

# Press release: Funding boost for Scottish charity working in Yemen

Yemen continues to be the worst humanitarian crisis in the world with over 22 million people – 75% of the population – in need of humanitarian assistance.

Mercy Corps' new work, funded by the UK government, will help thousands of people who have had to flee from conflict in and around Hodeidah in northern Yemen to the cities of al Mokha and Dhubab.

Mercy Corps will provide these vulnerable people, many of whom now have no access to essential services, with life-saving access to over 73,000 litres of clean water every day. They will also help over 21,000 people buy vital food through cash transfers, which are one of the most effective and direct ways of helping communities facing crisis, like those displaced from Hodeidah.

Cash transfers work by providing a modest amount of cash to vulnerable families so that they can buy essential items such as food, water and medicine. This provides better value for money for UK taxpayers and gives recipients the dignity they deserve, with some research showing that £1 delivered through cash transfers can buy £1.20 worth of traditional aid.

The Minister for International Development, Alistair Burt, made the announcement during a visit to Mercy Corps' offices in central Edinburgh.

Mr Burt said:

It was great to visit Mercy Corps' offices in Edinburgh this morning and hear more about how UK aid is helping their vital work in Yemen and throughout the world.

The UK remains deeply concerned by the humanitarian crisis in Yemen, which is the largest in the world. That's why the UK was the second-largest donor to the UN Humanitarian Appeal last year.

The conflict has forced thousands to leave their homes, jobs and livelihoods. Our support to Mercy Corps will put cash directly in the hands of 21,000 of some of the most vulnerable Yemenis, to make sure that they have enough money to buy the food and other essentials they need to survive.

Ultimately only a political settlement can bring long-term stability to Yemen and end the humanitarian crisis, so peace talks are the top priority. We call upon all parties to join the UK in supporting the efforts being made by the United Nations to find peace for the sake of the Yemeni people and the security of Yemen's neighbours.

Simon O'Connell, Mercy Corps Executive Director said:

At a time of unprecedented need in Yemen, UK Aid plays a vital role in helping Mercy Corps meet the emergency needs of families who have been forced to flee their homes. However, until there is a political solution to the conflict in Yemen, their suffering will not end.

Humanitarian organisations, like Mercy Corps, need to be able to provide life-saving support safely and securely, and we must continue all efforts to protect the humanitarian space.

## Notes to Editors

- The UK remains deeply concerned by the humanitarian crisis in Yemen – the largest in the world. Over 22 million people – 75% of the population – are in need of humanitarian assistance. More than 11 million are in need of immediate help to save or sustain life. The UN estimates that 17.8 million people in Yemen do not have reliable access to food and 8.4 million people face extreme food shortages.
- This is an additional funding allocation of £2.7 million to Mercy Corps for their work in Yemen. Earlier this year the UK announced a total of £170 million in response to the humanitarian crisis in Yemen for the financial year 2018 – 2019. This will meet immediate food needs for 2.5 million Yemenis, and brings the total UK bilateral support to Yemen to over £570 million since 2015.
- Independent research on a cash transfer programme in Lebanon show it delivered 20% better value for money, so every £1 of UK support delivered through cash transfers delivers £1.20 worth of aid. Evidence shows that digital cash transfers are more accountable and better safeguarded against theft, diversion and corruption.
- Mercy Corps is a leading global organisation powered by the belief that a better world is possible. In disaster, in hardship, in more than 40 countries around the world, they partner to put bold solutions into action – helping people triumph over adversity and build stronger communities from within. [www.mercycorps.org.uk](http://www.mercycorps.org.uk)