Shabwah | WASH Needs Tracking System (WANTS)

JULY - SEPTEMBER 2024

CONTEXT & RATIONALE

After more than ten years of conflict, Yemen is grappling with a public health emergency, evidenced by disruptions in accessing essential services, with an estimated **19.54 million** individuals projected to require humanitarian assistance in 2025.¹

The conflict, exacerbated by economic decline and recurrent natural hazards, has severely impaired public services and infrastructure, particularly affecting the nationwide Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) systems and services. Damage and underdevelopment of WASH systems have resulted in a demand for assistance from at least **15.2 million** people to address their critical needs for **clean water and basic sanitation** in 2025.¹

Assessed Districts

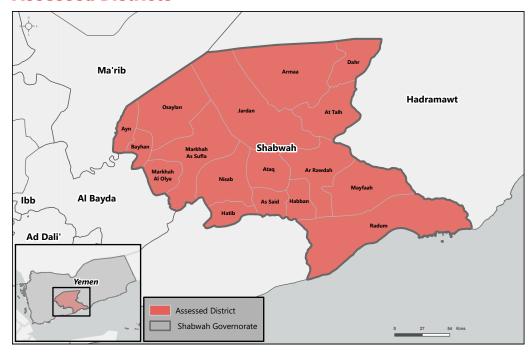


Figure 1: Covered Districts in Shabwah

Introduction

The Yemen WASH Cluster (YWC) and REACH have initiated the WASH Needs Tracking System (WANTS) since 2021. This system aims to deliver high quality WASH data, enhancing program efficiency and planning accuracy. WANTS constitutes of a set of harmonized monitoring tools, which facilitate the collection of up-to-date information on WASH accessibility and requirements across Yemen through partner-based data collection efforts.

The **WANTS Key Informant (KI)** tool monitors the WASH needs within communities, **providing up-to-date and reliable WASH data**. This data supports geographical and thematic prioritization at the national level and contributes to evidence-based programs for a **more targeted and effective WASH response**.

Figure 1 presents the coverage map of WANTS for Shabwah in 2024, highlighting 17 districts across the governorate. Data collection occurred between July and September 2024, within a recall period of 3 months, with active involvement from 4 Yemen WASH Cluster partners which were: Muslim Hands, Yemen Family Care Association, Yemen Alkhair for Relief and Development and Ministry of Water and Environment. Insights were gathered from 57 KIs. It is important to note that the findings in this situation overview are only indicative and do not provide a representative view of entire population.

KEY MESSAGES

The following key messages were reported by KIs:

- Communities face significant challenges with access to WASH services, which leads them to rely on inadequate sources and facilities, and to struggle with affording the necessary WASH items.
- Many KIs reported dissatisfaction with the quality and availability of WASH services, which might lead to poor health outcomes and increase reliance on inadequate solutions.
- In Shabwah, limited awareness about cholera, poor service quality in the health centers, inadequate WASH services in the health facilities, and long distances to health centers may contribute to delays in treatment, and increased transmission of diseases.







The availability and quality of water sources vary significantly across communities. Approximately 51% of the KIs reported that people in their community rely on improved water sources, while 49% of KIs indicated a dependence on non-improved water sources. About, 70% of KIs reported that their respective areas have acceptable quality of drinking water, indicating that water in these districts generally adheres to basic quality requirements.

In Shabwah governorate, people received water through diverse methods, *some of which seemed to reveal challenges in regards to infrastructure and access. 72% of KIs reported that people have access to piped water into the dwelling, most likely in more stable areas, while 68% of KIs reported that people received water through water trucking, which is both costly and often unreliable. Additionally, 19% of KIs reported that people bring water in gallons (jerrycans) from a tank/well next to the water source. This highlights the widespread lack of basic water infrastructure in many regions and underscores the significant challenges to achieving reliable water access across Shabwah governorate.



47% of KIs reported people in the community were **unsatisfied** with water access in the last 3 months prior to data collection, while **14% of KIs** reported people in the community were **very unsatisfied**.



28% of KIs reported that people in the community found **drinking water quality unacceptable** in the last 3 months.

Among the 51% of KIs who reported access to improved water sources in Shabwah governorate, 72% of KIs highlighted not having any issues with the quality of the drinking water. Despite this, dissatisfaction with water access persists, underscoring challenges related to availability, affordability and reliability of water supplies in these districts. This emphasizes the need for focused efforts to enhance water infrastructure, improve service delivery, and ensure equitable access for all. Continuous monitoring and investment are crucial to addressing these gaps and achieving sustainable management of water resources in Shabwah governorate.

^{**11%} of KIs reported that people in their communities do not fetch water, while 5% of KIs answered do not know



Water Issues, Coping Mechanisms, and Responsibilities

Percentage of KIs outlining the top 3 water access issues in the assessed districts in the last 3 months prior to data collection*



In response to these challenges, communities have implemented various adaptation strategies. 50% of KIs reported that people in their community fetch water at a source further than the usual one, indicating a willingness to travel greater distances to secure water when local sources are insufficient or unreliable. Furthermore, 41% of KIs reported that people reduce water consumption for other purposes (bathe less, etc.). Another coping strategy adopted by people in the community is to reduce drinking water consumption (drink less), a practice reported by 33% of KIs. These strategies reflect the ongoing struggle for consistent, safe water access, emphasizing the urgent need for improved infrastructure to ensure sustainable and reliable water sources for all communities.

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Minutes is the average number of minutes required to fetch water from the water source and return back, according to 84% of KIs. **

Percentage of KIs outlining the top 3 reasons for not treating water in the assessed districts in the last 3 months prior to data collection*

People do not have materials for water purification or treatment	75 %	
Treating water is too expensive	53%	
People do not know any treatment methods	49%	



51% of KIs reported that "Nobody" treated their water in their assessed areas in the last 3 months prior to data collection.

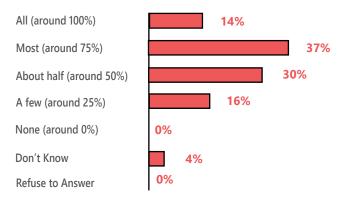


^{*} KIs were able to select multiple answers for this question.

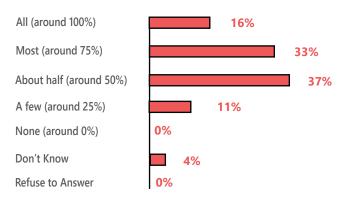
According to Kls, **50% reported that adult men (19 - 64 years)** are primarily responsible for fetching water, followed by **boy (under 15 years)** that are reported by **19%**. This finding highlights a significant role for **men** and **boys** in water collection, which could be influenced by **cultural norms, and physical requirements**. Such a distribution may suggest that **households rely on male members for tasks perceived as physically demanding or requiring longer travel distances**. Understanding these patterns is crucial for designing interventions aimed at improving water access, reducing the burden on specific groups, and promoting equitable sharing of responsibilities within the community.

Proportion of People With Access to Enough Quantity of Water

KIs reporting on the proportion of people in their community having enough drinking water in the last 3 months prior to data collection



KIs reporting on the proportion of people in their community having enough water for other purposes (cooking,bathing, washing) in the last 3 months prior to data collection

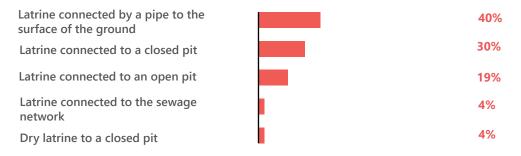


Around 86% of KIs reported that more than half of the people in the community had access to a sufficient quantity of water for both drinking and other purposes (such as cooking, bathing, and washing). However, around 16% of the KIs reported few or none of people in their communities had access to sufficient water for drinking and other purposes. This variation suggests that water access is uneven within the community, possibly due to factors like location or infrastructure. Insufficient water for basic needs can lead to health risks and highlights the need for targeted solutions to improve access.

Sanitation

The data collected from interviews with KIs in 17 districts across in Shabwah offers invaluable insights into the usage patterns, conditions, access challenges, and coping mechanisms related to sanitation facilities. Among the KIs interviewed, 37% of KIs reported people in their community had access to improved sanitation facilities, while 63% of KIs reported that people had access to unimproved sanitation facilities. This indicates a concerning gap in access to sanitation facilities, and highlights the need for targeted interventions to improve facilities, especially in areas with limited access to improved sanitation.

Top reported sanitation facilities used by people in the last 3 months prior to data collection, as reported by the KIs.



KI responses highlight that shared sanitation facilities are not always gender-segregated, and some KIs also pointed out the absence of locks on the inside, which are crucial for ensuring privacy and security in communal settings where facilities are shared by multiple households. Although reported by only a small percentage, this issue remains a significant concern, as the lack of privacy in latrines can lead to discomfort and heightened vulnerability. The absence of secure and private sanitation facilities increases the risk of gender-based violence, particularly for women and girls, threatening their safety, well-being, and dignity.







23% of KIs reported people in the community using shared/communal latrines in their areas.

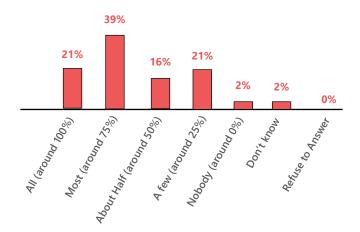


Approximately 31% of KIs reported that communal latrines in their communities were **not gender separated**.



15% of KIs reported communal latrines in their communities had **functional locks on the inside**.

KIs reporting on the proportion of people with access to functioning latrine in the last 3 months prior to data collection.



KIs reporting on access dissatisfaction (Unsatisfied & Very Unsatisfied) to sanitation facilities by gender in the last 3 months prior to data collection.



56% of KIs reported that **women** were dissatisfied with access to sanitation facilities, while **42% of KIs** reported similar dissatisfaction among **men**. The difference in dissatisfaction between the two groups may be influenced by varying problems and expectations regarding sanitation access. This discrepancy could reflect different concerns or priorities, such as the **specific challenges faced in communal settings** or the **impacts of inadequate facilities** on daily life. Regardless of these differences, the concerning levels of dissatisfaction from both men and women highlight the critical need for improved sanitation infrastructure to meet the needs of all community members.

Accessibility, Challenges, and Adaptation Methods.

According to 37% of KIs, inconsistent access to sanitation facilities day and night is a concerning issue in the assessed districts in Hadramawt governorate. This gap exacerbates health risks in a region already struggling with water and sanitation-related diseases. Girls, women, and persons with disabilities are particularly affected due to multiple reasons such as: sanitation facilities (latrines/toilets) lack sufficient quantities of water, and the absence of sanitation facilities (latrines/toilets).

The insights provided by KIs shed light on pressing sanitation challenges in the communities surveyed. **68% of KIs highlighted that people experienced issues related to latrines,** and these included **insufficient water availability for sanitation facilities (latrines/toilets), the septic tank or sewage pipes are broken, and the presence of sewage in the streets.** These issues point to critical gaps in the sanitation infrastructure, which directly impact the community's ability to maintain clean and safe facilities.

To tackle these challenges, the communities have implemented various **coping mechanisms**, as reported by Kls. These methods include: **rely on less preferred** (unhygienic/unimproved) sanitation facilities (toilets/latrines), defecate in the open, and do rapid maintenance to use the latrines for a short **period of time.** While these strategies provide temporary relief, they expose communities to health risks, highlighting the need for sustainable sanitation solutions and better maintenance practices.

Additionally, **38% of KIs** reported observing **visible traces of human feces in the environment**, which underscores the extent of the sanitation issues in Shabwah governorate. This issue poses significant health risks, including the spread of diseases, and reflects the inadequacy of current facilities. The presence of waste in public spaces underscores the need for urgent improvements in sanitation infrastructure to protect community health.





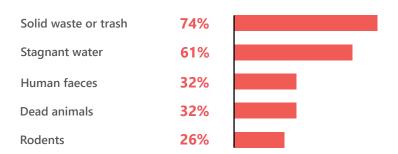
Top 3 issues related to the latrines/toilets in the last 3 months prior to data collection, as reported by the KIs*



Top 3 adaptations methods to latrine issues in the last 3 months prior to data collection, as reported by the KIs*



Visible traces most seen in the community in the last 3 months prior to data collection, as reported by the KIs*



^{*} KIs were able to select multiple answers for this question.





Hygiene

The shortage of hygiene services in Yemen has severe health implications. Inadequate access to basic hygiene facilities, such as handwashing stations and clean water, increases the risk of communicable diseases like Acute Watery Diarrhea (AWD), further compromising public health.



According to WANTS data, 23% of KIs reported that nobody (0%) had access to functioning hand-washing facilities with soap and water. This highlights a concerning lack of basic hygiene amenities in the communities assessed. The absence of proper hand-washing facilities presents a significant public health risk, as it undermines personal hygiene practices and increases the community's vulnerability to infectious disease.



Moreover, **41% of KIs** reported that communities primarily use **bar, or liquid soap**, reflecting strong hygiene practices and the availability of soap through markets, aid, or local production. This highlights good awareness of hygiene's importance, though some gaps remain.



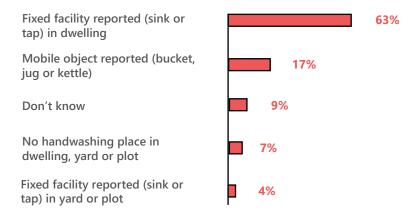
According to 61% of KIs, people in their communities were dissatisfied (47% of KIs reported that people were unsatisfied and 14% of KIs reported people were very unsatisfied) with access to handwashing facilities, this dissatisfaction points to a considerable gap in the current infrastructure, which does not sufficiently meet the hygiene needs or expectations of the community. Such inadequacy underscores the urgent need for improvements to ensure that communities have access to basic hygiene facilities that align with their standards and public health requirements.



Additionally, the data shows that **19%** of KIs reported that **everyone** (**around 100%**) of the people in the community had **access to functioning bathing or shower facilities**, highlighting a critical gap in essential hygiene services. While some individuals do have access, many others are left without proper facilities, reflecting the uneven distribution of bathing/showering facilities. This lack of adequate bathing facilities can lead to **poor hygiene**, **increasing the risk of infections and waterborne diseases**, underscoring the need for greater investment in sanitation infrastructure to ensure equitable access for all.



Handwashing facility locations used by people in the community in the last 3 months prior to data collection, as reported by the KIs



Access to WASH services and items

This section offers a comprehensive overview of the challenges related to access WASH facilities and hygiene items within the assessed communities, as reported by KIs. The data sheds light on the general deficiencies in WASH infrastructure and the barriers faced by community members, particularly vulnerable groups such as **persons with disabilities**, **older people**, **girls**, **and women**.

Kls highlighted that persons with disabilities, older people, girls, and women emerge as the groups facing the greatest challenges in accessing water sources, handwashing facilities, and bathing and sanitation amenities. This reflects the systemic inequalities in access to essential WASH services, likely driven by physical, social, or cultural barriers. Girls and women may face challenges due to gender roles, safety concerns, or cultural norms, while older people and persons with disabilities may encounter physical difficulties or infrastructural limitations that hinder their access. These disparities highlight the urgent need for inclusive and targeted interventions to address the specific needs of these vulnerable groups. Ensuring equitable access to WASH facilities can help reduce hygiene-related health risks, promote dignity, and foster social inclusion within the community.

Furthermore, the data underscores **challenges** related to the **accessibility of WASH hygiene items** (e.g., **water treatment items**, **sanitary napkins**, and **soap or detergent for personal hygiene**). While these items are vital for maintaining proper hygiene and preventing the spread of disease, many vulnerable communities face **barriers** in accessing them. This is primarily due to a **lack of sufficient awareness about the importance of these hygiene practices** and **the financial constraints** that make it difficult for households to afford the necessary items.

Without access to these basic tools, residents are unable to perform critical hygiene activities, increasing the **likelihood of waterborne** diseases and other preventable health issues. Addressing these gaps is not only essential for **improving sanitation and hygiene standards** but also for **protecting public health**, especially in regions already grappling with acute food insecurity, limited healthcare resources, and severe economic challenges.

Top 3 WASH items that people couldn't access in the last 3 months prior to data collection, as reported by the KIs*

Water treatment items	72%	
Sanitary napkins	70%	
Soap or detergent for personal hygiene	67%	

Top 3 problems related to WASH items accessibility in the last 3 months prior to data collection, as reported by the KIs*



^{*} KIs were able to select multiple answers for this question.



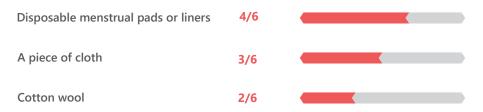


Menstrual Hygiene Management: Insights from Female KIs

Out of 57 KI interviews conducted in Shabwah governorate, only 6 were conducted by female enumerators with female KIs.* According to 3 female KIs, half (around 50%) of the women in Shabwah governorate had sufficient access to menstrual materials. This highlights a critical gap in WASH services and underscores the need for targeted interventions to ensure that women have access to essential menstrual hygiene products. Furthermore, 5 out of 6 female KIs reported that women and girls faced obstacles when attempting to access menstrual materials, exacerbating the challenges posed by inadequate availability.

Additionally, according to **5 female KIs**, women expressed dissatisfaction with their access to menstrual hygiene products. This dissatisfaction stems from several challenges, including the high cost of menstrual products, the limited variety of suitable options, and the availability of menstrual materials in the markets. These issues not only hinder effective menstrual health management but also contribute to feelings of shame, discomfort, and social exclusion, particularly in communities with limited resources.

Top 3 menstrual materials commonly used by women in the last 3 months prior to data collection, as reported by female KIs**



Top 3 problems related to menstrual materials accessibility in the last 3 months prior to data collection, as reported by female KIs**



^{*} In this section, the results reflect the responses of the 6 female KIs, rather than the total 57 KIs.

^{**} KIs were able to select multiple answers for this question.





Acute Watery Diarrhea

What is Acute Watery Diarrhea? And how it affects the Yemeni People?

Acute watery diarrhea (AWD) is a sudden onset of frequent, loose bowel movements, commonly attributed to waterborne diseases such as cholera. In Yemen, the spread of this disease is exacerbated by limited hygiene awareness and inadequate sewage management, particularly evident in IDP and refugee camps. Yemenis, especially vulnerable groups, face increased risks of dehydration and malnutrition due to AWD, worsened by inconsistent water access and inadequate WASH services caused by infrastructure gaps, governance issues, and ongoing conflict. By October 2024, Shabwah governorate had reported approximately 1047 suspected cases of acute watery diarrhea/cholera, resulting in 3 deaths. ²

KIs reporting on all age groups in the community that had diarrhea in the last 3



Healthcare Disparities in Shabwah: Gaps in Information Dissemination and

58% of KIs noted that individuals in their communities had received information about cholera in the past 3 months. Additionally, 27% of the KIs indicated that the information provided was available to everyone in the community. This suggests that awareness efforts have only reached a small portion of the community, indicating significant gaps in the distribution of cholera-related information. This comprehensive dissemination is crucial in ensuring that the population is well-informed about preventive measures and symptoms. However, it is equally important to focus on the groups that have not been reached, addressing any gaps in awareness to ensure inclusive and effective cholera prevention efforts. Despite these awareness campaigns, Shabwah governorate reported approximately 1047 suspected cholera cases until October 2024, highlighting that raising awareness alone may not be enough to effectively curb the disease's spread. ²

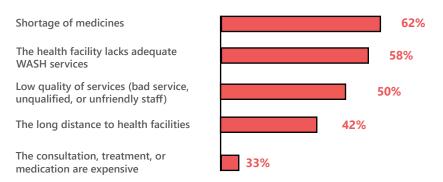


Notably, 16% of KIs reported people in their communities were familiar with preparing Oral Rehydration Solution (ORS), which indicates that while some community awareness exists, there is a need to enhance knowledge and readiness to manage dehydration-related illnesses effectively. Moreover, 82% of KIs highlighted the absence of nearby Oral Rehydration Centers (ORCs) or Diarrhea Treatment Centers (DTCs). This significant percentage underscores a major challenge in accessing timely treatment for dehydration and diarrhea-related illnesses, highlighting an urgent need for improvements in healthcare services

According to 77% of KIs, the majority of the population faces significant barriers in accessing general healthcare facilities. These obstacles include a Shortage of medicines and The health facility lacks adequate WASH services (lack of clean water, lack of gender-segregated toilets, non-functioning toilets, poor hygiene, etc.). Such challenges exacerbate the already difficult process of seeking medical care, further limiting individuals' ability to access the healthcare services they require.

To address these barriers, interventions should prioritize ensuring a **consistent supply** of medicines and improving the quality of healthcare services through staff training and better management. Additionally, expanding transportation support, establishing closer healthcare facilities, and upgrading WASH infrastructure in existing centers are critical steps. Strengthening community health education will further empower individuals to seek care and utilize available services effectively. Collectively, these measures are essential for enhancing healthcare access and outcomes in the assessed districts of Shabwah governorate.

Top barriers that most people faced when accessing health facilities in the last 3 months prior to data collection, as reported by the KIs*



* KIs were able to select multiple answers for this question.

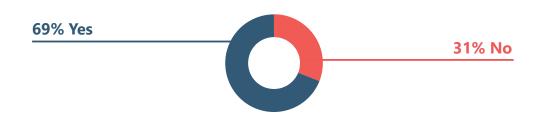
Community Engagement and Participation in WASH Assistance

Within the assessed districts, only 23% of KIs reported the presence of WASH assistance. While, 67% of KIs reported that there was no WASH assistance, 11% of KIs were unsure. Among the KIs who reported the presence of WASH assistance, 23% stated that the community was not consulted before the assistance was provided. This lack of consultation highlights the need for stronger community engagement to ensure future interventions are aligned with local needs and priorities, thereby improving the effectiveness and sustainability of WASH programs.

Furthermore, the data reveals varying levels of community involvement in the planning and delivery of humanitarian assistance. 23% of KIs reported that community members were not involved in these processes, indicating a potential gap in community participation. Conversely, 62% of KIs reported community involvement in the planning and delivery of humanitarian assistance, which is a positive indicator of engagement. However, 15% of KIs were uncertain about the level of community involvement, highlighting a lack of communication regarding the decision-making processes. This variation emphasizes the need for more consistent and inclusive approaches to ensure that communities have a voice in humanitarian interventions. People awareness of complaint and feedback mechanisms

According to KIs, awareness of complaints and feedback mechanisms among the population shows a varied understanding. **Only 69% of KIs** reported that people **are aware of these mechanisms**, indicating a good level of awareness within the community. However, **23% of KIs noted a lack of awareness**, suggesting that a significant portion of the population may not know how to access or utilize these channels. This mix of responses highlights a need for targeted outreach to improve understanding and access to feedback mechanisms.

KI Awareness of any complaints or feedback mechanisms







METHODOLOGY OVERVIEW

The WANTS KI tool is used to **collect data in districts under the GoY**. In addition, YWC partners have the flexibility to employ both KI and HH level WANTS tools on an ad-hoc basis, in accordance with organizational priorities. The situation overview findings were derived from data collection districts under the GoY, which took place **between July and September 2024 with a recall period of 3 months prior to data collection. Data was collected through KIs, which reported on the WASH situation on the behalf of the communities they belonged to, facilitating the compilation of indicative insights at the district level through a reduced number of interviews per district.**

Between 3 and 10 KI interviews were conducted per district to ensure a representative sample across 126 districts in GoY. While the initial aim was to cover all 333 districts in Yemen, only 126 districts were reached due to various challenges. For more details, please refer to the limitations section. The sampling framework used an equation that assigned each district a minimum of three KIs, with additional KIs allocated proportionally based on the district's population relative to Yemen's total estimated population in 2024. To capture diverse perspectives, random sampling was applied at the subdistrict level, extending coverage beyond densely populated areas and incorporating insights from various geographic locations within each district, not just the main population centers. The analysis was conducted at the governorate level, with percentages reflecting an average of all KI responses across the districts under the Shabwah governorate. However, as the number of KIs varies according to district population size, the results may not provide a fully detailed representation of conditions in individual districts.

It is important to acknowledge that the findings presented in this report provide indicative insights rather than a representative depiction of the experiences of entire population in the assessed districts. Data collected was aggregated based on geographical areas, encompassing districts and governorates in the GoY. This aggregation at various levels safeguards the privacy of KIs and HHs, while also enabling comparisons of results across different locations and demographic groups. Categorical variables are reported as response frequencies, while continuous variables are presented as averages keeping in mind that a KIs were surveyed in representation of their communities and the figure here reported represent a proportion of KIs, rather than proportions of the population represented. In certain cases, when multiple questions are selected, there might be situations where the total percentages of the answers surpass 100% due to respondents selecting multiple options. Furthermore, occasionally, exclusions of responses like "Refuse to answer/Other/Don't know" from the calculations can lead to a combined percentage that falls below 100%.

Limitations

During the assessment process, several limitations were encountered, particularly given the nationwide scope of the assessment, which involved contributions from over 29 partners in data collection activities. Below are some of the limitations identified:

- Lack of resources from YWC partners hindered the ability to conduct a HH level assessment, limiting the representativeness of WASH data collected.
- The data collection timeline was impacted by delays, as the original two-week schedule was extended multiple times at the request of partners. These extensions, coupled with variations in recall periods, may have influenced the accuracy of the data. Since all data was aggregated at the governorate level, it potentially reflects conditions over several months—for instance, data collected in July captured the situation in April, while data from August reflected conditions during May.
- The absence of female KIs in Shabwah governorate, attributed to factors like the sensitivity of the topic and cultural norms has resulted in a lack of comprehensive data that does not allow capturing women's perspective and issues.
- Reporting based on percentages of KIs limits the ability to compare indicative
 results between areas. However, for the 2024 rounds of WANTS, it was decided
 to report at the KI level rather than aggregating data at the district level to better
 capture the diverse perspectives of KIs. For detailed district-level comparisons,
 please refer to the interactive dashboard: WANTS Dashboard.

ABOUT REACH

REACH Initiative facilitates the development of information tools and products that enhance the capacity of aid actors to make evidence-based decisions in emergency, recovery, and development contexts. The methodologies used by REACH include primary data collection and in-depth analysis, and all activities are conducted through inter-agency aid coordination mechanisms. REACH is a joint initiative of IMPACT Initiatives, ACTED and the United Nations Institute for Training and Research - Operational Satellite Applications Programme (UNITAR-UNOSAT).

For more information about REACH Yemen, you can contact us and sign up to our REACH Yemen mailing list under impact.yemen@impact-initiatives.org
For more information about IMPACT, please visit our website, and sign up to our IMPACT quarterly newsletter or contact us directly at: geneva@reach-initiative.org and follow us on Twitter:@REACH_info





ENDNOTES

- 1. Yemen HNRP 2025
- 2. Epidemiological Situation of diseases in free areas in Yemen in 2024

Participating Agencies









Assessed Districts in Shabwah governorate *

Nisab	Ataq	At Talh	Osaylan
Hatib	Ar Rawdah	Bayhan	Markhah Al Olya
Ayn	Mayfa'ah	Radum	
Habban	As Sa'id	Markhah As Sufla	
Jardan	Arma'a	Dahr	

^{*} Governorate names are shown in red, while district names are displayed in grey. For details on the data collection period and number of KIs during data collection, please refer to the dashboard.



