

Strengthening food and nutrition security in Yemen



Context

In Yemen, 14.4 million people or 53 percent of the total population are affected by food and nutrition insecurity. As a result, Yemen is one of 14 countries worldwide at an alarming state in the Global Hunger Index. Due to political instability since 2011 and lack of investment in the country's basic public infrastructure, access to food markets and health services is insufficient.

Yemen's physiographic resource base in terms of agriculturally productive land is limited. As a result,

and exacerbated by increasing water shortages, the country can only produce 20 percent of its own food and must import the remaining 80 percent. In rural areas, knowledge on reproductive health and nutrition as well as access to qualified health services is often poor. Fewer than half of all pregnancies and births are supported by skilled professionals and 70 percent of all births take place outside of health centres. Consequently, 35 percent of new-borns are underweight at birth.

Activities in Yemen

- **Promotion of good health and nutrition practices and health services:** Training of health professionals and awareness-raising campaigns targeted at volunteers in the health facilities through public channels improve access to information and advice on good health, hygiene and nutrition practices – especially for pregnant woman and children.
- **Strengthening the resilience of food and nutrition insecure households and communities:** The resilience of food and nutrition insecure households and whole communities in the catchment areas of participating health centres is being improved by way of locally adapted measures in the areas of WASH, agriculture, home gardens and skills development.
- **Strengthening the Yemeni Government's monitoring and evaluation capacities on food and nutrition security:** The programme strengthens the Secretariats for Food and Nutrition Security and the *Scaling Up Nutrition* (SUN) Secretariat in their monitoring and results evaluation of food and nutrition security programmes. This is to enable the government to have early information on imminent food crises and enables them to act quickly.

Our objective

The project's aim is to improve the food and nutrition security and resilience to food crises of food-insecure people, in particular of women of child bearing age as well as young children, in the Ibb and Hajjah Governorates.



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Region(s)

Ibb and Hajjah Governorates

Duration

10/2015 to 12/2019

Budget

EUR 4.4 million

Implementation partners

IFPRI, health authorities at the Governorate level, health centres, Technical Secretariat for Food Security, and the Technical Secretariat of the SUN initiative.

Lead executing agency

Ministry for Public Health and Population (MOPHP)

Target group

125,000 food and nutrition insecure women – especially pregnant and breast-feeding women – as well as approximately 90,000 young children up to 2 years of age in the catchment areas of the roughly 90 participating health centres.



How we work

A universal approach and holistic activities in the areas of health, agriculture, water provision and sanitation are used to achieve food and nutrition security. One of the activities focuses on public health workers and volunteers in public health centres. They are trained with a newly developed curriculum that includes topics such as the appropriate diet for pregnant women and small children. This ensures that the issue of nutrition is integrated into the expertise of health professionals and midwives, based on scientific evidence and locally adapted information. Awareness-raising campaigns contribute to disseminating core aspects of good practices additionally, which are multiplied by health centres and community health volunteers as well as through public channels.

In parallel, activities within communities are being implemented focussing on sanitation, agriculture, home gardens and hygiene which improve the resilience of food and nutrition insecure households. Agricultural production is strengthened through the provision of inputs and technologies, such as seed, livestock for breeding, bees, etc. Local women's groups are being supported in the installation of home gardens. They are also trained on locally relevant skills such as tailoring, frankincense processing or embroidery that contributes to the diversification of household incomes. This additional income can – in turn – be used to buy more diverse and nutritious food on the market.



Results

Despite the difficult political situation, some activities have already been implemented in Yemen. In the field of agriculture, 411 people (including 231 women) participated in a 5-day course on house gardens. They learned the essential aspects of managing a house garden and got the necessary instruments and seeds. A further 80 women participated in vocational training courses in which they were qualified for relevant, income-generating activities. Another 22 trainers have been trained in nutritional counselling, who have passed on this knowledge to health workers in 90 health care centers.

Imprint

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Photograph:

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GIZ is responsible for the content of the
present publication

February 2017