



Humanitarian Standards Resources for the response in Yemen

Purpose of the document

This paper shows how different humanitarian standards can be used by humanitarian actors and affected communities in their response to the crisis in Yemen.

Introduction

Yemen has been embroiled in civil war since 2015. Even before the conflict, it was one of the poorest countries in the region. Entering the third year of humanitarian crisis, the country's situation keeps worsening due to ongoing conflict, severe economic decline, and collapsing of essential public services. Humanitarian actors, present in this vulnerable part of the world for long, have intensified their actions in the past two years with the escalating conflict. But needs are growing fast, and humanitarian organisations will endeavour to expand their reach. Humanitarian standards can support them to develop their interventions, monitor their impact, and strive for high quality assistance and accountability to affected populations.

Background and context



Yemenis are facing armed conflict, displacement, high risk of famine and disease outbreaks. Some 80 per cent of the population – 22.2 million people – need humanitarian assistance (including 11.3 million people in acute need who urgently require immediate assistance to survive.)¹ Intensified conflict and violations of International Humanitarian Law have resulted in massive protection needs, particularly for women, children, displaced and persons with specific needs.

Essential basic services are at the brink of total collapse. In this situation, Yemen is increasingly becoming susceptible to disease outbreaks: a cholera outbreak struck in 2017, followed by a rapidly spreading suspected diphtheria epidemic. Already ailing before the escalation of the conflict, the Yemeni economy has been decimated, thus driving significant losses of livelihoods. Companies have reduced their operations and agriculture has been harshly constrained by a shortage of inputs. 153 humanitarian organisations are working in Yemen (including 109 national organisations)² deploying their assistance on WASH, Shelter,

¹ <https://www.icrc.org/en/where-we-work/middle-east/yemen/health-crisis-yemen>

² https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/sites/www.humanitarianresponse.info/files/documents/files/organizations_3w_operational_presence_as_of_nov_2017.pdf

Refugees and Migrants, Protection, Nutrition, Health, Food security and agriculture, Education and EECR³.

Humanitarian Standards

The standards from the Humanitarian Standards Partnership are internationally recognised set of common principles and universal minimum standards for humanitarian response.

They outline the assistance and protection crisis-affected people can expect and uphold their right to life with dignity.

Founded on humanitarian principles and human rights, they allow humanitarian actors to be held accountable to the people they serve, represent a reference point for all actors in preparedness and response.

The Humanitarian Standards Partnership brings together standards initiatives around:



Humanitarian Charter, Protection Principles, Core Humanitarian Standard, WASH, Food, security, Nutrition, Shelter and settlement, Health



Child protection

INEE

Education in emergencies



Economic recovery



Livestock



Market analysis

Inclusion of older people/ people with disabilities

Collectively, these standards address all aspects of humanitarian response from protection concerns, productive assets, livelihoods, food security, inclusion, education and market systems. These areas of support are essential for humanitarian organisations involved in the response in Yemen.

About the standards

Humanitarian standards are developed through a consultative process with expert practitioners and adhere to similar formats and structure. Most standards undergo periodic revisions to ensure content is most up-to-date and reflect current realities. HSP standards come out of

³ Emergency Employment and Community rehabilitation

Map from <http://yemenmap.facts.co/yemenmapof/yemenmap.php>

processes of broad consultation with practitioners and policy makers followed by the commissioning of authors for each of their technical chapter. They represent benchmarks of best practices in humanitarian action, and compile decades of knowledge and expertise. They are meant to be used at all stages of the humanitarian response, from preparedness, to response, to early recovery, or prevention. They are mostly used by humanitarian actors but also guide governments and policy makers in their duties towards those affected by humanitarian crises. They are not necessarily geared for a specific organisation, and can be for small organisation, community-based organisation, or large international organization. They are available as handbooks, online as PDFs, and on mobile devices through a user-friendly smartphone application called the HSPapp



Yemen WASH Cluster

Marije Broekhuijsen, former coordinator for the WASH cluster in Yemen says: *"Humanitarian standards such as Sphere were fundamental for each aspect of my core functions as coordinator in Yemen: the establishment of coordination mechanisms, the understanding of local needs, the development of intervention strategy, the planning of responses, the advocacy for humanitarian space with authorities, and the development of accountability mechanisms to affected people"*

She also explains that given their good recognition by partners involved in the response, Sphere standards allowed for better coordination and created a common ground for everyone's work and efforts, especially in the WASH area.



Sphere Handbook

The Sphere Handbook puts the right of disaster-affected populations to life with **dignity**, and to protection and **assistance** at the centre of humanitarian action. It promotes the active **participation** of affected populations as well as of local and national authorities.

Furthermore, the Sphere minimum standards cover several primary areas of humanitarian aid. (WASH, Food, Shelter, Health)

Because of physical damage to infrastructures, lack of resources and forced internal displacement people, 16 million people in Yemen are in acute need of durable access to water, hygiene and sanitation.⁴

Sphere standards on **WASH** give guidelines for humanitarian actors to develop solutions that are appropriate and adapted to people's needs in affected areas (constructions of latrines, sewage systems, distribution of consumable hygiene kits and water filters, etc.). According to the former WASH cluster coordinator for Yemen, Sphere standards, contextualized for Yemen, help understanding where people most in needs are, and monitoring if their needs are met.

There are furthermore currently about 11.3 million people living in areas affected by cholera who need preventive services.⁵ Sphere standards on **Hygiene promotion** support the development of integrated prevention activities such as water quality monitoring, chlorination of water sources, communication and mass awareness raising.

The standards present assessment checklists: "What water and sanitation practices were the population accustomed to before the emergency?" "What segments of the population need to be targeted?"

In Yemen, children with malnutrition who may contract cholera need special consideration. Other target groups are women in reproductive age and elderly, as these vulnerable groups were most affected by the outbreak in 2017.⁶ Sphere Handbook gives essential indications for targeting the most vulnerable.

Click [here](#) to read the Sphere standards



The Minimum Standards for Child Protection (CPMS)

⁴ https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/20180120_HRP_YEMEN_Final.pdf, page 37

⁵ *ibid*

⁶ *ibid*

The Minimum Standards for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action (CPMS), led by the Alliance for Child Protection⁷, set out a common agreement on what needs to be achieved for **child protection** in humanitarian action to be of adequate **quality**.

In Yemen, two years of ground fighting and aerial bombardment has destroyed many homes, rendering families homeless, and forcing schools to close. Children, family, and entire communities are suffering and need mental health and **psychosocial support**, in addition to material life-saving assistance⁸.



CPMS outline the requisite for humanitarian practices to uphold **children's protection principles**, to do no harm to them, to make decisions based on the child's best interest and to involve children in the decision-making.

The handbook also gives guidelines on psychosocial support for children and their families. For example, it contains a standard on **child-friendly spaces**, where communities create a nurturing environment with provision of educational and psychosocial support for children. In Yemen such spaces are exceptionally popular with children, parents and the communities.

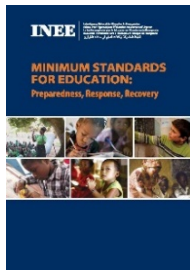
Furthermore, Yemen's migration flows consist of large numbers of unaccompanied migrant children from the Horn of Africa who aim to transit Yemen to go to Saudi Arabia.⁹ These children need urgent life-saving assistance and protection. The CPMS can support this work. They contain standards and guidelines on **unaccompanied and separated children**, shelter and child protection, psychosocial distress. They provide resources for the analysis of the children's vulnerabilities and needs, the provision of immediate needs and the family tracing or reunification.

Click [here](#) read the CPMS

⁷ The Alliance for Child Protection is a global level forum for inter-agency collaboration, learning and standard setting on child protection in humanitarian action.

⁸ Interview from Chissey Mueller, Migrant Assistance and Protection Officer with IOM, the UN Migration Agency in Yemen, <https://reliefweb.int/report/yemen/protecting-children-yemen>

⁹ Ibid



INEE Minimum Standards for Education

Education is a fundamental human right. The Minimum Standards led by the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) articulate the minimum level of **educational quality and access in emergencies** through to recovery.

Since the latest conflict erupted in Yemen, widespread displacement, damage to schools, and general insecurity have deeply impact children's access to schooling. Nearly half a million children have dropped out of school, bringing the total number of out-of-school children to 2 million¹⁰. Meanwhile, almost three quarters of public school teachers have not been paid their salaries in over a year. Many have also been exposed to serious psychological trauma. Over 3,500 schools have been destroyed or are being used to host internally displaced people (IDPs)¹¹. Many of the roughly 2.2 million IDPs in Yemen are students or teachers, which further contributes to education gaps.¹²

INEE Minimum standards can support education in emergency efforts in Yemen. They help the coordination and creation of plans to ensure access to **safe learning spaces** and **alternative learning opportunities**.

They provide standards on strengthened capacity of education systems and communities. They support all aspects education on emergencies which are relevant in Yemen, such as training are needed on how to support children who have experience distress, on mine risk reduction, in hygiene promotion.

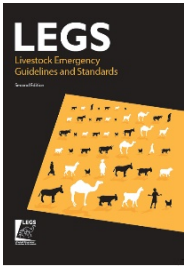
The INEE standards foster equitable access to education and help humanitarian actors and communities in Yemen promoting **school as a protective place for all children**, both from displaced and host populations. The standards also explain that effective emergency education response is based on active community participation and use of community resources.

Click [here](#) to read the INEE standards

¹⁰ <http://www.ineesite.org/en/news/in-yemen-childrens-education-devastated-after-three-years-of-escalating-con>

¹¹ https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/yemen_education_cluster_strategy2016-2017_eng.pdf

¹² https://www.unocha.org/sites/unocha/files/dms/yemen_humanitarian_needs_overview_hno_2018_20171204.pdf



The Livestock Emergency Guidelines and Standards (LEGS)

The Livestock Emergency Guidelines and Standards assist people with managing and protecting their **livestock** during **humanitarian crises**.

In Yemen livestock production is one of the **main income sources** of the rural community with significant contribution to their livelihoods. The majority of the rural population in the rural areas follows the traditional livestock production system which partially or fully depends on natural grazing and pasture.

The recent escalation of conflict has impacted the livestock sector in the coastal area of the southern districts. Lack of pasture and water, the high price of fodder, and the absence of veterinary services are the main challenges faced by livestock owners. Furthermore, and as result of the protracted conflict, livestock markets are not functioning, and the prices and terms of trade have been against the livestock owners.¹³



LEGS provides key recommendations on conducting in-depth assessment on the livestock situation in Yemen and designing appropriate responses, such as implementation of livestock treatment campaigns, provision of **animal feed and water** ensuring equitable distribution of resources, monitoring and implementation of animal health activities, etc.

LEGS outlines the Do-No-Harm principle, and the need for **coordination** with all actors, including the local community and stakeholders, to avoid any misunderstanding and arise of conflict.

The standards give guidance for a well-coordinated and **integrated approach**, which is highly needed in the context of Yemen and to address the various needs of the IDPs and host communities in the provision of animal material and services.

Click [here](#) to read LEGS

¹³ <https://reliefweb.int/report/yemen/yemen-rapid-assessment-report-livestock-sector-conflict-affected-areas-hodeidah>
Photo: Brahma Cattle (Bos indicus) zebu emaciated cattle in North Yemen village, untrimmed hooves, Photographer: [David Hosking](#)



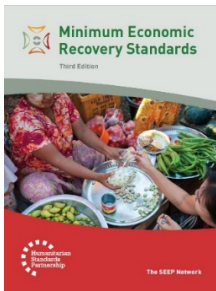
The Humanitarian Inclusion Standard for Older People and People with disabilities

Humanitarian organisations are committed to providing assistance and protection without discrimination. Yet **older people and people with disabilities** are routinely excluded from humanitarian responses, despite being among the most vulnerable. There are many barriers to access to humanitarian help and participation for older people or people with disability, such as stigma and discrimination against older people and people with disability, over-protection, communication and physical barrier, etc.

In Yemen, an estimated 1.65 million older people are at risk. They are among the **most vulnerable** in this crisis. Unable to flee the bombing, they are often ignored and neglected. Older people with chronic illnesses – who rely on life-saving medication every day - are particularly at risk. Reports also indicate that an estimated **6,000 people have acquired a disability in Yemen** since the conflict started in 2015 – most as the result of a blast, a mine or sustaining a gunshot. Older people and people with disability in the community are increasingly excluded in the humanitarian response.

The newly launched Humanitarian inclusion standards for older people and people with disabilities, developed by the Age and Disability Capacity Programme (ADCAP), provide guidance for humanitarian practitioners, to ensure older people and people with disabilities are **included**, and help to pay particular attention to **vulnerable and injured people**. They consist of key core standards (on identification, safe and equitable access, knowledge and participation, learning) and sector-specific standard.

Click [here](#) to read the standard



The Minimum Economic Recovery Standards

MERS represent a consensus across agencies engaged in economic recovery and development on what constitutes an effective and appropriate response to help disaster-affected populations gain **fair access to viable economic opportunities**, regain their **livelihoods** and provide for themselves and their families with dignity.

The economic situation in Yemen continues to deteriorate, with the alarming depreciation of the Yemeni Riyal, price spike of fuel and basic commodities, reduction/suspension of businesses activities, disruption of local markets, non-payment of civil servants, etc. This is driving significant losses of livelihoods and has already resulted in negative coping mechanisms (selling assets, reducing food consumption and clean water, going into debt). The food security situation of millions of vulnerable Yemenis is expected to continue to further deteriorate.¹⁴

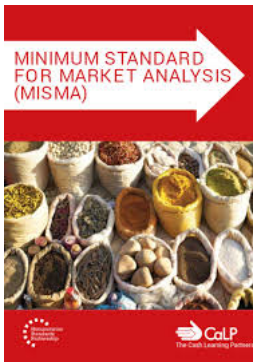
Many humanitarian organisations are committing to reduce the impact of future disasters in Yemen and **promote recovery** among vulnerable populations, especially in districts where the security situation has stabilised, and where populations are in need of assistance to rebuild their lives. To build resilience for affected populations, organisations are providing access to sustainable productive assets, facilitating linkages with financial institutions, promoting livelihoods that are less reliant on Yemen's scarce water resources, and offering vocational training, business development training and loans to vulnerable returnees and conflict-affected people.¹⁵

MERS support these organisations by outlining strategies for good programming that takes a markets-based approach to **asset distribution, enterprise and market systems development, financial services** and **employment**. Each set of MERS standards offer cross-cutting strategies that support local populations in Yemen to prepare, cope and recover from crisis and instability.

Click [here](#) to read the MERS

¹⁴ https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/20180120_HRP_YEMEN_Final.pdf

¹⁵ https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1866/erms_sector_update_october2013.pdf



The Minimum Standard for Market Analysis

The objective of the Minimum Standard for Market Analysis (MISMA) is to **guide the work of humanitarian practitioners across sectors** and to ensure that, irrespective of the tool used, the key standard of market analysis is being met. By **supporting high-quality market analysis**, the MISMA intends to contribute to improving response analysis and programme implementation.

Yemen, as many other humanitarian responses, has seen an increased usage of market-based programming as a mean for aid delivery and as part of the response to the crisis. As the conflict in Yemen escalated in March 2015, humanitarian partners increased both unconditional and conditional cash and vouchers modalities as a potential tool for scaling up the emergency response recognizing its immense potential within the Yemeni context in stimulating local demand and market functioning.¹⁶

The MISMA establishes the standards that must be met in any **market analysis exercise** to ensure the quality of humanitarian response and associated contingency plans. This means assisting disaster-affected populations to meet their basic needs and recover with dignity while using and supporting local markets as an engine of that recovery.

The MISMA is intended for humanitarian practitioners that are considering using market analysis exercises in **various sectors and/or for multi-sectoral** use. It has been developed and revised in such a way that it is accessible to and relevant for non-market specialist field practitioners across sectors who already possess assessment and analytical skills.



¹⁶ HRP Yemen

es/20180120_HRP_YEMEN_Final.pdf)

¹⁷ Photo from
yemen, 07

Yemenis, <https://www.wfp.org/photos/gallery/wfp-cash-transfer-distributions->

MISMA was developed by the Cash Learning Partnership (CaLP), the global partnership of humanitarian actors working in humanitarian **cash transfer programming**.

Click [here](#) to read the MISMA

To get access to all standards from your mobile devices, please
download the HSP application from www.humanitarianstandardspartnership.org

For any question, please contact us at hsp@sphereproject.org

