

SIEGE OF TAIZ

A HUMANITARIAN CRISIS

July - 2024

ACJ AMERICAN
CENTER FOR
JUSTICE

Issued by the American Center for
Justice (ACJ)

Table of Contents

Executive summary	3
Introduction	3
Context	4
Methodology	6
Legal framework	6
Overview	7
Chapter One: Humanitarian impacts of the siege	9
1. Civilian victims of the war and siege	9
2. Road closures and restrictions on the right to freedom of movement	12
3. Alternative routes	13
4. Deprivation of the right to healthcare	17
5. Prevention of access to humanitarian aid	19
Chapter Two: Social impacts of the siege	20
1. Forced displacement and evacuation	20
2. Consequences of the siege on the water sector	23
3. Consequences of the siege on the education sector	25
4. Impact of the siege on the environment and sanitation sectors	25
Chapter Three: Economic impacts of the siege	26
1. Economic resources and activities	26
2. Impact of the siege on various sectors	27
Chapter Four: Examples of violations during the siege	29
1. Sieges on villages	29
2. Targeting of civilians	30
3. Bombardment of the city	30
4. Mines	31
5. Healthcare disruptions	32
6. Violations occurring on alternative routes	33
7. Denial of humanitarian aid	34
8. Forced displacement	34
9. Arrest, torture, and enforced disappearance	35
Chapter Five: Personal stories from the grip of the siege	36
Summary of key findings	40
Recommendations	42

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The report “Taiz: A Siege on Life” documents the severe humanitarian crisis resulting from the ongoing siege of Taiz Governorate, Yemen, imposed by the Houthi group since March 2015. Data for this report were collected and verified by the field monitoring team of the American Center for Justice (ACJ) following international standards for the documentation of human rights violations. Despite operating under dangerous conditions, the team utilized photographic evidence, testimonies, and open-source data to ensure credibility.

The siege has led to significant casualties, infrastructure damage, and daily impacts on the lives of the civilian population. Taiz, Yemen’s most populous governorate, has been a focal point of conflict, with control divided among various factions. The siege has isolated the city, disrupted essential services, and caused severe movement restrictions for residents. The siege and associated actions, such as road blockades, are considered war crimes under international law.

Forced displacement and evacuation have disrupted community structures, leading to increased child marriages, divorce rates, educational setbacks, and psychological trauma. The siege has exacerbated poverty and food insecurity, and agricultural and industrial activities have declined sharply. This has led to significant economic losses and unemployment. The destruction of infrastructure and increased transportation costs have exacerbated inflation of the prices for basic goods.

This report calls for the siege to be fully lifted, safe and free movement of civilians, and increased humanitarian assistance. By highlighting the severe and ongoing impact of the siege on Taiz, the report aims to mobilize global action to address the humanitarian crisis and restore stability and dignity to the affected rural and urban population of Taiz.

INTRODUCTION

Yemen's Taiz Governorate is situated 256 kilometers (km) to the south of the nation's capital, Sana'a and 120 km from Aden, the largest city in the southern part of the country. Taiz is surrounded by Ibb Governorate to the north, Lahj and Al-Dhale'e Governorates to the east and south, respectively, and Hodeidah to the north and west. The western region of Taiz overlooks a lengthy stretch of maritime waters spanning 183 km.

Taiz is Yemen's most populated governorate, home to an estimated 4 million people (12.2% of the total population). Taiz occupies 10,008 square km and comprises 23 districts. The Red Sea coastal region of Taiz is of geopolitical importance, housing the historic city and port of Al-Mokha and bordering the strategic Bab-el-Mandeb Strait.

The Houthi group initiated its siege on the governorate in March 2015. The siege on Taiz city, the governorate's largest, has been ongoing for nine years, with catastrophic consequences on the population. High numbers of civilians have suffered casualties and injuries due to shelling, sniping, and the planting of mines. Additionally, the closure of major roads in the city has required people to traverse difficult and rugged alternative routes, leading to the loss of dozens of lives, destruction of properties, and daily hardship for travelers to and from the city. This has forced many civilians living in conflict zones to flee their homes in fear for their lives. Humanitarian conditions in the city are poor. Furthermore, the war and siege have caused extensive damage to basic infrastructure and cause public services to implode.

The war and siege have resulted in significant humanitarian, social, and economic effects and consequences. In this report, the American Center for Justice (ACJ) seeks to shed light on the suffering of millions of civilians, aiming to pressure an end to the humanitarian crisis. ACJ calls for a lifting of the siege, open roads, and mine removal. Additionally, it aims to influence local and international public opinion by raising awareness about the serious violations of international humanitarian law and international human rights law caused by the siege. The report presents the effects and consequences of the siege on the city of Taiz in three chapters: 1) humanitarian impacts, 2) social impacts, and 3) economic impacts.



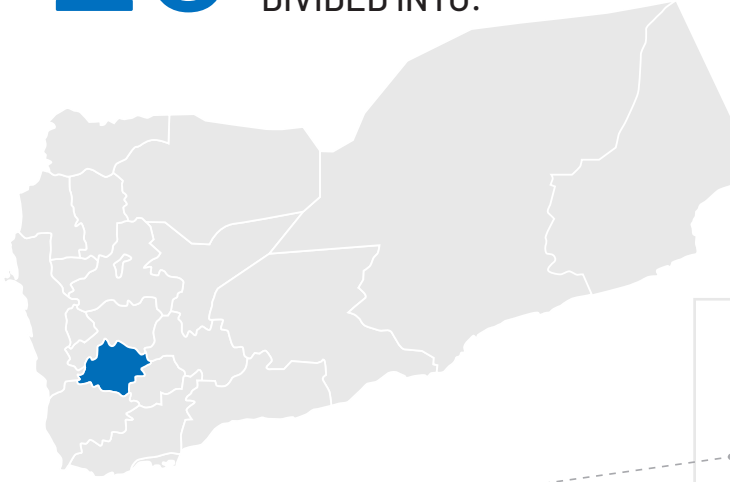
CONTEXT

In each of Taiz's 23 districts, authority is shared among three parties: the legitimate government, which fully controls eight districts; the Houthi group, which controls four; and the joint forces allied with the government, who control the coastal districts.⁽¹⁾ In addition, the government and Houthi groups share control in seven districts to varying degrees.

This complex political landscape reflects the Houthi group's siege of the city in the form of a semi-closed circle. The incursion was initiated in the Al-Hawban area in At-Ta'iziyah district and later reached areas to the north and west of Taiz city, reaching Jabal Habashi and Maqbana districts to the city's west and Sabir Al-Mawadim district to the southeast. The forces of the legitimate government continue control of the city center and the rural districts south of the city, while the joint forces control the western coastal areas up to the Bab-el-Mandeb Strait.

(1) The Joint Forces are forces established by the United Arab Emirates, funded by them, and led by Tareq Saleh and Abu Zaraq Al-Mahrami. They control the coastal directorates in Taiz and two districts in the governorate of Hodeidah.

23 TAIZ GOVERNORATE IS ADMINISTRATIVELY DIVIDED INTO:



GOVERNMENT-CONTROLLED DISTRICTS

Al-Qahirah	10	0.10
Mashra'a Wa Hadnan	14	0.14
Al-Misrakh	92	0.92
Sabir al-Mawadim	197	1.97
Al-Maafer	350	3.50
Ash-Shamayatayn	617	6.17
Al-Mudhaffar	14	0.14
Al-Mawasit	217	2.17



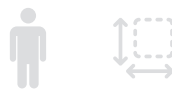
Houthi-controlled districts

Mawiyah	708	5.45
Shar'ab as-Salam	199	5.59
Shar'ab ar-Rawnah	416	6.13
Dimnat Khadir	459	4.71



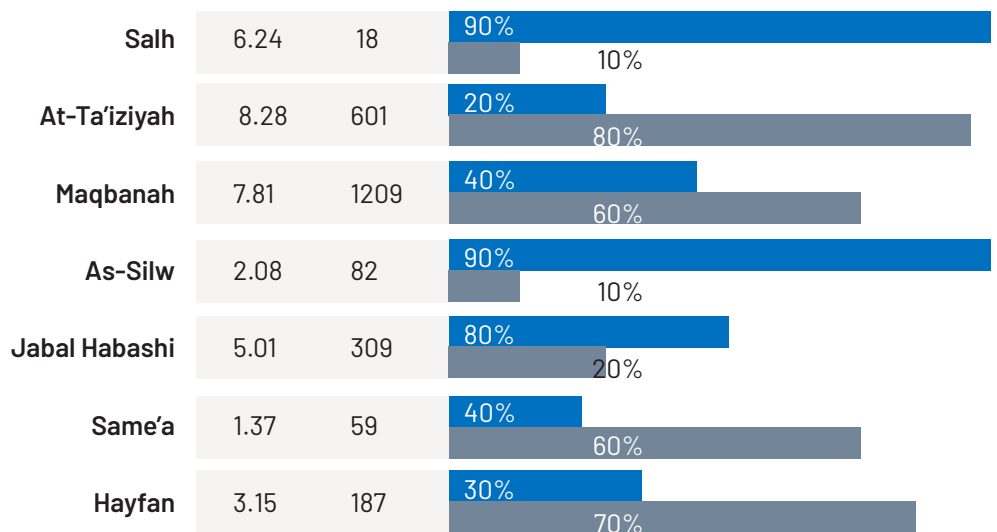
Jointly controlled districts

Al-Makha	1569	2.61
Dhubab	1557	0.76
Mawza	684	1.46
Al-Wazi'iyah	439	4.59



Government control (%)

Houthi control (%)



METHODOLOGY

The information and data presented in the report were documented, collected, and verified by the field monitoring team affiliated with the American Center for Justice (ACJ). This team is comprised of professional members trained in monitoring human rights violations during armed conflicts, in accordance with international mechanisms and standards. The monitoring and documentation team affiliated with ACJ in Taiz operates under challenging conditions that make it difficult and risky to observe human rights situations and document violations, especially in conflict zones. This posed a significant and complex obstacle to promptly assessing incidents given the anticipated risks to the lives of the monitors.

Each incident described in this report has been verified, informed, compared, and analyzed to ensure its credibility. The team utilized photographic evidence and testimonies from victims or their relatives. Additionally, they crosschecked information obtained from open digital sources and comparing it with physical evidence and documents related to the incidents. Bottom of Form

It is worth noting that the findings and figures presented in this report do not fully capture the reality on the ground, especially concerning the humanitarian situation. However, we emphasize that the report provides examples of various patterns of violations and demonstrates the suffering of civilians in the city due to the severe impact of the siege imposed.

LEGAL FRAMEWORK

“Siege” is defined as a military operation carried out by an armed force against a fortified city with the intention of occupying it. The use of blockades and starvation as weapons constitutes a war crime according to international criminal law, which prohibits it in both international and non-international armed conflicts. This falls within the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court, as per the amendment to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court in 2019.

Article 14) of the Second Additional Protocol to the Geneva Conventions prohibits the deliberate starvation of civilians and its use as a method of warfare in non-international armed conflicts. It states, “It is prohibited to attack, destroy, remove, or render useless objects indispensable to the survival of the civilian population, such as foodstuffs, agricultural areas for the production of foodstuffs, crops, livestock, drinking water installations and supplies, and irrigation works.”

In addition, blocking main roads and restricting residents’ freedom of movement contradicts the guaranteed human right stated in Article (13) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The article affirms, “Everyone has the right to freedom of movement and residence within the borders of each state,” and “to be free to leave and return to their own country.” Paragraphs 1 and 2 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights further emphasize that “everyone lawfully within the territory of a State shall, within that territory, have the right to liberty of movement and freedom to choose his residence” and “everyone shall be free to leave any country, including his own.”

Article (141) of the Yemen Penal Code, concerning crimes against public safety including roadblocks, stipulates that if such crimes result in the death of a person, the punishment is execution. Article (142) prescribes imprisonment for five years for anyone who intentionally damages or destroys a public road by any means.

ACJ views the ongoing siege on Taiz as a crime against humanity and persecution under Article (7) of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court. We argue that blocking roads and preventing essential supplies from reaching the population constitute prohibited collective punishment under international humanitarian law. ACJ believes that the siege has deprived the city’s residents of their rights as guaranteed by international agreements, including the rights to life, health, water, education, food, work, and freedom of movement.⁽¹⁾

(1) The conflict in Yemen between the legitimate government and the Houthi group is classified as a non-international armed conflict governed by treaty law according to Article 3 common to the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and its Additional Protocol II. Yemen is a party to these agreements. According to this classification, all entities involved in the armed conflict, whether state or non-state actors, bear full responsibility for their actions. This includes adherence to international humanitarian law, ensuring protection for civilians and non-combatants, and respecting the fundamental rules of warfare.



OVERVIEW

On February 21, 2015, President Hadi arrived in Aden after managing to escape the siege imposed on him by the Houthi group at his residence in Sana'a. Upon Hadi's arrival in Aden, he delivered a speech in which he declared the actions of the Houthis a full-fledged coup. He decreed Aden as the interim capital of the country until the original capital, Sana'a, could be reclaimed. Following this speech, Houthi forces from Saada, Amran, and Dhamar began arriving in Taiz, aiming to use it as a base to launch attacks on Aden.

This was met with widespread popular rejection by the people of Taiz, who took to the streets in mass protests denouncing the Houthi expansion. Brigadier General Adnan al-Hammadi, commander of the 35th Armored Brigade, refused to surrender to the Houthi forces, who were then supported by the troops of former President Ali Abdullah Saleh. Choosing armed resistance, the people of Taiz began organizing themselves into popular resistance groups in support of the government forces, led by Sheikh Hamoud Saeed al-Mikhlafi. Violent clashes soon erupted between the two sides.

On February 21, 2015, the Houthi group began an unofficial siege of the city. Roads were completely closed during intense armed clashes and then reopened for limited hours each day, allowing residents to either flee or enter the city. The eastern route (Al-Qasr Roundabout) was fully closed to vehicular and goods traffic from the first day of clashes and was open to pedestrians only from 10 AM to 4 PM. But this route has been completely shut down since July 12, 2015. Other routes were partially opened until the siege was fully imposed on November 5, 2015, when the Houthis closed all remaining access points to the city, leaving no open routes. The Houthi group then established a single entry and exit point known as the Al-Dahi checkpoint.

AL-DAHI CHECKPOINT

Al-Dahi checkpoint is a military barrier set up by the Houthi group in the Al-Dahi area west of Taiz city, making it the sole entry and exit point for residents and the only route for food and medicine to enter the city after other access points were closed, enabling the Houthis to achieve a total siege on the three districts that comprise the city: Salh, Al-Mudhaffar, and Al-Qahira. **The checkpoint was open to civilians from 6 AM to 5 PM, with thorough searches conducted on both men and women. The Houthis prohibited anyone from bringing in more than the minimum quantity of food and goods needed for daily consumption. In addition, they banned the entry of medicines and oxygen cylinders for hospitals.**

The Houthi group also committed sniper attacks on civilians and conducted widespread arrests, converting buildings like Taiz University and Al-Saqr Club into detention centers holding hundreds of civilians. As the siege and abuses by the Houthis intensified, residents sought alternative routes to ensure the delivery of essential supplies and medicines to the hundreds of thousands of civilians who had been deprived of these necessities.

TALOOQ ROAD

Talooq Road became a key lifeline for city residents for nine months of the total siege. The road is a rugged path through a mountainous area originating in the Sina area of Taiz and extending to the Mishra'ah and Hadnan district, ending at the Talooq Market in the Saber Al-Mawadim district. Talooq Market is thus the final destination for goods arriving from Aden, which are then transported on the backs of people, donkeys, and camels along a steep 25-kilometer stretch of Jabal Saber, one of the highest mountains in Yemen. From there, the goods are carried by vehicle into the besieged city center. Despite the immense hardships residents faced in using Talooq Road to move food, medicine, oxygen, fuel and gas, supplies for the injured and sick, and even coffins for the critically ill, it remained the city's lifeline during the nine-month siege.

PARTIAL LIFTING OF THE SIEGE

In mid-March 2016, the popular resistance managed to partially lift the siege on the city and open the Al-Dahi checkpoint, connecting the city to the southern countryside and the city of Al-Turbah. The governorates of Lahij and Aden were also subsequently linked. Despite the partial lift, access from the city to rural districts was limited to alternative, extremely rugged, dangerous, and long routes such as the Heija al-Abd Road, Al-Aqroodh, Sailat al-Maqatira, and Jabal Habashi Road).⁽¹⁾

These roads were not built to serve as the city's main lifelines; they are narrow and can only accommodate trucks of a certain weight, necessitating the division of goods and supplies into numerous loads. This increased the financial burden and raised the prices of goods within the city. The dangers of the routes were not only due to their difficult terrain but also flash floods during the rainy season that swept through the steep paths, causing traffic accidents. Each year, this resulted in dozens of casualties as well as financial losses for the city's vehicle owners.

(1) The Al-Aqrud Road and the Jabal Habashi Road are only passable by 4-wheel-drive vehicles, as they are mountainous, rugged, and narrow terrains.

CHAPTER

01

HUMANITARIAN IMPACTS OF THE SIEGE

The war and siege had a profound impact on various humanitarian aspects of city residents' lives, especially during the nine-month total siege but still ongoing. In Taiz city, the past decade of war has been marked by frequent shelling and sniper attacks by the Houthi group on residential neighborhoods, a problem that persists as of the writing of this report. **The resulting casualties, injuries, and forced displacement have had severe consequences. Civilians are deprived of basic human rights such as access to healthcare, food, humanitarian aid, and the right to movement due to the road closures. Due to the siege, residents of the governorate's 20 outlying districts were unable to transport patients suffering from cancer, kidney failure, and other serious ailments to specialized treatment centers in the city.**

The following report in this chapter highlights the major violations experienced by civilians during the nine years of the siege, providing quantitative data on the number of victims affected by different types of violations. The final part of the report presents various incident examples to illustrate these violations. The humanitarian impacts of the siege can be summarized as follows:



1. CIVILIAN VICTIMS OF THE WAR AND SIEGE

Taiz is considered to be the governorate most heavily affected by violence during Yemen's war, including significant loss of life. The violence reached Taiz in early 2015 and has continued until the present. Ongoing clashes between government forces and the Houthis have significantly contributed to civilian casualties. Civilians have been killed by various means including sniping, shelling, and landmines. Areas and villages along the frontlines have been the most severely affected, with residents exposed to repeated attacks by Houthi snipers and indiscriminate shelling of residential neighborhoods near Houthi positions surrounding the city center. Landmines and explosive devices have turned citizens' farms, pastures, and valleys into minefields, causing thousands of civilian deaths and injuries.

1A. Shelling victims

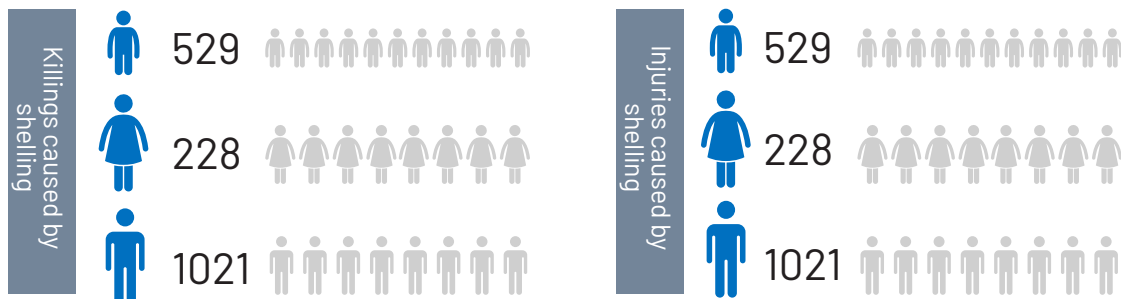
For eight years, villages and residential neighborhoods along the frontlines have been subjected to intense shelling by the Houthi group, using various heavy and medium weapons. This has resulted in hundreds of civilian casualties. **ACJ recorded 1,778 deaths during the reporting period, including 529 children, 228 women, and 1,021 men. Additionally, 4,427 individuals were injured, including 1,717 children, 691 women, and 2,019 men across seven districts.** The district of Salh had the highest casualty rate, followed by Al-Mudhaffar and then Al-Qahira, as shown in the table below.

Table 2: Civilian casualties from shelling by the Houthi group during the reporting period.

District	Killings caused by shelling			Total	Injuries caused by shelling			Total
	Children	Women	Men		Children	Women	Men	
Salh	126	43	334	503	506	145	623	1274
Al-Mudhaffar	112	35	222	369	439	146	383	968
Al-Qahirah	79	32	152	263	258	63	327	648
Sabir al-Mawadim	68	55	92	215	228	188	311	727
At-Ta'iziyah	59	20	108	187	156	78	226	460
Jabal Habashi	40	14	60	114	53	29	71	153
Maqbanah	45	29	53	127	77	42	78	197
Total	529	228	1021	1778	1717	691	2019	4427

4,427

CIVILIAN CASUALTIES FROM SHELLING BY THE HOUTHİ GROUP DURING THE REPORTING PERIOD.



1B. SNIPER ATTACK VICTIMS

The Houthi group frequently employs sniper rifles, which are among the deadliest weapons used against the civilian population residing on the outskirts of besieged areas in Taiz. Snipers target victims as they leave their homes to fetch water, firewood, tend to agriculture, or herd livestock. They also target returnees checking on their homes and students commuting to and from schools.

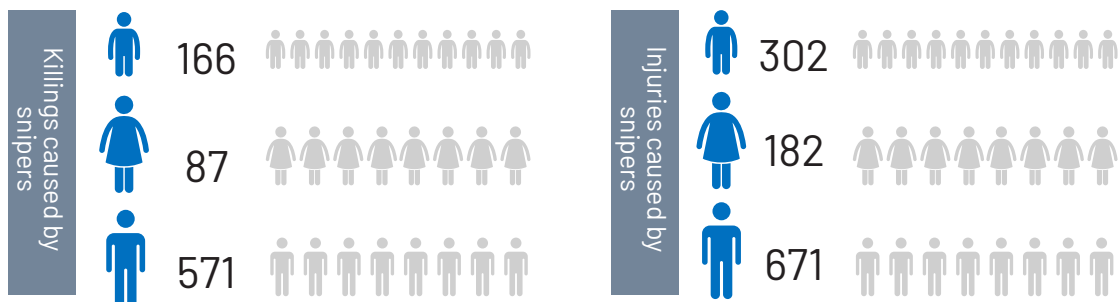
During the reporting period, the ACJ documented 824 deaths caused by sniper attacks, including 166 children, 87 women, and 571 men. Additionally, 1,155 civilians were injured, including 302 children, 182 women, and 671 men. These incidents occurred in the three districts within the city (Salh, Al-Qahira, Al-Mudhaffar) and in the surrounding districts of Al-Taiziyah, Jabal Habashi, Sabr Al-Mawadem, and Maqbanah.

Table 3: Civilian casualties caused by the Houthi group’s snipers during the reporting period.

District	Killings			Total	Injuries			Total
	Children	Women	Men		Children	Women	Men	
Salh	38	18	193	249	71	36	251	358
At-Ta’iziyah	35	21	101	157	57	26	89	172
Al-Mudhaffar	31	9	124	164	55	26	148	229
Sabir al-Mawadim	23	13	62	98	56	44	90	190
Al-Qahirah	20	6	39	65	25	18	58	101
Jabal Habashi	7	7	30	44	17	23	24	64
Maqbanah	12	13	22	47	21	9	11	41
Total	166	87	571	824	302	182	671	1155

1.155

CIVILIAN CASUALTIES CAUSED BY THE HOUTHİ GROUP’S SNIPERS DURING THE REPORTING PERIOD



1C. LANDMINE VICTIMS

Taiz Governorate has sustained Yemen’s highest proportion of civilian casualties due to landmines and improvised explosive devices (IEDs). According to statistics from a 2022 ACJ report, “The Blind Killer,” the Houthis frequently plants landmines in areas where they are present.⁽¹⁾ In the outskirts of Taiz city, the Houthis plant anti-personnel mines and locally made IEDs as defensive barriers to hinder the progress of government forces. **These weapons are indiscriminately planted and threaten civilians’ lives, restrict their movement, and prevent them from accessing their farms and pastures.**

This situation has contributed to increased poverty rates and exacerbated food insecurity in Taiz city. Hundreds of civilian casualties have resulted from these mines during years of war and siege. ACJ documented 419 deaths (105 children, 43 women, and 271 men) and 779 injuries (189 children, 56 women, and 534 men).⁽²⁾ These incidents reflect data collected from only seven districts and do not account for the numerous other districts also affected by mine planting.⁽³⁾

Table 4: Civilian casualties from landmines planted by the Houthi group since 2015. Top of Form

District	Killings by Mines			Total	Injuries by Mines			Total
	Children	Women	Men		Children	Women	Men	
Salh	9	3	74	86	35	3	137	175
Al-Mudhaffar	6	0	22	28	14	12	75	101
Al-Qahirah	0	0	4	4	9	0	14	23
Sabir al-Mawadim	7	4	35	46	12	9	80	101
At-Ta’iziyah	43	12	59	114	19	6	67	92
Jabal Habashi	32	9	54	95	81	14	130	225
Maqbanah	8	15	23	46	19	12	31	62
Total	105	43	271	419	189	56	534	779

779 CIVILIAN CASUALTIES FROM LANDMINES PLANTED BY THE HOUTHİ GROUP SINCE 2015



(1) “The Blind Killer” is a report on landmine victims in Yemen that covers findings from 17 governorates. The report included case studies of victims from various governorates and provided recommendations to the international community and all concerned parties for addressing the landmine problem.

(2) See “The Blind Killer.”

(3) In Taiz Governorate, the 17 of 23 districts contaminated with landmines are: Al-Makha, Sala, Dhubab, Al-Wazi’iyah, Sabir Al-Mawadim, Al-Misrakh, Maqbanah, Muza’a, Al-Mazhar, Hayfan, Al-Silw, Jabal Habshi, Al-Ma’afer, Al-Shamayateen, Al-Qahira, Sharab Al-Rona, and Sharab Al-Salam. This list

2. ROAD CLOSURES AND RESTRICTIONS ON THE RIGHT TO FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT

Before delving into the fundamental human right of freedom of movement and the choice of residence guaranteed by national and international laws, it is necessary to mention the main entry points to the city that have been closed by the Houthi group since mid-June 2015 and remain closed to this day. These include:

2A. Eastern entry point⁽¹⁾ This road from this entry point extends from Sana'a station and passes through Al-Qasr junction to Al-Hawban junction, from which two roads branch out. One connects to southern governorates of Lahj, Aden, Abyan, Al-Dhale' and the other to the northern governorates of Ibb, Dhamar, Al-Bayda, Sana'a.

2B. Western entry point The road from this entry point originates from the Al-Hisab area and passes through Beir Basha to an asphalt road that connects Taiz city to Mokha Port and Al-Hodeidah Governorate. It also connects the city to rural districts including Jabal Habshi, Maqbana, and Al-Waze'iah. The closures have severely restricted the movement of civilians from these areas in and out of Taiz city.

2C. Northern entry point This road from this entry point begins from the Asifrah area and extends to 60th Street. It connects two roads: the road connecting Al-Hodeidah to Taiz from the west, and the road from Al-Hodeidah to Sana'a at the Al-Zikra junction from the east. It also connects the city to rural districts including Shara'b Al-Salam in Taiz Governorate and the districts of Mudhaykhirah and Al-Udayn in Ibb Governorate to the north.⁽²⁾

2D. Southern entry point The road from this entry point connects the city to its southern rural areas, including the city of Al-Turbah and the governorates of Lahj and Aden. Popular resistance forces successfully reopened this route in mid-March 2016, making it the sole lifeline for nearly two million people. The Houthi group has repeatedly attempted to cut off this route by targeting the Hija Al-Abd Road with shells and missiles in an effort to retighten the siege on the city.⁽³⁾

3. ALTERNATIVE ROUTES

Faced with the continuous siege, the city's residents were compelled to seek alternative, rugged, and unpaved routes traversing steep mountain ranges, in order to access or leave the city and transport food and medicine to it. These alternative routes are inadequate and informal, as they were never intended to replace the properly constructed main roads. Residents have resorted to them solely out of necessity. The routes described below take approximately six hours to traverse by car to reach or leave the city, whereas previously the distance could be covered in 15 minutes. These alternative routes are fraught with dangers such as fatal accidents, extortion of travelers, arrests, and harrowing landscapes. They consist of three pathways.

The first route passes through an area west of the city known for its fog, then continues through the Najd Qasim area under the jurisdiction of Al-Mesrakh District, then the Al-Aqrud area, reaching Saela Sama, passing through Damnat Khadeer, then Naqil Al-Abel, finally reaching Al-

(1) This gateway is considered one of the main entrances to the city. It serves as a link to both southern and northern governorates. It is also a lifeline that connects the city to the industrial area of Al-Houban. Despite its importance, the Houthi group has enforced a complete closure of the gateway since July 12, 2015.

(2) The Houthi group has closed all the aforementioned entrances, planted the roads with landmines, and deployed snipers on buildings and heights overlooking these entrances. Due to the prolonged siege, these areas have now become dense forests filled with thorny trees.

(3) The last targeting incident on the Hayjah Al-Abd Road involved the firing of an unexploded rocket by the Houthi group on August 2, 2018.

Huban (the eastern entrance to the city).⁽⁴⁾ The Houthi group enforces the closure of this route each day from 6 PM to 6 AM.

The second route starts from the foggy area west of the city and passes through the junction of Waseela and the villages of Jabal Habshi District, marked by rugged mountainous terrain. It passes through Saela Al-Saram, followed by the Al-Akhloud area, Hajda, and Al-Ramada, finally reaching the Sharab intersection (the northwestern entrance to the city).

The third route, known to many as the “Death Road,” is a narrow and rugged path stretching 9 km long and 6 meters wide. It features steep slopes and winding terrain with numerous tight and perilous turns. Located to the south of Taiz city, it connects it to the governorates of Lahj and Aden. Originally intended to link the Al-Maqaterah District to the city of At-Turbah, this route has become the city’s sole lifeline and passage amid the siege imposed by the Houthi group.

Due to the lack of protection against soil collapses and rockslides, and the effects of heavy seasonal rains, the third road frequently becomes inaccessible, completely halting travel. This situation prevents the entry of trucks that supply the city with energy, food, and essential supplies. Moreover, numerous traffic accidents resulting in fatalities occur on this road annually. The closure of the main roads due to the siege has resulted in a series of violations against civilians forced to take the alternative routes, whether those trapped within the city or those coming from the surrounding district. Among these violations, the following are notable:

3A. Deaths and injuries from accidents on alternative roads

Residents traveling on the alternative routes have faced harrowing accidents due to rugged terrain, narrow pathways, increased rockslides, and the risks of flash floods that sweep away vehicles and passengers alike. **Over the course of the nine-year siege, there have been 561 traffic accidents on these alternative routes, resulting in 434 fatalities and 807 injuries. The financial losses from these accidents amounted to 511,612,028 million units of currency.**⁽⁵⁾

Table 5: Accidents on alternative routes, January 2016 to December 2023.

Road name	Total incidents	Total victims	Total deaths	Total injuries
Heejat Al-Abd	142	260	97	163
Al-Aqroudh	106	213	73	140
Hayfan	101	237	83	154
Jabal Habshi	91	182	68	114
Al-Karba Al-Sahi	72	214	76	138
Maqbana	49	135	37	98
Total	561	1241	434	807

(4) The Houthi group controls this road, as well as the second road for most of its distances, except for the Hayjah Al-Abd Road, which is not under the influence of the Houthi group.

(5) Source: Traffic Police in the city of Taiz.

3B. Arrests, kidnappings, and torture

Residents forced to travel on the alternative routes must cross numerous checkpoints controlled by both warring parties. This situation has negatively affected many civilians who were intercepted at checkpoints and subsequently kidnapped, forcibly disappeared, and tortured, especially between mid-2015 and 2021.⁽⁶⁾ Most of the violations were based on discriminatory reasons linked to the victims’ regional or political affiliation.

The ACJ monitoring team documented the arrests by the Houthi group of 477 victims in the city and surrounding areas (29 children, 3 women, and 445 men), 79 incidents of enforced disappearance (75 men, 3 children, 1 woman) and 59 victims (56 men, 2 children, and 1 woman) subjected to torture following arrest and forced disappearance.

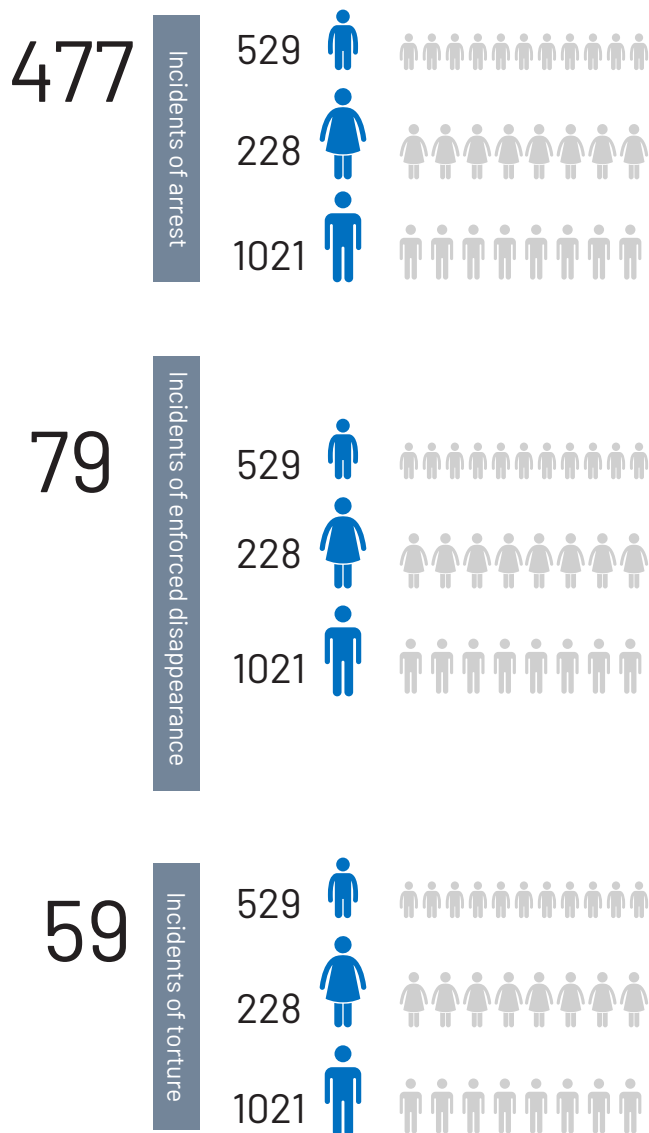


Table 6: Incidents of arrest.

District	Arrests			Total
	Children	Women	Men	
At-Ta'iziyah	25	296	2	323
Al-Qahirah	1	0	0	1
Al-Mudhaffar	2	22	1	25
Jabal Habashi	0	15	0	15
Salh	0	11	0	11
Sabir al-Mawadim	1	41	0	42
Maqbanah	0	60	0	60
Total	29	445	3	477

Table 7: Incidents of enforced disappearance.

District	Arrests			Total
	Children	Women	Men	
At-Ta'iziyah	1	25	0	26
Al-Qahirah	0	0	0	0
Al-Mudhaffar	2	8	1	11
Jabal Habashi	0	4	0	4
Salh	0	4	0	4
Sabir al-Mawadim	0	11	0	11
Maqbanah	0	23	0	23
Total	3	75	1	79

Table 8: Incidents of torture.

District	Torture			Total
	Children	Women	Men	
At-Ta'iziyah	1	21	1	23
Al-Qahirah	0	2	0	2
Al-Mudhaffar	1	4	0	5
Jabal Habashi	0	4	0	4
Salh	0	3	0	3
Sabir al-Mawadim	0	5	0	5
Maqbanah	0	17	0	17
Total	2	56	1	59

(6) Travelers using alternative routes are subjected to inspections of their belongings and scrutiny of their phones, along with extortion, blackmail, and prolonged detainments by checkpoints scattered along those routes. These practices continue unabated as of the writing of this report.

3C. INCREASE IN TRANSPORTATION FARES AND PRICES OF ESSENTIAL GOODS AND COMMODITIES

The closure of main roads has caused severe economic hardship for the city's residents. Prices of essential goods skyrocketed by up to 100% due to the difficulty of transporting goods through alternative routes. Additionally, transportation costs saw a significant increase. Prior to the siege, the fare from inside the city to Al-Hawban (the eastern entrance of the city) was 100 Yemeni riyals. **After the siege, the fare through alternative routes soared to 10,000 Yemeni riyals, equivalent to US\$22, correlated with a sharp rise in the number of households suffering from acute food insecurity in the governorate compared to their conditions in 2014. The Integrated Phase Classification (IPC) analysis for the period from December 2018 to January 2019 indicates that 73% of the population is experiencing food insecurity.⁽¹⁾**

Table 9: Transportation comparisons.

Example	Before siege	After siege
Number of vehicles arriving in city per month	60,000	25,200
Cost of transportation from Al-Hawban to city	100 YER	10,000 YER (22 USD)
Travel time from Al-Hawban to city	15 minutes	6 hours
Travel time from city to Sana'a	4 hours	12 hours

Table 10: Sample basic commodity prices before and after the siege.

Commodity	Quantity	2014 price (YER)	2024 price (YER)	% increase
Flour	50 kg	7,000	44,000	370
Sugar	50 kg	12,500	80,000	675
Ghee or clarified butter	6 kg	3,850	14,000	101.5
Oil	20 liters	7,500	34,000	265
Beans Cans	24 cans	3,600	24,000	204
Tray of eggs	30 eggs	800	6,000	52
Small yogurt	12 containers	840	6,000	51.6

(1) Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), December 2018 - January 2019.

3D. DETERIORATION OF FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS

The siege and road closures led to prolonged absences of fathers from their families, contributing to increased unemployment rates as many lost their jobs in both the government and private sectors. Additionally, the siege severed ties between residents of the city and their families in outlying areas, resulting in family problems that culminated in divorces and family breakdowns in some cases. ACJ documented 2,819 divorce cases in the three urban districts over seven years of the siege, as shown in the following table.

**INFOGRAPHIC WITH
STATISTICS ON
DIVORCE INCIDENTS
DURING THE PERIOD
FROM
(1/2018 - 6/2024)**

Year	Number of divorces
2018	39
2019	310
2020	241
2021	528
2022	684
2023	575
2024	288 (January to June)
	2819

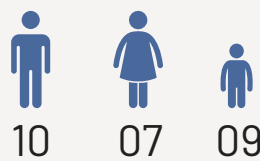
4. DEPRIVATION OF THE RIGHT TO HEALTHCARE

During the siege on Taiz city, the Houthi group has imposed barriers that hindered the arrival of life-saving basic medical supplies. This has had a profound impact, particularly on patients in critical need, exacerbated by the worsening of chronic diseases among tens of thousands of afflicted individuals. Infectious diseases such as malaria, dengue fever (chikungunya), yellow fever, and the spread of COVID-19 in 2020 further complicated the humanitarian situation, contributing to a dire and complex humanitarian crisis.

4A. Deaths due to lack of oxygen

During the first year of the siege on the city, the Houthi group prevented the entry of medicines, medical supplies, and oxygen cylinders to hospitals.^{(1) (2)} This led to the closure of a significant number of healthcare centers, depriving civilians, especially pregnant women and children, of necessary medical care. Consequently, dozens of civilians across all age groups died due to the denial of healthcare resulting from the siege. **ACJ documented 26 deaths in 2015 and 2016 due to oxygen deprivation. Among them were nine children who passed away shortly after birth, seven women, and ten men from across the besieged urban districts of Al-Qahira, Salh, and Al-Mudhaffar.**

26 Deaths due to oxygen deprivation,
June 2015 to March 2016.



4B. Cancer and kidney failure patients

Cancer and kidney failure patients in rural Taiz districts under Houthi control have been severely deprived of access to the specialized medical services available in central Taiz city. Specifically, the Hope Center for cancer treatment and kidney dialysis centers have been significantly affected. **The kidney dialysis center at the military hospital was bombed, resulting in complete destruction of its equipment. Additionally, the dialysis center at the Republican Hospital was forced to suspend operations for several months due to shortages of supplies and medications.** Fortunately, the dialysis center at the Ath-Thawra Hospital has continued to operate without interruption during the siege.

The suffering of patients and their caregivers is exacerbated as they are compelled to take alternative routes, spending at least six hours to reach the opposite bank of the city—a journey that previously took less than fifteen minutes.⁽³⁾ **Cancer and kidney failure patients from various districts constitute approximately 80% of the patients treated at these specialized centers. The arduous trip to receive treatment inside the city has led to serious health complications and, in some cases, fatalities when delays occurred.**

(1) On October 25, 2015, Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) confirmed that they had failed to deliver medical supplies to hospitals located in the besieged area after the Houthis denied them, despite weeks of negotiations with them.

(2) Due to the siege, Taiz city lost its most important health project, the Oxygen Plant Project, which had a production capacity of 300 cylinders per day, funded by Kuwait. Because of the closure of main roads and the challenging conditions of alternative routes, materials and products could not be transported. Consequently, the project was relocated to Marib Governorate, resulting in a significant number of deaths among COVID-19 patients in Taiz due to severe oxygen shortages in hospitals.

(3) The road connecting the city to the Port of Hodeidah is situated in a conflict zone where landmines planted by the Houthis are scattered throughout.

This situation exemplifies the severe impact of the siege on access to healthcare in Taiz city, particularly for patients with chronic conditions.⁽⁴⁾

Table 13: Hardships faced by patients.

Type of concern	Impact
Cancer patients deprived of healthcare during first year of siege	2370 persons
Kidney patients deprived of healthcare during first year of siege	506 persons
Kidney failure patients who accessed centers from beginning of the siege until July 2023	1251 persons
Visitors to kidney dialysis center from outside the city from beginning of siege through April 2024	1297 persons
Total cost for kidney dialysis patients to reach downtown Taiz via alternative routes	\$US 21,789,600
Visitors to Hope Center for Cancer Treatment, 2021 through April 2024	3,057 persons
Total cost for cancer patients to reach downtown Taiz via alternative routes	\$3,841,669
Total cost of transporting cancer drugs for patients for one year	\$16,200,000
Cost of transporting cancer drugs for patients before the siege for one year	\$168,224

(4) The Houthi group prevented the oxygen supplier from delivering the pipes needed by hospitals to save patients. They even kidnapped some citizens at checkpoints after attempting to bring in medications. This forced hospitals to resort to smuggling medicines and oxygen pipes via camels or on the backs of citizens through the arduous mountainous paths.

5. PREVENTION OF ACCESS TO HUMANITARIAN AID

Since mid-2015, the Houthi group has actively worked to close the main entry points to Taiz city despite their crucial importance for the population, particularly the eastern entry point.⁽¹⁾ This point serves as a supply line to deliver humanitarian aid, essential goods, and medical supplies into the city, crucial for sustaining a population of nearly one million.⁽²⁾

(1) According to a report by the Yemen Expert Group issued in 2016, Houthi forces systematically besieged the cities of Taiz and Aden, attacking humanitarian service providers and their facilities. This hindered the distribution of aid and humanitarian assistance, as the siege involved the closure of roads and access routes, leading to shortages of food, water, and medical supplies. In Taiz specifically, the deliberate obstruction of humanitarian aid and commercial goods by the Houthis resulted in severe damage in Al-Mazhar, Al-Qahira, and Salh Districts in the city center, displacing a third of the population. Those who remained faced urgent needs for food and water. Moreover, the blockade imposed by the Houthis on Taiz led to the deaths of some patients in hospitals, despite their conditions being treatable.

(2) In June 2015, more than 50 humanitarian organizations declared Taiz a disaster-stricken governorate due to the siege imposed by the Houthis.



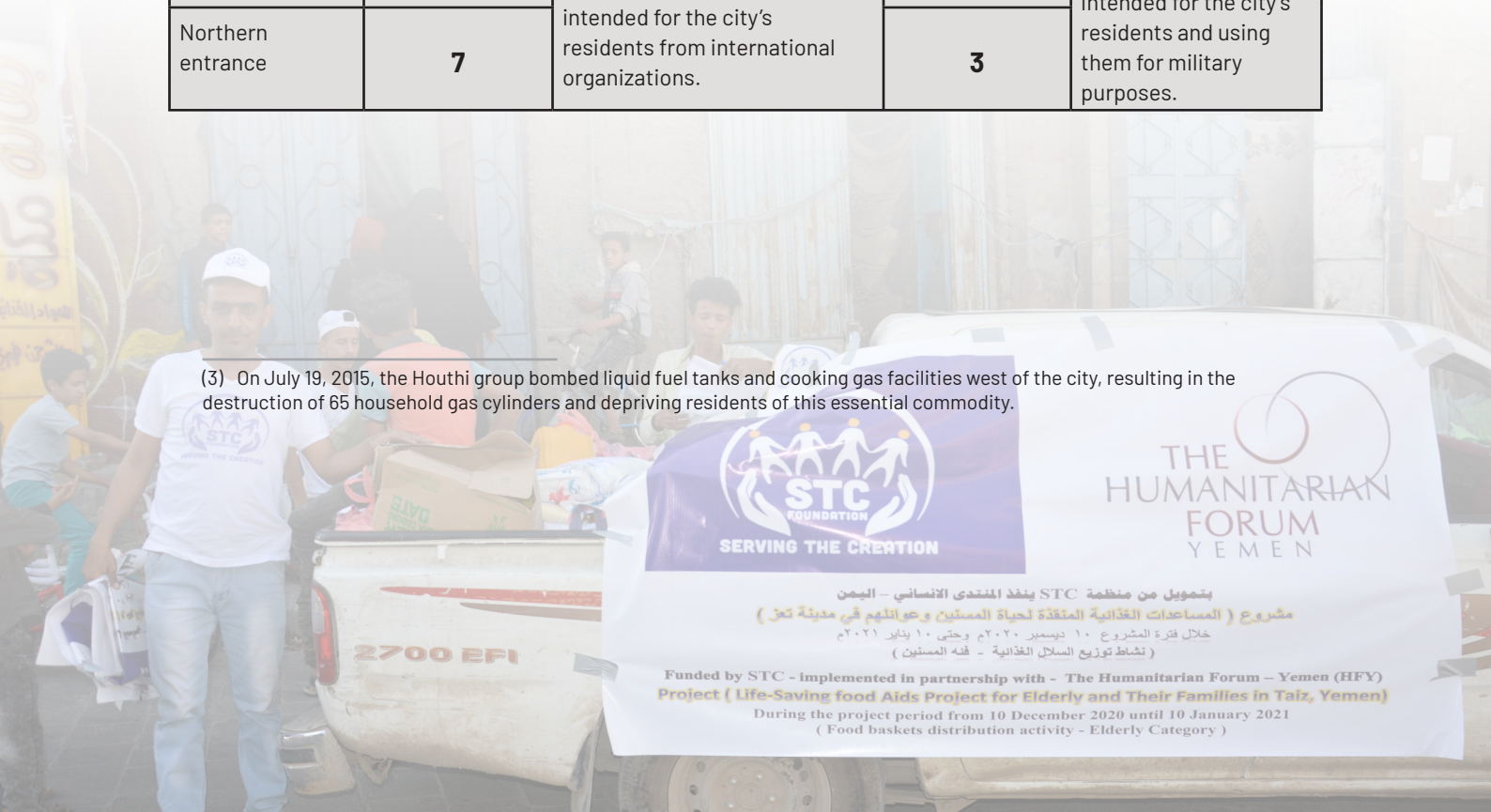
During the siege, ACJ has documented 31 incidents where the Houthi group obstructed and prevented humanitarian aid and relief supplies from reaching the besieged and affected areas. Some incidents involved confiscation of aid shipments and hindering the entry of missions and humanitarian teams. Geographically, 11 of these incidents occurred at the western entrances of the city, 13 at the eastern entrances, and 7 at the northern entrances.

The Houthi group targeted trucks loaded with food supplies, shelter materials, and humanitarian aid during these incidents. Additionally, medical trucks carrying medicines to treat conditions including cancer, kidney failure, diabetes, cholera, dengue fever, and child malnutrition were also hindered. ACJ documented 22 incidents where the Houthi group seized humanitarian aid and diverted it for military purposes through the city's three closed entry points under their control. These cases involved 12 trucks loaded with food, seven with medical supplies, and three carrying shelter materials bound for camps for internally displaced persons (IDPs) on the outskirts of the city.⁽³⁾

Table 14: Incidents affecting the delivery of humanitarian aid.

Incident Location	No. of Violations	Type of Violation	No. of Violations	Type of Violation
Western entrance to the city	11	Preventing the entry of humanitarian aid, medical supplies, and shelter materials intended for the city's residents from international organizations.	12	Confiscation of humanitarian, medical, and shelter materials intended for the city's residents and using them for military purposes.
Eastern entrance	13		7	
Northern entrance	7		3	

(3) On July 19, 2015, the Houthi group bombed liquid fuel tanks and cooking gas facilities west of the city, resulting in the destruction of 65 household gas cylinders and depriving residents of this essential commodity.



CHAPTER 02

SOCIAL IMPACTS OF THE SIEGE

The social impacts of war and siege are enduring and cannot quickly dissipate, unlike economic impacts that can be addressed through reconstruction efforts given sufficient resources and achieved peace. These social impacts remain ingrained in the minds of those who have endured them for extended periods.

This chapter of the report sheds light on some of the social effects of war and siege on civilians, beginning with forced displacement and ending with the impacts of the siege on the health, water, education, environment, and sanitation sectors.

1. FORCED DISPLACEMENT AND EVACUATION

Since 2015, the war has caused displacement and forced the evacuation of large numbers of individuals and families in Taiz, including the complete abandonment of villages. The ACJ team documented incidents of forced displacement by the Houthi group in 14 villages in At-Ta'iziyah district, three in Jabal Habashi, three in Maqbana, and four in Sabir Al Mawadim. The displaced families now live in dire humanitarian conditions and have experienced drastic changes to their livelihoods, especially when displaced to camps lacking basic services or to other impoverished areas.

Displacement has caused significant social and economic changes for families, affecting their health, nutrition, and overall well-being. Increased child marriage rates, higher maternal and child mortality, and worsened nutritional conditions have all ensued. Displacement has also led to a loss of educational opportunities and resources, exacerbating the psychological, social, and economic crises faced by the affected population. These challenges have affected residents across 17 of Taiz's 22 districts.

Despite these hardships, displacement was unavoidable as a life-saving measure for families to avoid bombings and violence. Due to the protracted nature of the war, many IDPs are still unable to return to their homes, which have been either completely or partially destroyed or are located in active conflict zones.

Across Taiz Governorate, 107 IDP camps currently accommodate 7,195 displaced families (39,416 individuals).⁽¹⁾ The ACJ Team conducted visits to several camps and documented the hardships and tragedies faced by IDPs. These findings are described in detail in the latter part of this report.

Table 15: Current number of displaced families in Taiz Governorate

District	Families	Individuals	Families in camps	Individuals in camps	Families in homes	Individuals in homes
Sabir al-Mawadim	1,893	8,961	-	-	1,893	8,961
Al-Ma'afer	3,868	17,790	1,883	9,432	1,985	8,358
As-Silw	1,781	8,644	-	-	1,781	8,644
Al-Qahirah	5,318	23,082	204	903	5,114	22,179
Al-Misrakh	2,946	11,107	97	532	2,849	10,575
Al-Mudhaffar	5,996	26,726	1,305	7,546	4,691	19,180
Salh	3,123	20,827	1,023	5,469	2,100	15,358
Mashra'a Wa Hadnan	695	3,520	-	-	695	3,520
Al-Wazi'iyah	1,046	5,090	-	-	1,046	5,090
Al-Mawasit	2,670	13,386	-	-	2,670	13,386
Ash-Shamayatayn	5,870	28,626	733	3,512	5,137	25,114
Dhubab	454	2,270	-	-	454	2,270
Al-Makha	2,652	13,563	1,245	5,877	1,407	7,686
Same'a	918	4,588	-	-	918	4,588
Jabal Habashi	3,400	16,512	221	1,225	3,179	15,287
Mawza	1,176	5,781	628	2,951	548	2,830
Maqbanah	943	4,220	356	1,969	587	2,251
Total	44,749	214,693	7,695	39,416	37,054	175,277

(1) The statistics are issued by the Executive Unit for Managing IDP Camps in Taiz Governorate - July 2021.



Current number of displaced families in Taiz Governorate

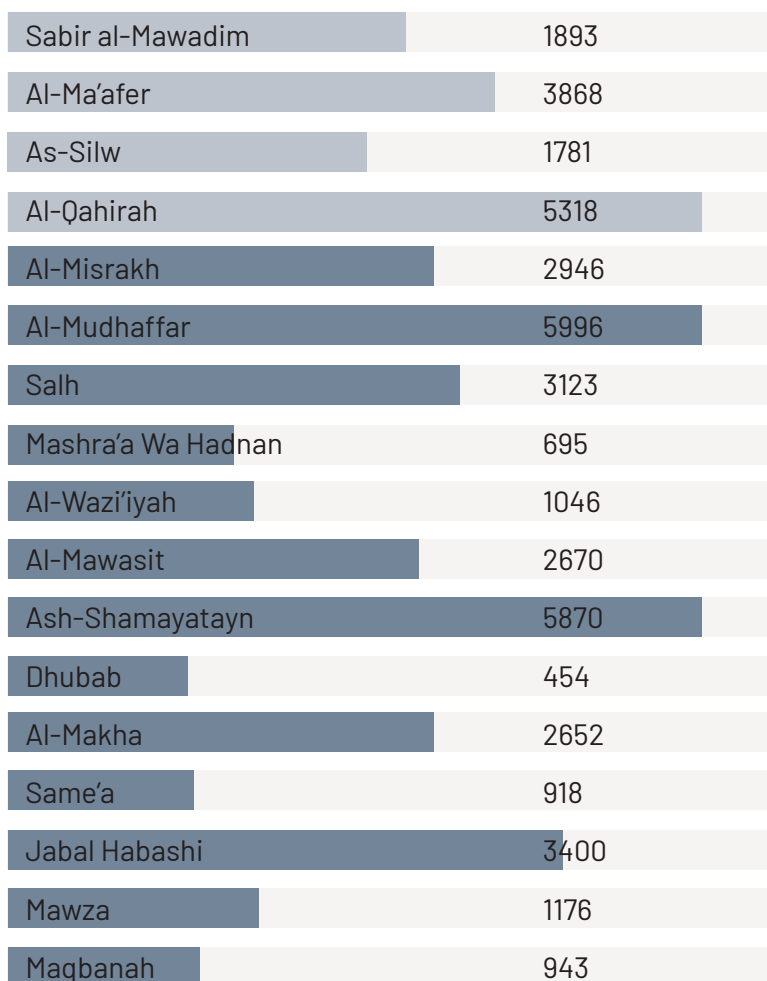


Table 16: Villages displaced during the reporting period.

District	Displaced villages	Villages	Affected families	Displacement period
At-Ta'iziyah	14	Shoab Akkari, Al-Dahna, Al-Dar, Al-Mantrah, Al-Bahabah, Hadhran, Al-Dabah, Mata, Al-Rawd Al-Olaiya, Hafira, Akma Ta'ali, Al-Najidiya, Jabal Han, Tamah,	3,014	2016 - 2017
Jabal Habashi	3	Tabishia, Al-Ashaab Al-Olaiya, Al-Jurf	170	2017
Sabir al-Mawadim	4	Al Shaqab (Tabet Al-Salihin), Dheraa Al-Ghobar, Al-Mashhoot, Al-Ouidan	284	2016
Maqbanah	3	Al-Makibel, Bani Abdullah Ashmala - Al-Kadma	180	2016

Since 2015, health facilities in Taiz have been subjected to frequent attacks by the Houthi group, especially hospitals like the General Revolution Hospital, the Central Laboratory, and the Military Hospital. The Hope Cancer Center and the Swedish Center at Point 4 were also destroyed due to shelling, with medications and medical equipment looted. The TB Center for lung tuberculosis has remained closed since the start of the war and siege, despite being the city's only center for such treatment.

The health sector has suffered significant human losses, including the deaths of three employees, two disabled individuals, and the forced displacement of 252 people from the city.⁽²⁾ Economically, the sector incurred losses amounting to \$16,311,030 from 2015 to 2020, primarily due to severe damage to buildings and the destruction or loss of furniture, goods, and transportation facilities.⁽³⁾ ACJ documented the war and siege damages on the health sector in the governorate in 2018 as a model, as detailed in the table.

Facility type	Number	Type of damage			Notes
		Complete	Partial	Ceased operation	
Hospital	3	0	3	-	The reason for the cessation is the displacement of medical staff and the lack of petroleum derivatives.
Health Center	35	0	22	13	
Health Unit	55	3	20	32	
Total	93	3	45	45	

2. CONSEQUENCES OF THE SIEGE ON THE WATER SECTOR

Before the siege, the Public Water and Sanitation Corporation in Taiz relied on water supplies from 86 wells across various aquifers. This included 39 wells located within the city limits, with a production capacity of 1,784,592 m³ per day. There were 23 wells in the Al-Haymah and Habir Sha'ban Al-Rayhan areas under the At-Ta'iziyah district, producing 2,892,672 m³ per day. In addition, there were nine wells from the aquifer in the Hazran area of the At-Ta'iziyah district, producing 1,539,648 m³ per day. Finally, there were 15 wells in the Al-Hawjljah area in At-Ta'iziyah and Al-Amerah in the Mawiyah district, with a production capacity of 1,762,272 m³ per day.

Before the siege, the amount of water reaching the reservoirs of the Public Water and Sanitation Corporation inside the city was estimated at 6,120,000 m³ per year. After the siege, this quantity dropped steeply, with inflows varying from 580,000 to 648,000 m³ per year. This drastic reduction caused a severe crisis for the city, especially during the last two years of the siege, with a shortfall reaching 80% of the population's water needs.⁽⁴⁾

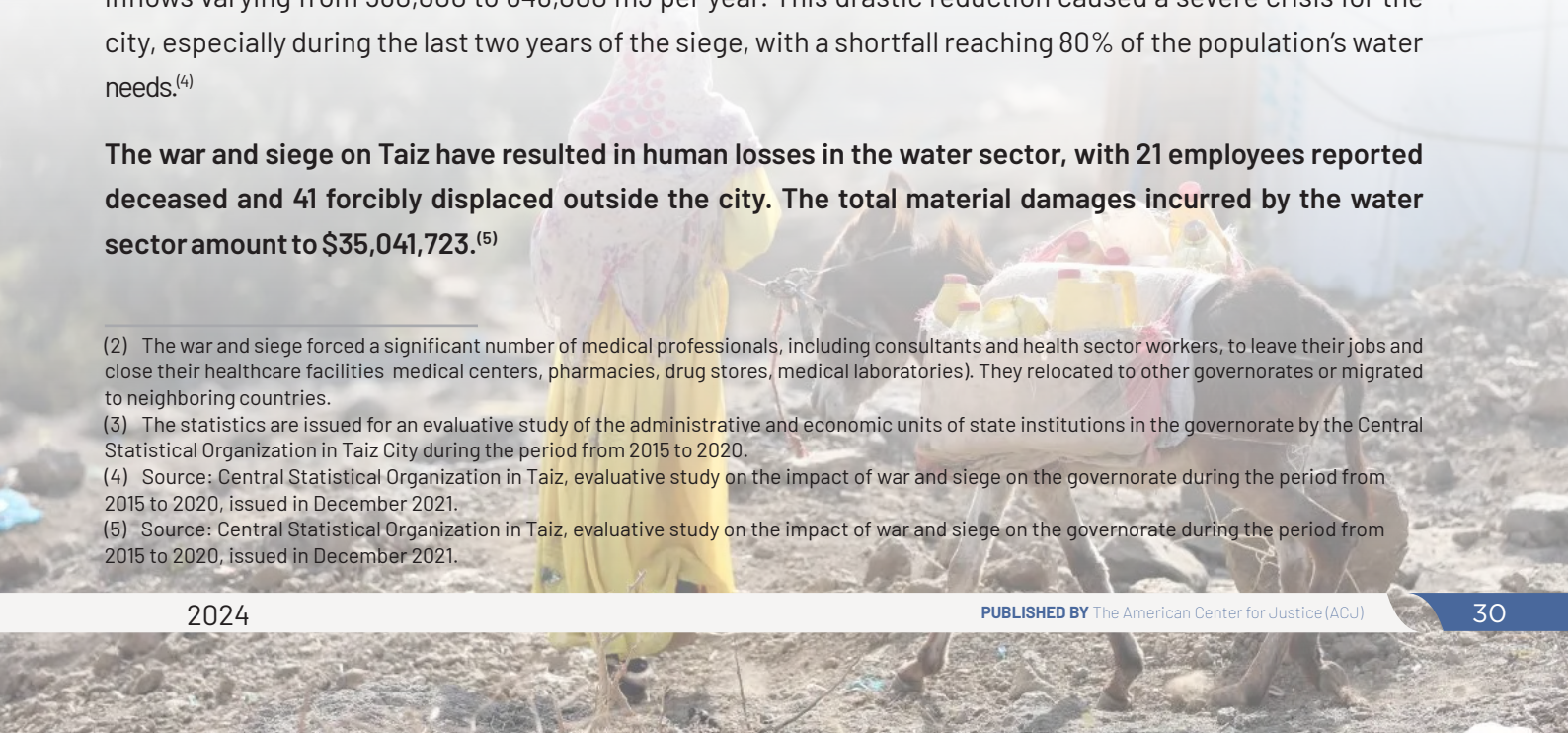
The war and siege on Taiz have resulted in human losses in the water sector, with 21 employees reported deceased and 41 forcibly displaced outside the city. The total material damages incurred by the water sector amount to \$35,041,723.⁽⁵⁾

(2) The war and siege forced a significant number of medical professionals, including consultants and health sector workers, to leave their jobs and close their healthcare facilities (medical centers, pharmacies, drug stores, medical laboratories). They relocated to other governorates or migrated to neighboring countries.

(3) The statistics are issued for an evaluative study of the administrative and economic units of state institutions in the governorate by the Central Statistical Organization in Taiz City during the period from 2015 to 2020.

(4) Source: Central Statistical Organization in Taiz, evaluative study on the impact of war and siege on the governorate during the period from 2015 to 2020, issued in December 2021.

(5) Source: Central Statistical Organization in Taiz, evaluative study on the impact of war and siege on the governorate during the period from 2015 to 2020, issued in December 2021.



In mid-August 2015, the local Water Corporation stopped pumping water to the residents of Taiz city after failing to procure fuel due to the siege. This deprivation left more than 300,000 citizens without drinking water. Additionally, the Houthis prevented mobile water tankers from entering the city. This situation persisted for several months until the liberation of the Dahi crossing.⁽⁶⁾

Since the 2015 outbreak of the war in Taiz, all water wells have fallen under the control of the Houthi group, except for those in the Wadi Al-Dhobab to the west of the city, which constitute its reserve basin. These wells are dug manually and belong to farmers. Of these, 51 are now dry up due to increased extraction. The resulting sudden lack of water left the population without access to these groundwater sources, which previously sustained the city. The Houthi group seized control of these water sources and has prevented water from reaching the city since the end of 2015.⁽⁷⁾

This situation has led to a severe water crisis in the city, with 75% of the population’s water needs unmet. To compensate for the water shortage, residents resort to digging wells at random. Seventy such wells have been dug this way, but most have dried up, with only 22 still functional.⁽⁸⁾

Table 17: Wells in Taiz in 2014.

No. of wells	Locations	Production capacity (L/m)	Current control range	Annual water supply quantity (per m3)	
				Before siege	After siege
39	City			Before siege	Deficit ratio
23	Al-Hayma and Habir Shaab Al-Rayhan	1,784,592	The legitimate government	6,120,000	80% of city's population needs
9	Hadhran, At- Ta'iziyah	2,892,672	Houthi group		
15	Al-Hawgla, At- Ta'iziyah	1,539,648	Houthi group		
		1,762,272	Houthi group		

(6) The organization Citizens for Human Rights reported a testimony from Haroun Mursheed, a victim of the siege of Taiz, in a report titled, "The Siege Tightens on the Last Breath of Life in Taiz," published on October 7, 2015. Mursheed confirmed that the Houthis stopped a drinking water truck at one of their checkpoints in the Beir Basha area. They proceeded to empty the water onto the ground after one of the armed men climbed aboard and urinated inside the water tank of the truck.

(7) In a report titled "Death Is Mercy Compared to This Life," Human Rights Watch stated that the Houthi group used water as a weapon by preventing its flow into the city of Taiz over the past eight years.

(8) During the siege imposed on the city, journalist Mahmoud Yassin, along with other activists and journalists, initiated a humanitarian initiative to bring water to the city. The team planned to bring a water convoy from neighboring Al-Bayda Governorate to Taiz. However, the Houthis preempted the activists' plan by ambushing a preparatory meeting. They arrested 30 individuals who had intended to travel with the convoy. The detainees were released in subsequent periods. The last to be freed was activist Ameen Al-Shafaq, released in February 2017 as part of a prisoner exchange deal with the Yemeni government.

3. CONSEQUENCES OF THE SIEGE ON THE EDUCATION SECTOR

The siege has had significant impacts on Taiz across educational institutions (kindergartens, schools, institutes, and universities). The educational process came to a halt at the onset of the war, preventing students from accessing their schools and universities, especially during the years 2015 and 2016. The number of students affected by the inability to attend university reached 12,484 due to the road closures and siege.⁽¹⁾

In technical and vocational institutes within the city, the average number of students before the siege was 10,300 per year, which dropped to 2,136 after. Thus, 8,137 students were unable to access education due to the siege.⁽²⁾ ACJ documented the closure of 31 schools in the city due to the siege and war, affecting 32,200 students.⁽³⁾ Additionally, 10,464 personnel working in the primary, technical, and vocational education sectors were displaced.

The damages incurred by the war and siege in the education sector amounted to \$81,262,135, including complete and partial destruction of buildings, as well as the destruction and loss of furniture, office equipment, transportation vehicles, and power generators. Human losses in the education sector included 883 deaths, 4,725 displacements, 20 disabilities, 268 external migrations, and 157 internal migrations.⁽⁴⁾

Table 18. Students affected by the siege on the city.

Colleges	Technical institutes	School students	Number of university staff	
			Before siege	After siege
12,484	8,137	32,200	2,100	833

(1) Source: University of Taiz.

(2) Source: Technical and Vocational Institute.

(3) ACJ issued a report in 2021 titled “The Forgotten Crime,” which focused on violations against the education process in Yemen. It specifically addressed the impact of war on the education sector in the city of Taiz.

(4) Source: Central Statistical and Information Agency - Taiz - December 2021.



4. IMPACT OF THE SIEGE ON THE ENVIRONMENT AND SANITATION SECTORS

Before the outbreak of armed conflict between government forces supported by popular resistance against the Houthi group, the latter had already seized control of the General Administration of Sanitation located in Al-Qasr Roundabout east of Taiz city. They confiscated the physical assets of the administration, including trucks, bulldozers, and equipment used for solid waste transportation, allocated for all neighborhoods and streets of the city. The designated waste disposal site (landfill) at the Sharab intersection west of the city also fell under Houthi control. They prohibited the city's Environmental and Sanitation Office from transporting waste there, leading to an environmental disaster within the besieged city.

During his testimony to the ACJ team, Mr. A.M.F., an employee at the Environmental Office in Taiz, **stated that the Houthi group deliberately deprived the city's residents of access to a fleet, comprising a variety of carriers, trucks, and equipment specifically for transporting the solid waste and preventing the delivery and transport of waste to designated collection sites. This intentional obstruction caused waste to accumulate in the middle of streets and residential neighborhoods, resulting in an environmental catastrophe that triggered the spread of diseases and epidemics. Consequently,** city workers were compelled to find an alternative location for transporting solid waste. The new site is located on the Al-Dabab southern outlet of the city.

Dr. Abdul Bari Alyousefi, an environmental scientist, told ACJ that the new landfill has partially mitigated the problem. However, it is located on a tall hill that is unsuitable for long-term use. The site was once a family park but was destroyed by airstrikes. Piles of waste at the new landfill sit only a few meters from the homes and farms of citizens, who are directly exposed to smoke, odors, and health risks such as asthma, allergies, skin irritation, and gastrointestinal diseases.

Unburied waste poses a health crisis, as it becomes a fertile environment for disease vectors such as malaria and dengue fever. It also serves as a breeding ground for stray animals like dogs, increasing the risk of spreading diseases such as rabies, which has seen a frightening spread in recent years, resulting in the deaths of 20 people and infecting 167 others. A solution to the waste management problem is needed urgently to ensure a humane, healthy, and just environment for citizens.

The war and siege on Taiz have caused human losses in the environmental and sanitation sector, with 29 of its employees disabled and 1,860 forcibly displaced outside the city. The total damages inflicted on the sector amount to \$5,666,292.⁽¹⁾

(1) Source: Central Statistical Organization in Taiz, evaluative study on the impact of war and siege on the governorate during the period from 2015 to 2020, issued in December 2021.

CHAPTER 03

ECONOMIC IMPACTS OF THE SIEGE

The war has been characterized by an ancient form of urban warfare known as “siege,” now enforced on the city for nine years. This daily reality has deeply affected the city’s residents, with its negative effects reverberating through the governorate’s economic infrastructure. The siege has led to economic deterioration each year, harming the lives of inhabitants. Key aspects of these economic impacts are explored below.

1. ECONOMIC RESOURCES AND ACTIVITIES

1A. Agricultural activity

Agricultural and related activities such as animal husbandry and beekeeping have sharply declined due to the war and siege, forcing many farmers to abandon their lands and flee to safer areas. Despite a relative cessation of hostilities due to a ceasefire in the past two years, the suffering of farmers in rural areas continues. This is largely due to the vast number of landmines indiscriminately planted by the Houthi group in valleys, farms, and pastures. Civilians pay a heavy price daily, losing lives and property. Ongoing sniper attacks by Houthi elements positioned in hills overlooking farms and valleys cause further hardship.

Furthermore, vast stretches of land have become arid due to the depletion of wells where water was redirected to the city after the Houthis cut off water access. The prices of fuel, seeds, and agricultural fertilizers have also increased, driven by higher transportation costs due to the need to use alternative routes. This has led to the abandonment of agricultural lands by many farmers seeking safety and alternative employment in the city. Additionally, these conditions have compelled some individuals to join the war as fighters to secure income to support their families.

1B. Industrial and commercial activity

The industrial and commercial sectors have been among the hardest hit by the war and siege, particularly in areas under Houthi control. These include the Ha'il Saeed An'am and Partners group of companies in Al-Hawban, the Ghee and Soap Factory at the intersection of Route 60 with the road to Hodeidah and Al-Makha, and the cement factory near Al-Barh city on the road to Hodeidah and Al-Makha. The siege imposed on Taiz City isolated these crucial establishments from the governorate center, resulting in hundreds of employees losing their jobs in these facilities.

The total damages incurred by the industrial sector during the period of war and siege amount to \$22,364,606. These damages included destruction and loss of mechanical equipment, stored goods, furniture, and transportation means. The total damages incurred by the commercial sector amount to approximately \$2,581,754 due to the destruction and loss of machinery, stored goods, furniture, and transportation means.⁽¹⁾

Table 19: Damage to the productive sectors.

Sector	Damage	Extent of damage
Commercial	Destruction and loss of machinery, stored goods, furniture, and vehicles	2,581,754\$
Industrial	Destruction and loss of machinery, stored goods, furniture, and vehicles	22,364,606\$

(1) Source: Central Statistical and Information Agency - Taiz.

2. IMPACT OF THE SIEGE ON VARIOUS SECTORS

The siege has caused extensive damage and losses to all vital sectors in the city, negatively affecting the lives of civilians and the economy. The damages and losses affect every sector including health, education, energy, electricity, water, commerce, communications, transportation, security and justice, industry, tourism, fisheries, environment, construction, labor force, media and culture, youth and sports, finance and banks, and public administration.

2A. Electricity sector

Before the war and blockade, the city primarily relied on the Al-Makha power station, which produced 160 megawatts, and the Osayferah power station, which produced 15 megawatts. However, the war led to the destruction of both stations, rendering them out of service. For nine years, the residents have been deprived of their sole energy source, significantly affecting health and service sectors in the city. Both sectors ceased operations during the nine-month blockade, which also damaged electricity transmission and distribution networks.

The public electricity grid has remained offline since the beginning of the war. Most of the population has been living without electricity, relying on costly alternative energy sources. The damages incurred by the energy sector amount to \$36,767,437 due to the loss of buildings, equipment, stored goods, furniture, and transportation means. Human losses in this sector totaled 207 deaths and 314 cases of displacement.⁽²⁾

Human losses in the electricity sector

Displacement



314

Deaths



207

Economic losses

36.767.437\$

(2) Deaths in the electricity sector and other sectors were due to the siege, resulting in the lack of healthcare for many patients suffering from serious diseases such as cancer, kidney failure, asthma, and heart diseases.

2B. Private sector and commercial companies

One hundred institutions, companies, and commercial factories operated in Taiz before the blockade, but only 17 remained operational thereafter. The number of commercial agents and suppliers in business before the blockade was more than 400. After the blockade, none remained.⁽³⁾ Before the blockade, 18,000 private sector workers were employed in these establishments, but 9,000 were affected by the blockade due to the partial or complete destruction of establishments.⁽⁴⁾

Table 21: Reduction of private sector activity.

Companies, institutions, and factories		Commercial agencies		Private sector workers	
Before siege	After siege	Before siege	After siege	Before siege	After siege
100	17	400	0	18,000	9,000

2C. OIL SECTOR AND REVENUES

The quantity of diesel fuel reaching the city through the Yemeni Oil Company before the blockade was **432,000,000,000** liters annually, generating sales taxes amounting to \$15,140,186. The quantity of gasoline reaching the city before the blockade through the Yemeni Oil Company was **216,000,000** liters annually, generating taxes amounting to **\$775,831**. Since the blockade and siege, no diesel fuel or gasoline has reached the city.⁽¹⁾⁽²⁾

The total revenue received by the governorate in 2014 before the blockade amounted to **\$240,626,028**. However, by 2021, revenues had dropped drastically to only **\$13,112,760**. The financial loss incurred by the governorate due to the siege amounted to **\$227,513,268**.

(1) The closure of roads and the siege deprived the city of the oil and diesel allocated to it before the siege by the oil company. This was due to the company's tanker trucks inability to traverse the alternative routes. The fuel that now reaches the city is transported by small tankers belonging to traders.

(2) Source: Yemeni Oil and Gas Company (Taiz Branch).

(3) Source: Chamber of Commerce in Taiz.

(4) Source: Office of Social Affairs and Labor.

CHAPTER FOUR:



**EXAMPLES OF
VIOLATIONS DURING THE
SIEGE**

1. SIEGES ON VILLAGES

Case #1: The village of Al-Arish (population 1,796) in Sabr Al-Mawadem district has been under siege by the Houthi group since early October 2017. The group seized control of the route from the village to Taiz city and established checkpoints in the areas of Al-Najd Al-Abyadh and Al-Sarmeen. Houthi group members prevent residents from entering or leaving the village through this sole route, which is essential for their livelihoods.

Residents have faced arrest at Houthi checkpoints, forcing them to transport food supplies via rugged paths on foot from the peak of Mount Al-Arus, a journey of up to five hours. Villagers in need of medical treatment are transported in the same manner, carried physically to the top of Mount Al-Arus by others and then taken by car to Taiz city. The residents of Al-Arish village have been subjected to these conditions for seven years and have incurred numerous violations.



Village residents are subjected to arrest as they pass through Houthi group points, forcing residents to transport food supplies across rugged roads, carrying on their backs, from the top of Jabal Al-Arous to reach the village, a distance of (5) hours on foot.

TABLE 22: VIOLATIONS AGAINST THE VILLAGERS OF AL-ARISH.

Deaths	Injuries	Displacement	Houses destroyed	Public properties destroyed
7	9	130 families	17	2

Case #2: Since March 2016, the villages of Al-Ash'ab, Al-Najd, Al-Safa, and Haleema in Jabal Habashi district have been under siege. Elements of the Houthi group have closed the official road leading to these villages, which passes through Al-Ramada in Maqbanah district and Al-Rubay'i in At-Ta'iziyah district. Additionally, the group has closed another road connecting Al-Ash'ab village and its surroundings to the city of Taiz, passing through Khawr village.

Due to the road closures, the 429 families residing in these villages have been prevented from accessing major markets in Al-Ramada, Al-Barh, and Bir Basha. As a result, residents are unable to reach markets for food supplies or to seek medical care for children and pregnant women, except through rugged and difficult mountainous routes newly established in the Al-Shahid and Milat areas. These routes require travel by foot, and patients must be carried on stretchers for four to five hours to reach the nearest hospital.



They were prevented from going to the main markets in the Al-Ramada, Al-Barah and Bir Basha areas, as residents could no longer reach the markets to obtain food supplies or treat sick children and pregnant women.

Moreover, delivering food to Al-Ash'ab village and its surroundings has become exceedingly challenging and risky due to the rugged mountain roads, which are exposed to sniper positions controlled by the Houthi group on Black Hill, Al-Mun'am Hill, Mount Zuman, Mount Al-Haram, and Mount Sura. Some civilians in this village have been targeted by snipers while traveling these routes. Despite the dangers they face, residents are compelled to traverse these routes to sustain their lives and access food. Civilians are also deprived of essential humanitarian assistance, as aid cannot easily enter.

2. TARGETING OF CIVILIANS

Case #1: At 9 AM on September 14, 2018, a 15-year-old girl named Basma Abdullah Muqbil was returning from the valley to gather grass for the sheep. Upon reaching Street 30 in Al-Mudhaffar district, she was shot by a sniper from the Houthi group positioned at the Al-Mudarajat mount on Street 50. The bullet struck the back of her head on the left side and exited through her eye. She was rushed to Al-Borehi Hospital and then transferred to Al-Safwa Hospital, where she passed away on Sunday morning, September 16, 2018, due to her injuries.

Case #2: At 5 PM on Sunday, January 8, 2023, two children named Abdullah and Munawar were playing in their village, Al-Najd neighborhood, east of the Shuqub area, overlooking the hill of Al-Saliheen where Houthi snipers are stationed. Suddenly, the sniper ambushed them and fired shots, causing serious injuries.

Table 23: Injuries sustained by two boys shot in Al-Najd.

Name of victim	Sex	Age	Type of injury
Abdullah Mohammed Qaid Saleh	M	11	Deep injury to the left shoulder and abdomen
Munawar Mohammed Abdo Noman	M	9	Injuries to the abdomen, left hand, and right index finger

Case #3: On August 7, 2023, in the village of Dhar Al-Urwud in the Shuqub area of Sabr district, a 22-year-old woman named Tasneem Ali Mohammed Abdo left her home to fetch firewood. A sniper from the Houthi group was observing her from the hill of Al-Saliheen southeast of the governorate. The sniper fired a shot that hit Tasneem in the lower abdomen and passed through her pelvis. Onlookers were afraid to approach her to provide assistance, fearing the sniper's fire, and she continued to bleed until she passed away.



The little girl, Basma, was returning from the valley to bring grass for the sheep, and when she arrived at Al-Thalatheen Street in Al-Muzaffar District, she was hit by a bullet from a Houthi sniper stationed in the hill of the terraces, Al-Fifteenth Street.



After Tasneem was injured by a Houthi sniper bullet, no one could approach her to treat her for fear of being targeted, and she continued to bleed until she died.

3. BOMBARDMENT OF THE CITY

Case #1: On January 11, 2018, the house of Abdullah Al-Ra'i in Al-Dabab, Sabr Al-Mawadem district, was targeted by a missile bombardment from the Houthi group stationed near Shurab junction. The bombardment resulted in the death of his wife, Hussan Mohammed Ahmed, his aunt, Waliyah Thabit Bakir, and her two children (Tahani, 6, and Jalal, 10). It is noteworthy that there are no military barracks or sites in the village.

Case #2: At 5:45 PM on June 30, 2019, the Houthi group shelled the neighborhood of Shu'ab al-Dabba in the Salh district with a mortar shell fired from their position at al-Hareer mount. The shelling resulted in the deaths of five people, including a child, and injuries to seven others, including four children and a woman.

Table 24: Victims of the shelling in Shu'ab al-Dabba.

Name of victim	Age	Sex	Status	No.	Name of victim	Age	Sex	Status
Ahmed Mohammed Saleh	8	Child	Deceased	7	Burhan Abdul Aleem Abdullah	12	Child	Injured
Mohammed Ahmed Saleh	40	M	Deceased	8	Mujahid Nasser Saeed	13	Child	Injured
Nasser Abdullah Saleh	60	M	Deceased	9	Ahmed Ali Mohammed	12	Child	Injured
Hamoud Mohammed Ali	60	M	Deceased	10	Kefah Hazza Qasim	32	F	Injured
Wajdi Mohammed Magali	27	M	Deceased	11	Salah Addin Mohammed Ali	40	M	Injured
Abdelwali Ahmed Saleh	10	Child	Injured	12	Khaled Awad Ali	40	M	Injured

Case #3: At 6 AM on Sunday, October 8, 2023, the family of Munir Ali Mohammed Saeed was sleeping in their home in the Shu'ab al-Dabba neighborhood, Hawd al-Ashraf district, when a shell fired by a Houthi group member at al-Hareer mount struck their house. The incident resulted in the death of Fatima Munir, 16, after she sustained scattered shrapnel wounds throughout her body. Her father was also injured by shrapnel in the head.⁽¹⁾

(1) It is important to note that many of the violations mentioned in this report occurred during the UN-brokered ceasefire between the legitimate government and the Houthi group.



The bombing killed his wife, "Hassan Muhammad Ahmad," his aunt, "Waliya Thabet Bakir," and her two children (Tahani (6 years old) and Jalal (10 years old)).



When they arrived at the entrance to the village, an explosive device that the Houthi group had planted on the right side of the line before it withdrew from the village exploded, killing 4 people and wounding another.

4. MINES

Case #1: On May 6, 2019, driver Ali Abdul-Aleem was returning from the city of Taiz in his taxi with four passengers heading to their village, Al-Madabi, in the Hamir sub-district of Maqbanah district. Upon reaching the village entrance, a planted explosive device detonated on the right side of the road, previously placed by the Houthi group before their withdrawal from the village. This resulted in the deaths of four individuals, injuries to another, and complete destruction of the vehicle.

Table 25: Victims of Al-Madabi mine explosion incident.

Name of victim	Age	Profession	Status
Abdul Majeed Abdullah Noman	18	Student	Deceased
Omar Tawfiq Nasr Abdel Qader	18	Student	Deceased
Abdo Saeed Mahyoub Nasr	74	Farmer	Deceased
Ali Abdul-Aleem Mohammed Ahmed	31	Driver	Deceased
Sami Abdel Wahab Thabet Al-Saghir	22	Worker	Permanently disabled

Case #2: On August 31, 2022, 13-year-old Anaya Dostur Saif al-Habshi, of Luzakh village in Al-Akhlud sub-district, Maqbanah district, stepped on a landmine while walking home from school. She was critically wounded and immediately transported to the hospital. Both of her feet had to be amputated and she sustained injuries from shrapnel across her body. She underwent treatment for two months until she was discharged from the hospital and will be confined to a wheelchair for life.

Case #3: On October 10, 2023, Qabol Hamoud Abdulqadir, 33, left her home in the Houthi-controlled village of Shaheer Al-Shaqab in the Sabr district to tend to her sheep in one of the village pastures. She stepped on a landmine that exploded, resulting in the amputation of her right foot and moderate injuries to her legs. The village had been indiscriminately mined by the Houthis, affecting residents' daily lives.



On the way the child Inaya returned from school, a mine exploded, leading to the amputation of both of her feet



The hospital was unable to provide health care services to thousands of sick children and women until August 19, 2015, after government forces took control of the area, when the hospital was rehabilitated and returned to providing care to patients.

5. HEALTHCARE DISRUPTIONS

Case #1: On July 15, 2015, several armed groups affiliated with the Houthi movement and forces loyal to Saleh raided the Yemeni-Swedish Hospital in the Al-Qahirah district. They evacuated patients and denied them healthcare, positioning tanks at the hospital gates to shell the positions of the Resistance forces in the city. This resulted in extensive damage to medical equipment, supplies, and medications across most hospital departments, as well as the shattering of all hospital windows. Two days after the raid, the militants expelled all staff and deployed snipers on the hospital rooftops, converting it into a military barracks. The hospital was thus disabled from providing healthcare services to thousands of sick children and women until August 19, 2015, when government forces regained control of the area. Subsequently, the hospital was rehabilitated and resumed providing care to patients.

Case #2: On June 23, 2015, armed elements affiliated with the Houthi group raided the Al-Amal Cancer Center in the Al-Qahirah district, a facility that provides continuous services to hundreds of patients suffering from various diseases. They expelled cancer patients of various ages who had come from the city and rural districts to receive services. The staff of the center were prevented from reentering, and it was converted into a military barracks, with snipers positioned on the rooftops. Consequently, the center ceased providing any healthcare to cancer patients until mid-August 2015 when operations resumed. However, the center's capacity was limited due to extensive damage to medical equipment during the period of Houthi control.

Case #3: On December 12, 2019, an elderly man named Abdullah Mohammed Abdu, 65, from the village of Al-Saqqah, Blad Al-Wafi in Jabal Habashi district, was returning on foot from the city of Hajdah to his village. The road to his village had been blocked by the Houthi group, preventing cars from entering the city, forcing residents to take a difficult and rugged mountainous route. Due to the long distance, the victim experienced extreme fatigue and exhaustion and contacted his children to come to his aid. When they arrived, he had already lost consciousness. They carried him a long distance because the main road was blocked by the Houthis in the Najd Al-Aqeerah area. Due to the long distance, the difficulty of the road, and being carried on their shoulders for four hours, he passed away. His life easily could have been saved if he had been able to travel on the main road, which would have taken only half an hour.



Armed elements of the Houthi group stormed the Al-Amal Center for Cancer Diseases, expelled cancer patients from different age groups, and turned it into a military barracks for two months.

6. VIOLATIONS OCCURRING ON ALTERNATIVE ROUTES

Case #1: On October 11, 2021, on the road of Hayjat Al-Abad, a bus carrying eight members of a single family fell from the Hayjat Al-Abad Pass down the mountain, resulting in the death of five individuals, including three women. Three others were injured, including two young girls.

Table 26: Victims of Hayjat Al-Abad bus accident.

Name of victim	Sex	Age	Status	Name of victim	Sex	Age	Status
Salim Adnan Farea	M	18	Deceased	Rahma Bashir Al-Khair	F	30	Deceased
Mukhtar Abdo Ali	M	40	Deceased	Sima Adnan Farea	F	23	Injured
Arwa Bashir Al-Khair	F	18	Deceased	Maria Helmy Mohammed	Child	3	Injured
Sahar Mutaher Rajeh	F	25	Deceased	Zubaida Adnan Farea	Child	9m	Injured

Case #2: Ahmed Omar, a taxi driver transporting passengers from Al-Hawban to Aden through the alternate route that he was forced to traverse due to the closure of the main road between Rahida, Alanad, and Aden. Vehicles traveling this way must ascend the perilous Haifan pass, then travel through the dusty stretch of Al-Saylah for up to two hours. On June 27, 2023, while driving through Saylat Haifan, extreme and dangerous torrents of rain suddenly hit.

Intense currents overwhelmed Ahmed’s car as the path flooded, and he lost control of the car. The floodwaters swept the car away with all six passengers inside. Three survived by clinging to trees after being thrown from the car. The other three perished after their bodies were carried off by the torrents. On the same day, the National Meteorological Center in Taiz reported finding 22 bodies in Saylat Haifan, connecting Taiz and Lahij, of people who drowned in the floods. Additionally, 15 vehicles and trucks were swept away.



On the alternative roads imposed by the Houthi group on the population, due to the intensity of the floods, Ahmed lost the ability to control the car that was swept away by the floods, including the six passengers in it.

7. DENIAL OF HUMANITARIAN AID

Case #1: In early August 2015, the director of Al-Mudhaffar Hospital provided testimony to the ACJ team: “During this period, the Houthi group was imposing a strict siege on the city, exacerbating the suffering of hospital patients in his facility, which primarily provided maternal and child health. Humanitarian aid including medicines, vaccines, and oxygen (priced at \$100 per cylinder), ceased to arrive.⁽²⁾ As the siege worsened, we resorted to smuggling vaccines concealed by women who hid them in secret compartments under their clothes while crossing the Dahi border. Oxygen had to be delivered through costly and difficult means, and humanitarian aid was completely blocked from reaching all hospitals in the city, whether government or private, throughout the siege until the southern port was liberated from Houthi control.”⁽³⁾

Case #2: ACJ documented the Houthi group’s September 11, 2021, shelling of Al-Mokha port in Taiz, which had been rehabilitated by the Yemeni government after a period of closure earlier in the war. The shelling targeted warehouses storing humanitarian aid, resulting in the destruction of infrastructure in the port and depriving the governorate of its sole harbor.



Director of Al-Muzaffar Hospital: As the siege worsened, we were forced to smuggle vaccines in, through women who were hiding the vaccines in secret bags under their clothes, while crossing through the Al-Dahhi crossing.

(2) On December 23, 2018, the Houthi group refused to allow a UN delegation from the World Food Programme to enter Taiz city through the eastern entrance. The delegation intended to assess the humanitarian conditions experienced by civilians inside the city.

(3) On October 22, 2016, the Houthi group prevented a UNICEF delegation from entering the besieged city through its eastern entrance. The delegation’s objective was to deliver food supplies and assess the health situation amidst a cholera outbreak.

8. FORCED DISPLACEMENT

Case #1: Starting on January 4, 2016, armed elements affiliated with the Houthi group surrounded Al-Shaqab village in Sabr Al-Mawadem district. They opened fire on civilians' homes using various weapons, and the village was shelled continuously for more than a week. Eventually, the group stormed the village, forcing residents to leave by coercion and under threat of weapons. The number of families forcibly displaced from the village reached 282. They left behind their homes, farms, and all their possessions upon relocating to neighboring villages and displacement camps.

Case #2: In mid-July 2017, the Houthi militia forcefully seized control of Al-Qal'a Haraz village in Jabal Habashi district. Numerous village residents, including the elderly couple Mahyoub Sultan Muqbil and his wife Aisha Bajash, were forced to leave their homes and all their belongings and relocate to a nearby village. After the Houthi group withdrew from the village, Aisha, accompanied by her relative Fatima Ali Hassan (35 years old), returned to Al-Qal'a Haraz on December 13, 2018, to check on the family's house and gather some necessities. As Aisha and Fatima approached the house, a landmine planted by the Houthi group exploded at the door, causing the house to collapse. Aisha and Fatima were severely injured, and their bodies were left "scattered in pieces."

Case #3: At 3 PM on Wednesday, April 25, 2018, an armed group affiliated with the Houthi group entered the mosque of Al-Kudma village in Al-Qahifa sub-district in Maqbanah district, west of Taiz. They announced their intention to convert the village into a military barracks and ordered residents to leave their homes and evacuate the village, threatening to use force against anyone who refused. When the villagers refused to abandon their homes, Houthi militia forces were deployed to the village and forcibly expelled them under the threat of weapons. A total of 54 households (324 individuals), mostly children, women, and elderly, were compelled to leave their homes under duress and carrying only their simplest belongings. They left under harsh conditions and unsure of their destination. Some settled in Al-Tafili village, while others dispersed across neighboring districts.



The Houthi group fired on civilian homes in the village of Al Shaqab with various weapons, and the bombing of the village continued for more than a week, then forced the residents to leave.



When they opened the house, a mine that the Houthi group had planted at the door of the house exploded



When the villagers refused to leave their homes, military forces came to the village and forced the residents to leave by force and at gunpoint

9. ARREST, TORTURE, AND ENFORCED DISAPPEARANCE

Case #1: Nour Addin Al-Salwi, a human rights activist, was arrested, tortured, and forcibly disappeared. He recounted the circumstances of his arrest to ACJ: “On February 18, 2016, I left Sana’a city to travel to Al-Hawban city to bid farewell to my father, who was leaving the country to work in Saudi Arabia. Upon reaching the Sana’a checkpoint, which was manned by Houthi forces, Houthi militia members were inspecting the phones of all travelers entering and leaving the city. They confiscated my phone, and I was taken to a room behind Al-Hayat Hospital, near the frontline area of the conflict. I was detained from noon until midnight, then transferred to Al-Saleh Detention Center in Al-Hawban until the next day.

I was then handed over to a Houthi leader named Abu Mohammed Al-Madani, who is closely associated with the group’s leader, Abdul-Malik Al-Houthi. He blindfolded me, tied me up, and drove me in his car from Al-Saleh to an unknown location. I was put in solitary confinement in a dark room for two weeks, then taken to a room with seven other detainees. That is when I realized that I was in Ash-Shamalyyah prison in Dhamar Governorate. The enforced disappearance continued, and I was prevented from contacting my family for seven months. After that, I was allowed to call my family and inform them that I was alive but prohibited from disclosing the location of my detention.

In terms of psychological impact, next to my cell was an interrogation and torture room, where detainees were subjected to severe torture every night from 8 pm until 4 am. One night, the jailer took a detainee from Mares district who was subjected to torture so brutal that he urinated blood for several days. The nightly torture of detainees tormented me psychologically. Every night I wondered when my turn would come. After eight months in these circumstances, I gave my family’s phone to a fellow prisoner who was being released. I asked him to urge my family to contact Abu Mohammed Al-Madani, the Houthi leader who first detained me, because his approval would be required for my release. I had been detained for a total of ten months when some elders from Sada governorate acted as intermediaries and secured my release. Al-Madani instructed me to pledge not to undertake human rights activities or any other action opposing the Houthi group.”

Case #2: At 9 AM on December 15, 2017, a 26-year-old man was traveling to his workplace at the Ghee and Soap Factory located in Sharaab intersection. Before reaching the factory gate, he was abducted by a



They prevented me from talking about my place of detention, and about the psychological aspect of the prison. There was a room next to us designated for interrogation and torture, and every night a prisoner was summoned from eight in the evening until four in the morning and subjected to severe torture. One night, the jailer took a detainee from the Maris district, and he underwent... He was subjected to severe torture, which made him urinate blood for several days

Houthi leader (with the initials J.S.A.) and his escorts, who took him away in a Hilux vehicle. The leader instructed the escorts to kill the man immediately. However, they suggested he be executed in prison instead, which filled the victim with panic.

He was transported to the Rabi'i area and then to the detention center in Al-Saleh city in Al-Hawban. The victim recalls, "They took me to the building of Preventive Security and placed me in a small room. The investigator started questioning me, 'When does the factory treasurer go to the bank to withdraw money? What is the number plate of the car he drives? What color is it? Where is the location of the factory's surveillance room?' I refused to answer these questions as they pertained to work secrets."

Two individuals tied my left foot to an electrical wire and secured it with a lock, while my other foot hung freely. I was left lying on the ground without any bedding, food, or water for ten days. During this time, I urinated on myself. After this period, they took me to the rooftop of the building and submerged my head in a tank of cold water. They sprayed me with the cold water late into the night until I vomited blood. Afterward, they took me to Apartment #1 on the first floor of the building and placed me in a room with 18 other detainees. They provided insufficient meals and contaminated water, which caused skin diseases. I was denied any treatment or medications.

During the detention period, I endured severe torture with electrocution, and various parts of my body were beaten with cables and iron whips. The physical and psychological torture continued, along with deprivation of healthcare. I was eventually released on December 19, 2019, as part of an exchange deal between the legitimate government and the Houthi group. I was displaced within the city after previously residing in Hazran area, in the At-Ta'iziyah district, which had fallen under Houthi control."

Case #3: Yassin Abdul Qadir, 25, was abducted by elements affiliated with the Houthi group on January 1, 2016, on the Rabdi road. He was transferred to the central prison during the period when the Houthis controlled the area and was later moved to Saleh Prison in Al-Hawban city. The victim stated that he "was subjected to torture by beatings with electric wires, placed in a cell with mentally ill individuals who threatened to kill me, forced to confess to incidents I had no involvement in, and coerced to sign investigation papers." He also suffered from poor nutrition and inadequate medical care. He was released after six months.



I was taken into the Preventive Security building, and they brought me into a small room, and the investigator began asking me: When does the factory cashier go to the bank and withdraw money? What is the number of the car he is traveling in? What color is it? Where is the factory control room located? I refused to answer these questions as they were work secrets, so two people tied my left foot to the electrical outlet and closed it with a lock, while the other foot was hanging while my body was on the floor without any bed.



The victim was tortured, beaten with electric wires, and placed in a detention facility with lunatics. They threatened to kill him and asked him to confess to facts that had nothing to do with him.

PERSONAL STORIES FROM THE GRIP OF THE SIEGE

ACJ compiled the following collection of testimonies from local Taiz residents about hardships they have endured during the war. The stories here are just a few of countless similar experiences endured by the Yemeni people.

5A. A DOCTOR'S TRAGEDY

Dr. Sadam Abdo Hassan, a medical doctor working with his wife at Al-Thawra Hospital in Taiz, recounted a tragic incident from mid-2018. Dr. Sadam's wife took their one-year-old child to visit relatives in Al-Hawban, east of the city, while Sadam remained at the hospital's emergency department, treating civilians wounded by shelling and sniper fire.

According to Dr. Sadam, "While I was on duty in the emergency room, I received a call informing me that my wife and son were in a car accident on the Al-Aqrud road. This road had become the alternative route after the Houthi group closed the main route (Al-Qasr roundabout). I was completely shocked by the news and endured long hours filled with fear and anxiety. When they arrived at the hospital, I rushed to the emergency room only to find my son Mohammed lying on a bed, fighting for his life. My wife had suffered a spinal injury. Never did I imagine that while working in the emergency room, I would witness my only child struggling for life before my eyes, utterly helpless. Even today, after five years, we have not been able to overcome the shock. My wife's health has not fully recovered."⁽¹⁾

5B. A DREAM TO RETURN HOME

"I wish to return to my home, to my land, to cultivate it again and harvest the fruits of my labor there. This land was a part of me until the Houthi group came and seized it from me due to the siege, war, and destruction they imposed on us."

This is how farmer Abdul Jalil describes his relationship to his lands and home village of Ashaab in Jabal Habashi district, which lies on the frontlines that separate Houthi and government-controlled areas. He was unable to attend to his lands and practice his agricultural rituals once the Houthi group launched its war and siege on the city in mid-2016, as his land now fell within the Houthi-controlled territory. Though he lived just one kilometer from the plot, the area was densely planted with mines. The siege led to the destruction of Abdul Jalil's crops, leaving him unable to provide food for his family.

Abdul Jalil tried to find a way to support his family through work but was unsuccessful. Prices soared while job opportunities in the besieged city became scarce and workplaces difficult to reach due to the blockade. The family's situation and Abdul Jalil's inability to feed them weighed on his mind day and night. He wondered how he could provide for his family and return home without empty hands as they suffered the bitterness of poverty and hunger.

(1) This story was contributed by journalist Bushra Al-Humaidi.

The family's plight continues and still weighs heavily on Abdul Jalil, evident in his face and affecting his health. Recently, he collapsed and was rushed to the hospital by his son, only to learn that he had developed a heart condition requiring immediate life-saving surgery.⁽²⁾

5C. AN EARLY DEATH

The mid-2015 Houthi siege made life exceedingly difficult for Ahmed, a 35-year-old cancer patient who resided in the Mawiyah district east of Taiz city. He required continuous chemotherapy at the Hope Center for Cancer Treatment, the only center open within the besieged city. He was deprived of treatment and unable to travel to the city due to the long distance he had to traverse through rugged mountain slopes, a journey that Ahmed used to cover in less than an hour but now took six.

The road was Ahmed's key barrier to accessing treatment. He became fearful of enduring the hardships of travel while already contending with the suffering caused by his cancer. His psychological state became unbearable, especially in light of the deteriorating living conditions, loss of income, shortage of medicine, and food scarcity he and others now faced. News of deaths due to the war and siege haunted Ahmed daily. The situation worsened as hospitals were unable to fulfill their roles and treatment became rare and expensive. Money was scarce and Ahmed's hope for treatment dwindled. Every attempt to obtain the medications he needed ended in failure.

Time passed, and Ahmed's condition worsened. Cancer ravaged his body, and he refused to travel, fearing the ordeals of the road, which he described as torture worse than his illness. He preferred to die peacefully in his bed rather than in a car accident on the harsh alternative routes. On a bitterly cold and dark night, Ahmed lost consciousness due to his illness. His family decided to transport him to the local health center, but it was too late to save his life. He passed away because the siege had deprived him of receiving treatment. He was one of numerous condemned cancer and kidney failure patients from his district who relied on treatment from the city's two cancer centers.⁽³⁾

5D. THE STORY OF AN UNBORN BABY

Asma, a 30-year-old woman, lived in the Osiferah neighborhood in the north of Taiz city. She was six months pregnant, eagerly awaiting the arrival of her third child. As the siege tightened in early November 2015, water, gas, and medicines were cut off from the city, and life became increasingly difficult for Asma. She struggled to provide for her children as she managed household affairs alone, since her husband suffered from a mental condition and spent most of his time outside the home.

(2) This story was contributed by human rights activist Dalia Nasr.

(3) This story was contributed by journalist Bushra Al-Humaidi.

One day, due to the lack of cooking gas, Asma went out in search of firewood to prepare a meal for her children. On her return, she was targeted by a sniper from the Houthi group positioned on one of the mountain ridges. A gunshot struck her abdomen and exited through her lower spine, inflicting serious wounds. As a result, Asma lost her fetus. She was transported to Al-Rawdhah Hospital, which was facing critical shortages of oxygen and medications. The surgical intervention was not sufficient to restore Asma to her previous health. She was left permanently disabled.⁽⁴⁾

5E. THE STRUGGLE OF A RURAL WOMAN

“Maryam” (not her real name) is a widow in her forties who lives in the rural village of Hudhran west of Taiz. Her life is simple and humble: she spends her days caring for her livestock, tilling her land, and fetching water from the well with her children and neighbors. However, everything changed when the Houthi group attacked and took control of the village.

Maryam felt afraid and anxious as the Houthis imposed their authority and laws on the villagers, restricting their movements in and out of the village. They were ordered to visit their own farms only during specified hours. One day, Maryam went out at a time outside of the permitted hours to cut some grass for her cow. She was confronted by a group of Houthi group members who stopped and assaulted her. As time went on, she and other villagers faced increasing harassment, forcing them to leave their homes and move to safer places in other villages and mountains. While displaced, they suffered from hunger, thirst, cold, and disease, and gradually lost hope of returning to their homes.

After several months, Maryam heard some good news. The government forces had expelled the Houthis from her village and reclaimed it. Maryam was overjoyed and returned with some neighbors to see her home again. However, she found it destroyed and looted. Despite this, she didn't mind; she was happy to be back in her homeland. However, her happiness didn't last long.

(4) This story was contributed by journalist Bushra Al-Humaidi.



One day, due to the lack of cooking gas, “Asmaa” went out to look for firewood to prepare lunch for her two children. When she returned, she was stalked by a Houthi sniper, who was on one of the mountain slopes. He hit her with a gunshot that entered from the abdomen and exited from the lower part of the spine.



But everything changed when the Houthi group attacked the village and took control of it. Maryam began to feel fear and anxiety, as the Houthis imposed their authority and laws on the villagers not to leave or enter the village.

The Houthis had left behind mines planted densely throughout the village's roads and farms. Tragically, Maryam's son lost his hand, and two of her neighbors' children were killed by a mine that exploded in a nearby pasture. Maryam herself was injured by another mine while herding sheep, resulting in the amputation of one of her legs and a fracture in the other.⁽⁵⁾

5F. A PIECE OF HELL

Mrs. Saud Hassan Ahmed Saeed, 31, recounted an incident of being shot on a public road. "In the first week of January 2018, I was in a car with a driver named Abdo Hassan and other passengers. We were heading to the city of Hajdah to buy household supplies. Upon reaching the area near the house of Al-Mawhebi in Najd Aqamah, members of the Houthi group opened fire on us from the mounts of Ainain, Habiriah, and Tawfiq. The gunfire hit the front of the car. I heard shots and screams and found myself injured and covered in blood. The other passengers carried me to safety. They also carried the driver while the snipers continued shooting.

We were carried on foot to the distant village of Juraih, bleeding along the way and enduring extreme exhaustion to the point where I nearly died. The journey took about three hours. Later, we took a car from Juraih to Taiz, a journey of two and a half hours. Finally, we arrived at Al-Safwa Hospital, and I was examined. It turned out that I had been wounded on the right side of my chest that caused bleeding around my right lung and a tear in my right breast. I stayed in the hospital until January 18 and underwent follow-up treatment for another two months. I continue to suffer from those injuries.

Since then, the road has remained closed from that location, as has the road from the Al-Sadd area in the village of Maka'ir. This road is the only route connecting most of the villages of Bilad Al-Wafi with the cities of Taiz and Hajdah, supplying them with essential food and other supplies. We continue transporting food and necessities on foot through mountainous paths to the village of Al-Qahfah from Juraih village, sub-district in Bani Isa, a distance of three hours. From Taiz city, it takes two and a half hours, totaling five and a half hours from the city to the village. Previously, we could cover the full distance in just one hour."

Mrs. Saud concludes her story by saying, "This is how our lives have become after the siege, a piece of hell."

(5) This story was contributed by human rights activist Dalia Nasr.

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

1. The city of Taiz has endured a nearly complete siege imposed by the Houthi group for nine years, involving the blocking of main roads and movement restrictions in and out of the city. This has caused acute suffering for over 1.5 million residents.
2. The siege imposed by the Houthi group on Taiz was not purely for military advantage. It manifested as a retaliatory measure against the city's residents due to their rejection of the group's forcible seizure of power and imposition of its ideology through collective punishment policies.
3. ACJ documented 3,021 civilian deaths and 6,361 injuries because of sniping, direct shelling of the city, and the planting of mines by the Houthi group from March 2015 to December 2023.
4. During the reporting period, ACJ documented the Houthi group's arrest of 477 individuals, with 79 subjected to enforced disappearance and 59 to torture. Most were detained or abducted from alternative routes.
5. ACJ documented 31 incidents in which the Houthi group obstructed humanitarian relief convoys and seized 22 trucks carrying essential food and medical supplies intended for the city's residents, diverting them for military efforts.
6. The first year of the siege was marked by deprivation of basic necessities such as water, food, medicine, and oxygen. ACJ documented the deaths of 26 civilians due to the lack of oxygen in hospitals, including nine children and seven women.
7. The alternative routes during the reporting period saw 541 traffic accidents, resulting in the deaths of 434 individuals and injuries to 1,026 others. The material losses amounted to over \$2,000,000.
8. The war and siege on the city led to the displacement of 44,749 families comprising 214,693 individuals across 17 districts of the governorate. Among them, 7,195 families were accommodated in 107 displacement camps and centers. ACJ also documented the displacement of 22 villages by the Houthi group in districts such as At-Taiziyah, Jabal Habashi, Maqbana, and Sabr Al-Mawadim.
9. The Houthi group continues to block access to water for the city of Taiz, which it relied on for 75% of its supply from wells such as Hadhran, Al-Hayma, Habeer Shaib, Al-Hawjalah, and Al-Amirah, all in areas under Houthi control.
10. The prevention of water access for the city's residents has led to a 350% increase in water prices. This has contributed to the spread of diseases such as typhoid, diarrhea, and cholera. Additionally, the water level in the city's wells has decreased due to high demand.
11. The Houthi group has prevented the Environmental Office from using the designated landfill in its western part. This has led to garbage piling up in the city streets during the first year of the siege, causing the spread of infectious diseases among the population.
12. The blockade of main roads to the city has prevented healthcare access for kidney failure and cancer patients from outlying districts who previously received treatment at facilities within the city.
13. The siege and road closures have adversely affected 20,621 university and technical institute students, hindering their ability to continue their education. Additionally, 32,000 school students have been impacted by the siege.
14. The siege and road closures around the city have led to a 500% increase in the prices of basic commodities and medicines, and a 1000% increase in transportation costs for both people and goods.
15. The siege has contributed to deteriorating economic conditions for the besieged city's residents, causing many to lose their sources of income. This has had a negative impact on social life, increasing divorce rates, family breakdowns, and school dropouts.

RECOMMENDATIONS

TO THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY:

1. ACJ advises the international community not to link the siege of Taiz to political and military negotiations, but to handle it as a humanitarian issue requiring urgent intervention. This is because the rights to life, movement, work, and freedom are inherent and nonnegotiable.
2. ACJ urges the international community to help end the siege on Taiz by exerting stronger pressure on the Houthi group to open the main roads to the city, remove mines, withdraw snipers from the hills and highlands overlooking city entrances, allow entry of humanitarian aid and commercial goods through major city ports, and provide the city with water.
3. Support projects aimed at demining efforts and intensified humanitarian aid to Taiz Governorate in line with the magnitude of the hardships faced by residents

4. TO THE LEGITIMATE GOVERNMENT OF YEMEN:

1. Intensify efforts to remove mines in conflict zones and areas reclaimed from the Houthi group and ensure the safe return of residents to these areas.
2. Develop an urgent plan to alleviate the economic impact of the siege on the city's residents and support the supply of essential goods and materials necessary for their livelihoods.
3. Give special attention to the siege issue, including assessing damages and addressing its humanitarian, economic, social, and judicial impacts. Ensure accountability without impunity and achieve fair compensation for victims.

TO THE HOUTHİ GROUP:

1. Lift the siege on the city and open main roads from the eastern, western, and northern directions. Allow the entry of goods and humanitarian aid and ensure safe passage for travelers to and from the city.
2. Expedite the supply of the city's public water institution and restore the amounts of water allocated before the imposition of the siege.
3. Enable displaced persons to safely return to their villages, homes, and farms along the frontlines after clearing mines and explosive devices from these areas, providing maps of the mines, and lifting the siege on villages located in conflict zones.
4. Release forcibly detained and disappeared victims from the group's prisons and detention centers.
5. Allow the city's environmental office to transport waste to the designated landfill under its control.
6. Adhere to the principles of international humanitarian law, agreements, and treaties, and refrain from targeting residential neighborhoods in the city with shelling, sniping, or drones.

WHY?

While violations of international human rights and humanitarian law are widespread, and at a time when extremist groups, armed violence groups and government authorities continue to commit violations and war in more than one country, the suffering of civilians has increased, the most heinous crimes against humanity have been committed, and numerous disasters have led to a rise in the prevalence of crime and the absence of the rule of law, accountability and punishment. The American Center for Justice (ACJ) has therefore come to defend human rights, stand by the victims without discrimination, champion their causes, reduce further violations, promote the values of democracy and freedom, and consolidate the norms of peace.

The war in Yemen and the humanitarian catastrophe that has claimed the lives of tens of thousands, most of them women and children, is among the reasons for establishing ACJ to be among the most important institutions that adopt the protection and defense of human rights in this country that has been intensified by wars for several years.

WHERE?

The United States of America is considered the most influential actor in global decision-making, as well as the most important office of the United Nations services, bodies and programs. Many international organizations and human rights institutions with great reach and influence are based in the U.S. and ACJ has also chosen this country to be the base of its activities.

HOW ?

The American Center for Justice (ACJ) monitors, investigates and documents human rights violations, issues reports and provides legal support to victims to ensure that perpetrators do not enjoy impunity. Moving rights issues in international forums and seeking decisions and positions that support and champion the victims of human rights violations in the international community and United Nations decisionmakers will be a strong foundation and the basis for addressing all violations and breaches of domestic laws, international conventions and treaties.

The Center will also work on numerous programs and offer a range of activities, including conferences and symposiums, as well as producing human rights reports that reflect and coordinate the real picture of human rights, while working in coordination with the centers, organizations and personalities that influence international decision-making..

WHO?

American Center for Justice (ACJ) Team is a group of experts, specialists and prominent human rights advocates and victims of violations. The team has many capacities and relationships that enable it to perform its functions appropriately in accordance with international standards. The Center has a number of consultants, researchers and field investigators in its target areas and within its scope of work.



P.O Box 1141 Dearborn
MI 48121 , United States 1(313) 682-5385

✉ info@acjus.org

🌐 www.acjus.org

 [acjusa](https://www.facebook.com/acjusa)  [acj_usa](https://twitter.com/acj_usa)  [acj.usa](https://www.instagram.com/acj.usa)