THE WORLD BANK IN YEMEN

The World Bank has been an active partner in Yemen's development for more than four decades. This long-standing working relationship has helped the Bank to continue supporting the Yemeni people and the institutions that serve them throughout the past six years of conflict. Yemen has struggled with critical development challenges for longer, but the conflict has deteriorated the situation into a full-blown crisis. The Bank's emergency program provides vital support to Yemeni families and their communities across the country, helping them cope with the impact of the crisis through cash transfers and other income support, enhancing access to health, nutrition and education services, scaling up cholera response, and reviving agriculture production.

To implement its program, the Bank has forged extraordinary operational partnerships with key United Nations (UN) agencies and local organizations. By leveraging these, it aims to preserve the capacity of Yemeni institutions—now and for the future—to deliver basic services that millions of Yemenis rely on.

THE YEMEN COUNTRY ENGAGEMENT NOTE

With peace uncertain, Yemen faces the prospect of continued conflict and a growing number of adverse humanitarian, institutional, social, and economic effects. Amid this, the World Bank approved a Country Engagement Note (CEN) to guide its support to Yemen over the period FY20–21:

» The CEN focuses on two strategic objectives: Preserving basic services and the institutions that deliver them; and supporting people’s livelihoods and the potential for economic recovery.

» Priorities include institutional capacity, improving service delivery, especially in health, WASH, education, and social protection, and providing support to conflict-affected vulnerable Yemenis.

» Food security is addressed through a multi-pronged approach targeting household income, agricultural production and productivity, farmers’ access to markets, nutrition enhancing practices, and food security management.

» Recognizing the importance of youth and women to stability, prosperity, and human development, the CEN pays specific attention to their needs and to enhancing their role in peace-building and recovery.

» Protecting human capital and harnessing private sector solutions is at the heart of the CEN, in line with the Bank’s regional Middle East & North Africa (MENA) strategy.

» The World Bank is deepening its use of Advisory Services and Analytics to support ongoing projects, inform strategic adjustments, and ensure preparedness for future investments in recovery and reconstruction.

DELIVERING RESULTS

International Development Agency (IDA) grants have provided the backbone of financing for the implementation of World Bank’s strategy. IDA, the Bank’s fund for the poorest nations, has targeted the poorest and most vulnerable Yemeni households and communities nationwide.

Responding to COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic poses a unique risk to Yemen, a country where less than 50% of health facilities are fully functional and even those that are lack enough specialists, equipment, and medicine to be truly effective. IDA’s US$26.9 million Emergency Response Project is designed to strengthen Yemen’s fragile health systems for public health preparedness, including the detection, containment, diagnosis, and treatment of COVID-19. About $23.4 million will finance the procurement of medical supplies, equipment, training, and implementation expenses, as well as the rehabilitation and upgrading of existing health facilities. Initial focus has been on large communities with high risks of local transmission. To date, over 1,400 health workers have been trained on infection prevention and control, 32 isolation units and 6 central public health laboratories are being supported, and a monitoring and evaluation system has been established to monitor COVID-19 response activities.

Supporting Livelihood Opportunities

In partnership with UNDP and local institutions, namely the Social Fund for Development and the Public Works Project, the World Bank’s US$840 million IDA grant under the Emergency Crisis Response Project supports a cash-for-work and community-based investment program. The project has reached over 422,000 direct beneficiaries with wage employment; 5.10 million people have received access to community services (such as water, irrigation, and better roads); and 10.74 million workdays have been created. Over 341,542 mothers and children have received nutrition services. Nine microfinance institutions and over 5,101 microfinance clients have been supported.

Responding to the Risk of Famine

The US$472.14 million emergency cash transfer component of the ECRP, implemented by the UN’s Children’s Fund (UNICEF), has thus far completed nine cycles of emergency cash transfer payments to poor and vulnerable households across all of Yemen’s 333 districts. The last payment cycle, completed on February 11, 2021, reached approximately 1.44 million households.
DELIVERING RESULTS (continued)

(9 million individuals). The Emergency Cash Transfer program is financed partially through the Bank’s Crisis Response Window, with co-financing from the UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office and the United States Department of State, through the Yemen Emergency Multi-Donor Trust Fund. Post-distribution monitoring found that 91% of beneficiaries used cash transfers to purchase food. Women comprise about 45% of the direct recipients.

Maintaining Population Access to Essential Health and Nutrition Services
The Emergency Health and Nutrition Project (EHNP), in partnership with UNICEF and WHO, has assisted over 23 million people in all governorates across the country. Over 2.6 million people have gained access to improved water sources and about 2.2 million to improved sanitation, and over 2.6 million people in districts at high risk of cholera have received oral cholera vaccine. More than 4.3 million women and children have received basic nutrition services, and 7.5 million children have been immunized. As many as 32,000 health personnel have been trained and over 4,200 health facilities supported with equipment and medical/non-medical supplies. About 230 health facilities that were not functioning before 2017 are now functional with EHNP support.

Boosting local food supply and rural livelihoods
Implemented in partnership with the UN’s Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the Smallholder Agricultural Production Restoration and Enhancement Project reached more than 106,000 rural households, increasing production, incomes, and self-reliance. Through a combination of equipment, production inputs, capacity building, and extension services, 59,640 farmers were able to re-engage in crop and livestock production and 13,153 adopted improved agricultural technology. 18 private sector operators were supported to establish a manufacturing base for feed block production model. Four nurseries and two post-harvest collection centers were set up. Rehabilitation of community water benefitted 20,230 farmers and 11,634 workers accessed wage employment, which helped mitigate additional hardship created by COVID-19 for farming households.

Restoring services in urban areas
Through the Integrated Urban Services Emergency Project, the World Bank has partnered with the UN’s Office for Project Services (UNOPS) and local institutions in conflict-affected cities to provide more than 3 million recipients with access to critical services. Up to now, the project has restored access to critical urban services, including water and sanitation, transport, energy, and solid waste management for 2.8 million Yemenis.

Providing Sustainable Energy solutions to ensure service continuity
To increase people’s access to electricity in a sustainable way, the Yemen Emergency Electricity Access Project is partnering with local microfinance institutions (MFIs) to help them set up financing windows for high quality, small-scale, solar power solutions for households, and providing partial grants to make the systems more affordable. The project is also contracting solar suppliers and installers to provide grant-financed solar power systems to key facilities, including clinics, schools, and water wells in rural and peri-urban areas. As of February 2021, 6 MFIs were participating in the program and a total of 35,148 households with over 235,000 beneficiaries had gained household access to electricity. Electricity had been installed in 293 facilities (119 health facilities, 149 schools, and 25 water wells), restoring critical services to over 1.7 million beneficiaries. All electric solutions supported under the project are fully renewable.

THE WORLD BANK PORTFOLIO IN YEMEN

Since July 2016, the World Bank has mobilized a total of US$2.114 billion for its emergency operations in Yemen. This includes IDA grants totaling US$2.078 billion, and a US$36 million project financed by the World Bank-managed Global Agriculture and Food Security Program Trust Fund.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Name</th>
<th>Amount (US$ million)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yemen Emergency Crisis Response Project</td>
<td>840</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yemen Emergency Health and Nutrition Project</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yemen Integrated Urban Services Emergency Project</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yemen Emergency Electricity Access Project</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yemen COVID-19 Response Project</td>
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<td>Yemen Desert Locust Response Project</td>
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<tr>
<td>Smallholder Agricultural Production Restoration and Enhancement Project</td>
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<tr>
<td>Emergency Social Protection Enhancement and COVID-19 Response Project</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yemen Restoring Education and Learning Project</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,115</strong></td>
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Investments are complemented and informed by a diversified program of technical assistance and analytical work. This includes for example advisory services to the Central Statistical Organization on National Accounts indicators, regular economic and welfare monitoring, and a multi-phase Dynamic Needs Assessment, which has been conducted in 2015, 2018 and 2020 to assess the impact of the conflict on the population, infrastructure, service delivery, and institutions.

For more information, visit our website: www.worldbank.org/ye or contact Ebrahim Al-Harazi at ealharazi@worldbank.org.