

6 years of war in Yemen

Yemen devastated by an endless war

Ottawa, 26 March 2021. The 6-year long war in Yemen war has caused the largest humanitarian crisis in the world. The level of destruction of infrastructure by massive bombing and shelling in populated areas, as well as the contamination by explosive devices are enormous challenges to overcome. The conflict in Yemen provides a horrifying example of the long-term humanitarian consequences of explosive weapons used in populated areas. States must support the draft international agreement against urban bombing currently being negotiated to help end the suffering.

- In 6 years of war, Yemen has been devastated by the war and the extensive use of explosive weapons. **Around 233,000 people died due to the conflict, some being direct victims of the violence, others dying of the indirect consequences of the conflict**, such as lack of health services and clean water as health facilities and water supply systems have been largely destroyed by bombing and shelling; lack of food due to the destruction of roads making impossible to channelling goods, etc.. **More than 20,000 civilian deaths and injuries have been verified as a direct result of hostilities since 2015.**
- Conflict intensified during 2020, resulting in shocking levels of civilian suffering. By the end of October 2020, there were 47 front lines, up from 33 in January 2020. In recent weeks, violent combats have taken place in Marib forcing thousands to flee. Many families who actually live in Marib have already faced multiple displacements to flee violence's in the last years. They are stranded in overcrowded camps, needing shelter, protection, food, water, hygiene and health.
- There are reports of widespread use of landmines in several regions of the country. Almost **1,100 civilians were killed or injured by landmines or improvised explosive devices** from 2018 to 2020 included. In 2020 only, **at least 1,300 civilians** were affected in landmine or ERW related incidents (these incidents remain largely under-reported).
- The massive and repeated use of explosive weapons in populated areas - especially those with wide area effects - has exacerbated Yemen's humanitarian crisis and will have a long-term impact in Yemen. According to the Humanitarian Needs Overview 2021, 20 million people in need of humanitarian assistance, which represents 66% of the entire population. 16 million people who are food insecure. **3.6 million people are displaced.** The disruption to the economy has inflated the cost of food. In recent months, the country has also been hit by the COVID-19 pandemic and natural hazards such as flooding and locusts.
- The level of contamination by explosive remnants of war in Yemen is likely to be extremely high due to the intensity of the conflict over the last 6 years. Should the conflict end today, incidents linked with the use of weapons are expected to last for decades and continue to impact civilians and prevent the return of the displaced to their homes.

- **Quote:** "The 6-year war has made Yemen the world's largest humanitarian emergency: 66 % of the population is in need of humanitarian assistance. The level of destruction is staggering. NGOs face significant security and administrative constraints that considerably reduce their scope of action. Humanitarian aid is unfortunately largely underfunded as only 50% of the 3.8 million USD required by the United Nations are so far met. States' Donors should support lifesaving humanitarian aid in Yemen. They should also continue to put pressure on parties to the conflict to lift the obstacles that impede humanitarian access and intervention and ensure civilians are protected."

Humanity & Inclusion in Yemen

- HI is present in the governorates of Sana'a, Amanat al Asimah, Hajjah, Aden Lahj and Taiz, in 9 health centres, and welcomes patients from all over the country. HI has treated at least **30,000 people, many of them victims of the conflict**, since the beginning of its operations in 2015. **More than 3,000 of them** (Figure Dec. 2019) **were victims of explosive weapons** such as bombings, explosive remnants of war, improvised explosive devices.
- Among its beneficiaries, HI notes a large and unprecedented proportion of victims of landmines and explosive remnants of war in Yemen: **850 victims of these weapons** (Figure Dec. 2019) have been taken care of by the association in 5 years.
- The association has provided **more than 35,000 crutches, walkers, wheelchairs etc. Nearly 23,000 people have received psychological support**. HI fitted **520 people with prostheses and orthotics** through its collaboration with the Sana'a Physiotherapy and Prosthesis Centre. **More than 800 Yemeni health workers** in Sana'a and other governorates were sensitized and trained in early trauma response.

Diplomatic process to end bombing in urban areas

- HI and members of the International Network of Explosive Weapons (INEW) are working with States to develop a strong international agreement **to end the use of explosive weapons with wide area effects in populated areas and to ensure support to the victims of these weapons**.
- An Ireland-led diplomatic process to reach an international agreement against the use of explosive weapons in populated areas started in October 2019. So far, more than 70 States have been involved in drafting the international agreement against the use of explosive weapons in populated areas. Negotiations were put on hold due to the Covid-19 pandemic, but resumed early this year.
- A final round of negotiation is scheduled for late spring/early summer in Geneva depending on the outcomes of the global health situation caused by Covid-19. Then, the international agreement should be proposed to States for endorsement during a conference that should be scheduled depending on the outcomes of the global health situation caused by Covid-19.

About Humanity & Inclusion (HI)

HI is an independent international aid organisation. It has been working in situations of poverty and exclusion, conflict and disaster for 30 years. Working alongside people with disabilities and other vulnerable groups, our actions and voice are focused on responding to their essential needs, improving their living conditions and promoting respect for their dignity and basic rights. Since it was founded in 1982, Humanity & Inclusion (formerly Handicap International) has set up development programmes in more than 60 countries and intervenes in numerous emergency situations. There are eight national associations within the network (Germany, Belgium, Canada, United States, France, Luxembourg, UK and Switzerland), working tirelessly to mobilise resources, co-manage projects and increase the impact of the organisation's principles and actions. HI is one of six founding



organisations of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL), co-recipient of the 1997 Nobel Peace Prize and winner of the Conrad N. Hilton Award in 2011. HI takes action and campaigns in places where “living in dignity” is no easy task.”

More information sur www.hi-canada.org

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