



# CHAPTER 4

## A Weapon of War in Yemen: An Analysis of the Ongoing Food Crisis in 2019

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### INTRODUCTION

The humanitarian aid crisis has been at the forefront of the discussion on Yemen in the past two years. Prior to 2017, the humanitarian crisis, that has been seen since the start of the war, was not discussed on an international level. Since the beginning of the coalition blockade in 2015, millions of people's lives have been at risk, as food, water and medical supplies are diminished or unable to enter into Yemen, or are stuck in the ports. The number of people in danger of starvation has become the top priority in the humanitarian crisis in Yemen.<sup>1</sup> While there are many reasons for the supplies not entering into the country, multiple actors involved on both sides of the conflict are to blame. The international coalition, the Houthis and the international community, including the United Nations (UN) all have a role in the humanitarian crisis, and the failure to resolve the hunger of over 80 percent of the population, upwards of 22 million Yemenis.

1 UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, "Humanitarian Response Plan: January-December 2019," April 14, 2019, 3.

The situation has evolved from a proxy war waged between the coalition and the Iranian-backed Houthis, into a multifaceted conflict where actors play both sides of the war, ultimately exacerbating the ongoing battle of the humanitarian crisis. One of the most significant aspects to the humanitarian aid crisis is the food shortages that threaten millions of Yemenis. The food shortages cannot be directed towards one actor in the conflict, but rather a series of events that have taken place over the last two years of the war, and the subsequent failure of the international community and international organizations to adequately address the situation.

The statistics are staggering, for those that face malnutrition, potential famine, or insecurity in where their next meal is going to come from. There are an estimated 22 million people in need of immediate humanitarian aid, and nearly 17.8 million of these people are insecure about where their next meal is coming from, as they rely on food aid from humanitarian organizations to survive.<sup>2</sup> Specifically, over eight million people

2 United Nations, "With 22 Million People Requiring Aid





in Yemen are at risk of starvation.<sup>3</sup> About half of the nearly three million women and children that are malnourished in Yemen receive aid every month.<sup>4</sup> The magnitude of the humanitarian crisis is unlike any other in the world, yet the international community continues to struggle in resolving the disaster. One of the most difficult aspects in solving the humanitarian crisis is the distribution of aid in conflict zones. The ability of the international community to distribute aid in the face of conflict, has been put to the test in Yemen in recent years.

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in Yemen, Special Envoy Calls for Political Consultations in Geneva, as Delegates Advocate Continued Security Council Unity | Meetings Coverage and Press Releases," United Nations Meetings Coverage and Press Releases, August 2, 2018, [https://www.un.org/press/en/2018/sc13442.doc.htm.7,2\]\]\]\]\]\]](https://www.un.org/press/en/2018/sc13442.doc.htm.7,2]]]]]]),"schema":"https://github.com/citation-style-language/schema/raw/master/csl-citation.json"}]

<sup>3</sup> Embrace Relief, "Food Distribution in Yemen," *Embrace Relief* (blog), October 8, 2018, <https://www.embrace-relief.org/yemen/>.

<sup>4</sup> Jonathan Dumont, "Orpheus in Yemen," World Food Programme Insight, February 19, 2019, <https://insight.wfp.org/-28922f91cd5>.

This paper will explore the complexities of the humanitarian aid crisis, specifically regarding the potential famine situation taking place throughout Yemen. Furthermore, the role of the different actors and organizations that are involved in food crisis in varying capacities, which has ultimately led to the starvation of millions of people will be examined. Specifically, this paper will look at one of the organizations that has been most involved in the food crisis, the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP). The WFP has faced many struggles in trying to distribute food and build reliable partnerships throughout Yemen. These struggles are not unique to the WFP, which resonates how some of the recurring themes of the food crisis are not being addressed by the international community, and are ultimately worsening the crisis situation in Yemen.

### THE BLOCKADE AGAINST AID: A FAILURE FROM BOTH SIDES

In 2015, the coalition forces created a partial blockade on the Hodeida port. This blockade ultimately transformed into all goods being denied access into the country. The significance

of the Hodeida port as the main entry for up to 80 percent of the aid entering into the country, is also strategic for the Houthis, the coalition, and the international community.<sup>5</sup> The international coalition uses the port as an entry point into the Red Sea, and by blocking access, they are preventing both humanitarian aid supplies and other goods from entering into the country.<sup>6</sup> The Houthis' interest in the port of Hodeida is to control the distribution of goods coming in to the country. Ultimately, this decision to put up a blockade on the port, brought the already food-insecure country to the brink of starvation, leaving millions of people without consistent access to food. Following the blockade, many of the imports were redirected from the north of Yemen, to the southern port of Aden, where the national capital was re-established. By diverting the aid to a different port, the struggles to distribute aid throughout Yemen were not solved. Today people still face grave food insecurity, and humanitarian organizations struggle to find safe ways to distribute food. However, while there were many difficulties in bringing aid into the country in 2017 and 2018, the difficulty has now transformed as the food aid is being taken by local armed groups. There are still large amounts of food that are making it into the country, but before the food arrives to the intended recipients, the aid is stolen.<sup>7</sup> The citizens of Yemen are the ones that suffer the most by the aid being diverted, and it calls into question the ability of international institutions to prevent armed groups, such as the Houthis, as well as government actors from preventing crises like this from occurring.

5 Joanne Stocker, "Fearing Imminent UAE Assault, Some NGOs Pull Staff from Yemen's Hodeidah," *The Defense Post*, June 11, 2018, <https://thedefensepost.com/2018/06/11/ngos-evacuate-yemen-hodeidah/>.

6 Middle East Correspondent Sophie McNeill, "'Threat of Famine Looming' in Yemen amid Import Blockade," *Text*, ABC News, February 24, 2017, <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2017-02-24/yemen-on-brink-of-famine-mass-starvation-un-warns/8299776>.

7 Maggie Michael, "AP Investigation: Food Aid Stolen as Yemen Starves," *AP NEWS*, December 31, 2018, <https://apnews.com/bcf4e7595b554029bcd372cb129c49ab>.

Actors of the coalition have promised the largest amounts of funding for different groups and projects in the humanitarian aid crisis. Saudi Arabia pledged \$1.5 billion to fund humanitarian aid projects in Yemen in early 2018, and the United Arab Emirates promised another large sum of \$750 million to the crisis.<sup>8</sup> These two actors alone have pledged enough money in aid to significantly reduce the humanitarian crisis, yet the humanitarian crisis ensues. The amount of money that has actually been delivered to Yemen is not even close to what was promised, with some estimates saying that less than ten percent of the 1.5 billion dollar project has been funded by the coalition. In 2019, similar promises were made by the coalition, where large sums of money were promised to assist with the humanitarian aid crisis. So far the WFP has received only \$120 million from Saudi Arabia this year.<sup>9</sup>

Other significant donors, besides members of the coalition, include members of the European Union (EU). While many of the EU countries provide humanitarian assistance indirectly through monetary aid, the EU has remained largely absent from the food crisis in Yemen.<sup>10</sup> The EU mostly gives humanitarian assistance to international organizations like the UN, or EU partners like European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO).<sup>11</sup> These programs give monetary aid, but fail to address some of the individual needs throughout Yemen. The programs give money to humanitarian

8 Stephen Kalin, "Saudi-Led Coalition to Give \$1.5 Billion in Yemen Aid, Expand Port..." *Reuters*, January 22, 2018, <https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-yemen-aid-saudi-idUKKBN1FB000>.

9 World Food Programme, "Contributions to WFP in 2019 | WFP | United Nations World Food Programme - Fighting Hunger Worldwide," May 12, 2019, <https://www.wfp.org/funding/year/2019>.

10 "Yemen and the EU," *Text*, EEAS - European External Action Service - European Commission, accessed July 2, 2019, [https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/yemen/1877/yemen-and-eu\\_en](https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/yemen/1877/yemen-and-eu_en).

11 ECHO, "Yemen," *Text*, European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations - European Commission, October 3, 2013, [https://ec.europa.eu/echo/where/middle-east/yemen\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/echo/where/middle-east/yemen_en).

assistance as an umbrella, which covers a variety of different subjects, without addressing some of the more acute issues, such as famine in Yemen. <sup>12</sup> Simply sending money does not alleviate the crisis that the people of Yemen are experiencing. The money that the EU gives to the humanitarian crisis in Yemen is funneled through partner organizations such as the UN and many of its subsidiaries, or through the Red Cross. <sup>13</sup> While the money is vital to the food crisis, there role that the EU plays in the humanitarian disaster is dismal. The EU should be able to take a more active role in these efforts to ensure that the money is being properly used and handled to best solve the food crisis. The use of local partnerships in the humanitarian crisis is one of the best ways to directly benefit the people, but only if the aid is being used and distributed properly.

Distribution of food is a constant struggle, as both the blockade on commercial and humanitarian aid is still seen in some capacity. Aid distribution is further exacerbated by the presence of local armed groups and militias that try and steal the aid once it has entered in land, from the ports. The coalition has taken responsibility for a percentage of the food distribution throughout Yemen, working to find local partners and channels to which the aid can be distributed through. However, the coalition has been reluctant to deliver aid to channels where the Houthis are present, as they cannot control the safety of these areas. The coalition has aligned with local armies in areas of southwest Yemen to assist in food distribution, but a report found that the army groups tasked with circulating the food aid, were looting food for themselves throughout 2018. <sup>14</sup> The accountability for where the aid in Yemen goes, and if it is properly distributed does not exist. In Taiz issues of government corruption and untrustworthy deals with local organizations have resulted in food aid going missing. <sup>15</sup> Aid is

blocked from groups on all sides of the conflict from those who are suspected of being disloyal, and the aid is either diverted for personal use, or sold on the black market for profit by the groups who block the aid. <sup>16</sup> The situation in Yemen has resulted in many local partners stealing aid for personal gain. This is the result of very low levels of accountability in ensuring that food is provided to those who need it most.

With the amount of insecurity aid workers and people who are partnered with humanitarian organizations face, it is difficult to imagine a viable solution to properly account for the aid and where it is delivered. There is no consistency in the struggle to distribute aid. Many channels of food distribution are corrupt, and uninterrupted transport of food aid seems to be rare. OCHA has outlined a map (below) of the districts in Yemen that inconsistently receive aid because the areas are considered difficult to reach, for a variety of reasons. <sup>17</sup> There are over 75 districts that are considered difficult to reach, many of which are directly impeded by the closures of ports, border crossings and roads to and from major cities. The Houthis place blockades on roads going between cities to control the amount of aid that is entering the country, while the coalition seems unwilling to partner with localities that are not aligned with their cause. Humanitarian organizations continually struggle to access areas to distribute aid, and they encounter security dilemmas along the way. While aid workers not only struggle to push aid through, they also risk their personal safety. Reports have come out noting encounters that aid workers have had with locals while trying to deliver aid. <sup>18</sup> Interactions with locals are sometimes dangerous, aid workers compromise their safety in the struggle to deliver aid to the millions of people that have

<sup>12</sup> ECHO.

<sup>13</sup> "Yemen and the EU."

<sup>14</sup> Michael, "AP Investigation."

<sup>15</sup> Michael.

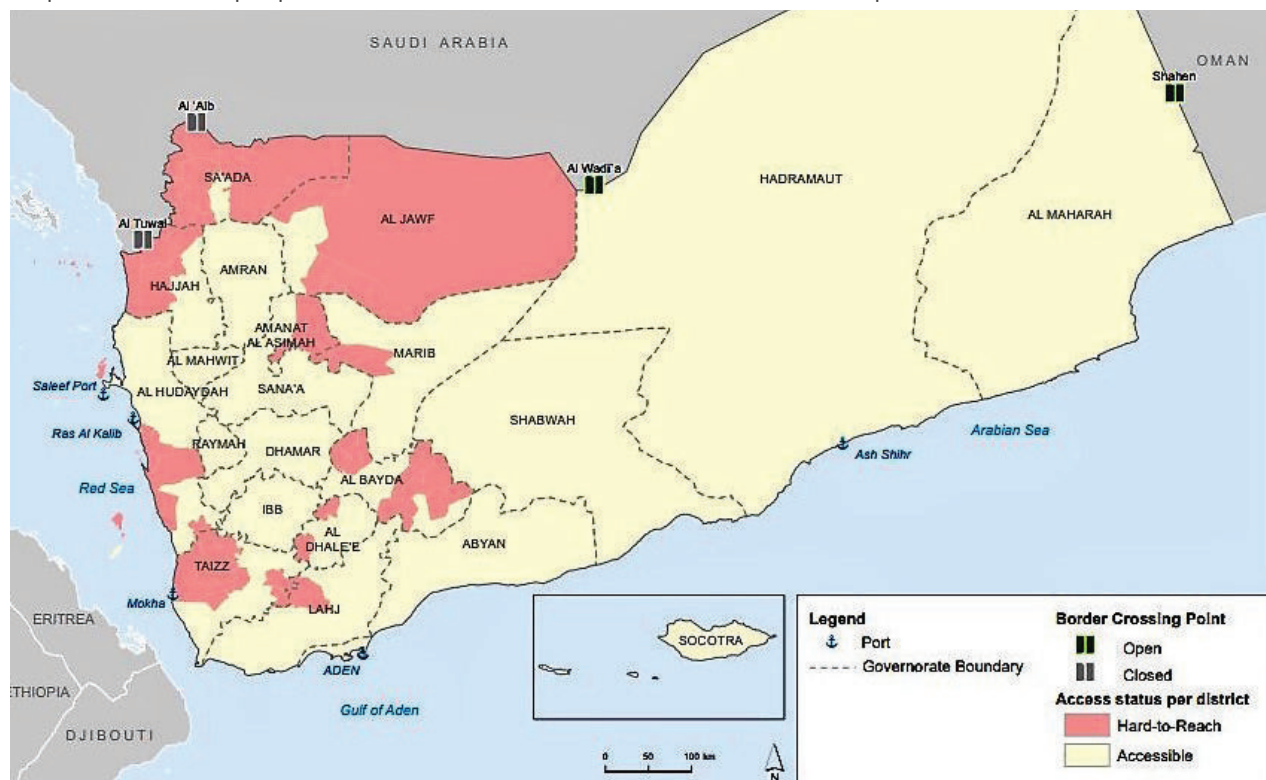
<sup>16</sup> Sana'a Center for Strategic Studies, "Stockholm Agreement Meets Yemeni Reality – The Yemen Review, January 2019," *Sana'a Center For Strategic Studies* (blog), February 11, 2019, <http://sanaacenter.org/publications/the-yemen-review/7027>.

<sup>17</sup> OCHA, "Yemen Interim Country Strategic Plan (2019–2020)," April 29, 2019, 37.

<sup>18</sup> Michael, "AP Investigation."



Map 2. 5.1 million people in need in 75 hard-to-reach districts (as of 29 April 2019). Source: OCHA.



relied on aid for the past four years. “Workers of the UN and other international groups have been forced to sacrifice their independence in order to maintain access as they try to deliver aid to as many people as possible”.<sup>19</sup> Situations like these call into question the ability of humanitarian organizations to continue to access these areas. If the safety of the workers is compromised by any party in the conflict, these organizations may have to reevaluate the capacity in which they operate in Yemen. As the dangers that aid workers face increase, the humanitarian aid organizations present in these areas may be forced to scale back their operations, or even leave the areas all together. Both the coalition and the Houthis must allow for aid workers to bring in food aid, unabatedly.

## THE HOUTHIS: ACCUSATIONS AND VIEWS TOWARDS HUMANITARIAN AID

The Houthis have controlled a large majority of the population for nearly four years now. The most populated regions of the country are under Houthi control and they are also the

<sup>19</sup> Michael.

regions that require the most humanitarian assistance. The Houthis have been repeatedly accused of stealing humanitarian aid from NGOs and international organizations.<sup>20</sup> While the Houthis deny claims that they are stealing food, the numbers that have been presented argue that around one percent of the aid delivered in 2018 was stolen, but in reality these numbers could be much higher. It is the responsibility of the aid organizations to monitor the channels in which they operate. If aid is being stolen from the civilians that are in desperate need of the supplies, the organizations must be prepared to take further actions to ensure the safety of their workers and the aid supplies. Continued allegations of food aid being stolen should be identified and addressed by the international community.

Those who have accused the Houthis of stealing aid said that they have been either using the food

<sup>20</sup> Sam Kiley, Sarah El Sergany, and Brice Lainé, “CNN Exposes Systematic Abuse of Aid in Yemen - CNN,” accessed May 21, 2019, [https://edition.cnn.com/2019/05/20/middleeast/yemen-houthi-aid-investigation-kiley/index.html?fbclid=IwAR3leYw38-bsOsWx-rbSXBaY\\_dBqp7ga005jPvT-bKikftPlzu7fq0hV-kv0](https://edition.cnn.com/2019/05/20/middleeast/yemen-houthi-aid-investigation-kiley/index.html?fbclid=IwAR3leYw38-bsOsWx-rbSXBaY_dBqp7ga005jPvT-bKikftPlzu7fq0hV-kv0).

supplies for personal use, or selling it for profit.<sup>21</sup> In 2018, the WFP accused the Houthi rebels of diverting the food aid they brought in to Sanaa. Unfortunately, the Houthis did not respond to this claim, but similar reports published in the past have stated similar accusations. When food aid is brought in to areas that are under control of armed groups, the organizations that are attempting to bring the supplies into these areas must establish local partnerships in order to safely distribute the aid. Often times, this is done in order to maximize the safety of the individuals working for the humanitarian organizations and also to try and establish trust between the aid organizations and the armed groups. This concept is no different than what was seen with the Houthi rebels. In December 2018, rations of food were not delivered to starving people in Sanaa, following an investigation by the WFP, it was concluded that the partnering organization that was in charge of handling and distributing the food rations to civilians had not held up their end of the deal. This local organization was a known affiliate with a Houthi-run education ministry in Sanaa.<sup>22</sup> The struggles of distributing food in conflict zones are extreme, but it is up to the humanitarian organizations to provide safe and secure channels for the aid to be delivered. While the Houthis have taken a majority of the blame for diverting food aid from its intended recipients, the other main actor in the war, the coalition, also has a major role in the food crisis that is affecting millions of Yemenis.

### THE ROLE OF SAUDI ARABIA PLAYING BOTH SIDES OF THE CONFLICT

The coalition forces have been battling against the Houthis in Yemen for four years, yet they are also the biggest financial supporters of humanitarian aid to Yemen. The WFP estimated the cost to alleviate the famine in Yemen to be at over \$3 billion. This project has not been well funded, as the international community has not allocated the significant amount of funds to the

project. Of the 3.3 billion dollars that the WFP asked for, only 28 percent of the project has been funded.<sup>23</sup> Significantly, the second biggest donor of this project, behind the United States, is the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, who has donated over 150 million dollars to this project, which is 4.5 percent of the whole project. The United Arab Emirates was the third largest donor, followed by the European Commission.<sup>24</sup> The complexities of these donations will be explored below, as the conflict is being waged by the parties that are also the biggest donors to the humanitarian crisis.

In January of 2018, Saudi Arabia launched a humanitarian operation called the Yemen Comprehensive Humanitarian Operation, which outlined very specific donations that Saudi Arabia would give to Yemen, including a donation of \$1.5 billion to international organizations to ensure the success of the UN Humanitarian Response Plan.<sup>25</sup> This money was to be distributed across different UN agencies, including the WFP. However, it was later discovered that the Saudis had strict stipulations to the publicity of their donations.<sup>26</sup> While the coalition forces have offered large amounts of financial aid to the humanitarian crisis in Yemen, many of these financial donations come with the stipulations of giving good publicity. The importance of this good publicity may be due to some of the coalitions' actions in 2017, including the blockade on the port of Hodeida that prevented over 80 percent of the aid from getting into Yemen for several months. In late 2018, Saudi Arabia pledged to give the remainder of their aid donation to the UN, but threatened to withhold the aid if the UN didn't agree to give them favorable publicity.<sup>27</sup>

23 World Food Programme, "Yemen Resource Situation: Needs Based Plan," May 2019, 2.

24 World Food Programme.

25 Dan Glazebrook, "The Spin behind Saudi Arabia's 'humanitarian Aid Plan' for Yemen," Middle East Eye, March 2, 2018, <http://www.middleeasteye.net/opinion/spin-behind-saudi-arabias-humanitarian-aid-plan-yemen>.

26 Glazebrook.

27 Patrick Wintour, "Saudis Demanded Good Publicity over Yemen Aid, Leaked UN Document Shows," *The Guardian*, October 30, 2018, sec. Global development,

21 BBC News, "Yemen Rebels 'Stealing Food from Hungry,'" December 31, 2018, sec. Middle East, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-46722502>.

22 BBC News.

While the publicity stunts are not specifically linked to the blockade in 2017, framing the coalition forces as the ones at the forefront of humanitarian relief is an inflated reflection of the actions that have taken place over the course of the war. Stipulations such as these make it difficult for international organizations to accept aid, because the stipulations may be disagreeable to the values of the organization, but the money must be weighed against the human impact without the aid.

While the Saudis have promised large amounts of money and food supplies to Yemen, the strict requirements that they place on the access points for the aid, may restrict the aid from getting to the populations that need it most. These requirements were that no aid from the Saudis would enter through areas that were not under their control.<sup>28</sup> As Glazebrook wrote: “The ‘Comprehensive Operations’ plan envisages making permanent the juxtaposition of willful starvation of Houthi-controlled territory (in which the vast majority of Yemenis live) and ‘generous’ aid deliveries into coalition-controlled territories”.<sup>29</sup> There are speculations that the aid donations to Yemen are all part of an attempt to cover up their blockade in Hodeida and improve their image.<sup>30</sup> It is the responsibility of the organizations that are delivering the humanitarian aid, such as the WFP and the UN, to ensure transparency on where the aid is coming from, and the potential ethical implications of the aid coming from certain actors. Furthermore, the international community, including members of the coalition should continue to work to implement the existing aid plans rather than trying to fuel personal agendas through unilateral aid response plans.

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<https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2018/oct/30/saudis-demanded-good-publicity-over-yemen-aid-leaked-un-document-shows>.

28 London Royal Embassy of Saudi Arabia, “Yemen Comprehensive Humanitarian Operations,” January 22, 2018, <https://saudiembassyuk.co.uk/yemen-comprehensive-humanitarian-operations/>.

29 Glazebrook, “The Spin behind Saudi Arabia’s ‘humanitarian Aid Plan’ for Yemen.”

30 Ibid.

There are potential human rights impacts to these decisions, as the aid stipulations are used as a way to garner support for a war that is causing thousands of civilians to die. In April 2019, a report was leaked regarding the French involvement in the war in Yemen, as a supplier of military technology to the coalition forces.<sup>31</sup> This report analyzed how the coalition forces are using food as a weapon of war. The number of air strikes that have been carried out since February of 2015 is almost 20,000.<sup>32</sup> The impact of these airstrikes is vast, and it was estimated in the report that 30 percent of these were targeted against civilians by destroying civilian infrastructure, agricultural production, water supplies, and fisheries.<sup>33</sup> It should be noted that a UN Security Council Resolution was adopted in May 2018, stating that “using starvation of civilians as a method of warfare may constitute a war crime”.<sup>34</sup> Targeting the food supplies in Yemen has affected millions of civilians. The reports that have been published cannot be ignored, as food insecurity is being used as a weapon of war. One organization that has been at the forefront of combatting the humanitarian aid crisis in Yemen is the World Food Programme, a UN agency that sees that implications of all the actors in the conflict and the failure to resolve the food crisis in Yemen.

## THE WORLD FOOD PROGRAMME’S PRESENCE IN SANAA

The WFP has taken charge of the food security crisis in Sanaa. Since before the blockade began in 2017, the WFP assisted the people through food aid, but dramatically increased their efforts following the blockade of the Hodeida port in 2017. The difficulty that the WFP faces regarding distribution are unavoidable, however

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 31 “Food War - Made in France” (Disclose, April 15, 2019), <https://made-in-france.disclose.ngo/en/chapter/food-war>.

32 “Food War - Made in France.”

33 “Food War - Made in France.”

34 United Nations Security Council, “Resolution 2417 (2018),” May 24, 2018, <https://www.un.org/press/en/2018/sc13354.doc.htm>.



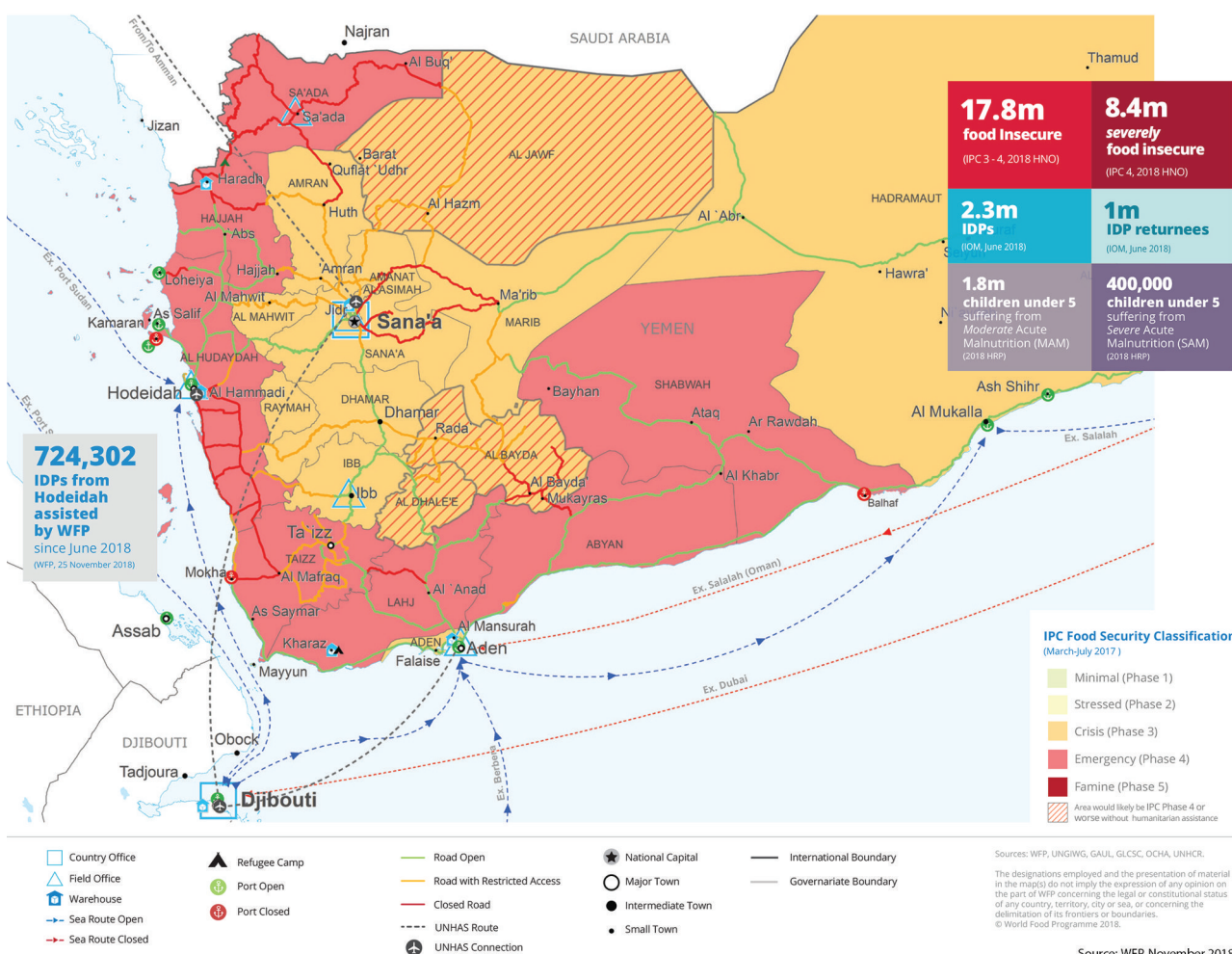
the issues must be addressed and every step possible to ensure the safe delivery of aid, must be enacted. There are over 5,000 distribution sites throughout Yemen, as the WFP attempts to reach nearly twelve million people every month with food assistance.<sup>35</sup> Because this task is so large, and there are thousands of distribution sites, it is impossible for the WFP to monitor the distribution for each site. Furthermore, there isn't a map that exists of the distribution sites in Yemen to clearly demonstrate the complexity of the issue. Without a map that shows all the distribution sites, the safety of aid workers and the delivery of food is at risk, because many of these sites are not monitored regularly. Only

20 percent of the deliveries to and from the distribution sites can be monitored, making it easy for armed groups and local actors to take advantage of the food that is being brought in.<sup>36</sup> The amount of food that is stolen from some areas is difficult to estimate, because the population that faces severe hunger and lack of food is impossible to measure accurately due to security and safety concerns. Some areas near Sanaa have received enough food aid to feed twice the population in the province, yet a majority of the population is still face food shortages.<sup>37</sup> This clearly demonstrates that food is not going to the intended recipients, and the food aid is being diverted or stolen. The WFP has taken on an immense task of providing food

35 UNOCHA, "Yemen: CERF Allocates US\$32M to Allow WFP to Ramp up Logistical Operations," OCHA, January 11, 2019, <https://www.unocha.org/story/yemen-cerf-allocates-us32m-allow-wfp-ramp-logistical-operations>.

36 Michael, "AP Investigation."

37 Kiley, El Sergany, and Lainé, "CNN Exposes Systematic Abuse of Aid in Yemen - CNN."



Map 3. Coverage of food assistance in different regions of Yemen throughout 2018. Source: WFP.

aid to millions of people on a monthly basis in Yemen, but they must ensure that they pursue the proper channels to safely deliver the food aid. On page 54 is a map that outlines the coverage of food assistance in different regions throughout 2018 (see Map 3). It demonstrates that while there are areas where 100 percent of the needs of food aid are being met, while in a large majority of the country, food assistance is not up to par with the level that it should be. The difficulty with aid distribution is not only the bringing aid into the country, but dispersing the aid to all the areas where it is needed. Clearly, this is still an area for improvement, and aid needs to reach all areas where it is needed.

The WFP built a partnership with the education ministry in Sanaa, one of the strongest areas held by the Houthis in 2018. This partnership was built on the premise that the education ministry would be responsible for distributing baskets of food from the WFP every month, yet nearly 15,000 of these food baskets never make it to the hungry people, and are sold on the black market by the Houthis or are used to feed members of the armed group.<sup>38</sup> The major concern following these claims then, is not whether or not there is enough food to feed the people of Yemen, but what can be done to ensure the food is being properly distributed to those who need it. "Enough aid is coming into the country to meet the demands of the hunger crisis, but much of it is stolen. If there is no corruption --- there is no famine."<sup>39</sup>

The WFP has developed a series of other partnerships in both Houthi and government controlled territories throughout Yemen as they attempt to reach over twelve million people per month in 2019, a significant increase from the previous years of the conflict.<sup>40</sup> The WFP has established local partnerships throughout Yemen to aid in their distribution of food. However, these

partnerships are not completely transparent and many come with stipulations of publicity. In developing these partnerships, the WFP must remain transparent about the ways their food is moved, who they are working with, and where the aid is coming from. The amount of corruption throughout Yemen is the single most important factor which has allowed the hunger crisis to continue. If both sides are blamed for the improper distribution of food aid, there will likely not be a lasting solution to end the hunger crisis until both sides remain committed to ensuring the aid is delivered properly to its intended recipients. Only through developing proper, secure and transparent protocols can aid organizations hope to foster strong distribution networks.

The WFP must continue to work to build strong partnerships that ensure the safety of their workers, as well as the security of the food products to arrive safely to their intended recipients. Further, the repeated claims of the Houthis stealing food aid from humanitarian organizations is an issue that must be addressed by the WFP, the United Nations, and the countries involved in the conflict. The complexity of this issue is not specific to one area of Yemen, and while is more common in Houthi controlled regions, action needs to be taken to ensure that the food supplies that are being brought into Yemen, are safely delivered to the intended recipients of the population. It is idealistic to think that the international organizations that have undertaken this task will be able to resolve these issues on their own, yet there must be a better protocol for building relationships with local partners who will ensure the food is properly distributed.

## CONCLUSION

The food crisis in Yemen must be addressed as an urgent need. Large amounts of funding has been allocated by countries and humanitarian organizations around the world to address the crisis, yet there are still many issues that need to be addressed. First and foremost, humanitarian organizations such as the WFP must be allowed

38 Michael, "AP Investigation."

39 Michael.

40 Stephen Anderson, "YEMEN: This Is the World's Largest Food Crisis." (World Food Programme, March 29, 2019), <https://unwfp.maps.arcgis.com/apps/Cascade/index.html?appid=a8e9e0ef4b854f3f921b08d296830e28>.

unrestricted access to roads, ports and all other channels for distributing humanitarian aid. The partnerships that aid organizations build, whether with local organizations, the Houthis, or coalition forces, must enable the aid organization to distribute the complete amount of supplies to the people of Yemen who they are intended for. Furthermore, the aid organizations must be transparent in their actions and must take responsibility for the monitoring of the actions of their partners. The organizations that the WFP works with must also be safe and ensure the full cooperation to distribute the aid, without worry that the aid will be stolen.

Further escalations in fighting will only worsen the humanitarian crisis, as roads and ports are

at risk of closing, preventing aid supplies from getting in. The solution to the humanitarian crisis in Yemen is idealistic, as the starvation of millions of people will not be solved until the conflict ends. Small steps to alleviate the food aid shortages in Yemen must be taken, including guaranteeing safe access for aid workers to deliver goods to civilians. Actors on all sides of this conflict must remain committed to the secure delivery of aid. The coalition, the Houthis and humanitarian organizations all have a responsibility to the citizens of Yemen to ensure their safety and access to basic human rights, most significantly the much needed food aid. The international community must step up and take action against any actors in the conflict that do not comply with the protection of the civilian population. ■