Acute food insecurity trends

Numbers have risen since 2020. The food crisis in Yemen continued to worsen in 2021 with the number of people in Crisis or worse (IPC Phase 3 or above) rising by 19 percent from 13.5 million in October–December 2020 to 16.2 million during January–June 2021. This dire situation is the product of protracted conflict and a major economic crisis, which continued to disrupt livelihoods, reduce incomes and drive up food prices. In the three governorates (Al Jawf, Amran, and Hajjah) with populations in Catastrophe (IPC Phase 5) in October–December 2020, the number of people in this highest phase was expected to almost triple to 47,000 in January–June 2021 (IPC, December 2020).

The January–June 2021 estimate also exceeds figures from December 2018–January 2019, when 15.9 million people (53 percent of the population) were in Crisis or worse (IPC Phase 3 or above) (IPC, December 2018). The number of districts classified in Emergency (IPC Phase 4) increased from 49 in December 2018–January 2019 to 154 in the first six months of 2021 (IPC, December 2020).

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The analysis covers 100% of the country’s total population of 30 million people.


National population

62% Rural, 38% Urban


Humanitarian assistance

A significant share of the population depends on humanitarian assistance as the primary source of staple foods in Yemen, with 13 million people receiving varying levels of food assistance in 2021. Yemen began 2021 with pockets of populations facing Catastrophe (IPC Phase 5) (IPC, December 2020). Although food assistance was significantly reduced during the first half of 2021, a notable increase in assistance in the second half of the year supported over three-quarters of the caseload with their monthly needs (IPC, March 2022).