

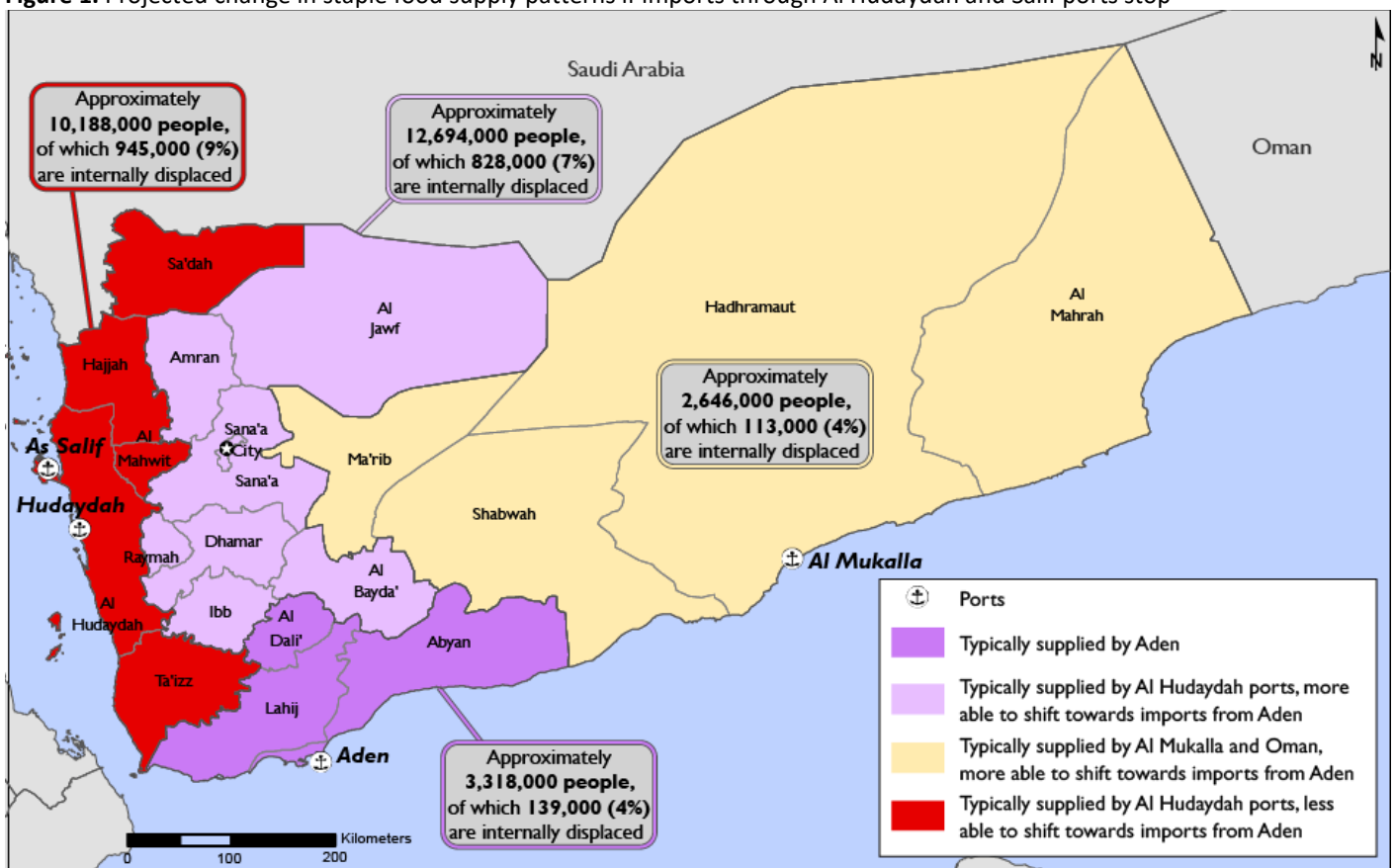
*Conflict in Al Hudaydah threatens ports; sustained imports needed to mitigate risk of Famine*

Following warnings in early June of an impending offensive in Al Hudaydah, Saudi and UAE-led military forces began an assault on the port city of Al Hudaydah on June 13. Media reports indicated that the objectives of the assault are to reclaim the city, and particularly the ports, from Houthi control. In a worst-case scenario, any conflict that could significantly disrupt port operations or destroy port facilities risks driving Yemen into Famine (IPC Phase 5), given Yemen’s reliance on maritime imports to satisfy the vast majority of its annual food and fuel supply.

The recent increase in conflict near Al Hudaydah raises high concern. However, as of June 14, initial reports indicate that no damage to port facilities or disruption of port activities has occurred at either Al Hudaydah or Salif ports. As a result, the scenario in which FEWS NET would be most concerned about Famine (IPC Phase 5) remains possible, but has not yet begun to develop. Severe damage to, or severe and persistent restrictions on commercial and humanitarian imports, and/or physical access to the ports from inside Yemen, would signal the beginning of that scenario.

Based on available information, FEWS NET believes current stock levels in Yemen are likely enough to satisfy approximately two months, but most likely no more than three months, of national need. Commercial stocks make up the large majority of in-country cereal availability, and in May 2018, staple food imports increased significantly compared to previous months. Humanitarian stocks are also contributing to national availability beyond current estimates of commercial stocks.

**Figure 1.** Projected change in staple food supply patterns if imports through Al Hudaydah and Salif ports stop



Source: FEWS NET analysis of information from the Food Security Cluster, Task Force on Population Movement, 16th Report, other partners, and FEWS NET monitors.  
Note: This reflects a coarse analysis of potential changes in trade at the governorate level. The source of staple foods may not be uniform at the sub-governorate level.

In a worst-case scenario, should humanitarian and commercial imports through Al Hudaydah and Salif stop or drastically decline for a prolonged period, FEWS NET estimates Famine (IPC Phase 5) would become likely in parts of Yemen within three to four months. Fuel prices would increase sharply, and as national cereal stocks start to become exhausted and/or market availability becomes extremely limited, staple food prices would increase sharply, beyond the ability for many households to purchase food. In addition, many of the more than 6 million people who receive humanitarian assistance each month live in areas served by assistance imported through the Red Sea ports. Populations most in need would begin to face more immediate and substantial food consumption gaps as stock shortages and increasing levels of insecurity in previously accessible areas begin to limit assistance delivery.

The inability to import sufficient levels of other essential commodities would also significantly impact human health. Very low fuel availability would significantly limit households' and communities' ability to pump water, significantly restricting access to water for human consumption and for sanitation. Meanwhile, the lack of essential medical supplies would limit access to lifesaving medical assistance. Attacks on key infrastructure, such as the recent attack on the MSF Cholera Treatment Center in Abs, Yemen, already highlight additional concerns for providing lifesaving assistance.

The areas where Famine (IPC Phase 5) would be likely to develop most quickly include areas more highly dependent on imports through Al Hudaydah and Salif, particularly those with intensive conflict and high numbers of IDPs, such as Hajjah, Sa'dah, and Ta'izz. Even for areas that are able to access imports from Aden, a risk of Famine would persist given the already severe levels of acute food insecurity that would be exacerbated by the increased competition for goods imported through Aden and through overland trade (overland imports account for a very minor share of total imports).