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FLOODS

Severe flooding in Yemen impacted over 165 000 people, exacerbating the displacement crisis

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Image credit: Yemen flood (2022/stock)

More than 165 000 people across more than 70 districts of Yemen were impacted by widespread flooding over the past couple of months, leading to loss of life and significant damage to shelters, crops, and infrastructure. The already vulnerable internally displaced persons (IDP) find themselves further distressed as their shelters and belongings have been swept away by the floods, forcing them into yet another round of displacements.

Since mid-March, torrential rainfall has inundated various governorates of Yemen, significantly impacting more than 165 000 people. The flooding not only took a

toll on human lives but also inflicted substantial property damage and infrastructure loss. Critical structures, including roads and bridges, have been severely impaired in this environmental disaster.

Reports indicate that the heaviest rainfall has wreaked havoc in the governorates of Al-Jawf, Marib, Sayun, Hajjah, Amran, Marib, Shabwah, Lahj, Al-Bayda, Al-Mahwit, Taiz, and Al-Mahra. The devastation has left 31 people dead and over 37 injured, with nearly 1 000 buildings either partially or completely collapsed.

According to the March update from the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) in Yemen, approximately 603 000 people across 112 districts are at high risk of flooding this year. As of that update, 16 435 families had been affected, with Marib being the worst hit, followed by Hajjah and Amran.

Flooding also exacerbates the threat of water-borne diseases, disrupts livelihoods, and leads to loss of crops and property damage. In 2022, climate-related events were responsible for a 93 percent increase in new and secondary displacements, particularly in Al-Hodeidah, Al-Jawf, Marib, and Ta'iz governorates.

The United Nations’ Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) reported 30 homes damaged in the Salh district in the Taiz governorate. Areas in southern, central, and western Yemen have experienced torrential rainfall since early April, leading to further flooding and causing significant casualties and damage.

This was the second major flooding event to hit Yemen in a month, adding further strain to an already vulnerable population. The Global Disaster Alert and Coordination System (GDACS) and media sources indicate that at least five people have lost their lives, and 30 houses have been destroyed or damaged in southwestern areas due to flash floods, resulting in more displacements.

In Al-Jawf governorate, heavy rains have fallen in most of the villages and areas of the Al-Zahir district, causing extensive damage and losses. The heavy rains, which continued for several hours and recurred, resulted in torrential floods, soil erosion, and the collapse of several houses.

References:

¹ Yemen floods – update – DG ECHO – June 12, 2023

² YEM: Flood – 2023-03 – Heavy rains and floods in Yemen – IFRC

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