



2018-2019

ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT



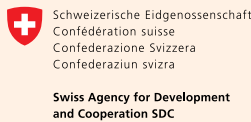
OCHA

YEMEN
HUMANITARIAN
FUND

**THE YHF THANKS ITS DONORS
FOR THEIR GENEROUS SUPPORT IN 2018-2019**



Government of the Netherlands
Ministry of Foreign Affairs



CREDITS

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Front Cover:

HFU field monitoring visit of Nahda Makers Organization (NMO) food security project in Lahj in August 2019.

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INTRODUCTION



Credit: OCHA/ HFU field monitoring visit of Nahda Makers Organization (NMO) food security project in Lahj in August 2019.

During the period under review, Yemen continued to be the world's worst humanitarian crisis, driven by conflict, economic collapse and the continuous breakdown of public institutions and services. Seventy-five per cent of the entire population, 22.2 million people required some form of humanitarian or protection assistance, including 11.3 million who were in acute need – an increase of more than one million people in acute need since June 2017. The escalation of the conflict since March 2015 had dramatically aggravated protection risks for millions.

The Yemen Humanitarian Fund (YHF) is the largest Country-Based Pooled Fund (CBPF) in the world. It makes funding directly available to humanitarian partners operating in Yemen so they can deliver timely and effective life-saving assistance to those who need it most. Donor contributions are unearmarked and allocated to eligible partners through an inclu-

sive and transparent process in support of priorities set out in the Yemen Humanitarian Response Plan (YHRP). In 2018, 26 generous donors contributed a record-breaking \$208.7m. Between January 2018 and July 2019, the YHF has supported 187 projects amounting to \$302m.

This monitoring report provides an overview of YHF monitoring functions and analysis of projects monitored since 2018 and until July 2019.

YHF MONITORING MODALITIES

PURPOSE AND SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

Monitoring is an integral part of the YHF Accountability Framework, and its primary purpose is to assess progress made towards set targets and to verify the accuracy of results reported by partners. YHF monitoring and reporting activities have the following key specific objectives:

- Verify partner progress in delivering project outputs and activities (as per logical framework and work plan), the beneficiary targeting process, the use of resources (as per budget) and internal monitoring and reporting systems.
- Triangulate information collected through other means, identify gaps and trends in humanitarian operations and reflect on best practices and lessons learned using findings and recommendations for results management, risk mitigation and public information.
- Strengthen partnership and coordination between OCHA and the partner; engage and seek feedback from affected communities.

KEY STAGES OF MONITORING

YHF monitoring activities are integrated throughout the fund program cycle:

Capacity Assessment (CA) stage

During the CA, the YHF conducts a thorough review of interested organizations' internal Monitoring & Evaluation/Reporting (M&E) capacity to ensure that eligible partners have a robust internal M&E/R system in place.

Allocation stage

As part of the strategic and technical review of project proposals, the YHF ensures that proposals meet the minimum M&E standards by verifying that project specific M&E arrangements, including monitoring of sub-implementing partners when relevant, are included in the proposal and that enough human and financial resources have been budgeted;

The YHF provides technical guidance and support to partners on key M&E components of the proposal template during proposal development stage and at the time of the strategic and technical review.



Credit: OCHA/ HFU monitoring of DRC project in Amran on 27 January 2019

Implementation and Reporting stage

Throughout the implementation phase, the YHF:

- Reviews progress reports to assess implementation progress, identify any outstanding issues and provide feedback to the partner and other relevant stakeholders.
- Undertakes field monitoring activities to verify the accuracy of self-reported achievements by partners on the ground.
- Conducts regular trainings on YHF monitoring and reporting, to ensure partners understand requirements.

Project audit stage:

Relevant findings observed during monitoring are flagged to auditors to ensure that observed concerns are well considered during the audit exercise.

YHF FIELD MONITORING MODALITIES

Based on YHF Operational Modalities, the YHF establishes monitoring requirements for each approved project, identifies the appropriate field monitoring modality and undertakes field visits. The following field monitoring modalities have been in place since 2018:

Field Site Visits: implemented by OCHA staff with the support of clusters as well as via two externally contracted Third Party Monitoring (TPM) service providers. These include desk reviews of project documents, discussions with the partner in preparation for the field visit, and visits to project sites to observe and collect information on the implementation, as well as discussions with beneficiaries and other relevant stakeholders to gather further insights and feedback. The objective is to assess:

- Implementation progress against project workplan and targets
- Relevance and appropriateness of project activities
- Compliance to Cluster, YHF and other established implementation standards
- Beneficiary satisfaction with the assistance received
- Gender and protection mainstreaming and accountability to affected populations (AAP)
- Implementation of M&E/R modalities detailed by the partner in the project proposal
- Challenges faced in project implementation and how they were addressed

Findings from field monitoring are used to identify gaps in project implementation and share recommendations with the partner and other relevant stakeholders such as Clusters for their action, as well as to rate the overall project implementation performance which feeds into the Partner Performance Index (PPI). In addition, the findings serve as an input for project audit activities.

Remote Call Monitoring (RCM)

In the second half of 2018, the YHF added RCM as an additional monitoring modality and incorporated it as part of TPM services to be implemented by the TPM service providers' call centers.

RCM primary purpose is to reach more beneficiaries including those located in remote and difficult to access locations and collect statistical data regarding key implementation aspects of assistance delivered through distributions, such as food baskets, non-food items (NFIs), hygiene kits, or cash/voucher assistance. The data is collected from a representative sample of beneficiaries randomly selected from distribution lists by administering structured survey questionnaires through telephone interviews.

Analysis of data collected from RCM provides useful insights that can help to assess the following key aspects of distribution-based assistances:

- Estimated proportion of beneficiaries who received assistance to assess the accuracy of implementation tracking and reporting.
- Estimated proportion of beneficiaries who received the complete package of items or amount of cash/voucher as per their entitlement.
- The level of beneficiary satisfaction on the quantity and quality of the assistance received and on the distribution process.
- The proportion of beneficiaries asked to pay a fee (monetary or in-kind) in order to be registered or receive assistance.

Moreover, data from multiple RCM surveys can be combined to analyze trends and compare humanitarian response overtime, across geographical locations, by partner type or risk level, etc.

YHF MONITORING CHALLENGES

YHF monitoring function has faced various administrative, operational and technical challenges during the reporting period. These included:

- Delays in procurement process for contracting TPM service providers
- Challenges in getting permit from local authorities to conduct field visit both by OCHA staff and TPM service providers which affected timely implementation of monitoring activities.
- Lack of active engagement from partners during the monitoring process including delay in replying to requests for documentation and facilitation of field monitoring.
- Irregular involvement from clusters in supporting the field visits.
- Interference/presence of local authorities during monitoring visit which influences information/feedback collected from beneficiaries regarding the assistance delivered.
- Gaps in the description of monitoring findings and the formulation of relevant recommendations by TPM monitors.
- Limited monitoring of UN projects given the threshold to only monitor UN projects above \$5 million.

WAY FORWARD

The YHF is currently in the process of revising the methodological approaches and monitoring tools based on lessons learnt over the last 18 months. It is also adapting the guidance provided to its TPM companies so that they can pay due attention to these observations during the visits and discuss with YHF partners how to improve service delivery. These monitoring findings will help the HFU better tailor and target its training to partners and will be used in quarter 4 2019 for discussion with the cluster coordinators, also with the view to engage them better in the process. It will also be used to provide more detailed feedback to partners during the allocation process and reconsider the minimum funding ceiling to monitor UN projects. Lastly, OCHA will engage with authorities in Yemen to minimize interference with humanitarian operations.

Despite these challenges, YHF monitoring activities have increased in scale and scope over time and played a key role in improving AAP by identifying shortcomings in project implementation and following-up on their resolution.

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OVERVIEW OF 2018-2019 MONITORING FINDINGS

Credit: OCHA/ HFU
monitoring of DRC
project in Amran on
27 January 2019



OVERALL MONITORING COVERAGE (AS OF JULY 2019)

Out of 161 field visits, planned in 2018, 151 (94%) were conducted within the year and 10 postponed to 2019 due to various challenges faced. In addition, five field monitoring visits which were planned in 2017 but not conducted were also carried out in 2018 bringing the total number of monitoring visits conducted in 2018 to 156. Overall, 123 (79%) out of the 156 monitoring visits were conducted by the TPM service provider and the remaining 33 (21%) were conducted by OCHA staff. Despite various operational, administrative and bureaucratic challenges faced, the number of monitoring visits conducted in 2018 increased by 85% compared with 2017 and the number of projects monitored increased by 31% (see page 7).

As of July 2019, a total of 68 monitoring visits have been conducted. Overall, 36 (53%) out of the 68 monitoring visits were carried out by TPM service providers and 32 (47%) were conducted by OCHA staff. The relative increase in the number of monitoring field visits conducted by OCHA staff is mainly due to the recent contracting of a second TPM service provider which required time to be fully operational.

¹ One field visit can take place in multiple locations and one project may be monitored more than once, hence the difference between the # of field visits and # of projects monitored.

A total of 45 partner organizations (27 NNGOs, 16 INGOs, 1 UN Agency and 1 Other -QRCS) were monitored in 2018 and 39 partners (27 NNGOs, 10 INGOs, 1 UN Agency and 1 Other -QRCS) as of July 2019.

Out of the 146 distinct projects¹ monitored between 2018 and July 2019, 15% were implemented by low risk partners, 40% by medium risk and 45% by high risk partners.

Overall, the level of performance between INGOs and NNGOs does not show major discrepancy with almost as many under-performance and not justified for each (16 visit and 15 visits respectively). However, as for good performance, NNGOs seem to be doing better than INGOs with 65 per cent of overall NNGO projects showing good performance against 40 per cent for INGOs. This is possibly due to a lesser impact of project implementation delays on local partners compared to international partners. The figures in the graph below include projects that have been monitored more than once which would result in gradually improved performance as the projects get closer to reaching its indicators.

USE OF MONITORING FINDINGS

Monitoring findings have been used to formulate recommendations that inform decision-making regarding ongoing implementation and future response programming as well as rate implementation performance. In addition, the findings are documented in the Grant Management System so that they can be easily and systematically accessed by OCHA and Cluster Coordinators.

Overall, based on 224 monitoring visits covering 146 projects, a total of 973 recommendations and follow-up action points were shared with partners for their consideration.

Each monitoring visit assesses overall implementation progress and assigns a specific performance rating. There are five categories of implementation performance:

- Outstanding performance: assigned when the monitoring findings indicate that the project implementation and quality of response exceeds expectation and is on track to exceed project targets.
- Good performance: assigned when the findings indicate that project implementation progressed well against the workplan and on track to achieve project targets.
- Underperforming but justified: assigned when the project progress is less than expected against work plan but there is valid justification for under achievement.
- Underperforming and not justified: assigned when the project progress is less than expected against work plan and the IP does not have a valid justification for under achievement.
- No performance: assigned when there is no tangible progress in implementation.

The graphs next page present an overview of YHF monitoring and project implementation performance rating since 2017.

A rating of no performance or not justified underperformance would usually result in follow up monitoring visits, call to beneficiaries and meeting with the partner to agree on follow up actions. The HFU will also use its other assurance mechanisms to identify potential broader issues with project implementation.

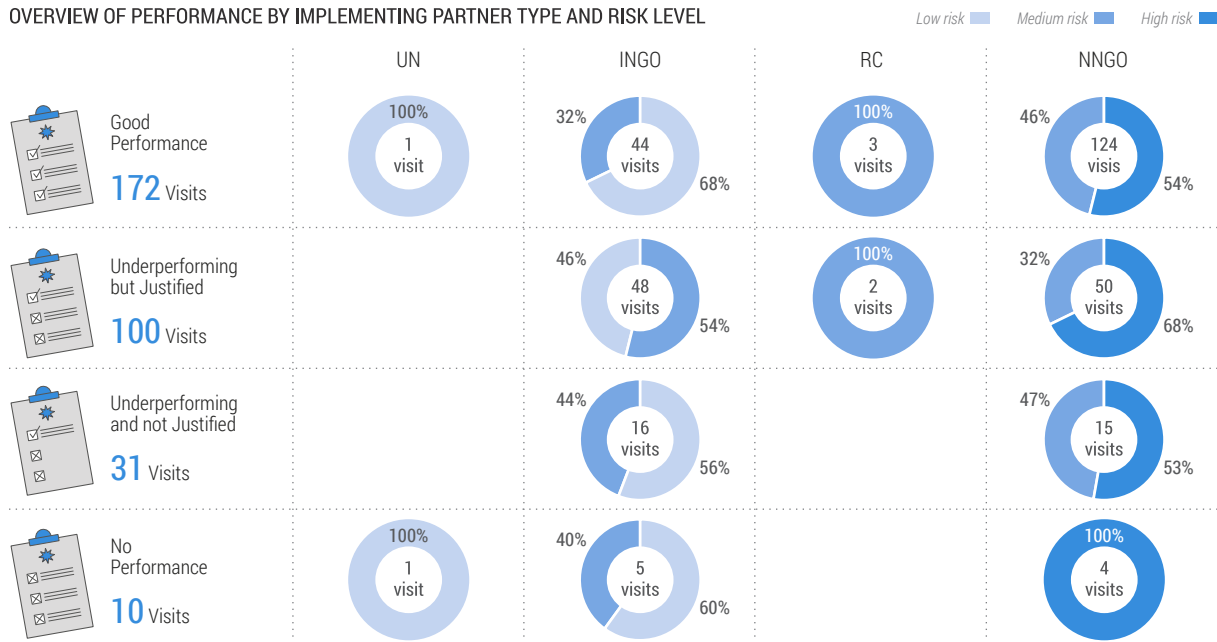
COMMON FINDINGS ACROSS CLUSTERS

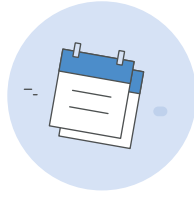
Overall, 40% of the projects monitored between 2018 and July 2019 were multi-sector projects. Out of the 92 projects monitored in 2018, 46 (50%) had WASH cluster activities, 38 (41%) had FSAC components and 37 (40%) had health components.

The following are common findings across clusters identified through field monitoring:

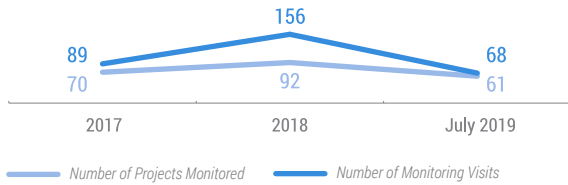
- Bureaucratic impediments such as delays in signing sub-agreements, delays in visa/work permit for international staff and movement permits significantly affected the IPs ability to deliver assistance in a timely manner.
- Lack of full control of beneficiary selection criteria, including beneficiary identification, registration and verification by the IP (interference by other stakeholders) impacting who receives assistance.
- Lack of feedback and complaints mechanism in various implementation locations or lack of knowledge by beneficiaries on the availability of mechanisms put in place by IP, or IP's lack of proper tracking system for documenting feedback and the actions taken by the IPs.
- Low level of awareness by beneficiaries on available supports including information on project entitlements due to inadequate sharing of information by the IP.

OVERVIEW OF PERFORMANCE BY IMPLEMENTING PARTNER TYPE AND RISK LEVEL

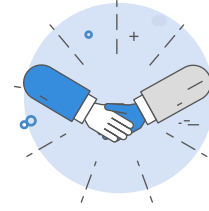




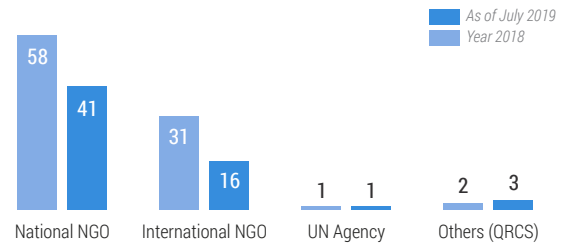
NUMBER OF MONITORING VISITS* AND NUMBER OF PROJECTS MONITORED BY YEAR



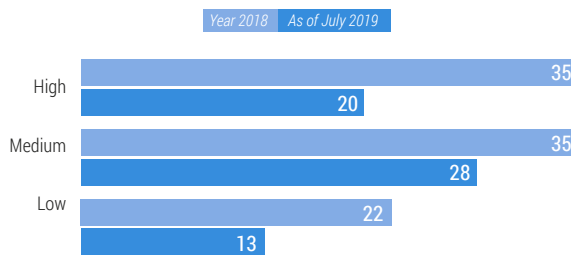
*7 out of the 61 projects monitored in 2019 are also included in the total number of projects monitored in 2018.



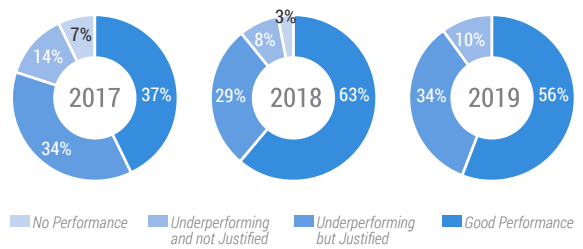
NUMBER OF PROJECTS MONITORED BY TYPE OF IMPLEMENTING PARTNER



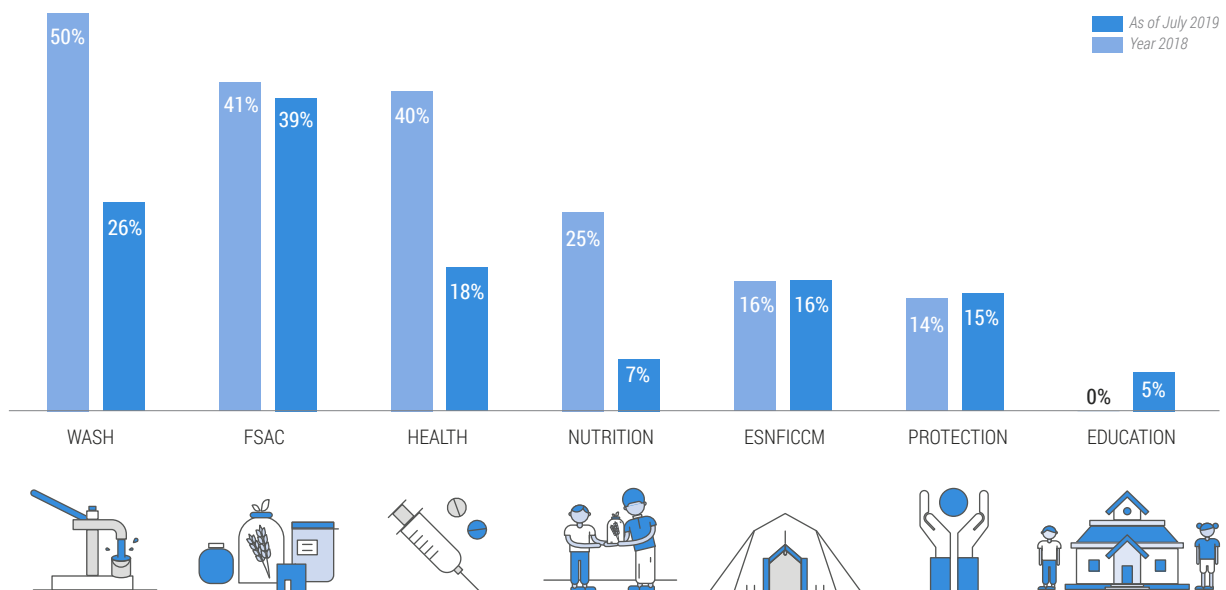
NUMBER OF PROJECTS MONITORED BY THE RISK LEVEL OF IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS



SUMMARY OF PERFORMANCE RATING BASED ON MONITORING OBSERVATIONS (2017- JULY 2019)



FREQUENCY OF CLUSTER COMPONENTS WITHIN PROJECTS MONITORED



MONITORING FINDINGS PER CLUSTER

Credit: OCHA/ HFU
monitoring of YFCA
project in AL-Dhale'a
on 20 March 2019



MONITORING FINDINGS PER CLUSTER

FOOD SECURITY AND AGRICULTURE



A total of 91 field visits (65 in 2018 and 26 in 2019) were conducted to 57 projects with Food Security and Agriculture components. The main activities monitored included:

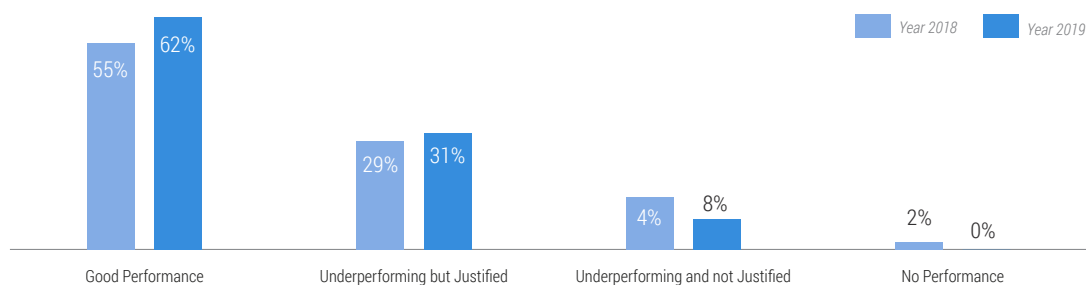
- Distribution of livelihood inputs such as agricultural inputs and fishery kits.
- Cash/voucher assistance for emergency food or livelihood support.
- Beneficiary registration, selection and verification process as well as documentation of beneficiary profiles.

Summary of key findings associated with poor implementation performance

- Beneficiary lists found to be incomplete for monitoring and verification purposes.
- Lack of strong tracking, monitoring and reporting mechanisms by some IPs affecting the quality of implementation and reporting activities.
- On rare occasions, beneficiaries on distribution lists found not to have received the assistance or received a lesser amount/quantity than they were entitled to.
- Post distribution monitoring (PDM) surveys not conducted as planned.
- Inadequate assessment of local context such as availability of suppliers affected timely implementation of some food voucher distribution activities.
- Beneficiary dissatisfaction with the content of standard food basket.
- Distribution of agricultural inputs to targeted households that did not meet the required criteria due to poor targeting process.
- Lack of supervisory visits and technical advice to beneficiaries on the utilization of inputs.
- Low level of awareness by beneficiaries on the project activities including registration selection criteria due to inadequate information sharing.

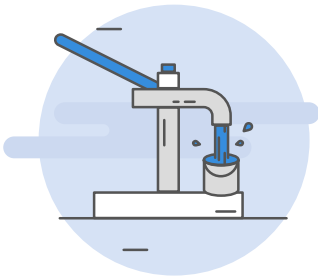


SUMMARY OF IMPLEMENTATION PERFORMANCE RATING FOR PROJECTS WITH FSAC ACTIVITIES



MONITORING FINDINGS PER CLUSTER

WATER, SANITATION & HYGIENE



A total of 97 field visits (80 in 2018 and 17 in 2019) were carried out to 57 projects with a WASH component. The main activities monitored included:

- Rehabilitation and maintenance of water supply.
- Construction, rehabilitation and maintenance of sanitation systems
- Operationalisation of water supply systems.
- Water chlorination and water quality supervision activities.
- Distribution of hygiene kits.

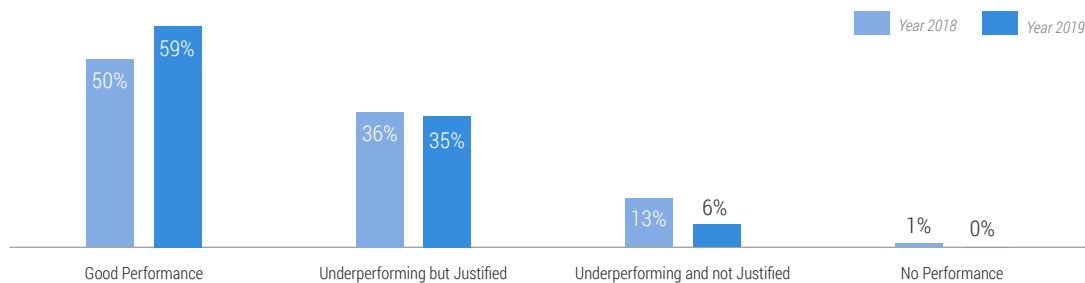
Summary of key findings associated with poor implementation performance

- Interference from local authorities during implementation leading to disruption of timely implementation.

- Lack of WASH construction material in the local market and import restrictions on some materials affecting the quality and timely implementation of construction and maintenance activities. Some projects were also affected by lack of competent local contractors to undertake construction and maintenance activities.
- Setting up of water supply systems that are too expensive to run on contributions from local communities due to lack of adequate feasibility study beforehand.
- Poor/unsafe water quality due to inadequate supervision and chlorination of water supply systems by IPs.
- Inadequate use of WASH facilities due to lack of water.



SUMMARY OF IMPLEMENTATION PERFORMANCE RATING FOR PROJECTS WITH WASH ACTIVITIES



MONITORING FINDINGS PER CLUSTER

HEALTH



A total of 75 field visits (62 in 2018 and 13 in 2019) were carried out to 45 projects with a Health component. The main activities monitored include:

- Health services provided by supported HFs.
- Medical supplies and equipment support to targeted HFs.
- Incentive and other operational support to targeted HF.

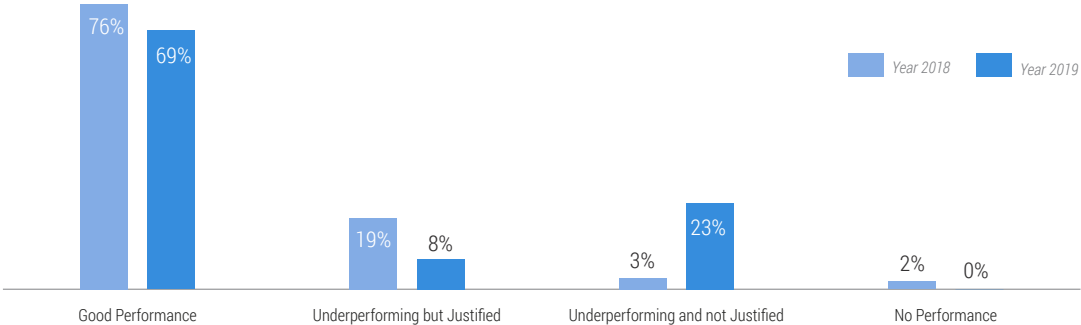
- Unsafe storage of medical supplies such as vaccines being stored in refrigerator with no temperature regulator.
- Inadequate supervisory monitoring visit by IPs to the supported health facilities.
- Complaints by beneficiaries required to pay for certain services at the health facilities.

Summary of key findings associated with poor implementation performance

- Delays in payment of incentives to health workers and delivery of medical supplies and equipment.
- Unsafe disposal of medical wastes such as used syringes and sharp objects.



SUMMARY OF IMPLEMENTATION PERFORMANCE RATING FOR PROJECTS WITH HEALTH ACTIVITIES



MONITORING FINDINGS PER CLUSTER

NUTRITION



A total of 44 field visits (40 in 2018 and 4 in 2019) were carried out to 24 projects with a nutrition component. The main activities monitored include:

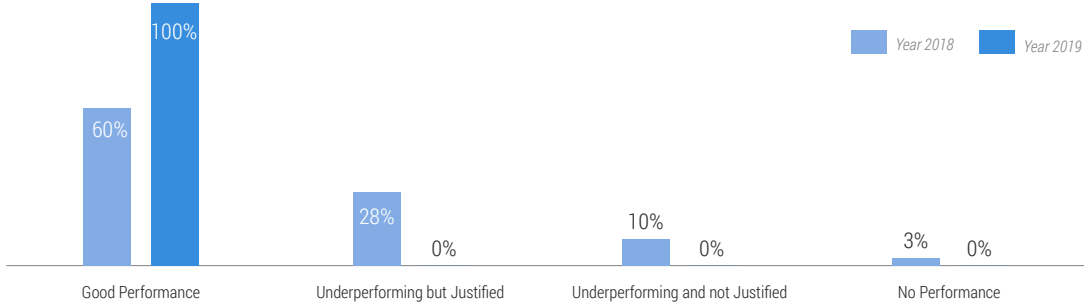
- Provision of malnutrition treatment services by targeted facilities.
- Supplies and equipment support to targeted facilities .
- Incentive and operational support to targeted facilities.

Summary of key findings associated with poor implementation performance

- Screening of pregnant and lactating women and children under five using only mid-upper arm circumference (MUAC) as opposed to full anthropometric measurements as per the standard procedures.
- Lack of registries in facilities to track admission, treatment and discharges.
- Lack of availability of Moderate Acute Malnutrition (MAM) treatment supplies such as corn-soy blend (CSB) in the facilities .

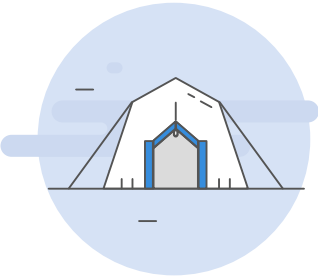


SUMMARY OF IMPLEMENTATION PERFORMANCE RATING FOR PROJECTS WITH NUTRITION ACTIVITIES



MONITORING FINDINGS PER CLUSTER

SHELTER AND NON-FOOD ITEMS



A total of 39 field visits (28 in 2018 and 11 in 2019) were carried out to 24 projects with shelter/NFI/CCCM activities. The main activities monitored included:

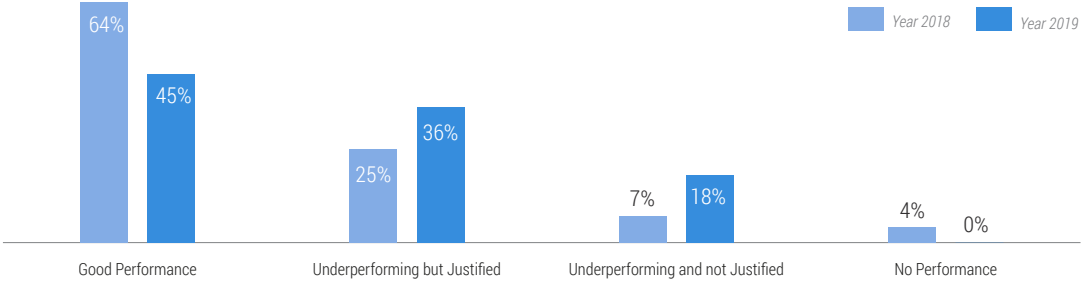
- Distribution of in-kind NFIs.
- Cash/voucher assistance for NFIs or for emergency shelter.
- Cash assistance for rental subsidy.
- Construction and maintenance of emergency shelters.

Summary of key findings associated with poor implementation performance

- Distribution of winterization kits after the winter season has passed.
- Beneficiaries not receiving the full content of the NFI kits.



SUMMARY OF IMPLEMENTATION PERFORMANCE RATING FOR PROJECTS WITH ES/NFI/CCM ACTIVITIES



MONITORING FINDINGS PER CLUSTER

PROTECTION



A total of 33 field visits (23 in 2018 and 10 in 2019) were carried out to 24 projects with protection activities. The main activities monitored included:

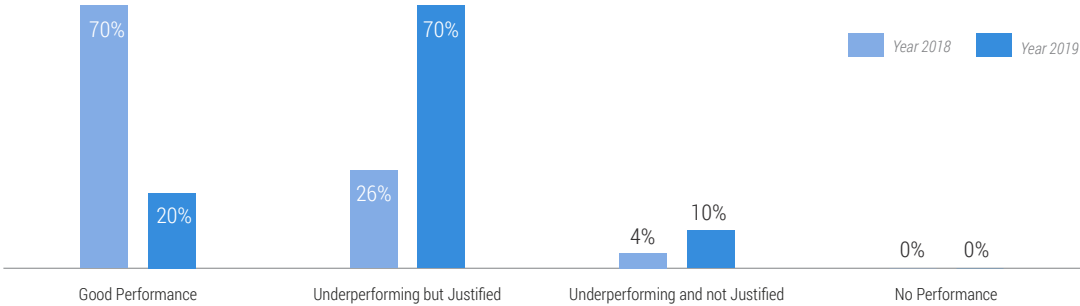
- Community protection centres.
- Availability and functionality of referral services.
- Distribution of protection cash assistance.
- Provision of legal assistance.

Summary of key findings associated with poor implementation performance

- Lack of awareness on the available protection services by beneficiaries, including by some members of Community Based Protection Network (CBPN).
- Lack of referral system at the community centres, and establishment of centres in areas where there are no available referral services due to poor mapping of available services at the planning stage.



SUMMARY OF IMPLEMENTATION PERFORMANCE RATING FOR PROJECTS WITH PROTECTION ACTIVITIES



MONITORING FINDINGS PER CLUSTER

EDUCATION



YHF started funding education activities in 2018. Four projects with a total value of US\$ 4.7 million were funded. YHF facilitated the monitoring of three out of the four projects via TPM service providers in 2019. Twelve education projects were funded in 2019 but not monitored in the first half of the year due to delays with project start date.

The key activities monitored included:

- Procurement, pre-positioning and provision of materials to schools as well as maintenance and repair of school desks and other facilities.
- Construction of semi-permanent learning spaces.
- Provision of recreational kits to schools and distribution of learning materials for students.
- Provision of incentives for teachers.
- Setting up, training and activation of Community Education Committees and training education task force.

Summary of key findings associated with poor implementation performance

The monitoring rated the overall implementation performance of all the three projects as “Good performance”. However, as was the case with other sector projects, bureaucratic impediments such as negotiations and signing of sub-agreements with concerned authorities affected timely implementation of the project activities. While implementation for two of the projects was delayed by two months, one project was delayed by four months, impacting the needed assistance during the school season.

In addition, partners faced additional disruptions by local authorities during implementation related to objection of setting up a tent-based Temporary Learning Spaces in the schools targeted. This led partners to shift to building semi-permanent learning spaces using containers. The re-programming process as well as acquiring the needed materials and the construction process further impacted the timely delivery of learning spaces during the school season. Some monitoring visits also noted the presence, at times, of armed elements inside the schools which had obvious negative impact on learning and safety of children.



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