will maintain close coordination with YRCS throughout the whole operation. To efficiently reach the target groups, the NS will also collaborate with the authorities and local councils, and with community leaders. Other international organizations and humanitarian player will be consulted to identify gaps and avoid duplications in target areas.

## Red Cross and Red Crescent action

YRCS have been carrying out food and non-food item distributions across the country to assist the IDPs left by the ongoing unrest in the country. To date, the Yemen Red Crescent Society (YRCS) has reached nearly 25,000 families through its food parcel distributions. Funded by and in coordination with ICRC, the YRCS is distributing food parcels to 6,622 IDP families in Sam, Al Ihsa, Mandaba and Al Taleh camps in the northern Sa'ada governorate. In the south of the country, YRCS is carrying out food and non-food distributions to IDPs in Abyan, Lahjj and Aden city. This includes those living in schools and with host families. The food parcels contain wheat, pulses, oil, sugar, salt and dates.

The YRCS has been partnering with the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health and the government's Camp Management Unit, which has coordinated with a large network of civil organisations.

In response to the food crisis, discussions are in progress between YRCS, the Yemeni government and other international organisations to decide on next steps for coordinating the response. It is likely that any activities by YRCS will be similar to the distributions currently underway.

To gain a greater understanding of the situation and prepare YRCS for a response to the food crisis, the NS, with support from the Federation and interested PNS, is currently in the planning stages for an assessment mission. Findings from this will determine the scope and focus for any future emergency appeal.

## The needs

The DM Department of YRCS will be responsible for implementing the operation, in close cooperation with the Federation office in Yemen. The intervention will aim at providing immediate food assistance to 1,000 children in three governorates of the country which are severely affected. This assistance will be provided in the existing areas and through the health centres where YRCS has ongoing contacts and programmes. Each child will get 30 kilograms of porridge over three months. Volunteers at branch and district level will be deployed and trained to do the assessments and then distributions and, will in addition, provide health awareness messaging to expectant or new mothers attending the NS health centers. Their selection criteria will depend mainly on the records of the registered mothers and children in addition to the medical advices by the health teams.

## The proposed operation

| Relief / food distributions  |  |
|--|--|
| <p><b>Outcome:</b> The health and malnutrition levels of 1,000 children under the age of five are improved through the provision of high energy porridge in the three food insecure governorates of Sana'a, Al Baida, and Hajja for three months through the YRCS health care centres.</p> |  |
| <p><b>Output:</b> 1,000 vulnerable children suffering from food insecurity received the necessary food which contributed to improving health and nutrition.</p>  | <p><b>Activities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Train/retrain NS volunteers on assessment and distribution techniques and methods</li> <li>• Assess most vulnerable children in need of assistance accessed via YRCS health centres</li> <li>• Distribute of porridge to 1,000 children below five years, providing 10 kilograms to each child on a monthly basis over three months in each the three mentioned governorates.</li> <li>• Purchase and transport of food items.</li> </ul> |

|  |  |
|--|--|
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepare distribution tools using the list of the beneficiaries targeted</li> <li>• Ensure monitoring, evaluation and reporting on the distribution</li> <li>• Appointment of a local Operations Support Officer full time that will also oversee the implementation and maintain the information flows between all parties. The costs will include his salary and office costs related to the position</li> </ul> |
|--|--|

### Emergency health / health awareness

**Outcome:** Health awareness is improved amongst approximately 15,000 or more expectant or lactating mothers attending YRCS health centres in three of the food insecure governorates (Sana'a , Al Baida, and Hajja) over the next three months

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <p><b>Output:</b> MCH and health education provided to 15,000 or more expectant or lactating mothers through our programmes linked to YRCS health centres</p> | <p><b>Activities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan and develop appropriate health awareness training and materials</li> <li>• Carry out awareness campaigns/education sessions and share appropriate materials with new or expectant mothers attending YRCS health centres.</li> <li>• Recruit 60 volunteers - 20 per month in each of the three governorates – to work for seven days to hold education sessions</li> </ul> |
|---|---|

### Assessment

**Outcome:** An assessment is carried out by YRCS, supported by the Federation and partners, to further define the possible scope and scale of the food insecurity interventions to be carried out by YRCS supported by a possible Federation appeal

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <p><b>Outputs:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An participatory assessment has been conducted to assess the food security situation and the possible role for YRCS supported by the wider Federation</li> </ul> | <p><b>Activities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consolidate assessment team with NS and IFRC participants in closed consultation with the existing PNSs in Yemen</li> <li>• Train YRCS volunteers and staff on food security and livelihood assessment techniques</li> <li>• Conduct field visits applying food security assessment tools and methodologies</li> <li>• Data analysis and compilation of findings to inform the planning process for an appropriate intervention and possible appeal</li> </ul> |
|--|---|

## Contact information

### For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:

- **Yemen Red Crescent Society:** Mr. Fuad Al-Makhethi, Secretary General, Email: [f.almakhathy@gmail.com](mailto:f.almakhathy@gmail.com) phone: +967 1298615 Mobile: +967 770972253
- **IFRC Country Representation:** Mohamed Babiker, Acting Country Representative for Yemen, (based in Amman), phone; +962 79 550 7899, email: [mohamed.babiker@ifrc.org](mailto:mohamed.babiker@ifrc.org)
- **IFRC MENA Zone:** Dr Hosam Faysal, DM Coordinator, MENA Zone; phone: +961 (0)5 956 058; mob.: +961 71 802 916; email: [hosam.faysal@ifrc.org](mailto:hosam.faysal@ifrc.org)
- **In Geneva:** Christine South, Operations Support, Phone: +41.22.730.4529, email [christine.south@ifrc.org](mailto:christine.south@ifrc.org)
- **Regional Logistics Unit (RLU):**

### For Resource Mobilization and Pledges:

- **In IFRC MENA Zone:** Samah Hassoun, Senior Resource Mobilization Officer, Mena Zone, Phone: +961 70 480 488, Email: [samah.hassoun@ifrc.org](mailto:samah.hassoun@ifrc.org)

### For Performance and Accountability (planning, monitoring, evaluation and reporting enquiries)

- **In IFRC MENA Zone:** Nadine Haddad, Senior Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting Officer, Mena Zone, Phone: + 961 71 802775, Email: [nadine.haddad@ifrc.org](mailto:nadine.haddad@ifrc.org)
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## How we work

All IFRC assistance seeks to adhere to the Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO's) in Disaster Relief and the Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response (Sphere) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

The IFRC's vision is to inspire, encourage, facilitate and promote at all times all forms of humanitarian activities by National Societies, with a view to preventing and alleviating human suffering, and thereby contributing to the maintenance and promotion of human dignity and peace in the world.

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The IFRC's work is guided by Strategy 2020 which puts forward three strategic aims:

1. Save lives, protect livelihoods, and strengthen recovery from disaster and crises.
2. Enable healthy and safe living.
3. Promote social inclusion and a culture of non-violence and peace.

**BUDGET SUMMARY**

| Budget Group                                   | DREF Grant Budget | TOTAL BUDGET CHF |
|--|-------------------|------------------|
| Shelter - Relief                               |                   | 0                |
| Shelter - Transitional                         |                   | 0                |
| Construction - Housing                         |                   | 0                |
| Construction - Facilities / Infrastructure     |                   | 0                |
| Construction - Materials                       |                   | 0                |
| Clothing & Textiles                            |                   | 0                |
| Food   | 201,000           | 201,000          |
| Seeds & Plants                                 |                   | 0                |
| Water & Sanitation                             |                   | 0                |
| Medical & First Aid                            |                   | 0                |
| Teaching Materials                             |                   | 0                |
| Ustensils & Tools                              |                   | 0                |
| Other Supplies & Services & Cash Disbursements |                   | 0                |
| <b>Total Supplies</b>                          | <b>201,000</b>    | <b>201,000</b>   |
| Land & Buildings                               |                   | 0                |
| Vehicles                                       |                   | 0                |
| Computer & Telecom                             |                   | 0                |
| Office/Household Furniture & Equipment         |                   | 0                |
| Medical Equipment                              |                   | 0                |
| Other Machinery & Equipment                    |                   | 0                |
| <b>Total Land, vehicles &amp; equipment</b>    | <b>0</b>          | <b>0</b>         |
| Storage  |                   | 0                |
| Distribution & Monitoring                      |                   | 0                |
| Transport & Vehicle Costs                      | 10,000            | 10,000           |
| <b>Total Transport &amp; Storage</b>           | <b>10,000</b>     | <b>10,000</b>    |
| International Staff                            | 1,100             | 1,100            |
| Regionally Deployed Staff                      | 275               | 275              |
| National Staff                                 | 4,500             | 4,500            |
| National Society Staff                         | 4,500             | 4,500            |
| Volunteers                                     | 15,372            | 15,372           |
| Other Staff benefits                           |                   | 0                |
| Consultants                                    |                   | 0                |
| <b>Total Personnel</b>                         | <b>25,747</b>     | <b>25,747</b>    |
| Workshops & Training                           | 14,500            | 14,500           |
| <b>Total Workshops &amp; Training</b>          | <b>14,500</b>     | <b>14,500</b>    |
| Travel   | 2,625             | 2,625            |
| Information & Public Relation                  |                   | 0                |
| Office Costs                                   |                   | 0                |
| Communications                                 |                   | 0                |
| Professional Fees                              |                   | 0                |
| Financial Charges                              |                   | 0                |
| Other General Expenses                         |                   | 0                |
| <b>Total General Expenditure</b>               | <b>2,625</b>      | <b>2,625</b>     |
| Cash Transfers to National Societies           |                   | 0                |
| Cash Transfers to 3rd parties                  |                   | 0                |
| <b>Total Contributions &amp; Transfers</b>     | <b>0</b>          | <b>0</b>         |
| Program Support                                | 16,903            | 16,903           |
| <b>Total Programme Support</b>                 | <b>16,903</b>     | <b>16,903</b>    |
| Services & Recoveries                          |                   | 0                |
| Shared Services                                | 6,180             | 6,180            |
| <b>Total Services</b>                          | <b>6,180</b>      | <b>6,180</b>     |
| <b>TOTAL BUDGET</b>                            | <b>276,955</b>    | <b>276,955</b>   |



# Yemen: Food insecurity

