

New funding provides much needed boost for Yemen aid operations, but needs outstrip means

30 November 2017 – A United Nations-managed humanitarian emergency fund has allocated \$70 million to strife-ridden Yemen, enabling critical life-saving relief operations across large parts of the country.

“Through this new allocation, [humanitarians] will respond to the immediate causes of food insecurity and malnutrition; improve access to food, nutrition, health, water and sanitation services; and continue to support the ongoing cholera response,” said Jamie McGoldrick, the Humanitarian Coordinator in Yemen, in a [news release](#) issued by the UN Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs ([OCHA](#)).

“It will also provide a minimum package of assistance including shelter, non-food items and protection services to the most vulnerable individuals among internally displaced persons, returnees and host communities,” he added.

Approved Wednesday, the latest allocation by the OCHA-managed Yemen Humanitarian Fund has prioritized 95 districts across 15 of the country’s 22 governorates, including Aden, Al Bayda Al Dhale’e, Hadramaut, Hajjah, Lahj, Sa’ada Shabwah and Taiz.

It will also assist national non-governmental organizations which will implement more than 40 per cent of the total grant through some 33 projects run by 26 national relief actors (amounting to about \$31.3 million).

Even before the eruption of violence in 2015, Yemen had been suffering chronic poverty and under development.

However, close to three years of [relentless conflict](#) has left more than three-fourths of Yemenis in need of some kind of humanitarian assistance to meet their basic needs and over 17.8 million people food insecure – 8.4 million among them severely food insecure and at risk of starvation.

Basic social services in Yemen have virtually collapsed
Humanitarian coordinator Yemen

The latest, much-needed allocation – made possible through [contributions](#) from 18 donors – will help many, but more resources are urgently needed to ensure that the \$1 billion funding gap in the [2017 Yemen Humanitarian Response Plan](#) can be closed and all those who need assistance can be reached.

“Basic social services in Yemen have virtually collapsed, therefore the continued provision of humanitarian assistance remains a lifeline for millions of people who continue to struggle in a crisis that does not make

many headlines,” Mr. McGoldrick added.

[Global blueprints on refugees, safe migration should include protections for children – UNICEF](#)

30 November 2017 – The rights, protection and wellbeing of uprooted children should be central commitments of global migration policies, the United Nations Children’s Fund ([UNICEF](#)) said on Thursday, as it released a new report prior to a meeting next week on safe, regular and orderly migration.

The meeting, taking place from 4 to 6 December in Puerto Vallarta, Mexico, is a major step towards drafting the landmark intergovernmental [Global Compact for Migration](#) , an agreement covering all dimensions of international migration.

“Global leaders and policymakers convening in Puerto Vallarta can work together to [make migration safe for children](#),” said UNICEF Director of Programmes Ted Chaiban.

It is the moment when world leaders will begin to forge consensus on political and financial commitments in line with the [New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants](#) and the [Convention on the Rights of the Child](#).

The report, [Beyond Borders: How to make the global compacts on migration and refugees work for uprooted children](#), highlights best practices for the care and protection of refugee and migrant children and includes examples of governments, civil society partners and host communities working to support and integrate uprooted children and their families.

“Our new report shows that it is possible, even in countries with stretched resources, to implement policies, services and investments that effectively support refugee and migrant children in their countries of origin, as they transit across borders and upon reaching their destinations,” said Mr. Chaiba.

Refugee and migrant children are especially vulnerable to xenophobia, abuse, sexual exploitation and lack of access to social services. The report underscores the importance of having policies in place to protect them over the course of their journey.

It also presents successful case studies from around the world, including the implementation of minimum protection standards for refugee children in Germany, cross border child protection systems in West Africa, and finding alternatives to the detention of migrant children in Zambia. Other countries

featured in the report include Afghanistan, Italy, Jordan, Lebanon, South Sudan, Vietnam, Uganda and the United States.

Each of the initiatives can be replicated in different contexts and inform child-focused actions and policy change at national, regional and global levels to be agreed in the framework of the Compact.

The report also presents UNICEF's six-point agenda for action, as a basis for policies to protect refugee and migrant children, particularly those unaccompanied, and ensure their wellbeing from exploitation and violence.

It also calls for the end of detention for children seeking refugee status or migrating, by introducing a range of practical alternatives, and advocates for keeping families together as the best way to protect children and give children legal status.

The agenda stresses that all refugee and migrant children have access to education, health and other quality services, and presses for action on underlying causes of large scale movements of [refugees and migrants](#).

Finally, it promotes measures to combat xenophobia, discrimination and marginalization in countries of transit and destination.

One in 10 medicines in developing countries substandard or falsified – UN health agency

29 November 2017 – Substandard or fake medicines that fail to prevent and cure disease – and could even cause death – are becoming more and more prevalent, the World Health Organization ([WHO](#)) has warned, calling on Governments to take urgent actions to tackle this global problem.

“Substandard and falsified medicines particularly affect the most vulnerable communities,” Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, WHO Director-General, [said](#) during the launch of the Global Surveillance and Monitoring System report and a study on the Public health and socioeconomic impact in Geneva.

“These products do nothing but prolong sickness, waste money and erode hope. At worst, they kill, cause serious harm, and fan the flames of drug resistance,” Mr. Tedros Adhanom underscored.

According to the reports, anti-malarials and antibiotics are the most common substandard or falsified products. Others range from cancer treatment to contraception.

While most cases received are from Africa, WHO said the data is the tip of the iceberg as many more are unreported.

“Substandard or falsified medicines not only have a tragic impact on individual patients and their families, but also are a threat to antimicrobial resistance, adding to the worrying trend of medicines losing their power to treat,” said Mariângela Simão, Assistant Director-General for Access to Medicines, Vaccines and Pharmaceuticals at WHO.

Progress has been made since 2013, with 550 regulators from 141 countries having been trained to detect and respond to this issue. As more people are trained, more cases are reported to WHO.

Substandard and falsified medicines not only have negative health impact, but they also cause socioeconomic problems due to the absence of good governance and weak technical capacity.

Globalization also makes it harder to regulate medical products, and online pharmacies can easily avoid quality control.

Calling it an “all-too-common” reality, Mr. Tedros Adhanom urged Governments to set prevention, detection and response into action.

“These commitments are not costs; they’re investments that protect businesses and markets, and the integrity of health systems,” he said, adding that “but more importantly, they’re investments in human capital.”

[Four billion people have no social security protection – UN labour agency](#)

29 November 2017 – More than half of the global population – some four billion people – have no social security protection, UN labour experts said on Wednesday.

In a new World Social Protection Report 2017-2019, entitled [Universal social protection to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals](#), the UN International Labour Organization ([ILO](#)) highlights how this protection gap is an obstacle to reaching globally-agreed targets on promoting growth and development and protecting the planet.

ILO Director-General Guy Ryder said that although many countries had improved social protection for their citizens in recent decades, much more investment and political is needed to extend coverage.

“The lack of social protection [leaves people vulnerable](#) to ill-health, poverty, inequality and social exclusion throughout their lifecycle. Denying

this human right to four billion people worldwide is a significant obstacle to economic and social development,” he warned.

Indeed, speaking to journalists in Geneva, he said that social security protection is a basic human right, and “when people don’t have it, governments reap the benefits.” Today however, Mr. Ryder explained that only 45 per cent of the global population have access to at least one social benefit, and only 29 per cent have comprehensive protection.

“In 2017, this global lack of social protection, I think, should be regarded as being completely unacceptable [...] and that means that the aggregate level of public expenditure on social protection needs to be increased to extend social protection coverage particularly in Africa, in Asia and the Arab countries where marked under-investment in social protection prevails,” he said.

Despite a slight improvement in welfare coverage since 2015 around the world, much more investment by governments will be needed to extend protection to all; not least the 1.3 billion children who have no cover whatsoever.

ILO says this is particularly true in rural areas, where 56 per cent of people lack health coverage, compared to 22 per cent in towns and cities.

Some countries are already tackling the problem by offering simplified tax returns to workers previously in the informal sector.

Once on the government’s books, contributions from these workers help pay for maternity leave, job-seekers’ allowance, disabilities benefit and care for senior citizens. The evolving world of work and technology has also provided new opportunities to extend social protection, ILO says.

In Uruguay, for example, e-taxi provider Uber’s drivers can download a phone application which automatically deducts their social security charges.

Elsewhere, ILO warns that progress in welfare protection risks being pushed back – the result of fiscal savings put in place after the global economic crisis.

This is likely to be the case in Europe, the agency’s Isabel Ortiz warns, where pensioners in 19 countries face lower benefits by 2060.

“You have to balance equity with sustainability,” she told journalists.

[South Sudan: UN envoy condemns](#)

'horrific' killings of civilians in Jonglei

29 November 2017 – The most senior United Nations official in South Sudan has condemned the “horrific” killing of some 45 civilians in the Jonglei region on Tuesday when a Murle ethnic group attacked a Dinka village.

“I [utterly condemn these killings](#) and the abduction of some 60 women and children which accompanied these attacks,” said David Shearer, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for South Sudan and head of the UN Mission in the country, known as UNMISS.

The attack left 19 people wounded.

“I urge the leaders of both communities to reign in the youth, show restraint and to put an end to the cycle of revenge killings. It is crucial that the national and local authorities support the community leaders and work to bring the perpetrators of all attacks to account,” he added.

Since 2013, the Murle and Dinka communities in Jonglei, which is in the central part of the country, have been engaged in long-standing inter-ethnic violence that has operated outside the wider political conflict in South Sudan.

“The perpetrators of this violence have undermined the ongoing peace and reconciliation efforts that [UNMISS] has supported in Jonglei,” Mr. Shearer said.

“The engagement that UNMISS has had with both communities has shown that the vast majority of people want to end the destructive pattern of revenge attacks,” he underscored.

The dead included humanitarian workers who, according to Mr. Shearer, were “working selflessly for the people of Jonglei.”

Their deaths, he added, are “pointless and utterly contemptible.”