

Edition: III

Yemen Humanitarian  
Communications  
Network



# Stories of Inspiration

2024

HUMANITARIAN PROGRAMMING  
IN YEMEN



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# INTRODUCTION

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2024 was another trying year for the people of Yemen. As the country moved into its tenth year of conflict, more than half the country's population required humanitarian assistance and protection services. Economic shocks, weakened essential services, and climate hazards compounded the decade-long protection and humanitarian crisis.

During the year, civilians benefitted from reduced hostilities due to the de facto continuation of the 2022 six-month UN-brokered truce. Conflict-induced displacement decreased further, and new road openings helped to increase civilians' freedom of movement, enhance access to public services, and facilitate returns across frontlines. However, other risks emerged in 2024 with negative impacts for millions of people in need, including escalating regional conflict, widespread economic decline, and disruptions to lifesaving assistance due to funding shortfalls.

Despite widespread challenges, the humanitarian community continued to work tirelessly to save lives and deliver critical assistance throughout the year. Eight million people across the country—including women and girls, IDPs, returnees, marginalized groups, vulnerable host communities, and other people in need—received life-saving humanitarian assistance and protection services in 2024.

2025 is set to be another challenging year, with more than 19 million people requiring humanitarian assistance and protection.

This past year has shown us that the humanitarian action in Yemen continues to be effective in saving lives and mitigating the worst impacts of the crisis. In 2025, humanitarian organizations across Yemen remain committed to delivering principled humanitarian assistance to those most in need.

This collective work of "Stories of Inspiration" highlights some of these efforts in 2024. The booklet showcases the hope and strength of the people in Yemen and the powerful work of humanitarian actors.

**Sincerely,**

**Yemen Humanitarian Communications Network (HCN)**

See our full compilation of stories of inspiration [here](#).

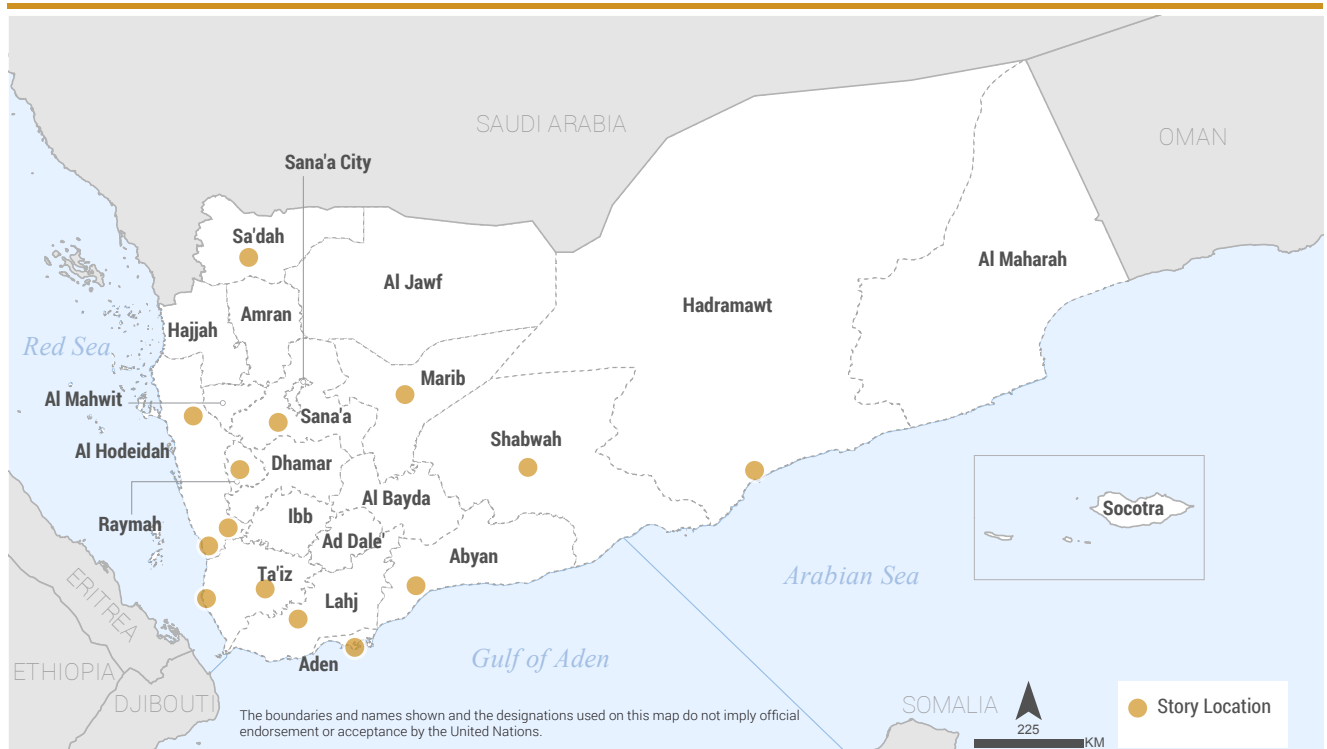


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**About:** The HCN is a network of communicators from local and international non-governmental organizations and UN agencies engaged in humanitarian efforts in Yemen.

**Cover photos (front and back):** Munadhel, a young man from a marginalized community in Ta'iz, holds and releases a pigeon. Munadhel and his siblings were able to return to their studies after receiving training and stipends. Photo: Oxfam

# STORIES OF INSPIRATION ACROSS YEMEN



The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

## Contributors:



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## ARZAQ: FROM NO EDUCATION TO DREAMS OF TEACHING

Our story is about Arzaq Awad Abbas Mohammed, a nine-year-old Yemeni girl who lives with her family of seven members in the Sha'ab Nab'a, Bakri site, in Al Khawkhah District of Al Hodeidah Governorate. Her father, a 30-year-old, works as a motorcycle driver, which is the family's only source of income, while her 28-year-old mother takes care of the family under the harsh living conditions imposed by the war.

Arzaq's father recounts their life story before the conflict, saying, "We lived in our home...We lived in peace." But this did not last long. With the outbreak of conflict and the spread of fighting young Arzaq, who could not yet understand what was happening around her, had to face a new reality. The war destroyed their home, and they lost everything they owned. At that time, they had no choice but to flee.

Arzaq's family was displaced to the Sha'ab Naba site in Al-Khawkhah District, joining other displaced families who shared shattered dreams and an uncertain fate.

"When we arrived at the site, Arzaq was too young to attend school," Arzaq's father says. "When she became school age, there was no opportunity for her to enrol in any school. The site is too far from the nearest

school, and the road there is dangerous due to a nearby highway that has seen many accidents."

Amid these challenging circumstances, Nahda Makers Organization, funded by UNICEF, intervened with a project to provide a long-awaited opportunity for Arzaq and other children in the site to return to school. Educational tents were set up within the site and equipped with essential educational resources to create a safe and engaging learning environment. Arzaq received a student kit and learning tools that helped her take her first steps in education.

When we met with Arzaq's family, the young girl was happy with her progress in reading, writing, and numeracy. When asked if she enjoys studying in the educational tent, she replied with a smile, "Yes, I love going to the tent to study with my friends."

Asked about her future dreams, she answered excitedly, "I want to become a teacher." This dream, which fills Arzaq's heart with joy, reflects her gratitude to the teachers in the tent. She hopes one day to become a teacher herself, helping other children like her build their dreams and achieve a brighter future.



Arzaq with her student kit. Photo: NMO





Arzaq proudly shows off her backpack as part of her student kit. Photo: NMO

## RAPID RESPONSE MECHANISM HELPS TO RESTORE HOPE FOR FAMILIES BATTERED BY FLASH FLOODS

Yasmin and her family, torn from the quiet life they once knew in Sana'a, had already endured the heavy burden of displacement. Their journey led them to the Al Swaida Site in Marib, where they hoped to find refuge from the horrors they fled. Yet, they encountered nature's fury in its most unforgiving form as torrential rains turned to floods that washed away hundreds of homes in seconds.

"Our tent, fragile and worn, was no match for the storm. The wind howled as if to mock our despair, tearing through the fabric that was meant to protect us. We huddled together, my children clinging to me as the water rose around us, turning our shelter into a swamp of mud and misery," Yasmin recalled.

For Yasmin, the persistent rain was more than just a force of nature; it was a reminder of their powerlessness in the face of ongoing hardships. Her family, already on the brink of survival, was pushed further into despair as their few remaining possessions were destroyed, and their hopes were drowned in the floodwaters.

"Our days were spent trying to keep dry, and our nights were filled with fear," Yasmin continued. "We had nothing left—no food, no dry clothes, no hope. It felt like the world was against us."

Within 72 hours of the flooding, the UN Rapid Response Mechanism (RRM) team arrived at Al Swaida Site

with a combination of emergency supplies: Dignity kits containing sanitary products, scarves, underwear and soap, as well as ready-to-eat food rations from WFP and basic hygiene kits provided by UNICEF.

"They brought us the RRM Kits," Yasmin said. "It was like a ray of sunshine breaking through the heavy clouds. The kits contained everything we needed to start rebuilding—food, clean water, and materials to repair our tent. For the first time in what felt like forever, we were able to sleep without the fear of waking up in a pool of water."

The intervention did more than just provide physical relief; it restored Yasmin's faith in a better future. Her family began to find stability in the site, and the weight of despair began to lift. Yasmin now dreams of a day when her children can go back to school, a day when they can live without fear of the next storm.

"We are not out of the woods yet," Yasmin admits, "but with the help we've received, we can see a path forward. My children are smiling again, and that is more than I could have asked for."

*The UN rapid response mechanism ensures life-saving assistance for newly-displaced people in temporary shelters and hard-to-reach areas and crisis zones. In 2024, nearly half a million people were reached with RRM assistance, over 90 per cent of them affected by climate-related disasters.*



Yasmin and her children collecting their RRM kit outside their tent at Al Swaida Site, Marib. Photo: BFD



## IN HIS OWN WORDS: THRIVING IN THE FACE OF WAR, POVERTY AND DISCRIMINATION

"I live with my family - there are 16 of us in the house. We all live in one room. My family and I sometimes sit together to read. Sometimes we play, laugh and remember good times that have passed. I love cooking and I like to cook for my family. On special occasions, we have special meals, if we can afford it. For example, we buy meat on Fridays like a piece of [red] meat or chicken. If not, we stick to our one meal, which is Aseed [porridge].

Life has completely flipped from what it was before the war. From a life of hope to one of misery, from joy to sadness, from a life of affordability to one of inflation, from safety to collapse. The economic situation in our country is tragic, a situation of war, of suffering. It has affected all citizens. It has led to many collapses, for example, economic collapse, political collapse, financial collapse. The price of wheat flour has now reached 51,000 or 50,000 rials—how? If a family's monthly income is 15,000 or 20,000 rials, how can they buy a bag of flour for 50,000? It's impossible for them.

Stopping education wasn't a permanent decision in our minds, it wasn't meant to be forever. It was only a temporary pause. I stopped my education because of the poverty, suffering, and unemployment that hit us. Why? Should we die of hunger? No. So I dropped out [of school] and started working, as did some of my siblings.

Each of us worked in separate villages, engaging in manual labour akin to our father's occupation: repairing household items like kettles, pots and pans and so on. You used to think about your goals and dreams, but with responsibility you forget your dreams, you forget your goals, because you are responsible at a very young age.

After I quit school, Oxfam came and took us in. They trained us so we could work with them on a project and gave us a stipend at the end of each month. I worked with them. They transferred us to train with other organisations. One was the Youth Renaissance Organisation in Ta'iz. It was a great experience for me, and I gained lots of skills and abilities.



Munadhel with his mother and some of his siblings outside their home. Photo: Oxfam





Munadhel uses the laptop he purchased with his stipend. Photo: Oxfam

Upon receiving the stipend, it felt like I was truly living now, as if I wasn't even aware of myself before. I returned to my studies and completed my final year of high school. And for my siblings who had dropped out of school, the stipend helped them finish their studies too.

After finishing high school, I immediately studied a six-month English diploma. In the second year, I went straight into a six-month computer diploma. I also took special courses. I bought a motorcycle with the stipend we received at the end of the month. I use it to transport vegetables and fruits, going to the villages and mountains to sell and earn a living, to support my family and our daily sustenance. I also bought a computer for work, for myself and for my future studies.

When I first received support from Oxfam, I felt like I had come out of darkness. It illuminated me and my family and the entire region. To me, Oxfam is like a second mother, right after my own.

Of course, my family couldn't have been happier. We

had all dropped out of school, but now we were all back studying, life improved, our livelihood improved, and our daily food situation also improved. We even started a project and, thank Allah, now our income is stable. I have many aspirations and if the project continues like this for a bit longer, I will achieve my life goals..

Regarding my future plans, goals, and ambitions; first, I want to complete my bachelor's degree, and then pursue a Master's and a Ph.D., Allah willing, if life and health permit.

Racial discrimination and poverty are the main reasons the *Muhamasheen* flee from education. When you assess the literacy rate here, it's around 95% illiterate. Only a few exceptions exist. Just a small number of our people, the *Muhamasheen*, are in education.

I aim to be successful, despite all the challenges we faced. Despite all the obstacles. Despite all those who discriminated against us in schools, colleges, universities, villages - in all aspects of life."



Munadhel sits and studies with his sister and brother. Photo: Oxfam



Munadhel explains something on the board at the English Institute. Photo: Oxfam

## PROMOTING HYGIENE IN AL-THAWBANI VILLAGE

In the village of Al-Thawbani, located in Al-Mokha District on the west coast of Yemen, Shifaa, Mohammed, Yousef and Saleh exemplify the impact of education on health and hygiene habits.

Among the pupils of Al-Noor school, Shifaa, a 13-year-old girl in grade 8, attends school daily and courageously engages in hygiene practices taught in her classroom.

Solidarités International supported the school by installing water points and latrines, while also training teachers to incorporate hygiene promotion topics in the curriculum, which is reflected in pupils' knowledge and practices.

Shifaa shared "I learned in class to wash my hands before and after eating and after using the latrine," with Yousef in grade 7 chiming in, "after playing outside".

The hygiene promotion participative approach aims to integrate hygiene learning into different school subjects, using case studies such as the transmission of water-borne diseases in science classes, or the water crisis in geography and history classes.

Shifaa appreciates the importance of cleanliness, stating, "Washing my hands keeps me and my family safe. I learned that it could prevent diseases like cholera which causes diarrhoea and vomiting." Her parents, three sisters and three brothers support these healthy habits, creating a safe environment for everyone.

Similarly, Mohammed, Yousef, and Saleh recognize the importance of safely washing their hands, which is key

to adopting safe hygiene practices. Yousef emphasizes, "If we don't wash our hands, we can get sick." Learning hygiene at school even helped the three boys to teach their families about handwashing. Saleh, a first-grade student, proudly stated, "I tell my siblings to wash their hands before eating."

The pupils express their happiness in having access to water and sanitation at school, with Mohammed, 15 years old, noting, "Having clean water makes me feel safe at school."

Mentioning their eagerness to learn more on how to protect themselves from diseases and unsafe hygiene habits, the pupils agree on the need for continued education around hygiene. While they feel well-informed, they express a desire for more resources, such as soap and other hygiene items. Their experiences underline the positive impact of hygiene promotion facilitated through participatory approaches, which has empowered them to take charge of their health and well-being.

Continuous support is needed to provide essential water, sanitation and hygiene resources. Around 6,000 students recorded as dropped out of school in 2024, mainly due to poor conditions of school infrastructure such as sanitation. Shifaa says, "More soap would help us stay clean and healthy."



Mohammed, Saleh, Shifaa and Yousef washing their hands in Al-Noor school, Al-Thawbani, Al-Mokha District, 2024. Photo: Abdullah Aljaradi



Hygiene Awareness session during a class in Al-Noor school, Al-Thawbani, Al-Mokha District, 2024 Photo: Abdullah Aljaradi



Saleh washing his hands in Al-Noor school, Al-Thawbani, Al-Mokha district, 2024. Photo: Abdullah Aljaradi



## A MOTHER'S LOVE KNOWS NO BOUNDS

Two years ago, Tayto boarded an overcrowded boat in Obock, Djibouti, with 150 others, many of them women like herself seeking a better future. Leaving her family behind in Ethiopia, she could have never imagined her journey would lead her to a migrant settlement in Marib, Yemen.

Finding work as a housekeeper, Tayto began rebuilding her life. But three months in, she discovered she was pregnant. Soon after, she lost her job. Alone in a foreign land, she struggled to support herself and her child. Yet, when she found a little girl abandoned by her parents, Tayto didn't hesitate and took her in, providing a safe and loving home.

Caring for two children without family support in sweltering heat and without electricity has been an immense challenge. In many cultures, including Tayto's, caring for others is a deeply rooted tradition, but such kindness often comes at a personal cost, stretching limited resources even further.

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) works to assist families like Tayto's. Through vulnerability screenings, IOM provides protection and case management support. Female-headed households receive tailored assistance to help them withstand the daily hardships of displacement.

Last June, a fire swept through the crowded settlement, destroying what little stability Tayto had built. In response, IOM provided dignity kits, hygiene supplies, food, and emergency shelter. The immediate relief helped, but the trauma lingered, compounding her struggles.

Like Tayto, Darwisha is a mother whose resilience is as boundless as her love for her children. She always dreamed of having a large family. Today, she is the proud mother of 15 children. "Keeping track of everyone is not easy," she laughs, "but they always have each other." To support them, she collects and sells plastic bottles, earning a modest income.



From Ethiopia to Yemen, Tayto's journey has been marked by struggle, but also by resilience and the strength of a mother's love. Photo: IOM/Monica Chiriac

On one of these trips, just days before giving birth to her youngest, Darwisha made a discovery that changed her life forever. In a ditch, hidden beneath thorns, she found a newborn, still covered in blood, with a tiny cap shielding his face. Stray dogs prowled nearby. Miraculously, the baby was unharmed.

They named him Daif Allah, meaning ‘God’s guest,’ convinced divine intervention had led him to them. Their own newborn daughter was named Anood, meaning ‘strong’ – a fitting tribute to their resilience.

When conflict forced Darwisha’s family to flee their home, IOM’s Rapid Response Mechanism provided life-saving assistance within 72 hours, including essential relief kits and emergency cash assistance, allowing her to purchase critical supplies. The family also received a transitional shelter and Darwisha made improvements, upgrading the structure and latrine to better suit their needs.

More than a year has passed since Darwisha found Daif Allah. From the beginning, she considered him her own. When her youngest daughter was born, she

nursed both infants, watching them grow side by side, surrounded by siblings and the close-knit love of their family.

Darwisha admits that her days of having more children are behind her. Her poor eyesight, kidney stones, and anemia have taken their toll, and raising 15 children is already more than she ever bargained for. While some of her children still go to school, the older ones have moved out and started families of their own.

One day, when Daif Allah is older, Darwisha plans to tell him the story of how he came into her life and let him choose his own path, whether that means staying by her side or pursuing his own dreams. “All I want is for my children to be happy and safe,” she says.

*IOM’s protection services in Marib are funded by EU Humanitarian Aid (ECHO).*



Tayto and Darwisha's journey show that even in the toughest of times, love knows no bound. Photo: IOM/Monica Chiriac



## NOOR'S RECOVERY FROM MALNUTRITION

16-month-old Noor was identified as severely malnourished by Nabilah, a community health volunteer, during a routine home visit. Noor's mother is a housewife and her father is a daily worker, leaving the family with little income amid the country's ongoing humanitarian and economic crisis.

Malnutrition is a pervasive issue in Noor's community in Lahj Governorate, and has gotten worse due to an ongoing cholera outbreak that is putting vulnerable children like Noor at even higher risk of life-threatening complications. At the same time, the fragile health system is suffering from the consequences of protracted conflict and economic decline.

"During my routine home visit, I see that Noor is weak, and her mother told me she is not eating well, often sick and not sleeping well," says Nabilah, the community health volunteer. "I did the nutrition screening and thoroughly assessed Noor's physical conditions, including weight/height check, and found that she is suffering from severe malnutrition."

Nabilah discussed Noor's health condition with her mother and provided her a referral card for a nearby health facility. Following a check-up by the health staff, Noor was admitted to the Outpatient Therapeutic Program and received treatment for malnutrition.

With treatment, Noor's condition improved. She was discharged from the health facility with good health and fully recovered. Noor's mother also received hygiene kits – including soap, a water bucket, washing powder and a jerrycan – to ensure proper hygiene practices and prevent further health complications given the ongoing cholera outbreak.

"May Allah bless you all, especially Nabilah, who referred my girl to the doctor. She conducts weekly visits to my home and guides me and other mothers on breastfeeding and good hygiene practices. Now my child, my husband and I can sleep well; there is no more crying every time," says Noor's mother. "From now on, I will visit the doctor when I see a danger sign and for the vaccination of my child."

While relieved about the Noor's health condition, her mother and father still worry about the future. "We don't have any income source, Noor's father is struggling to get daily work, [and] the prices of food items are going up," says Noor's mother. "[While] we are getting free health services, thanks to Concern, we request organizations to also support us with livelihood opportunities to get out of poverty and rebuild our lives."

Concern provides health and nutrition services in areas facing high malnutrition and growing public health risks. In collaboration with the Ministry of Public Health and Population (MoPHP), Concern supports five health facilities in Lahj Governorate with integrated health and nutrition services. Concern also supports 45 community health volunteers, who play a crucial role in conducting nutrition counselling, screening children and women for malnutrition, providing timely referrals for sick and malnourished children and women, and conducting routine follow-ups.



Noor receives a nutrition screening by Nabilah, a community health volunteer, in Lahj Governorate. Photo: Concern





Nabilah, a community health volunteer conducts a weight check for Noor. Photo: Concern



Following her treatment for severe acute malnutrition, Noor is now fully recovered and can go back to playing with neighboring children. Photo: Concern

## TRANSFORMING CHALLENGES INTO TRIUMPHS

In the city of Mukalla, on the shores of the Rokob area, Anwar Ahmed Bakhwa, a 50-year-old fisherman supporting his family of 5, silently struggled with accumulated challenges. Faced with rising fuel prices, a broken fiberglass boat, and torn nets, his profession, which he depended on to feed his family, seemed to be fading away. “Whenever my boat broke down or my nets tore, I felt helpless. I had to rely on others to fix them, which burdened me with costs I couldn’t afford,” Anwar recounts sadly.

However, the turning point came when he participated in a training course for the ‘Food to Resilience’ project, implemented by the Field Medical Foundation in partnership with the World Food Programme. This project aims to support livelihoods by providing skills training and temporary financial support to help individuals become self-sufficient and reduce their reliance on food aid.

Through several interventions, Anwar learned to repair his boat, including mending cracks and applying sealants to protect it from salty seawater. He acquired skills in making and maintaining nets, reducing the burden of buying or repairing them from specialists. Most importantly, he learned to use a fish finder, which helped him increase his productivity by accurately locating fish schools.

“For the first time, I have control over my work. I have become less dependent on others and more efficient in facing daily challenges,” Anwar proudly says.

Today, Anwar is no longer just a fisherman supporting his family; he has become a role model in his community. Thanks to the skills he acquired, he has reduced his costs, doubled his production, and now helped other fishermen repair their boats and nets, earning him the respect of everyone.

“This project was not just training. It has given me a new life. Because of it, I have become stronger and more capable of facing the waves that stand in my way,” Anwar adds.

The ‘Food to Resilience’ project has changed Anwar’s life and restored hope to fishermen in coastal communities. It affirms that investing in human development and training is the key to creating a more sustainable and dignified future.

Fifty fishermen in the Rokob area of Mukalla received intensive training on boat and net maintenance, as well as the use of fish finders. Additionally, they were provided with an empowerment grant to support their fishing activities.



Fifty fishermen in the Rokob area of Mukalla received intensive training on boat and net maintenance, as well as the use of fish finders. Photo: FMF





Anwar, after returning from a fishing trip loaded with blessings and provisions. Photo: FMF



## THE STRUGGLE FOR SHELTER

Years of relentless conflict in Yemen have displaced millions of people, forcing families into makeshift shelters that offer little protection from the harsh elements.

For Abdu Ahmed Yahya and his wife Fatima, life in a worn-out tent was a daily battle against wind, rain, and cold. Separated from their family and community, they lived in a fragile shelter made of palm fronds on a remote farm. "We endured so much hardship," Abdu recalls. "Every day was a struggle to survive, far from basic services like clean water and healthcare."

### A VILLAGE OF HOPE

In response to the dire need for safe and dignified housing, Altwasul for Human Development, with funding from the International Islamic Charitable Organization (IICO) of Kuwait, built the "Brotherhood Village." This initiative provided 50 homes to displaced families, offering them a chance to rebuild their lives.

Each home in the village consists of two rooms, a kitchen, bathroom and courtyard powered by solar energy. The village also has a mosque, a health center, a primary school, and a solar-powered water well, ensuring access to essential services.

For Abdu and Fatima, their new home is more than just shelter - it is a symbol of hope and dignity. "This house has brought us warmth, safety, and a sense of stability," Abdu shares. "It's a reminder of God's grace and the kindness of those who made it possible."

The Brotherhood Village has transformed the lives of 50 families, offering them not just a roof over their heads but also a chance to thrive. By addressing the urgent need for shelter, Altwasul continues to bring hope to Yemen's most vulnerable communities, proving that even in the darkest times, compassion and solidarity can light the way forward.

From January 2020 to date, Altwasul has constructed 12 residential villages for internally displaced persons with integrated health, WASH, and education services in Ta'iz, Al Hodeidah, and Marib governates in Yemen. This included 881 housing units, 5 schools, 4 health units, 9 mosques, and 12 water and sanitation infrastructures. 723 houses received solar-powered lighting and 158 housing units were linked with city power. In addition, Altwasul provided several household heads with livelihood assistance in the form of sewing machines and livestock. This project has benefited 6,167 individuals with durable solutions.



One of a dozen 'brotherhood villages', providing durable solutions to displaced families and bringing hope for the future. Photo: Altwasul for Human Development

## HOPE AND HYGIENE: CONSTRUCTING ACCESSIBLE LATRINES IN AL HODEIDAH GOVERNORATE

Years of conflict in Yemen have severely damaged water and sanitation infrastructure. Lack of clean water and sanitation facilities has led to outbreaks of diseases such as cholera and diarrhea, which are particularly dangerous for children and vulnerable populations. Accessible water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) facilities are crucial for ensuring that people with disabilities can maintain hygiene and dignity.

"Our village suffered from the lack of water and basic human needs," says Shawki, a resilient man from Al-Qanawis in Al Hodeidah Governorate. He is a devoted husband and father to five children, living with a disability. Despite the challenges, his story is one of perseverance and hope.

Shawki struggles to access the communal water point. The path is uneven, and the facilities are not designed for someone with his needs. His family worries constantly about his health and well-being, knowing that clean water is essential for his care.

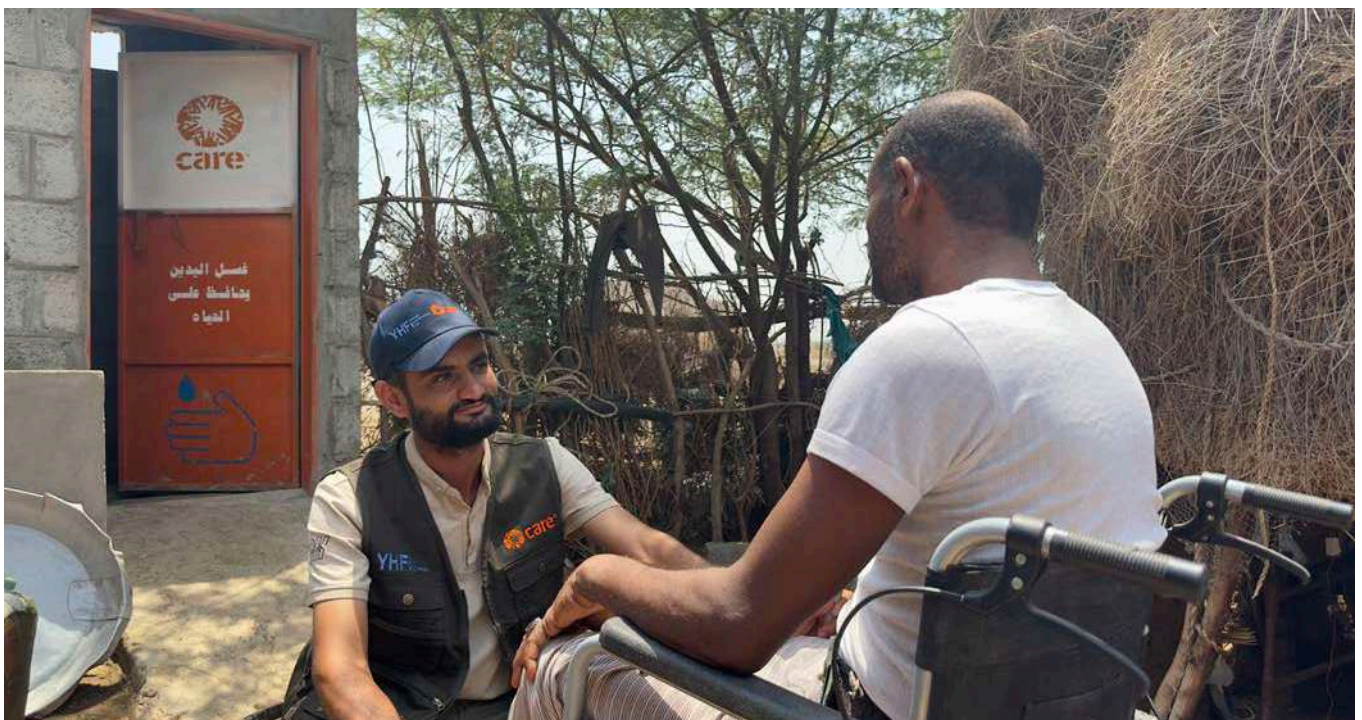
With funding from the Yemen Humanitarian Fund, CARE delivered a project focused on meeting WASH needs for the communities. In addition to building a

water tank that is connected to 775 households, the project provided latrines for 530 families in three sub-districts in Al Hodeidah.

For Shawki, the newly constructed latrine – which is specifically designed to be accessible to people with disabilities – has been life changing. "Any house without a latrine can't be called a home," he emphasizes. The latrine has not only provided him with essential privacy and dignity, but has also improved the overall hygiene and health conditions for his family.

In addition to the latrine, Shawki's household has been connected to the newly built water network. This has transformed their daily lives, eliminating the arduous task of fetching water and ensuring a reliable supply for drinking, cooking and cleaning.

"I've been bearing this disability for a while, and I had been suffering right until they provided us with a latrine and water source," Shawki says. The improvements brought about by the project have not only enhanced his physical well-being but have also restored his sense of hope, dignity and independence.



CARE staff while monitoring the quality of the control room tools. Photo: Abdalnasser Al-Gefry/CARE



## VICTIM ASSISTANCE IN YEMEN: ADDRESSING THE URGENT NEEDS OF LANDMINE SURVIVORS

*Landmines and explosive remnants of war (ERW) continue to claim civilian lives and hinder the safe return of displaced families in Yemen. As one of the most heavily contaminated countries in the world, Yemen ranked third globally for casualties by landmines and ERW over the past decade. The presence of these hidden dangers continues to present a significant threat to communities and recovery efforts. Landmines and ERW prevent safe returns of affected populations, restrict income generating activities and limit access to essential public services in contaminated areas.*

*From July 2023 to July 2024, with the funding from the European Union, the Danish Refugee Council (DRC) delivered lifesaving medical interventions and victim assistance to 151 individuals who were injured as a direct result of the ongoing conflict in Yemen. These efforts are a part of DRC's continued commitment to supporting those affected by the violence.*

### LABEEB'S STORY

Labeeb, a 25-year-old father of three from the Dhamar governorate, was forced to leave his family and work in the Qat farms in Sa'dah to provide for them. Life in this dangerous area was difficult, with low daily wages despite the high risks. One day, tragedy struck when a mortar bomb exploded, severely injuring Labeeb's leg, chest and eyes.

With the support from the European Union, DRC was able to provide Labeeb with lifesaving medical assistance. His treatment began with surgeries on his leg and chest in a hospital in Sa'dah. However, after his initial recovery, Labeeb started experiencing loss of vision. Doctors discovered a foreign body lodged in his eye from the explosion. Since there were no specialized eye centres in Sa'dah, Labeeb was referred to Sana'a, where he underwent surgery that salvaged his eyesight. After nearly two months of treatment, Labeeb was able to return to his village and reunite with his family, with his sight restored and a new hope for the future.

Despite the challenges he faced, Labeeb has managed to rise again. After enduring months of illness and treatment, he now feels his health is gradually improving. Today, Labeeb is feeling stronger and is determined to find a new job in his village. Despite the hardship, he carries a sense of gratitude and optimism, looking forward to spending more time with his children and building a better life for his family.

Reflecting on his journey, Labeeb says, "If I had not received treatment of this quality, there would have definitely been a devastating impact on my health."

### SIGNIFICANT NEED FOR VICTIM ASSISTANCE IN YEMEN

In Yemen, countless lives have been irreversibly altered by landmines. Between June 2023 and July 2024, DRC with the support of the European Union provided critical support to 151 cases through conflict victims, covering treatment costs where possible. However, the needs of landmine victims far exceed the resources currently available.

DRC emphasizes the importance of a holistic approach to effectively support landmine victims. This includes not only medical treatment, but also psychological care and livelihood support, empowering survivors to rebuild their lives and regain independence.

While DRC has made significant strides in assisting victims, comprehensive efforts and increased support are necessary to address this ongoing and long-term challenge.





A DRC victims assistance team with local community members. Photo: DRC

## SMALL FARMERS OVERCOME CONFLICT-DRIVEN FOOD INSECURITY

Rashida Abdullah Noman is a farmer and livestock breeder residing in Al-Akahela Al-Ulia, a sub-district of Al Maqatirah, Lahj. Rashida, her daughter, and her husband were forced to flee their hometown due to the conflict, seeking refuge in a local community within Lahj Governorate. Overnight, she became the sole provider for her family, shouldering the responsibility of meeting their needs. However, the lack of job opportunities left her constantly worried and wondering how to meet her family's needs and in a constant state of instability.

Perceiving that farming and livestock breeding were the best and only available means of earning a living. Rashida rehabilitated the land that the locals had allowed her to use. "I wake up early in the morning to tend to my farm, cleaning it of weeds, irrigating the crops, and grazing livestock," she says.

Rashida encountered numerous challenges, including exorbitant seed prices, lack of agricultural tools, and insufficient rainfall, which affected production and her ability to cultivate variable crops. Reflecting on her situation before the project's intervention, she expresses, "I received no assistance to sustain my work. I had to purchase expensive seeds, with my work at the farm limited to growing corn and legumes. However, thanks to the Emergency Aid Project to Improve Agricultural Livelihoods for the Affected Population, I have received valuable support in the form of agricultural seeds, leading to further improvements in our living conditions."

FAO offers comprehensive support to farmers by combining emergency aid and livelihood assistance. This approach aims to enhance the nutritional status of the targeted households and reduce malnutrition by promoting domestic agriculture, which will help meet their demand for vegetable varieties.

### A POSITIVE IMPACT

Initially, she only grew corn, cowpea, and beans, which were the staple crops of the area. However, with the help of FAO, she diversified her crops and started cultivating vegetables such as okra, mallow, onions, and

tomatoes. "I received vegetable seeds, a large water tank, and training on good agricultural practices," she explains. "This support helped me save the money that I would have otherwise spent on purchasing seeds and contributed to increasing my farm production and diversifying the grain and vegetable crops I grow. We consume some of the harvest domestically while selling the surplus at the market."

This support has improved her livelihood, allowing her to cultivate the crops successfully. With the support she received, Rashida anticipates that the upcoming season will be even more prosperous.

Farmers in Lahj governorate were supported with some high-quality seeds and farming tools to enhance crop production and improve their livelihoods.

"I am grateful for the support I received from the project. It has given me a sense of purpose in providing for my family and contributing to my community, which brings me great joy," Rashida says.

Rashida hopes for continued support to cultivate a larger area and increase crop production, highlighting that such interventions contribute to improving the living conditions of vulnerable farmers. She thanks FAO for making a difference in her life; "The project has had a positive impact on me, not only strengthening my resilience but also significantly enhancing my livelihoods," she concludes.

*With funding and support from King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Center (KSRelief), the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) is implementing the Emergency Aid Project to Improve Agricultural Livelihoods for the Affected Population in Yemen.*





Rashida was supported with a water tank and water can to help facilitate the process of irrigating her farm. Photo: FAO



## FROM DREAMS TO REALITY: SALMA'S JOURNEY BACK TO SCHOOL

10-year-old Salma lives in Al Mokha District, Ta'iz Governorate. She is very smart but faces big challenges because of a heart condition that makes it hard for her to walk long distances or play. This makes her dream of going to school feel out of reach. Often, she sits by her door, watching her friends head to school with their bags, feeling sad and longing to join them. "I always wanted to learn, but my health makes it hard to get to the faraway school," she says.

The ongoing conflict in her village since 2015 has made things even tougher. The war has devastated the community, leading to economic struggles and a lack of basic services. Families, including Salma's, work hard every day to survive, mainly relying on livestock. The nearest school is five kilometres away, which feels impossible for Salma given her health issues. As time goes by, her dream of education starts to fade, leaving her feeling lonely and unsure of her worth. Yet, she holds onto a small hope: "Maybe one day I will go to school."

A turning point came when War Child arrived in Salma's village with educational programs, bringing hope for children like her. They started an Accelerated Learning Program to help out-of-school children in conflict areas. Salma was part of this initiative, which reignited her love for learning. "Now I can finally connect with other children in my village!" she exclaimed, excited to join fun educational activities.

War Child created temporary learning spaces with UNICEF tents, allowing children to learn and play while waiting for a permanent school. This approach helped Salma and her friends start their education without delay, creating a sense of community and safety. "I was so happy to learn even in a tent!" Salma shared, remembering the joy of being in a classroom, even if it was temporary.

To find lasting solutions, War Child, along with education authorities and community members, chose her village to build semi-classrooms to help

children who couldn't get to school. This school would be close enough for Salma to walk to safely. "I won't feel exhausted anymore!" she thought happily as she watched the construction from her home, dreaming of being in a classroom with friends.

As the school was built, Salma's excitement grew. She imagined herself at a desk, learning and playing with classmates. "I can't wait to learn!" she said, her enthusiasm contagious.

When the school finally opened, she walked into the classroom and was filled with nerves and joy. Surrounded by classmates, she felt a sense of belonging. "This is my chance," she said, determined to catch up on all the learning she missed.

Now, Salma is thriving in her new school. She participates actively in her classes and enjoys being with peers who love learning too. "I'm finally learning and making progress!" she beams, grateful for the opportunities War Child has provided. Her journey reflects the progress of her entire community.

The project aimed at improving access to quality education, especially for vulnerable and marginalized groups like IDPs, girls and children with disabilities. Over the course of the initiative, 3,335 students, including 47 with disabilities, have been reached. Salma embodies resilience, stating, "Education is for everyone," highlighting the importance of ensuring that no child is left behind.

Thanks to dedicated teachers and community facilitators trained in psychosocial support and safety, Salma has progressed through the Accelerated Learning Program and is now part of mainstream education, developing lasting friendships. "We learned and laughed together," Salma fondly remembers, cherishing the joy of shared experiences.



Out of school children heading into temporary learning spaces. Photo: War Child UK



Children in a temporary learning space receive kits as part of the accelerated learning program. Photo: War Child UK





Children study in a temporary learning space, reigniting their hopes for the future. Photo: War Child UK



Salma sitting in the temporary learning spaces (July 2024). Photo: War Child UK



## SUPPORTING YEMEN'S MOST VULNERABLE HOUSEHOLDS: MEET MULUK

Muluk lives in Hareegat al-Thalwth displacement site, which hosts more than 500 people in the Aslam district of Hajjah Governorate. After losing her home and livelihood, Muluk was overwhelmed with uncertainty about her future.

Last year, Muluk was selected to participate in the Yemeni General Union of Sociologists, Social Workers, and Psychologists (YGUSSWP) training program for tailoring, supported by the Yemen Humanitarian Fund. At the site, YGUSSWP taught seven participants the essentials of tailoring through hands-on classes with sewing machines and fabric materials. In total, 119 participants received training across 17 IDP sites in Hajjah.

A glimmer of hope ignited within Muluk with the training. From pattern-making to garment construction, Muluk discovered her passion for sewing and realized that this newfound expertise could be the key to rebuilding her life.

Recognizing Muluk's dedication and talent, upon completion of the program, YGUSSWP provided her

with a sewing machine and a set of tailoring tools. This support enabled her to establish her own small tailoring business. Muluk set up a modest workshop in her temporary shelter and started taking orders from within the community, offering custom tailoring services for both men and women.

With Muluk's reputation for exquisite craftsmanship and attention to detail, her work quickly gained recognition beyond her immediate community. Now, Muluk's business has expanded beyond the IDP site, reaching out to the neighboring communities.

As Muluk's business expanded, so did her confidence and self-esteem. She became a source of inspiration for other displaced women, proving that with the right skills and tools, they, too, could create a sustainable livelihood.

Muluk's success stories illuminates the strength and determination of women in the face of adversity: with the right opportunities and support, they can overcome adversities and create a brighter future for themselves and their communities.



Muluk and six other participants learn the essentials of tailoring. Photo: YGUSSWP

## EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES: STRENGTHENING LIVES THROUGH PROTECTION NETWORKS

Years of conflict in Yemen have left millions displaced, struggling to access basic services. A lack of essential documents, such as IDs and birth certificates, often prevents access to critical aid. Community-based protection networks (CBPNs), supported by UNHCR and its partners, bridge this gap—ensuring access to services and fostering community-led solutions.

Across Yemen, nearly 500 CBPN teams, each consisting of one male and one female, provide life-saving support, connecting communities to essential services. These networks enable displaced individuals to access documentation, protection assistance, and referrals to specialized services.

### AREEJ: FROM DISPLACEMENT TO ADVOCACY

Seven years ago, Areej fled Al Hodeidah with her family as conflict engulfed her city. The journey to safety in Aden was perilous. “We thought we’d be back in two weeks,” Areej recalls. “But our house was destroyed, and we lost everything.”

Without an ID, life in displacement became even harder. She couldn’t access aid, education, or work. “Half the residents of the site do not have IDs,” she explains. “They are either lost, damaged, or expired.”

Through UNHCR’s partner Society for Humanitarian Services (SHS), Areej obtained her ID and became a CBPN community member. Now, she helps others secure legal documents and raises awareness on protection risks and education. One case stands out—helping a single mother obtain documentation to access aid. “I tell everyone they can reach out to us if they need anything,” Areej says.

### SADAM: BRIDGING GAPS IN ACCESS TO SERVICES

Like Areej, Sadam was displaced from Al Hodeidah to the Hawsh Derhim IDP site in Aden. Without IDs, his family struggled to access services or register the birth of their youngest children. “Without an ID, you can’t access aid or services,” he explains.

With CBPN support, Sadam secured IDs for his family and became an active member in his community. He now works to improve access to sanitation,

identify vulnerable individuals, and connect them with assistance.

One of his most impactful cases involved a woman suffering from severe heart and liver problems. Through his referral, SHS secured funding for three of her four needed surgeries. “Seeing her recover was incredible,” Sadam reflects.

### ABDULLAH: A LIFELINE THROUGH CBPN SUPPORT

Abdullah, a 40-year-old man, was displaced from Ta’iz to Bani Matar in 2018 due to the conflict. Previously able to provide for his family of seven, his disability left him struggling to meet even their most basic needs.

Referred to a CBPN member through our partner, the Yemen General Union of Sociologists, Social Workers and Psychologists (YGUSSWP), and assessed by the Protection Monitor Team (PMT), Abdullah received non-food items (NFIs) such as blankets and mattresses, easing his family’s immediate hardships. He also received cash assistance and Psychological First Aid (PFA), helping him cope with both financial and emotional challenges.

With CBPN support, Abdullah and his family improved their living conditions, securing basic necessities that had long been out of reach.

### THE STRENGTH OF COMMUNITY-BASED PROTECTION NETWORKS

CBPNs empower displaced people to support one another. By identifying needs, advocating for services, and providing direct assistance, these networks ensure even the most vulnerable have a voice.

During emergencies, CBPN members play a crucial role. When floods devastated parts of Yemen earlier this year, they were among the first responders—identifying affected families, ensuring they received emergency shelter, and coordinating with humanitarian organizations.

Through their leadership, CBPN members are active contributors to their communities. Their efforts demonstrate that when people are empowered, they can transform their own lives and their communities.





Areej and Saddam, community committee members with UNHCR partner SHS, go door-to-door in Hawsh Derhim Camp, Aden, to speak with IDPs and understand their needs. Photo: UNCHR/DotNotion



Areej, 28, a community committee member with UNHCR partner SHS, leads a focus group discussion with IDPs in Hawsh Derhim Camp, Aden, to assist them in obtaining essential legal documents. Photo: UNCHR/DotNotion



## SARA'S STORY

Sarah is a dedicated midwife with over 13 years of experience who has been serving the Al-Muqeibira region in Lahj for more than a year as part of a comprehensive health project implemented by ADRA and funded by USAID's Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (BHA). In her role, Sarah provides essential maternal health services to the local community, including home visits that support pregnant women, breastfeeding mothers, and those who have recently given birth.

During these visits, Sarah conducts thorough examinations to detect potential complications or health risks. She carefully monitors blood pressure, blood sugar levels, signs of anemia, and any indications of bleeding. If any issues are detected, she promptly refers the mother to a local health facility or, if necessary, to Ibn Khaldun Hospital. The Emergency Referral Voucher (ERV) system provided by ADRA ensures that mothers facing complications receive critical care in a timely manner—whether through urgent interventions or caesarean deliveries.

On an average day, Sarah identifies and manages between five to seven mothers with complications, playing a crucial role in safeguarding the health of

both mothers and their children. Despite significant challenges in the Al-Muqeibira region—such as long distances to health facilities and high transportation costs—Sarah overcomes these obstacles through her dedicated home visits. ADRA supports her efforts by providing essential medical equipment, medications, and monthly incentives to help her reach remote households.

### BEYOND THE PHYSICAL: SARAH'S IMPACT ON MATERNAL MENTAL HEALTH

Sarah's contributions extend well beyond improving physical health outcomes. Through her emergency and life-saving interventions, she also plays a significant role in enhancing the mental well-being of mothers. As part of the Multi-Sectoral Emergency and Life-saving Interventions Project in Yemen—funded by BHA and implemented by ADRA—her work delivers comprehensive support during critical times. By addressing both the physical and emotional needs of women, Sarah makes a profound and lasting impact on the entire community.



Sarah provides essential reproductive health services to the local community. Photo: ADRA

## DHIKRA'S JOURNEY TO STABILITY

Dhikra is a woman in her forties residing in the Ar Rawdhah District of Shabwah Governorate, Yemen. She lives with her family of four in a rented house and bears the sole responsibility for their livelihood. Her husband suffers from a speech disability and psychological challenges, rendering him unable to work. The family faced severe financial hardships, accumulating late rent that led to threats of eviction. Dhikra's only source of income came from her handicraft work, weaving *maawaz* (local men's skirts), which provided insufficient funds for basic needs.

Dhikra's life was marked by exploitation, as she worked under poor conditions for minimal pay. Her responsibilities extended beyond her family; she also assisted her husband's brother with medical expenses, adding to her financial strain. This overwhelming burden led to deteriorating mental health, including feelings of despair and exhaustion. Additionally, her declining eyesight further complicated her situation, making it difficult to continue her work effectively.

"I often felt trapped, unable to escape the cycle of poverty and despair," Dhikra recalls.

Dhikra was selected as a beneficiary of the Multi-sectoral Emergency Response Project, funded by the German Federal Foreign Ministry in partnership with Diakonie-Katastrophenhilfe (DKH). The selection process involved an initial assessment by Yemen Family Care Association (YFCA), which identified her as a vulnerable individual facing significant risks. After attending an awareness session and sharing her story with volunteers, she was referred to the protection team for a more detailed evaluation.

"When I learned they could help, I felt a flicker of hope—a chance to change my life," Dhikra states.

Following the assessment, the protection team provided psychological support and initiated case management processes, ultimately approving her for cash assistance. This assistance amounted to US\$225 (approximately 366,300 Yemeni riyals), which Dhikra used to purchase a knitting machine.

Obtaining the knitting machine transformed Dhikra's life. With her newfound equipment, she significantly increased her production capacity from 10 pieces a month to 20-30 pieces, generating income between 100,000 to 150,000 Yemeni riyals monthly. This financial improvement allowed her to pay off her accumulated due rent, provide medical care for her husband, and meet her family's basic needs. Additionally, Dhikra began visiting a gynaecologist, taking steps toward her long-held dream of motherhood. She also purchased glasses, which improved her vision and productivity.

"My first month with the machine, I felt like I was finally in control. I could see the fruits of my labor."

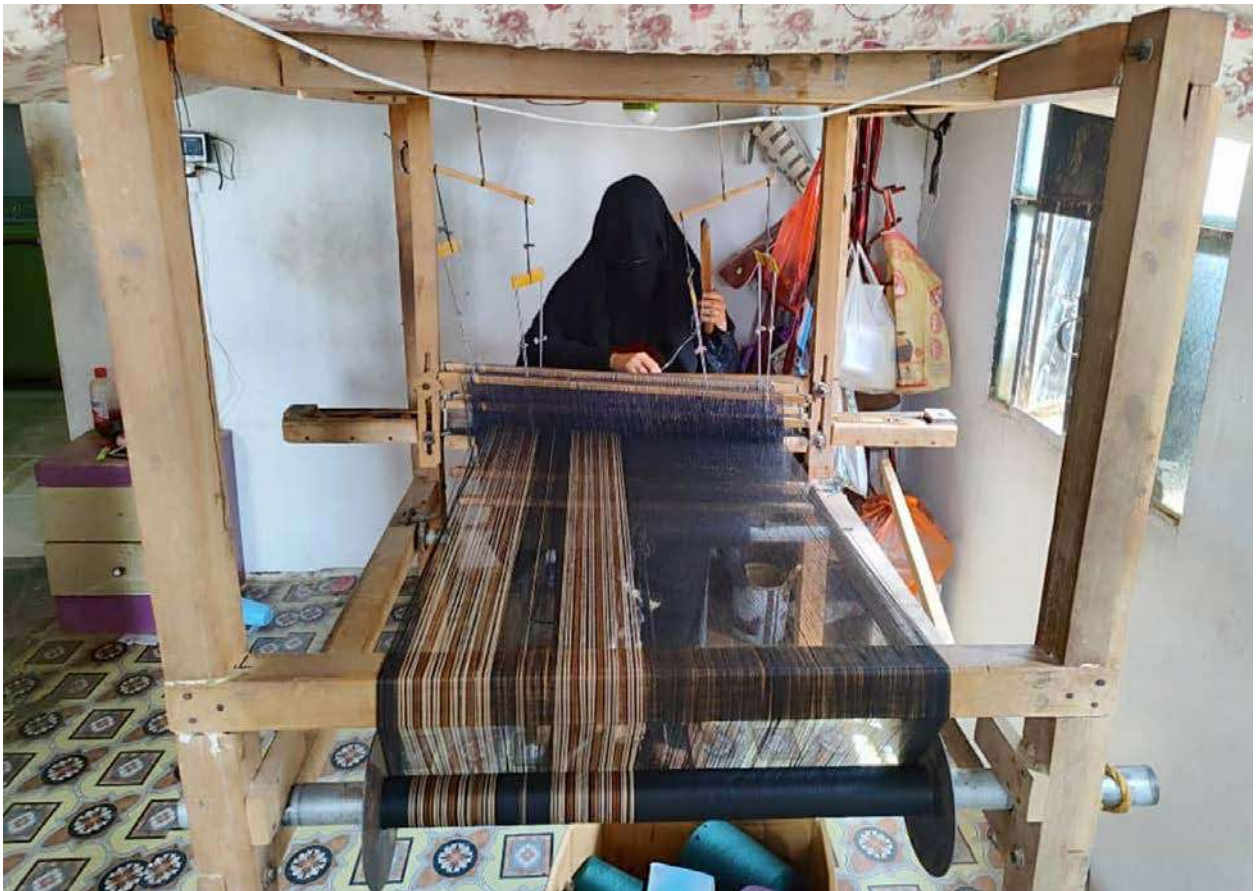
"I felt hopeless before, but now I see a future for my family. Owning my own knitting machine is a dream come true. I can finally work without fear of exploitation."

Dhikra's story exemplifies the profound impact of targeted intervention in the lives of vulnerable individuals. Through the support of YFCA funded by the German Federal Foreign Ministry and DKH through the cash for protection initiative, she transitioned from a state of despair to one of empowerment and stability. This case underscores the importance of providing not only financial assistance but also psychological support and skills development to help individuals regain control over their lives and achieve their aspirations.

Dhikra's journey serves as an inspiring testament to resilience and the positive change that can result from community support.

She remarked, "I am no longer just surviving; I am thriving."





Dhikra while working on her knitting machine after buying it from the cash for protection given by YFCA. Photo: YFCA



## WATER FOR ALL: SOLAR POWER SOLVES WATER SHORTAGE

Fuel prices have been increasing dramatically, significantly impacting the cost of operating water pumps and delivering clean water to residents. In Al-Ofa Asabeh sub-district of Ta'iz Governorate, residents faced severe water shortages due to the unaffordable cost of fuel.

"We require approximately one thousand litres of diesel per month to pump water for 730 families, which is an exorbitant expense," explains Saddam, the operator of the water pump.

Saddam confirmed that they had to halt the connection of new homes, both for displaced families and host community members, to the water network due to the insufficient fuel supply to meet the increased demand.

"We prioritized existing subscribers to the water scheme as the available water supply was inadequate to serve everyone," Saddam says.

As a result of this challenge, residents were forced to make difficult choices. Some women resorted to fetching water from distant sources, carrying heavy loads on their heads or using donkeys. Others were compelled to purchase water from water tankers, but the majority could not afford the high costs.

"We have been facing this challenging situation for the past ten years," Saddam adds. "The fuel costs, coupled with the limited income of most residents, have made it increasingly difficult to afford access to clean water."

In 2025, 19.5 million people in Yemen require some form of humanitarian assistance, including 17 million who do not have access to enough water to cover basic daily needs.

The Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), supported by the Swedish International Development Agency (Sida), intervened in the area by installing a complete solar energy system for the water pump.

"We don't need pumping costs as before," says Saddam. "We no longer need fuel or oil to operate the pump. The solar energy system has enabled us to provide sufficient clean water to all 730 families."

Saddam confirms, "we used to receive numerous complaints from residents regarding the limited water supply, but now those complaints have been replaced by expressions of gratitude."

Saddam emphasizes that they are now able to connect more families to the water network, as the previous fuel-related challenges no longer hinder their operations.

"Clean water is a fundamental need for all families," Saddam states. "Previously, residents had to dedicate significant time and resources to fetching water or purchasing it. Now, I am delighted to see all families in my village have access to enough quantities of clean water."



Solar power system installed by NRC for the water scheme of Al-Osa Asabeh in Taiz governorate. Photo: NRC

## BRIDGING THE EDUCATION GAP OF CHILDREN DISPLACED BY CONFLICT IN YEMEN

"Displacement was the most difficult thing I have ever experienced in my life," says Mansor, a 12-year-old boy now living in northern Marib, Yemen. "We used to have a comfortable life, then the war broke out, so we were displaced. After the war, we returned to find our hometown and houses destroyed. Everything was lost."

Mansor and his family fled to the city of Marib during the height of the conflict before returning to Majzar in the northwest of Marib Governorate two years ago. While missing out on education for one year, he grazed sheep to support his family.

Mansor is one of millions of children forced out of school due to the protracted conflict now entering its ninth year. According to the 2023 Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey, one in every four children of basic school age does not attend school in Yemen, and those who can attend school need to cope with overcrowded classrooms as well as overburdened and unequipped teachers.

Amid displacement and harsh economic conditions, out-of-school children often engage in child labour or household chores to survive and support their families, making it even more difficult to catch up on years of lost education.

While Mansor was willing to return to formal education, he needed to catch up on the learning he missed. So, when he learned about free compensatory classes to help children return to school, he rejoiced.

UNICEF, with the support of the European Union, now provides free literacy and numeracy classes, part of a series of non-formal learning programs children need to go through before taking an assessment to return to formal education. It equips students with basic reading, writing and calculation skills.

At Al-Sahary primary and secondary school where Mansor goes, formal education classes are offered to students in the morning while non-formal education is provided in the afternoon to support out-of-school children. The non-formal education support also involved the provision of incentives to teachers as well as their trainings.

Najeb Khaled Radmaan Al Haydary, a mentor living in the district, says the project mobilized community support and effectively attracted many children who required compensatory education. "During the two weeks before the programme started, we roamed through the community to identify children who had dropped out of school. We went to remote IDP sites, villages and homes to reach out to them," he said.

"We noticed a significant improvement in the learning of our students," said Hasan Husain Mobarak Hajer, the principal of Al-Sahary primary and secondary school. "The support is a great step, and we really need this to be continued," he added.

Mansor has attended the class for more than three months so far. "I learned everything: reading, writing, multiplication, subtraction, division and everything," Mansor said proudly.

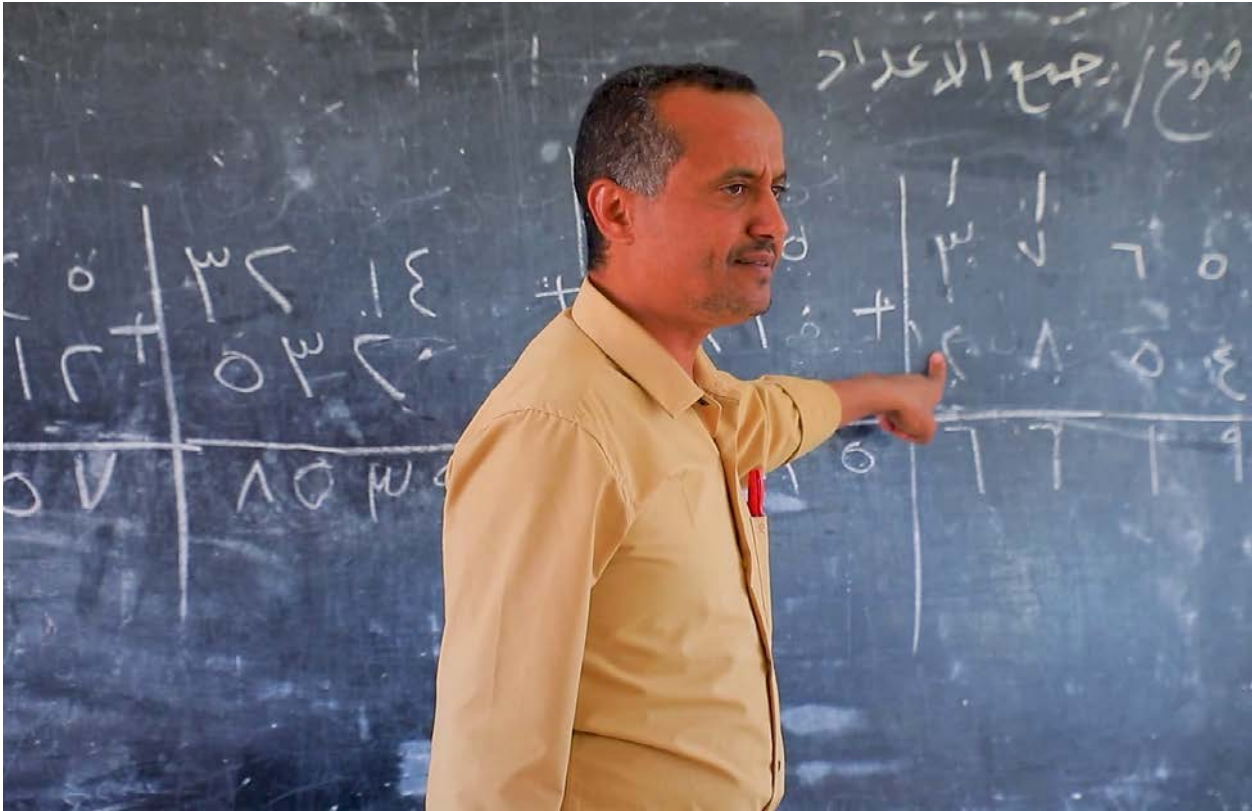
Asked about his hope in the future, Mansor said, "I want to become a doctor," adding, "I also want to return to my first home and play with my friends in the neighbourhood. I want to return with all my family members, including my aunts and uncles."

Funded by the European Union, UNICEF provides non-formal education programmes for children who dropped out of school. So far, UNICEF supported 40,000 children to access basic literacy and numeracy classes as well as accelerated learning programmes in Ta'iz, Marib, Al Hodeidah, Hajjah and Ibb.



Mansor in class at Al-Sahary primary and secondary school in Majzar, Maib.  
Photo: UNICEF/YPN





In addition to basic literacy and numeracy classes, UNICEF trained teachers and provided them with incentives. Photo: UNICEF/YPN



Children attending a basic literacy and numeracy class on 24 February 2024. Photo: UNICEF/YPN

## YEMEN: DAILY BATTLES AGAINST POVERTY AND HUNGER

Mohamed Khalil, a two-year-old boy from Al-Khawkhah District in Al Hodeidah, suffers from severe acute malnutrition with medical complications. His belly is swollen and his body is frail. When he began vomiting every time he ate, his mother scraped together what money she could from family and friends and took him to Al-Saddaqa Hospital in Aden.

Mohamed's mother has four children, the youngest just four months old. She struggles to feed her family. As the prices of basic food items continue to rise, it becomes daily more difficult to make ends meet. "The cost of living is becoming unbearable. We can barely afford enough food for everyone," she says.

Despite these hardships, she is determined that Mohamed gets the care he needs.

"The doctors at the hospital are kind. They provide milk for free, medicines, lab investigations, and meals for me but we still need to pay for additional specialized tests. I don't know how we will manage. I just want my son to get healthy, but it's distressing when I can't afford everything he needs."

The August 2024 Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) report revealed that 50 per cent of the population in Yemen's southern governorates face acute food insecurity. The situation is exacerbated by reduced humanitarian aid and economic decline. The depreciation of the Yemeni Riyal has increased fuel prices and compounded already limited access to food.

The high prevalence of diseases such as cholera and measles, limited access to safe water, and inadequate sanitation contribute to worsening nutritional and medical conditions, while the displacement of populations and loss of livelihoods due to conflict place additional strains on Yemeni families.

Her department is stretched to breaking point as increasing numbers of malnourished children from nearby governorates, especially the west coast region, strain essential supplies, leaving the staff to cope with decreasing resources. Despite the challenges, Faiza remains undeterred. She dedicates time to comforting anxious mothers, offering a listening ear and kind words.

"I try to give them hope," she says. "Sometimes, a little kindness goes a long way."

The seven supported therapeutic feeding centres (TFC), four of them embedded in paediatric wards, operating in regions with high malnutrition rates, high levels of internal displacement and severe food insecurity, provided lifesaving services to over 5,129 children between October 2023 and July 2024, addressing acute malnutrition cases with serious co-morbidities.

The TFCs offer round-the-clock, lifesaving health and nutrition care for severely malnourished children. Sustaining these services is vital to saving children's lives. To alleviate the financial burden on families, caregivers receive cash support for transportation, and three meals a day during the admission period, and the costs of lab tests and admission kits are fully covered.

Faiza dreams of a Yemen where no child goes hungry, and families find stability and peace. "I'm grateful to be here, to help any way I can," she says. "But I long for a future where our work isn't so desperately needed."

Leaving the hospital each day, Faiza carries with her the memories of those she has helped and those she has lost. The memories fuel her resolve to return, day after day, striving to make a difference.

"It's never easy, but I won't give up. Not now, not ever."

*In collaboration with the European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO), WHO is dedicated to enhancing child health and well-being while reducing mortality and morbidity through a protective, integrated approach. WHO supports 101 therapeutic feeding centres across Yemen, covering approximately 80% of the target caseload in the country.*

*WHO assists the Ministry of Public Health and Population and other partners by providing technical capacity building for case management and supplying essential medical supplies, including paediatric and severe acute malnutrition kits.*





Faiza Al-Maktari, a nurse in the nutrition department at Saddaqa Hospital, cares for children in the nutrition ward. Her department is stretched to breaking point as increasing numbers of malnourished children from nearby governorates strain essential supplies, leaving the staff to cope with dwindling resources. Photo: WHO / Nesma Khan

## 12 YEARS OF SEPARATION: A RETURN FULL OF HOPE

“When I had to leave my homeland, I hoped to find safety and a way to support my children.” With these words, Yasmin Ahmed Musa, a 42-year-old Somali mother, began her story about her journey that spanned over 12 years away from her homeland and her three children.

In 2012, as the security and economic situation in Somalia worsened, Yasmin found herself struggling to provide for her children, especially after her divorce. Facing mounting challenges and uncertainty, she made the difficult decision to seek refuge in Yemen, hoping to secure a better future for her family.

She remarried and had two more children, but life remained difficult. After her second separation, she found herself alone, bearing the full burden of supporting her family.

“My salary barely covered the rent. There wasn’t enough food, education for the children, or even the simplest necessities.”

Yasmin moved between Aden, Sana’a, and the Khazer site, searching for safety and stability that she never found. Although she considered Yemen her second home, life was harsh. She says, “I missed my children and my homeland. I endured a lot here, but my heart remained in Somalia.”

Then came the news of the program that changed her life. “I heard about the voluntary return program from my neighbours. At that moment, I realized that hope was still alive. This was the opportunity I had been searching for.”

Driven by a deep longing for her homeland and an intense desire to reunite with her three children, whom she hadn’t seen in 12 years, Yasmin registered for the voluntary repatriation program implemented by the Field Medical Foundation in partnership with the UNHCR. This program is designed to assist Somali refugees who wish to return to their home country.

This return was not just a physical journey; it marked the beginning of a new chapter in her life. She was finally reunited with her children, bringing smiles to their faces and filling their hearts with joy.

Yasmin could return to her homeland, which was a return to her heart, to her children whom she had not seen for 12 years. She said, “When I meet them, I will feel like I have been born again. Nothing compares to the joy of reunion after all these long years.”



Yasmin returning to her homeland with the help of Field Medical Foundation and UNHCR. Photo: FMF



# MEET RAWDA: A COMMUNITY LEADER FROM RURAL YEMEN

Rawda, a woman from Al Ma'afer District, Ta'iz Governorate, is a local leader in conflict resolution and community development. With support from the ERRY III Joint Programme, Rawda is working to improve living conditions for community members, focusing on restoring infrastructure and social cohesion, and ensuring resource distribution for those who have been displaced.

Initially not part of any formal committees, Rawda was elected as the coordinator of community committee initiatives, overseeing development projects across 40 villages in Al-Ma'afer District as part of the ERRY JP III Programme implemented by United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), International Labour Organization (ILO) and the World Food Programme (WFP). Her role extends beyond traditional leadership, as she actively led efforts to establish community resilience plans, resolve conflict, and implement initiatives.

"When I was elected, my goal was clear—to strengthen social harmony and ensure everyone in the community benefits," Rawda explains. "It wasn't easy, but I knew that if we came together, we could solve any challenge."

One of Rawda's most significant accomplishments was her contribution to the rehabilitation of the Market Road, supported through UNDP's local governance and social cohesion component, funded by European Union and Government of Sweden and implemented by local partner, the Social Fund for Development (SFD).

This vital road, crucial for both vendors and pedestrians, had become impassable due to frequent flooding during the rainy season. "The rainwater would pool, attracting insects and making the area unbearable," Rawda recalls. "People, especially the elderly, couldn't reach the market, and it caused serious difficulties for both shoppers and shopkeepers."

Through her persistent efforts, Rawda rallied the community and worked closely with local authorities to address the issue.

"The community welcomed the project with open arms. They saw how important it was to clear the streets

and improve access. Everyone came together in ways I hadn't seen before, and it was exciting to witness how it united us," Rawda explains.

Rawda's leadership not only improved vital road infrastructure but also resolved underlying tensions within the community. "There used to be so many disagreements because of the crowded conditions and the lack of proper infrastructure. But now, everyone has their space, and the market functions smoothly. The project truly strengthened social cohesion," she explains.

Rawda's work extended beyond roads. She played a crucial role during recent gas shortages, collecting supplies and distributing them to displaced individuals. "During the gas shortage, I collected supplies for the displaced and even opened my home to help those in need. It was difficult, but it had to be done," she recalls.

Rawda's perseverance and dedication to her community have earned their friendship and admiration. "I have gained the trust and respect of the people, and that has been the greatest reward for me," Rawda says. Her contributions have transformed the community's infrastructure, market access, and social dynamics, revitalizing both the local market and social cohesion.

"Now, the market is buzzing with life again, and people are happier. We overcame so many challenges together, and that's what makes this project a success story," she says proudly.

Rawda remains hopeful for the future, eager to continue her mission to serve her community.

"What motivates me is the suffering of the people and my goal to alleviate that suffering. I will continue, God willing, with this mission to serve my community," she says with conviction. "The community needs more projects like this. We've seen what we can accomplish when we have the resources and the will to work together."

Rawda's story is a testament to the power of collective action, determination, and the strength of community-driven leadership.



Rawda listens to community members, addressing their concerns and working to resolve conflicts, illustrating her commitment to improving the lives of those around her. Photo: UNDP Yemen



## A MOTHER'S STRUGGLE: WHERE WATER FLOWS, LIFE FOLLOWS

In the plains of Al Hodeidah, Basma grew up in a small village that thrived on farming. However, when clashes escalated over six years ago, she and her family were forced to flee to Al Makha, where they faced countless challenges adapting to harsh conditions.

Al Makha's proximity to the coastline has led to high salinity in its wells, which has rendered the water unusable for both drinking and farming. Basma did everything possible to find clean water for her family. She had to walk kilometers on her trips to collect water to reach the nearest source, braving dusty weather and sweltering heat. Carrying heavy jerrycans back to her small shelter, the water she gathered was often insufficient to meet her family's basic drinking needs. She struggled to maintain basic hygiene for her family, and the food she cooked was so salty that it became inedible.

As a result, Basma and her family were forced to resort to unsafe water sources. Soon, her children started suffering from kidney stones and other health

conditions – all caused by contaminated water. Tragically, Basma lost three of her children because of unsafe water.

Things finally changed with the completion of a water supply project, supported by the Yemen Humanitarian Fund, Germany, KSRelief and Japan. As part of the project, IOM and key stakeholders connected Al Makha City to a reliable water source through 7.5 kilometers of new transmission pipeline, and also provided capacity-building for local actors on sustainable maintenance and community-led water conservation.

Now, more than 120,000 residents, including Basma, have access to safe, clean water.

"I used to feel so much guilt, knowing my children were suffering because of the water we had," Basma reflects. "But now, with this water project, I feel a sense of relief and joy, knowing they finally have the clean water they deserve."



With the new water system in place, residents of Al Makha City now have access to safe drinking water. Photo: IOM/Moayad Zaghdani



"With this water project, I feel a sense of relief and joy," said Basma. Photo: IOM/Moayad Zaghdani

## FROM THE FIELD TO THE CLASSROOM

Aya Abdullah, a rural girl whose dreams of education were halted by harsh circumstances, faced significant challenges. The classrooms at her previous school were not equipped to receive students; there were no chairs, no restrooms, and overcrowding forced some students to attend lessons under trees or sit on rocks. Being a girl, Aya found herself compelled to abandon her education to help her parents in the fields and with household chores, bearing the weight of a harsh reality that obscured the future ahead of her.

However, hope returned when the classrooms at Saad bin Abi Waqqas School were rebuilt. With the intervention of the All Girls Foundation and the support of the Yemen Humanitarian Fund, the school became a new refuge, now equipped with classrooms and educational materials that dignified the students and their aspirations. Aya, with her ambitious spirit, managed to convince her parents to let her return to school, especially after receiving a school bag filled with everything she needed.

On her first day back, Aya walked proudly through the schoolyard, her wide smile never leaving her face. Since

then, she has become an example of commitment and excellence, attending school early and excelling in her class. Her teachers describe her as an outstanding student with a highly competitive spirit, always inspiring her classmates. She speaks of her joy at having her first-ever school bag and expresses her gratitude for the new classrooms that changed her life.

The impact of the project did not stop with Aya's return to school; the entire village was transformed. The villagers feel proud to have a modern school nearby, which encouraged them to send their children there. The awareness activities associated with the project motivated many out-of-school children, especially girls, to return to their studies.

Aya's story is more than just the tale of a student returning to school; it is a testament to how education can be a beacon of hope that changes the lives of individuals and communities. It also proves that investing in building schools is an investment in creating a brighter future.



Classes before and after interventions by the All Girls Foundation (AGF). Photo: AGF



## TRAINING EMPOWERS HEALTHCARE HEROES IN YEMEN

To address critical healthcare shortages, UNOPS partnered with KfW, the Government of Germany's development bank, to train healthcare workers in five facilities across Yemen.

In the midst of a critical healthcare crisis, Yemen has more than 19 million people in need of health-related assistance. Around 60 per cent of the country's healthcare facilities are fully or partially functioning, and services are further strained by shortages of specialist doctors, essential equipment and basic medications.

In partnership with KfW, UNOPS is helping to improve access to healthcare services across the country by enhancing healthcare infrastructure, providing much-needed equipment and supporting capacity development initiatives.

As part of this, 243 healthcare workers received training on improving patient care through courses on managing life support, obstetric and neonatal emergencies, anesthesia, and patient care in operating rooms and intensive care units (ICU).

Addressing the lack of access to training courses empowers local health workers who are already motivated to bring change to their community. Sarah Alhadah and Abdulaziz Diblah were among the 54 doctors, nurses and physician assistants who participated in an ICU training course in Sa'adah Province.

Sarah, a 25-year-old woman from Sana'a who is a trained doctor's assistant, wants to make a difference for her community, especially helping those most affected by the conflict.

"I learned so much about giving critical patients complete CPR, setting up respirators and even handling fainting emergencies in public spaces. Before, we'd wait for a specialist to save critical cases. Now, I can take the necessary steps myself, saving those precious golden minutes that can mean the difference between life and death for a patient."

Abdulaziz Diblah, a 38-year-old Yemeni doctor from the Sahar district of Sa'dah Governorate, emphasizes the importance of the training he just received: "We strive to provide the best possible care to our patients, even

under the constant strain of limited medical supplies and outdated knowledge."

"The lack of workshops and training courses often leaves us feeling helpless, yearning for a way to update our skills. The dream of attending a course, even abroad, sometimes seems just out of reach," he added.

After receiving ICU training, Abdulaziz is eager to share the knowledge he acquired with colleagues who couldn't attend. "This was a significant moment. Intensive care is one of the most demanding specialties, and acquiring the latest knowledge in this field can be incredibly difficult."

These advanced training courses help equip healthcare workers like Abdulaziz and Sarah with the expertise needed to save more lives by significantly enhancing their skill set and positively impacting the well-being of countless patients across Yemen.

*The 'Strengthening resilience through enhancing health service facilities in Yemen' project is implemented in partnership with KfW with financial assistance from the Government of Germany. The project provides comprehensive support to selected health facilities, including improving infrastructure, providing equipment and building local capacity. Under the project, UNOPS will rehabilitate and construct 18 health facilities and 17 isolation units, and procure more than 12,000 pieces of equipment. Training is helping elevate the quality of health services to beneficiaries by empowering health workers to effectively address all aspects of healthcare.*



Abdulaziz Diblah - Doctor and participant in an ICU training course. Photo: UNOPS



Sarah, a trained doctor's assistant and participant in the IUC training Photo: UNOPS



## CASH ASSISTANCE: A LIFELINE IN YEMEN'S TIME OF CONFLICT AND ECONOMIC DECLINE

After nine years of conflict in Yemen, over 17 million people are struggling to access food. For Arwa, a 46-year-old divorced mother of four, daily life was a battle for survival. The economic collapse, compounded by rising food prices and a lack of job opportunities, left her unable to provide for her children. She often worried not only about feeding them but also about how she could afford their education and healthcare.

In early 2024, Arwa was selected after a needs assessment for Save the Children's unconditional cash assistance program. Over six months, she received 140,000 Yemeni riyals (approximately US\$110) monthly. The first round of assistance allowed her to purchase essentials like meat, vegetables, and school supplies for her children.

Inspired by her nine-year-old son, Waleed, Arwa invested part of the cash into starting a small grocery business. "We began by selling chips and biscuits to our neighbours," Arwa recalls. "Soon, I added spices and vegetables to our stock." Her determination

and resourcefulness turned the small grocery into a successful source of income.

Today, Arwa is not only able to provide nutritious meals for her children but is also saving to expand her business. "I no longer rely on others," she says. "My life has stabilized, and I'm optimistic about the future."

Waleed shares his mother's enthusiasm: "Before, we ate mostly bread and tea. Now, we enjoy chicken and rice." Currently in the fourth grade, Waleed dreams of becoming an engineer when he grows up because he wants to build a house for his family.

Arwa is one of 384,000 people supported by the "Prioritized Lifesaving Integrated Multisectoral Response Project in Yemen," implemented by Save the Children with funds from USAID's Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance. This initiative addresses urgent needs through health, nutrition, WASH, child protection, and food assistance, with unconditional cash transfers as a key component to help families like Arwa's rebuild their lives.



Arwa helps her son Waleed with his school homework. Photo: Al Baraa Mansoor



Arwa and her son, Waleed, in their small shop. Photo: Al Baraa Mansoor



## BUILDING FUTURES: ALUMNI SUCCESS STORY

Nada's story is one of resilience, dedication, and triumph over adversity. Born into a family where education was not a given—her father, a retired worker, and her mother, a housewife—Nada faced significant challenges from an early age. Despite these obstacles, she was determined to forge a path to a better future.

In 2009, Nada graduated from Aden University with a bachelor's degree in business administration. This achievement was a monumental step, not only for her but for her entire family. With her degree in hand, Nada set out to find a job that would allow her to support her parents and her young son.

However, the harsh reality of unemployment soon cast a shadow over her dreams. Nada struggled to provide for her family's daily needs. "Unemployment affected me and my family," she recalls. "I was unable to provide for their daily needs, especially my son. I was unable to afford his expenses."

Determined to change her circumstances, Nada enrolled in the READY Women training program EFE-Yemen. The skills and knowledge she gained there set her apart from other trainees. "The training at Yemen Foundation helped me obtain new skills that qualified me for the labour market and made me stand out from other trainees," she says. This training was the turning

point in her journey, equipping her with the expertise she needed to succeed.

Armed with her newfound skills, Nada secured an internship as a finance specialist at the Bank of Aden. She approached this opportunity with unwavering dedication, working tirelessly to prove her competence. Her hard work did not go unnoticed. "I worked hard and proved my competence during my internship at the Bank of Aden, which made my evaluation high and then they stabilized me," Nada shares proudly.

The stability of a permanent job at the Bank of Aden transformed Nada's life. She could now support her parents and provide for her son's needs. Her journey from an unemployed graduate to a successful finance specialist is a testament to her resilience and determination.

Nada's story is an inspiration to many. It illustrates the power of education, the importance of continuous learning, and the impact of hard work and perseverance. She not only changed her own life but also set a powerful example for others facing similar challenges. Through her journey, Nada has shown that with determination and the right support, it is possible to overcome even the most daunting obstacles and achieve success.



"This journey has taught me that with determination and the right support, you can overcome any obstacle and achieve success," Nada says. Photo: UN Women

## DISPLACED FAMILIES MOVE FOR JOB OPPORTUNITIES

Near two lush banana valleys, resides Saeed, 47. He lives with dozens of other displaced families inside shelters made of wilted banana leaves and plastic sheets.

Saeed left his home in Al Hodeidah five years ago due to the conflict in Yemen. He fled towards an unknown destination and he kept moving from one area to another until he arrived in at his current residency, a site in Abyan's Khanfar District. 411 displaced families now live in this same site for internally displaced persons.

"Water brings life. If there is enough water and fertile land in any area, we can work the land and live from farming or raising livestock. Some relatives guided me to this area where there are two valleys, so I didn't hesitate to come here," Saeed says.

As soon as Saeed reached the area, he set up a shelter for his family and started to work by farming bananas and raising livestock.

"While farming doesn't bring in a fortune, it provides enough for me to feed my family. Returning home is not an option, as there are no opportunities there."

However, life in the site presents significant challenges. Lack of electricity makes movement at night dangerous, especially for children. "We have no latrines, and the lack of sanitation poses serious health risks," Saeed explains.

The Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), a member of the Yemen Displacement Response (YDR) Consortium, funded by the European Union through its Humanitarian Aid Operations, provided Saeed and 25 displaced families in the site with latrines and lighting. NRC also distributed 164 hygiene kits for displaced families and members of the host community in the area.

"These improvements have greatly eased our lives," Saeed acknowledges. "We can now move around safely at night without fear."

Saeed's journey has not been without its setbacks. While working on the farm, he suffered a debilitating back injury. "My wife and nine children were unable to support me," he recalls. "Then, a neighbour took me to

a doctor who prescribed an unaffordable medicine for me."

"I got back home without medicine but a family member reached out to NRC and informed them about my situation," he says.

NRC responded swiftly, providing Saeed with crucial 'cash for protection' assistance that enabled him to access and afford this medical care. Saeed has since recovered and is back working. "Without that assistance," Saeed emphasizes, "I wouldn't have recovered."

Saeed was happy he received assistance, but believes that there are many others in his area who are in dire need of some kind of help.

"Many others in my situation desperately need similar support. I hope all of them can receive support to get better and resume their work."

*Thanks to funding from the European Union, NRC will support 405 individuals with cash for protection assistance. However, there are many throughout Yemen who still require much needed assistance and do not have access to resources.*



Saeed confirms that the assistance he received reduced his suffering and helped him to provide for his family. Photo: NRC





Saeed in front of a banana farm near to his shelter in Abyan governorate. Photo: NRC

## OVERCOMING DESPAIR AND REBUILDING LIVES WITH THE HELP OF WOMEN'S SAFE SPACES

"I will not allow despair. I will overcome all difficulties," tells Nabila with confidence.

Nabila, a mother to two daughters, was verbally abused by her in-laws since the start of her marriage, which took a serious toll on her mental health.

"They abused me verbally every single day. I was depressed and constantly in tears," tells Nabila.

In search of a quieter life away from the in-laws, Nabila's husband decided to move to another district. Soon the war broke out and Nabila's husband was injured during hostilities close to her home, leaving him paralyzed. Nabila became the breadwinner for the family.

Frustrated by his inability to walk or work, Nabila's husband became short-tempered. Again Nabila found herself being abused verbally, this time by her husband.

As the conflict escalated, Nabila and her family were displaced to Marib Governorate. Living in a site for displaced persons, Nabila was determined to search for help to restore her mental health as well as acquire a professional skill to support her family.

Nabila attended an awareness raising session at the site conducted by a mobile women's protection team run by UNFPA. Nabila followed the advice given to her during the awareness session and visited a safe space to seek further help. Nabila was provided with psychosocial support and enrolled in a hairdressing course as part of the livelihood training provided by the safe space. Soon she began to feel more hopeful and even supported her husband to seek treatment.

Nabila excelled in hairdressing and was motivated to start her own hairdressing salon in her tent.

"Today I have my own business thanks to the safe space that has restored the colours of happiness in my life and the lives of many other women," tells a joyful Nabila.

*In 2024, UNFPA supported 44 such safe spaces in 21 governorates across Yemen.*



Women and girls gain skills in hairdressing as part of livelihood training offered at safe spaces. Photo: UNFPA Yemen



## THE STRUGGLE OF INTERNALLY DISPLACED PEOPLE AND HOST COMMUNITIES IN THEIR QUEST TO ACCESS WATER

In Yemen, internally displaced persons (IDPs) face immense challenges. Years of conflict have forced these communities to abandon their homes, leaving them to grapple with daily challenges in accessing clean, safe water. This scarcity exacerbates their hardships, leading to widespread health issues such as waterborne diseases and malnutrition. Vulnerable groups, including women, children and older persons, are particularly affected, too often succumbing to preventable illnesses.

Among those suffering is 50-year-old Maqbool, an IDP who lives in the Al-Qanawis district in Al Hodeidah Governorate. Forced to flee with his family of nine, Maqbool recounts the difficulties they face daily. "Since fleeing our homes, we've never had a water source near our camp. We rely on donkeys to fetch water for drinking, washing, and even for the donkeys themselves, from faraway sources," he says.

Fetching water has become an arduous task that defines the daily lives of many families in Al-Qanawis, with children bearing much of the burden. "Every day, children used to travel long distances under the scorching sun to fetch water. It left them exhausted and forced them to miss school," Maqbool explains.

However, life for Maqbool's family and many others in Al-Qanawis has taken a turn for the better, thanks to a transformative project. With generous funding from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic, CARE implemented the "Emergency Assistance through provision of WASH (Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene) to vulnerable IDPs and host communities in Al-Qanawis district, Governorate of Al Hodeidah, Yemen – Phase II" project.

This initiative rehabilitated a water tank with a 30-cubic-meter capacity and equipped it with a submersible pump powered by a solar panel system. A newly installed 1,560-meter pipeline network now supplies water directly to 600 households, including 250 IDP families. These efforts ensure that water is accessible and reliable to thousands of people in need.

Moreover, the project trained eight community hygiene volunteers, equipping them to educate their communities about proper hygiene practices. Through door-to-door visits, these volunteers provided practical training on handwashing, personal hygiene, household cleanliness, and water safety.

The impact of the project is profound. "Now, water is available. We have drinking water, can wash our kitchen tools, and maintain personal hygiene just as we were trained." Maqbool's words reflect the collective relief felt by the community. "Our biggest problem is solved. We're relieved, and the kids can now attend their classes regularly," he adds.

This project has brought more than water. It has restored hope and opportunities to a community that has endured years of hardship. For families like Maqbool's, access to clean water is not just a necessity, it is a symbol of resilience and a step toward rebuilding their lives.



CARE staff while monitoring the quality of the control room tools. Photo: Abdalnasser Al-Gefry/CARE



Local children fetch water on donkey carts. Photo: Abdalnasser Al-Gefry/CARE



An internally displaced person fills a container with water close to his shelter. Photo: Abdalnasser Al-Gefry/CARE



## POLIO IMMUNIZATION CAMPAIGNS: SECURING A BRIGHTER FUTURE FOR YEMENI CHILDREN

To safeguard Yemeni children from polio, UNICEF, in collaboration with its partners, initiated the first round of the door-to-door polio vaccination campaign in February 2024. The campaign aimed to vaccinate over 1.2 million children under five years of age across 12 governorates in Yemen.

More than 6,727 health workers in fixed and mobile teams participated in this vaccination campaign, and with the dedication and tireless efforts of those heroes, UNICEF and the partners were able to reach children in urban, rural and remote areas, effectively curbing the spread of polio in the targeted governorates.

### SAFE VACCINES TO PROTECT CHILDREN

For the last six years, Eileen Shafer, a health worker at Al-Mualla Health Facility in Aden, has been participating in door-to-door vaccination campaigns.

"During these campaigns, I provide immunization services directly to children at their houses, ensuring access even for those who were unable to reach the health facilities. For years, I've encountered parents eager to get their kids vaccinated. But my role goes beyond simply giving the vaccine doses. I also educate hesitant parents about the crucial role of immunization and the safety of vaccines themselves," she says.

"Despite the tiring nature of house-to-house visits, my work brings immense fulfillment. Every child I vaccinate feels like my own, and I'm proud to offer them this vital shield against preventable diseases."

### EASY ACCESS TO VACCINATION SERVICES

Immunization campaigns are vital for saving children's lives and securing their future. Nadeem Muhammad Saeed, a 40-year-old father from Al-Mualla, Aden, emphasizes this point. "The ease of access these campaigns provide is crucial," he says.



Eileen Shafer making the finger mark for a child after giving her the polio vaccine in Aden. Photo: UNICEF/ALfilastini

"When I heard about it through the media and announcements, I knew I had to get my daughter vaccinated against polio right away," he says, adding, "I was worried about her getting sick. But after the vaccination team came to our house, I felt a huge weight lifted. Knowing her immunity is stronger gives me a great peace of mind."

Nadeem added with a powerful plea: "I urge all parents to do the same and protect their children with vaccines."

### **AWARENESS RAISING – CONVERGING EFFORTS**

To support the polio immunization campaign, a community education effort was launched alongside it. This aims to increase public awareness and encourage parents to get their children vaccinated.

Widyan Abdel Wahab, a community mobilizer, explains, "Vaccination is crucial for healthy generations, so I always work to raise awareness among mothers about the importance of both routine vaccinations and ad-hoc campaigns and how they work together to keep children's immune systems strong."

### **BEYOND NUMBERS: THE HUMAN IMPACT OF VACCINATION**

Through their concerted efforts, the youth Scouts and Guides successfully reached out to a significant

number of people, with 12,100 individuals benefiting from vaccination and awareness-raising sessions facilitated by the initiative. This collaborative endeavour underscores the importance of youth engagement in public health campaigns.

By leveraging the enthusiasm and dedication of these young volunteers, the polio vaccination campaign not only achieved its objectives but also fostered a sense of community responsibility and empowerment. The impact of their involvement extends beyond the immediate success of the campaign, serving as a testament to the positive influence that youth-led initiatives can have on public health outcomes.

The polio campaign in Yemen has made significant strides in reaching over 1.2 million children under the age of five in 12 Yemeni provinces. The collective efforts demonstrated the power of unity and determination in combating preventable diseases and improving the health of the local communities in Yemen.

"Polio poses a serious threat to unvaccinated children," Tafa'ol Fare'a, a resident of Al-Mualla district, Aden. "Protecting our children from preventable diseases is a shared responsibility. Vaccines are the key to a healthier future for all the children."



A young scout member sensitizing a group of parents on the importance of polio vaccines in protecting their children, AlMukalla, Hadramawt. Photo: UNICEF Yemen/Khalid





A young girl receives the polio vaccine from a health worker. Photo: UNICEF/ALfilastini

## WASEEM'S CONSTRUCTION SKILLS REBUILD HOME AND HOPE AFTER YEARS OF DISPLACEMENT

Waseem Mohammed Fadhel Al-Tayeb, a resident of Sala District, Ta'iz City, is a graduate of the Vocational Institute, with a construction specialization. He spent his life studying this field, but he did not have the chance to work in his area of expertise. Instead, as a father of two daughters under the age of nine, he worked in a small kiosk in order to provide a decent life for his family.

When clashes began in the city of Ta'iz, it marked the start of Waseem and his family's suffering, as his area-Hassanat neighbourhood-was one of the first areas affected by the fighting.

Waseem said, "When the clashes broke out, we decided to stay at home and did not leave, but gradually the clashes intensified. My mother and brother were both injured, so we decided to move to Al-Hawban. We suffered a lot in Al-Hawban, and then we were displaced again to the Al-Khashaba area. Our life in displacement was very difficult, so as soon as the situation calmed down in 2020, we returned directly to our home."

When Waseem and his family returned to their home, they were shocked that the house was severely damaged—several shells had hit it, destroying windows and large parts of the house, making it uninhabitable, especially during the cold winters or heavy summer rains. With no means to repair the damage, Waseem and his family decided to live in a relative's house in the same area.

In 2024, Nahda Makers Organization (NMO), funded by UNHCR, intervened in a project to rehabilitate houses damaged by the armed conflict in Sala District, Ta'iz Governorate. Waseem's house was among the houses nominated.

A field team from NMO conducted a field visit to Waseem's house to assess the damage and identify needs. As a result, Waseem's house was selected for rehabilitation, and the privacy and protection issues in the house were addressed.

Waseem shared, "Thank to Allah, our house was rehabilitated, and the house returned to its previous state before the war. Now my family and I can return to live in it and regain our normal life".

Waseem's success story went beyond just rehabilitating his house; it also provided him with an opportunity to apply and showcase his skills in his field of study. His educational background in construction enabled him to carry out the rehabilitation with exceptional precision, making his home a standout model among the targeted houses in the project.

Waseem expressed his gratitude, saying, "I thank everyone involved in this project that truly addressed our needs, and I wish them all the best in their future projects".



Waseem's house before intervention. Photo: NMO



Waseem's house after intervention. Photo: NMO



## ESSENTIAL SUPPORT TO DISPLACED FAMILIES

In the heart of Hays, in Al-Amr Village, Al Hodeidah Governorate, lies the inspiring story of Zahra, a resilient widow and mother of three. Displaced from her home, Zahra faces significant challenges as she cares for her daughter and two sons – one of whom lives with a disability and the other suffers from haemolytic anemia.

Before receiving assistance from Solidarités International (SI), Zahra struggled daily to meet her family's basic needs. "Before the support, I could hardly obtain food or medicine for my sick children," she recalls. Often relying on the goodwill of acquaintances, she would split one meal among her family, desperately trying to make ends meet.

Zahra's situation worsened with the onset of heavy rains that flooded her home, making it increasingly difficult to care for her disabled son. "Transporting him during the rains was a constant challenge," she explains, highlighting the precariousness of her living conditions.

When Zahra first heard about SI's arrival in Hays, she held onto a glimmer of hope. "As a displaced woman, I didn't know what kind of aid would be available, but I hoped to be among the beneficiaries," she shares.

With the support of SI, Zahra receives monthly cash assistance. This consistent support allows her to purchase essential food items like rice, flour, and oil, as well as necessary treatments for her children. "Now, I can provide for my family without the constant worry," she says, reflecting on how her situation has changed.

The cash assistance provides her with a sense of security she had long been missing. "Before, I had no source of income; now, I feel safer knowing I can manage my family's needs," she explains.

Zahra believes that receiving cash is the best form of assistance, as it allows her the flexibility to decide how to spend it. "I prefer the money because I can choose how to use it based on my family's needs," she emphasizes.

Comparing her current situation to six months ago, Zahra states, "Life was very difficult before. Now, I can manage our needs, and my children are doing better." She appreciated SI's support, highlighting the kindness of the staff, the efficiency and respectfulness of the distribution process, and the comfort of beneficiaries during distribution.

Zahra hopes for continued assistance and expresses gratitude for the help she has received, as it has significantly aided her in providing food, the most critical need for her family. She remains optimistic yet aware of the ongoing challenges posed by the unstable security situation and natural hazards.

"I thank SI for this support, which has helped me provide food – the most critical need for my family. I hope this assistance continues."

Through Solidarités International's support, Zahra's story is a testament to the real difference targeted assistance can make, helping people build resilience and improve their lives during tough times.



Zahra with the cash received. Photo: SI

## DISEASE OUTBREAK DETECTION

### HOW YEMEN'S RAPID RESPONSE TEAMS WORK WITHIN COMMUNITIES TO BOLSTER HEALTH SECURITY

The work of rapid response teams (RRTs) involves a delicate balance of science, strategy and human connection.

These specialized groups of health care professionals and emergency responders play a crucial role in managing public health emergencies by swiftly detecting and controlling disease outbreaks. After receiving alerts of infectious disease cases within communities, RRTs are mobilized to trace infections back to their source. This early intervention is crucial for the identification of initial cases and understanding the spread of diseases and allows for swift action to contain and prevent further spread.

Yemen's humanitarian health landscape is challenging. Differing risk factors mean health needs vary across governorates and concurrent outbreaks of vaccine-preventable diseases, compounded by low vaccination coverage, ongoing conflict, economic instability and limited access to essential services strain an already fragile health infrastructure.

Established with support from WHO and the World Bank during the cholera outbreak in 2017, RRTs are equipped with tablets to report data from field investigations to the Electronic Integrated Disease Early Warning System (eIDEWS), ensuring comprehensive coverage across the country. Organized into three levels – central, governorate and district – RRTs ensure effective coordination and timely response in even the most remote areas.

RRTs excel at swiftly identifying and isolating individuals exposed to infectious diseases, ensuring accurate data collection and analysis and taking proactive measures to prevent outbreaks. Their work involves close collaboration with health authorities, and community engagement to facilitate the implementation of health interventions at the household level.

The ability to work closely with local communities to raise awareness about disease prevention, symptoms and home treatment is central to the success of RRTs, as is the promotion of hygiene practices to reduce the risk of infection. They understand that effective disease control is not just about medical intervention but

involves building trust and cooperation. By educating the public and ensuring everyone understands the importance of the measures being implemented, RRTs transform communities into active participants in the fight against disease.

"I work to disseminate accurate health information and foster behavioural change. When I realize my efforts have safeguarded communities where dengue-carrying mosquitoes are spreading or when I encourage parents to vaccinate their children, I feel enormous relief," says Aref Abdullah, a member of the RRT .

"The impact is mainly positive, particularly in remote rural areas. But our job becomes more difficult when people listen to those who propagate misinformation. We have to work hard to correct that."

The impact of RRTs extends beyond local communities. They play a pivotal role in cross-border disease control. Yemen is a transit route for many people traveling to countries such as the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Oman, and RRTs' extensive testing and contact tracing during outbreaks is crucial to prevent the spread of diseases to neighbouring countries and protect regional health security.

Funding shortages have reduced the number of RRT members from five to four per team, resulting in a shortfall in health education members, resulting in less frequent monitoring and intervention in some areas. This compromises the disease surveillance system, making it more difficult to monitor, detect and respond to health threats effectively, and leads to higher instances of illness and death among communities.

*Since 2017, WHO with support from the World Bank, has supported Yemen's RRTs by providing essential resources, training and operational costs. This support enables them to verify, respond to and manage outbreaks of infectious diseases such as cholera, dengue fever, measles and diphtheria, helping to prevent their spread and save lives.*

*Currently, RRTs are supported through a complementary approach to funding provided by the Emergency Human Capital Project (EHCP) and the Pandemic Fund's Pandemic Preparedness and Response Project.*





Posters disseminated throughout residential neighborhoods provide essential health information to mitigate the spread of cholera. Photo: WHO/Shatha Al-Eryani





Aref Abdullah, the community engagement specialist of the Rapid Response Team, explains critical health information to the public. He advocates that health literacy is a powerful tool for disease prevention. Photo: WHO/Shatha Al-Eryani



## "WATER IS LIFE, AND WHEN IT RETURNS, HOPE RETURNS" – MITIGATING WATER SCARCITY IN ADEN

Water, the essence of life, has become an increasingly scarce and precious resource in Aden. Years of conflict in Yemen, coupled with lack of maintenance for water infrastructure and rapid urbanization, have left many neighborhoods without access to clean water. Many residents are forced to rely on water trucks, paying up to 12,000 Yemeni riyals (approximately US\$10) for a 5,000-liter supply of water for their households – a cost that is unaffordable for most families living in extreme poverty.

### A FAMILY'S STRUGGLE

For Najat, a resident of the Al-Aidaros neighborhood in Crater District, the water crisis has been a daily struggle. "For over five years, no water from the city's main supply reached our home," Najat shares. "We relied entirely on water trucks, which were expensive and unreliable. I often had to sacrifice other essential needs just to buy water for my family."

### A SOLUTION TO THE CRISIS

In response to this dire situation, Al-Twasul for Human Development, funded by Kuwait Relief Society, implemented a transformative project in Aden. The

initiative included drilling ten artesian wells in the Al-Nasser wellfield, Aden's primary water source. A 610-kilowatt solar-powered station and an electrical grid were also installed to ensure an uninterrupted water supply. This project now delivers more than 17.2 million liters of water daily, meeting 30 per cent of the city's water needs.

### RENEWED HOPE

For Najat and her family, this project has brought profound relief. "We no longer hear the constant sound of water trucks in our neighborhood," she says. "Now, we have water in our homes, and I can focus on other aspects of my life instead of worrying about water every day."

Najat's neighborhood is just one of many in Aden that has been transformed by this initiative. This project not only provides immediate relief but also lays the foundation for long-term resilience, ensuring that families like Najat's can look forward to a future where access to clean water is no longer a daily struggle.

By addressing the water crisis, Al-Twasul is helping thousands of families reclaim their lives, restoring hope in the midst of adversity.



A 610-kilowatt solar-powered station and an electrical grid were installed to ensure uninterrupted water supply. Photo: Al-Twasul

## REEM'S JOURNEY: A STORY OF HOPE AND RECOVERY

Every day was a constant struggle for Reem. “I was so worried, not just for my own health, but for the life of the child growing inside me,” she recalled, her voice quivering with emotion. “The fear of the unknown kept me up at night, wondering if my baby would be born healthy and strong.”

Reem’s plight came to the attention of a dedicated community health volunteer who continued to screen children and pregnant or breastfeeding women (PLWs) despite the suspension of the BSFP program. “When I first met Reem, her eyes were filled with a mix of fear and fatigue,” the volunteer remembered.

Without delay, the volunteer referred Reem to the nearest health centre, Ma’shar Health Centre, where YFCA, in partnership with WFP, is promoting preventive and lifesaving nutrition interventions. The results were devastating – Reem’s mid-upper arm circumference (MUAC) measured just 21 cm, a clear indication of acute moderate malnutrition.

“I was so scared, my heart was racing,” Reem recalled, her voice laced with anguish. “But the health workers made me feel safe and supported. They immediately provided me with a nutritious blend of wheat and soy, along with detailed instructions on how to use it.”

Over the following months, Reem diligently attended her scheduled visits, eagerly tracking her progress. With each passing week, her MUAC measurements improved, climbing to 22.5 cm and eventually reaching a remarkable 23.5 cm.

As Reem’s health improved, so did her spirits. A glimmer of hope ignited within her. “I am forever grateful to the YFCA volunteers and the health workers,” she expressed, her eyes shining with renewed determination. “They fought for my baby’s life, and for that, I will be forever grateful.”

### THE BIGGER PICTURE: MALNUTRITION AMONG PREGNANT AND BREASTFEEDING WOMEN IN YEMEN

Reem’s story is just one among many in Yemen, where malnutrition remains a critical issue. Nearly 1.2 million pregnant or breastfeeding women in Yemen are projected to be acutely malnourished. These figures highlight the urgent need for continued support and intervention to combat malnutrition and save lives in Yemen. The efforts of organizations like YFCA and WFP are crucial in providing the necessary aid to those in desperate need.



Reem at Ma’shar Health Center with the nutrition volunteer doctor receiving nutrition supplies. Photo: YFCA.



## FROM CRISIS TO PREPAREDNESS: SECURING YEMEN AGAINST FUTURE FLOODS

On Yemen’s west coast, where disasters strike without warning, families like Ali and Fatima’s have endured both conflict and nature’s fury. Once dreaming of a peaceful life in Al Hodeidah, Ali, now 53, was forced to flee with his family as violence escalated. Displacement brought them to Al Khukhah, where they struggled to rebuild amid harsh conditions.

Without proper housing, Ali constructed a shelter from sticks and plastic, offering little protection. Every rainstorm turned their home into a hazard, with Ali standing for hours holding his children to keep them from floodwaters. “When the rain started, I wished I had even a plastic sheet to protect my family,” he recalls. Fatima feared the worst with each storm. One day, floodwaters submerged their few belongings, forcing them to consider relocating once again.

Their struggles eased when they received shelter assistance following recent flash floods. Despite funding gaps, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) allocates contingency stocks to address urgent needs. Non-food items like an oven and kitchen set helped Ali and Fatima cook meals without collecting firewood, making daily survival easier.

Yet emergency assistance alone is not enough. IOM is working to ensure vulnerable communities are better prepared for future disasters. In displacement sites like Al Khukhah, the Organization conducts environmental and hazard assessments to guide flood mitigation and water conservation efforts. Education initiatives help families protect themselves from both fires and floods, equipping them with critical knowledge.

Like Ali, 70-year-old Ibrahim has also faced the devastating effects of conflict and natural disasters. He once lived in the mountains of Mawza’, where his family struggled to make ends meet. When a rocket destroyed their home, they fled in search of safety. Their new shelter, built with scraps, could barely withstand the forces of nature. As the rainy season arrived, Ibrahim feared for his disabled son, knowing they had little means to escape a flood.

One night, floodwaters swept through their shelter. “I felt like my home turned into a pool,” Ibrahim recalls. His biggest fear was not being able to get his son to safety

in time. Thanks to IOM’s multipurpose cash assistance, he was able to buy food and medicine, helping his family survive the crisis.

Beyond immediate relief, IOM has focused on long-term disaster resilience. To address flood damage, the Organization’s Engineering Support Unit, in coordination with the Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) team, constructed gabion walls to prevent future destruction. These barriers protect key infrastructure, including the Al Ameer well in Hays—the only water source for over 25,000 people. When floods destroyed the well’s solar-powered pumps, IOM teams built protective structures to safeguard the water supply, ensuring the community’s long-term resilience.

For Ibrahim and others, survival is not just about enduring disasters but becoming stronger and more prepared. The fear that came with the rising floodwaters may never fully fade, but the strength he and his community have shown is a testament to their resilience. “We live with the land, and sometimes it turns against us,” Ibrahim says. “But we also learn how to stand our ground.”



At 70, Ibrahim’s main concern isn’t his own safety but that of his disabled son, whom he has protected through countless storms. Photo: IOM/Majed Mohammed



With stronger infrastructure and support, families like Ahmed's can be better equipped to face future floods and extreme weather events. Photo: IOM/ Majed Mohammed



## EMPOWERING LIVES AND BUILDING FUTURES

The Enhanced Living Conditions (ELC) project, funded by the Danish International Development Agency (Danida) and implemented by ADRA, is making a lasting impact on vulnerable communities by providing economic support, training, and opportunities that have already reached 2,200 people. Through this comprehensive initiative, individuals like Salih Ali Muhammad and Yahya Ahmed have transformed their lives and become engines of change in their communities.

Yahya Ahmed, a 50-year-old tailor and the sole breadwinner for his family of 14, experienced a remarkable turnaround. Supported by ADRA through the ELC II project, Yahya used cash-for-work funds to purchase a sewing machine and start his own business. His dedication inspired his daughters to learn tailoring from him, and they even enrolled in a local institute to refine their skills.

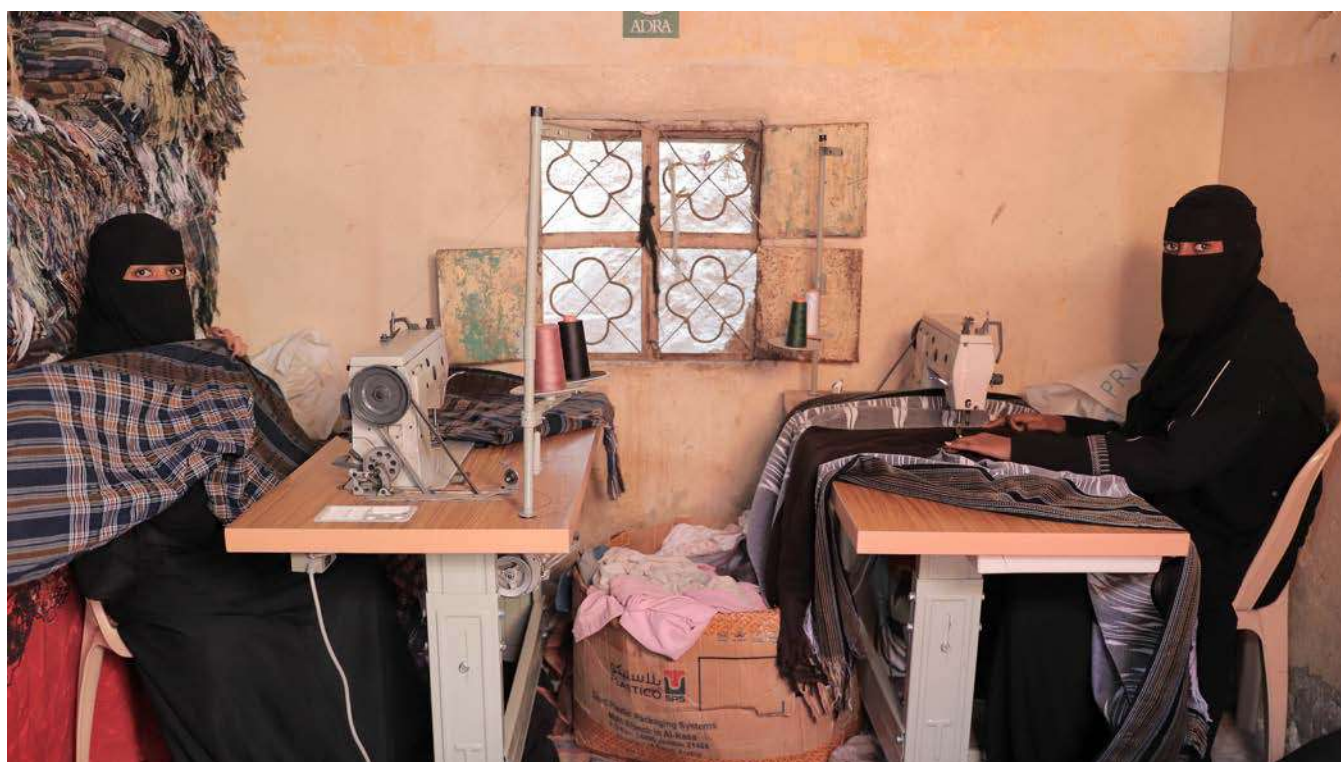
Under the ELC III project, his daughters received small business support—including two sewing machines and a solar energy system—which allowed them to expand their operations and employ 20 local women.

In addition, Yahya trained 120 women in tailoring, empowering them with new skills to improve their lives.

Similarly, Salih Ali Muhammad, a 62-year-old refugee from Somalia and the sole provider for his family of five, faced overwhelming challenges after his wife left him, leaving behind four young children. Thanks to the ELC project, he received welding workshop equipment through the Emergency Resilience Building (ERB) initiative and, later, additional tools under the ELC III component funded by Danida.

With this support, Salih launched his own workshop, which has evolved into a thriving business that not only enables him to provide for his family with dignity and stability but also creates new job opportunities within his community.

These inspiring stories demonstrate that the ELC project is not just a support initiative—it is a powerful engine for economic empowerment and community development. By reaching its target of 2,200 beneficiaries, the project is building a brighter, more resilient future for all.



Yahya's new business inspired his daughters to learn tailoring from him. Photo: ADRA



Salih at work in his welding business. Photo: ADRA



## A BLIND YOUNG MAN CHALLENGES THE DARKNESS TO ILLUMINATE HIS FUTURE THROUGH EDUCATION

Abdul-Muttalib Hashim Al-Nahari, a blind young man in his twenties, did not allow his disability or harsh circumstances extinguish his passion for knowledge. After a two-year interruption from school due to difficulty accessing education and limited resources, Abdul-Muttalib returned to the seventh grade at Al-Fawz School in Al-Haym area. The All Girls Foundation intervened by building four new classrooms equipped with all essential facilities, turning his dream into a tangible reality.

Abdul-Muttalib's story goes beyond geographical challenges and visual impairment, becoming a symbol of strong will. Thanks to the support of his family, who shared the burden of the mountainous road with him every day, and the encouragement of community awareness campaigns, he returned to school with a heart full of hope and eyes looking toward a brighter future.

Supported by the Yemen Humanitarian Fund, the project "Responding to the Increasing Educational and Protection Needs" served as a helping hand that

restored Abdul-Muttalib's confidence and illuminated his path. It was not just about building classrooms or providing chairs, but about building the spirit and affirming that education is a right that is earned through determination, not easily granted.

Today, teachers describe Abdul-Muttalib as an exemplary student, combining academic excellence and high morals, making him an inspiration to his peers.

With a tone full of gratitude, Abdul-Muttalib says, "The intervention of the All Girls Foundation and the Yemen Humanitarian Fund gave me a new hope. They restored my dream and reminded me that the path to success begins with a courageous step, no matter how dark it may be around me."

Abdul-Muttalib's story is not just an individual tale, but a message to all those facing difficulties: true willpower can make the impossible possible and turn dreams into reality.



Abd Al-Mutalib on his way to At Al-Fawz School in Bani Saeed, Al-Ja'fariya District, Raymah. Photo: AGF





Location of Al-Fawz School in Bani Saeed, Al-Ja'fariya, Raymah, where four new classrooms were built as part of the intervention. Photo: AGF



Al-Fawz School in Bani Saeed, Al-Ja'fariya, with four newly built classrooms made of sustainable stone, along with restrooms, improving the school facilities. Photo: AGF





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