

Yemen cholera toll nears 1,000 as 'humanity loses out to politics'

June 8 2017

The death toll from a cholera outbreak is approaching 1,000 in Yemen, a war-devastated and impoverished country where "humanity is losing out to politics", a senior UN official said Thursday.

"Time is running out to save people who are being killed or being starved and now you have cholera as well adding to that complication," said Jamie McGoldrick, UN humanitarian coordinator in Yemen.

"We are struggling because of the lack of resources. We need some action immediately," he said at a press briefing in the Jordanian capital.

McGoldrick gave updated figures of more than 130,000 suspected cases of cholera and over 970 deaths, with women and children accounting for half of the numbers.

"What is heartbreaking in Yemen is that humanity is losing out to the politics," said McGoldrick.

He said a \$2.1 billion humanitarian response plan for Yemen for 2017 had only been 29 percent funded.

The cholera outbreak on top of famine in Yemen was "an indication to how things are falling apart with only 50 percent of health services" operational.

"We need resources, we need money and we need them now to address

the famine and to address the problems of cholera."

Donors in April pledged close to \$1.1 billion in aid to Yemen, which the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs calls the "largest humanitarian crisis in the world".

But only 25 percent of aid pledged to the UN refugee agency has been delivered so far, UNHCR's Yemen spokesperson Shabia Mantoo said Wednesday.

Yemen's war has seen more than 8,000 people killed and millions displaced since a Saudi-led Arab coalition intervened in March 2015 to support the government against Shiite Huthi rebels allied with Iran.

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Citation: Yemen cholera toll nears 1,000 as 'humanity loses out to politics' (2017, June 8) retrieved 25 April 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2017-06-yemen-cholera-war-torn-country.html>

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