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Houthis hand over Al-Qushaibi's corpse to the state

Story and photo by
Ali Ibrahim Al-Moshki

SANA'A, July 21—The corpse of Brigadier Hameed Al-Qushaibi, commander of the 310th Armored Brigade, was handed over by the Houthis and was transported to Sana'a's military hospital late Sunday.

Al-Qushaibi was reported dead on July 9. He was killed during heavy fighting between Houthi rebels and the 310 Armored Brigade.

The corpses of Al-Qushaibi and two of his bodyguards were transported by helicopter from Amran governorate to Sana'a, where they were received by a large crowd of people, many of whom were Al-Qushaibi's relatives.

Various media outlets covered the death of Al-Qushaibi. Some local media reported that he was arrested in Amran and was then taken to Sa'ada where he was executed.

Ali Al-Qushaibi, brother of Brigadier Al-Qushaibi, said that the corpse was transported from Raida in Amran governorate, expressing his conviction that "he was killed in clashes with the Houthis in Amran."

Al-Ghawi stated that he was unsure where the military commander was killed, as there have been multiple conflicting reports about the whereabouts of his death. He said the perpetrators, including Defense Minister Mohammed Nasser Ahmad, will not go unpunished.

Brigadier Ali Aziz Al-Hujairi, the defense minister's adviser, told the



Many relatives and supporters of Al-Qushaibi gathered at the hospital, bearing their weapons and refusing to let journalists inside.

Yemen Times that it was not clear yet whether Al-Qushaibi was killed in Amran or Sa'ada.

A great number of Al-Qushaibi's relatives gathered in front and inside of the military hospital, bearing

their weapons. They vehemently refused to let journalists inside the hospital, even resorting to violence

to prevent them from entering. Dozens of Al-Qushaibi relatives and sympathizers, as well as Is-

Mediation committee arrives in Al-Jawf

■ **Amal Al-Yarisi**

SANA'A, July 21—Amid the arrival of a mediation committee on Saturday to Al-Jawf governorate, the Houthis and the Islah Party traded blame and put forth differing views on whether a ceasefire is in effect.

Mubarak Al-Abadi, director of Islah Party's Media Department in Al-Jawf, claims the fighting ended and both parties have been abiding by the ceasefire since the arrival of a mediation committee on Saturday.

However, Mohammed Al-Bukhaiti, a member of the Houthi's Political Office, said the committee is still negotiating with the warring parties to reach a ceasefire agreement.

The committee was created by President Abdu Rabu Mansour Hadi

and includes the governor of Al-Jawf as well as several sheikhs and community leaders from the governorate.

Clashes between the Houthis and Islah-affiliated tribesmen in the governorate renewed at the beginning of July. The tribesmen gained control over strategic locations in Al-Safra and Al-Humaida, which had been controlled by the Houthis since 2011.

Al-Abadi asserts that the Islah Party and its allied tribesmen are willing to hand over their positions in Al-Safra Military Camp to the state. Al-Safra is of strategic importance because it connects Al-Jawf with other governorates.

Al-Bukhaiti said the Houthis are ready to abide by the agreement as

soon as the Islah Party demonstrates its commitment. He claims that members of the Islah Party broke the ceasefire agreement by shelling Houthi locations in Al-Ghail, Al-Safra, and Al-Hajr, which Al-Bukhaiti says should be run by neutral military units.

The clashes have caused residents to avoid travelling through Al-Jawf, and have displaced many within the governorate.

Abdulsalam Shihat, a tribal sheikh in Al-Jawf, said that several people in the area of conflict have left their houses in recent days and moved to other areas inside the governorate, asserting that several people from both sides have been killed.

"The same thing that happened in Amran may happen in Al-Jawf but

we will not allow this at any cost," Shihat said.

The clashes follow previous rounds of fighting in June between the Houthis and military units backed by pro-government tribesmen in Amran and Hamdan, to the north of Sana'a.

Earlier in July and following two months of clashes, the Houthis took control of Amran City and the headquarters of the 310th Armored Brigade, and killed its commander, Brigadier Hameed Al-Qushaibi.

"I feel it is a conspiracy because the government only participates with us sometimes. It keeps sending us mediation committees and we are waiting for Al-Jawf to be controlled by the Houthis just like Amran," the Akhbar Al-Youm newspaper quoted

Sheikh Al-Hassan Abkar as saying. Abkar is the head of the Al-Jawf and Marib Federation, a tribal federation opposing the Houthi's expansion.

Abkar asserted that they will gather all tribesmen in Yemen to fight the Houthis. "We warn President Hadi, the defense minister, and all conspirators inside and outside Yemen, that ignoring the Houthi expansion, blood shedding, and looting of properties will cause Al-Jawf to turn to Al-Qaeda."

"We back the military in its fighting against Al-Qaeda but we are paying for this support. Al-Jawf will never be controlled by the Houthis," he added.

Al-Jawf is a vital governorate due to its proximity to the oil fields in Marib.

AQAP orders women in Hadramout not to leave home unaccompanied

■ **Nasser Al-Sakkaf**

SANA'A July 21—Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) militants in Haridha city, Hadramout governorate, distributed brochures to residents on Sunday, listing a number of demands, including that women not go outside unless accompanied by a close male relative.

"The militants gave citizens ten days to abide by the instructions given in the statement," said Mohammed Abdullah, a political analyst living in the area who himself

received the brochure.

The statement added that the group, which brands itself to locals as Ansar Al-Sharia, or supporters of Sharia law, will "punish" residents who do not follow their orders, without going into further detail.

Another demand given in the brochure is that the youth refrain from sitting in cafes where they have "meaningless conversations."

Abdullah pointed out that women in Haridha city are now afraid to go to markets alone but that the youth stay late at cafes as usual.

Two days earlier, on Friday, AQAP supporters distributed brochures in Tabah area, also located in Haridha district. According to Abdullah, the orders were widely accepted by residents of the area.

"The brochure was distributed in public by gunmen in Toyota pickups," he said, referring to both Tabah area and Haridha city. Abdullah noted that "they did not cover their faces like they usually do," indicating that AQAP members in the area are less afraid of reprisal from the government than they used to be.

Salem Sabri, another resident in Hadramout, said that women are already committed to the Islamic tenets and do not need anybody to teach them, adding that AQAP distributed pamphlets to claim having control over the governorate.

According to Saeed Al-Jamhi, an AQAP researcher, the military is unable to enforce the law in Hadramout. "There should be a plan to close all entrances to the governorate connected to Abyan and Shabwa because most AQAP affiliates come from these neighboring governor-

ates," he said.

The Yemen Times contacted Fahd Al-Amri, the security manager of Wadi Hadramout, for information but he refused to comment on the matter.

AQAP appeared in Abyan and Shabwa in May of 2011 and eventually took over Zinjibar, the capital of Abyan, which they controlled from early 2012 until June of the same year. The army expelled them in mid-2012, but they still maintain a fluid presence in some southern areas of the country.

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Eritrea confiscated 863 Yemeni fishing boats since 2006

■ Ali Ibrahim Al-Moshki

SANA'A, July 21—Eritrean authorities have confiscated 863 Yemeni fishing boats since 2006, according to Ali Hassan Buhaidr, the secretary general of the Fishery Cooperative Union.

Over the past two years, Eritrean authorities have arrested about 420 Yemeni fishermen they accuse of straying into their waters and negatively affecting their fishing economy.

Although Eritrea released 135 Yemeni fishermen in January and another 154 in May, it is still in possession of at least 863 confiscated fishing boats.

Without their boats, released fishermen who return to Yemen find themselves in a poor financial state, lacking the necessary equipment to continue their work.

"I could not work since I returned from Eritrea because my boat and equipment are still there," said Aref

Omar, a fisherman released by the Eritrean authorities in January.

In a statement to the state-run Saba News Agency, Buhaidr explained that Yemeni fishermen in the Red Sea continue to run the risk of being detained by neighboring countries, particularly in the Horn of Africa.

"The Fishery Cooperative Union is attempting to release the detained fishermen," Buhaidr said. He called on the Yemeni government to protect Yemeni fishermen by passing and implementing a bilateral agreement with Eritrea to resolve the two countries' ongoing controversies over fishing.

Abdulla Basunbul, deputy minister of the Ministry of Fisheries, denied to comment on the incident, pointing out that the Foreign Ministry was in charge of coordinating Yemeni-Eritrean relations.

The Yemen Times tried to contact the Foreign Ministry but could not get any response.



Although Eritrea released 135 Yemeni fishermen in January and 154 back in May, it kept Yemeni fishing boats, leaving returning fishermen in a poor financial state.

In a previous statement to the Yemen Times, Salem Abdullah Alyan, a member of the Fishery Cooperative Union, said, "the Yemeni fishermen cross the area between

Eritrea and Yemen either intentionally or unintentionally and get arrested by the Eritrean authorities. Sometimes the boats are pushed by winds to Eritrean waters."

Explosive kills two in Dhamar

■ Abdulkareem Al-Nahari

DHAMAR, July 21—Two young men were killed when an improvised explosive device went off on Friday in Otoma district, Dhamar governorate.

A source inside Otoma's police department, speaking on condition of anonymity, said that the explosion took place in Salem Mountain in the Bait Al-Sharfi area, killing two brothers, named Mujahed Mahdi Al-Sharifi, 25, and Jamal Mahdi Al-Sharifi, 23.

Security authorities in Otoma were notified about the accident and the Criminal Investigation Department sent a team to inspect the crime scene, according to the source.

Adel Al-Sharifi, one of the victims' relatives, said that Mujahid, Jamal, and a third young man were on their way to the mosque for prayer when the explosion oc-

cured.

Al-Sharifi links the incident to a long-raging land dispute between the Maooda family and the Rasam and Sahrifi family.

The land dispute, which started early last year, killed 19 people prior to the six-month peace agreement signed in January 2014.

Al-Sharifi explains that the explosion came five days prior to the end of the truce that was signed in January.

Al-Sharifi accuses the Maooda family of having breached the agreement by planting the explosive.

The Masooda family declined to comment on the incident.

On May 24, security authorities in Dhamar defused an explosive in Otoma district that was planted near the house of Jamal Abdulla Maooda, a member of the local council in Dhamar and the General People's Congress.

Post offices in Wadi Hadramout reopen after five-day shutdown

■ Ali Saeed

SANA'A, July 21—Following the armed robbery of a post office in Wadi Hadramout and the consequent closure of all branches in the area on July 15, post offices reopened on Sunday, according to Fahd Al-Amri, security chief of Wadi Hadramout.

"The post offices were reopened yesterday after we enforced secu-

rity at these offices," Al-Amri told the Yemen Times on Monday.

Ibrahim Ba Shuaib, general manager of the post offices in Wadi Hadramout, said last Wednesday that the post offices were closed in order to avoid any attacks by unknown militants.

Government institutions in Hadramout have been the site of repeated attacks and robberies by gunmen. Since the beginning of

this year, four major attacks have been recorded.

In the attack that caused the shutdown last Tuesday, one policeman was killed when twelve unidentified armed men attacked the Hawra Post Office in Wadi Hadramout, making off with YR1.6 million (\$7,500), the state-run Saba News Agency reported.

"The armed men pointed their guns at the staff of the post office,

demanding the keys for the drawers and looted all the money," Saba quoted Ba Shuaib as saying.

On May 23, military, security and financial offices in Seyoun city in Hadramout witnessed deadly attacks by dozens of militants linked to Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP). Bank and post offices in the city were looted, though the government did not disclose how much money

was stolen.

In April, Yasser Ba Ma'afa, secretary general of the Ghail Ba Wazeer local council in Hadramout, told the Yemen Times that unidentified armed men broke into the Ghail Ba Wazeer Post Office and stole YR9.8 million (\$46,000).

On February 17, in Ghail Ba Wazeer district, unidentified armed men attacked the office of

the state-run Public Water Corporation and stole three vehicles belonging to the company.

Yemen Post, a state-run company that runs post offices throughout the country, handles all financial issues for the government. These include the monthly payments of civil servants, and receiving bill payments for electricity, landline telephones, internet, and water.

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The deadline for receiving applications is **July 31, 2014.**

Yemenis arrested for taking injured to hospital

■ Mohammed Al-Khayat

“I suffered from unbearable pain and was shouting loudly after the car accident happened, but nobody took me to the hospital,” said Ehab Masood, a 22-year-old student from Sana’a.

Masood was the victim of a hit-and-run about eight months ago. The driver fled the scene, leaving Masood lying on the street in need of help.

Nobody stopped, however. “I was bleeding and shouting for about half an hour but it was in vain,” Masood recollected. “Everyone tried to avoid me instead of taking me to the hospital, fearing their help could cause them problems.”

Eventually, a stranger took Masood by motorbike to a private hospital. Having been denied any medical treatment there, he then went to a public hospital, all the while losing valuable time.

“I suffer from a permanent disability because of that accident and because I was taken to hospital late,” Masood explained.

Masood’s case is not unique. In fact, it is not uncommon for people who get seriously injured in car accidents or gun violence to be left to fend for themselves, lying on the street, watching seemingly uninterested people passing by.

The story of Mohammed Ibrahim, a taxi driver in Sana’a who once took an injured stranger to the hospital, helps to clarify a behavior that on its face resembles inhumane indifference. Recalling his experience, Ibrahim recalls:

“A man was injured in a car ac-



Many Yemenis avoid taking injured people to the hospital because they fear being arrested, sometimes for days if the patient is unresponsive.

cident at midnight. Several drivers refused to help him, so I took him to the hospital. But once I arrived there, the hospital’s security team confiscated my car for two days, claiming that I was the one who hit the man. I was not able to get out of the hospital until after the injured awoke from his coma and confirmed my innocence.”

Because of incidences like these, several residents in Sana’a openly admit they would not take an injured person to the hospital. Especially those who subsist on their daily wages can not afford, or are not willing to risk, being locked up for several days.

Jamal Saeed, another taxi driver in Sana’a, recounts that a group of people had requested him one day to take an injured man to the hospital. However, he refused, knowing that several of his friends encountered problems and were

maltreated when they tried to help others.

“I was very sad and, in fact, thought that what I did was inhumane. I know that I should have helped him. But I had no choice: I have a family to take care of and they depend on the money I bring in each day,” Saeed explained.

According to Abdulsalam Abu Al-Rijal, former head of the Criminal Investigation Bureau, it is routine that the person taking an injured person to a public hospital is arrested for sometime. If the injured patient confirms their innocence, they are quickly released again. If, however, disagreement arises over who is responsible for the injuries caused, they remain in custody until the matter is investigated by the hospital’s security team. Likewise, if the victim is unconscious, they have to wait until he or she regains consciousness before they

are freed.

“If the victim remains in a coma for a long time or dies as a result of the accident, eyewitnesses need to be questioned before the person who brought them is released,” he added.

Those who are arrested are held in a room—the same room that the hospital’s security personnel use—inside the hospital for about a day, after which they are transferred to a state prison.

“The problem does not lie in the law but in the procedures followed by the hospitals’ security staff,” explained lawyer Salim Alaw, who works for the National Organization for Defending Rights and Freedoms (HOOD).

According to Alaw, “unless orders from the prosecution are on hand, the law neither permits the detention of the person who caused the accident nor of the one who rescued the injured.”

In contrast, Dr. Anwar Mughalis, deputy head of the state-run Al-Thawra Hospital in Sana’a, claimed that the hospitals’ legal procedures vary from case to case, depending on whether the injured is in a coma or not.

“If the victim is conscious, the person who brought him or her to the hospital is released immediately, following some investigation. However, if the victim is in a coma, the deliverer might be kept for some days,” he explained.

Ahmed Omairi, a doctor at the public Al-Jamhuri hospital, clarifies that “the family of the injured criticizes the hospital’s security staff if they release the rescuer, considering he is the only one who might know details about the ac-

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cident.”

Abdulkareem Nasser, a former Sociology Professor at Taiz University, comments that existing hospital procedures “force people to avoid taking the injured to hospitals, which in itself is a moral crime that weakens social ties.”

The fear of being arrested for taking injured to the hospital exists not only in Yemen. An incident in Guangdong, China, for example, caught the world’s attention in October 2011. The video showed how a two-year-old girl, after being run

over by two vehicles, was ignored for more than seven minutes by at least 18 people passing her by without offering any help. In a poll conducted the following month by the China Youth Daily, 71 percent of people said they believe that those who passed the child by were simply afraid of getting themselves into trouble.

As a result of the outrage the video caused, Chinese politicians in Guangdong’s major city Shenzhen passed a Good Samaritan Law in 2013 to protect those who help others.

Perhaps it is time for Yemen to create its own Good Samaritan Law to counter a spreading culture of apathy towards people in need.

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Nearly 70 percent of Sa'ada food insecure: UN

■ Yemen Times staff

More than 40 percent of the population—over 10 million Yemenis—do not know where their next meal will come from, according to preliminary findings of a new survey released last week by UNICEF and the World Food Programme (WFP).

Food security has improved in Yemen, declining from 45 percent to 41 percent, since the last survey of a similar kind was conducted in 2011. But among the governorates there were huge variations, according to the latest survey.

In war-afflicted Sa'ada governorate, nearly 70 percent of the population was found to be food insecure. That number is as low as 10 percent in Al-Mahra, in the east. "Rural areas are worst affected," the report said.

Food security improved and there was a decrease in hunger levels in

"The Comprehensive Food Security Survey, usually held every two years, also shows that Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM) rates in Yemen are at emergency levels in some areas of the country and are serious across most of Yemen."

Sana'a, Ibb, Marib and Rayma governorates. But Shabwa governorate, which witnessed a recent military offensive against Al-Qaeda operatives, saw a severe deterioration. Shabwa went from being nearly 38 percent food insecure in 2011 to more than 57 percent, according to the survey.

"I am saddened by these continuing high rates. WFP's new operation, which will feed six million people, aims to address the problem," said WFP Yemen Country Director Bishow Parajuli. "We are now focusing more on building sustainable livelihoods and resilience, so that people are able to help themselves."

Parajuli said that food insecurity had an impact on the country's stability.

"For the political process to succeed, people need to be able to live

normal lives and not have to worry about where their next meal is coming from," he said.

About five million people were found to be severely food insecure in the country, "suffering from levels of hunger where external food assistance is generally required and the prevalence of chronic malnutrition among children under the age of five is beyond the international benchmark of 'critical,'" the report said.

The Comprehensive Food Security Survey, usually held every two years, also shows that Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM) rates in Yemen are at emergency levels in some areas of the country and are serious across most of Yemen.

The data for the survey was gathered from all of Yemen's 22 governorates and is based on more than 10,500 household interviews and

measurements.

Treating malnutrition and the complications that arise from it is a costly burden for Yemen's poor. Medical bills mean even less food for money, and a trip to the hospital—given the rising cost of fuel for those who resort to buying it on the black market, can put a family in significant debt.

Less food results in greater health issues, "a vicious cycle," Lenna Al-Eryani, a representative from Yemen's Ministry of Health, previously told the Yemen Times.

According to the report, twelve governorates have critical levels of stunting, "a condition caused by chronic malnutrition, where children fail to grow properly over time and never reach their physical and mental potential," the report said.

The worst-affected is the governorate of Al-Mahweet, where more

than 60 percent of children are stunted. Seven governorates have serious levels (between 30 and 39.9 percent) and two are classified as poor (20-29.9 percent).

"Children remain the most vulnerable in terms of food insecurity and malnutrition in Yemen," said Jeremy Hopkins, acting UNICEF representative in Yemen. "Of the estimated 4.5 million children under the age of five, more than 2 in 5 are stunted while almost 13 percent are acutely malnourished."

The two UN organizations say there is an urgent need for an integrated response in addressing malnutrition.

"UNICEF will continue to partner with WFP in ensuring a coordinated response to address severe and moderate acute malnutrition, especially in areas of greatest need," Hopkins emphasized.

Stand-up comedy: a new wedding fad

■ Ali Abulohoom

Weddings in Sana'a are usually held in private halls rented by the groom's family or in big tents set up in neighborhood alleys. Preparations typically take about two weeks—reservations are made for the hall or tent, traditional clothes are bought for the bride and groom, and catering is arranged. For more elaborate weddings, singers and musicians are often hired, but these days it is becoming increasingly common to see comedians perform at weddings who charge lower prices.

Traditional weddings in Sana'a usually cost between YR300,000 to 500,000 (\$1,400 to 2,340), which the majority of the city's residents are unable to afford. For the most part, couples have to forgo luxuries like singers and musicians. Instead, amateur and semi-professional stand-up comedians are becoming a popular alternative and often make for very lively, humor-filled weddings.

Saeed Al-Sharabi, 31, is due to be married this year. However, instead of a traditional wedding, he has other plans. "I made no reservations in advance because my financial situation is very tough. Instead, I will host a party at my house and enlist one comedian to make my guests happy. It is the only reservation I made in advance," Al-Sharabi said.

Making people laugh at weddings has become a full-time job for many performers.

Nasser Saeed Bakeel, a 44-year-old comedian in Sana'a, said that



With traditional weddings in Sana'a often costing more than residents can afford, many are instead opting to hire stand-up comedians in place of singers and musicians.

five years ago he used to perform at weddings of friends, family and acquaintances without charge. His passion for arousing laughter is now a source of income. "I receive anywhere from YR5,000 to 10,000 (\$25-50)," he said.

"Every comedian has his own style. For me, I provoke the people who sit in front of me and start to make some jokes and remarks to

them. When they start replying, I respond with humorous things and make them embarrassed."

Given the recent popularity of stand-up acts at wedding ceremonies, some comedians have come up with new ideas to make their shows unique.

Ali Al-Kawkabni, a 35-year-old Yemeni comedian, said that when he is invited to any wedding cer-

emony he is accompanied by his friend and they make fun of each other. "I feel ashamed making fun of someone I do not know. Instead, I bring my friend with me who is also a comedian."

Many wedding performers see themselves as professionals but say they lack the opportunity to become official actors with comedy performance groups.

ADVERTORIAL

Mercure Hotel holds the third Chess Tournament

Mercure Hotel, under the supervision of the Yemeni Chess Federation in Aden and the sponsorship of the Yemen National Bank, held the third Chess Tournament on 15/ 07/ 2014. The tournament lasts for a week.

Mr. Fadhil Saleh Al-Helali, general manager of Mercure Aden Hotel, delivered a speech in the ceremony and asserted that the hotel's leadership pays attention to organizing this annual tournament for the third time and activate the chess game, particularly in Aden because chess is known as the game of the smart.

Mr. Amr Al-Awlaqi, Sales Officer in Mercure Aden, asserted the attendance of Mercure to sport and social activities.

He noted that Aden Mercure Hotel is going to sponsor international Marathon in Aden in December, and the preparations for this event will be very huge and at the level of Yemen, the Arab World and the world.

He added this event will give a high status to Aden in particular and the entire Yemen in general.

Ewadh Mashbah, the head of the local council in Khor Maksr district and Mr. Basil, the head of Aden Chess Union, Mr. Alwi Albar and Ahmed Al-Dhalaei, Aden deputy governor, were in attendance.



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Building food security in Ethiopia



Fatuma Ahmed (on the right), a pastoralist in Ethiopia's Afar region, where women are seen and not heard.

IRIN
First published July 18

Ethiopia's Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP), set up in 2005, aims to make fully food secure the millions of people still dependent on food aid, provide support to the vulnerable to prevent the depletion of livestock, and create productive assets at community level. But nearly a decade on and over US\$3 billion spent, how successful has it been?

PSNP claims to be a program that bridges the response gap between emergency relief and long-term development aid, and helps build resilience.

Initially, it was available in four regions—Tigray, Amhara, Oromiya, and the Southern Nations and Nationalities' Region—and was later extended to the more re-

mote regions of Afar (in 2006) and the Somali Region (2007), according to the World Bank, one of its main backers.

The Ethiopian government spends 1.1 percent of GDP on PSNP and a complementary scheme called the Household Asset Building Program (HABP).

Both schemes are largely donor funded. The current phase of PSNP (2010-2014) which includes HABP, costs more than \$2 billion. Donors include the World Bank, International Development Association (IDA), the US Agency for International Development (USAID), Danish International Development Assistance (DANIDA), UK Department for International Development (DFID), European Commission, the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), the governments of Canada, Ireland, Netherlands and the World

Food Programme and the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF).

PSNP provides transfers—cash or food—to between six and eight million chronically food insecure Ethiopians for six months each year, according to DFID. At least 85 percent of the beneficiaries receive cash transfers as wages for labor on small-scale public works projects. These projects are selected by the community and contribute to environmental rehabilitation and local economic development, while 15 percent are "direct support" beneficiaries (disabled, elderly, pregnant or lactating women) who receive unconditional transfers.

Both donors and the government have become increasingly aware that PSNP does not really help secure those who have very limited or no assets against shocks, and help them "graduate" from a chronic situation to a state of food security.

Hence HABP was introduced in 2010 to help people build their livelihoods and create assets. Credit, agricultural extension and microenterprise advice, and linkages to markets, are part of the support provided. "These initiatives help households build their asset base, diversify their livelihoods and achieve food security, so 'graduating' from PSNP," according to DFID.

HABP has so far provided technical advice on how to improve livelihoods to 1,059,044 households; of these, 812,655 have prepared business plans.

The government says about 495,995 households "graduated" from PSNP between 2008 and 2012 out of more than seven million beneficiaries (until 2012), a figure some Ethiopian officials acknowledge as low. A household has "graduated" when, in the absence of receiving

PSNP transfers, it can meet its food needs for 12 months of the year and is able to withstand modest shocks.

A recent study by Oxford University ranked Ethiopia the second poorest country in the world after Niger.

A view from the ground

Duba Oundanumo, chief of Anderkelo kebele (municipal ward) in the arid Afar region, a northeastern pastoral community frequently dependent on food assistance, does not think PSNP will help local people emerge from chronic poverty and food insecurity any time soon.

"It is very hard for these families to become food secure. They are too poor... When you have nothing—no animals [no assets]—it is very difficult to recover from shocks [like droughts]," he said.

Fatuma Ahmed, 20, another pas-

toralist here, says the very poor need more support than just PSNP assistance. "We need micro-loans provided by cooperatives to buy animals, assistance with irrigation to be able to grow some crops."

The community has created a protected pastureland in exchange for food from WFP, one of the implementing partners of PSNP.

PSNP is being implemented in places as remote as Seban-Demale, a village just 60km from the Danakil depression in the Afar Region, one of the hottest places on earth, with temperatures of 40 degrees Celsius or more all year round. The village is only accessible during the dry months.

Government insiders say the current focus is on ensuring PSNP is accessible across the Afar and Somali regions; HABP will come later.

Continued on page 12

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Sudoku

Easy

5			7	3	6		
	3	2	4	1			7
		1	6				8
		3		9		7	
9		4			5	6	3
	8			3	6	5	
1				9	8		
8				4	1	2	9
	4	9	5				1

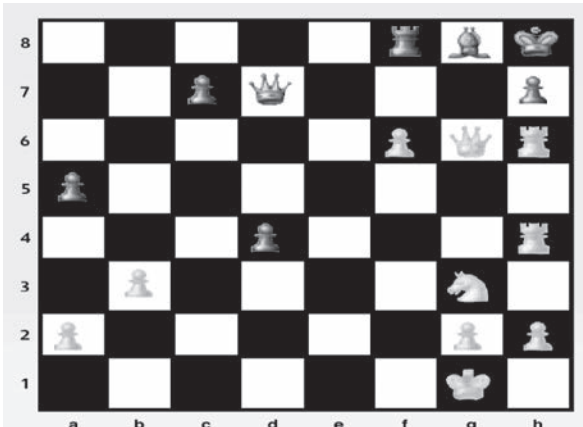
Intermediate

	7			4			5
		3		1		6	
		4			8		3
	1	4		7			6
		2			5	3	
5				1	9		
2	4		5			7	
		5		4		8	
3			9				5

Difficult

	6			3			2
		5			4	9	1
			7				8
						5	
	9					4	
		1					
7					2		
	3	4	6			8	
8			9				7

Chess



White plays and wins in the 4th move

Solutions

9	L	E	S	P	6	Z	L	8
5	Z	8	L	L	9	P	E	6
P	6	L	Z	8	E	9	S	L
6	E	Z	9	L	Z	9	L	8
L	9	P	8	S	L	6	Z	E
L	8	S	6	E	Z	L	P	9
8	S	9	L	Z	L	E	6	P
E	L	6	P	9	8	S	L	Z
Z	P	L	E	6	S	8	9	L
Z	S	P	9	L	6	8	L	E
E	9	8	Z	P	L	S	6	L
L	6	L	E	8	S	9	P	Z
8	P	6	L	Z	9	L	E	S
L	L	E	S	6	8	Z	9	P
9	Z	S	L	E	P	L	8	6
6	E	L	8	S	L	P	Z	9
P	L	9	6	L	Z	E	S	8
L	9	E	L	Z	6	8	S	P

Sudoku

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Building food security in Ethiopia

Aid has failed to protect livelihoods

Over the decades, drought and the inability to produce enough food have pushed millions of Ethiopians into hunger. The World Bank says agriculture accounts for 45 percent of Ethiopia's GDP, while providing a source of income to 80-85 percent of its population. "Any small variation in rainfall or world prices (for coffee) affects the incomes of 30 to 40 million people and can mean hunger for 10 to 15 million people,"

says the Bank.

"Both predictable (chronic) and unpredictable (acute or transitory) needs have largely been met through emergency relief [in Ethiopia]," says the Bank. While aid has saved millions of lives over the decades, it has failed to protect livelihoods and assets. "The unpredictable timing and level of relief resources flowing through the emergency channel means there are few opportunities to do more than address humanitarian needs," it adds.

Meanwhile, the debate continues within aid circles on how to determine if a household is indeed "food secure," as some households who were seen to have "graduated" have sunk back into poverty after a few shocks. IRIN did not come across anyone who had "graduated" in the villages it visited in Afar.

HABP, which could give people a better chance of "graduating" is not available everywhere yet. Getting "people to work in Afar [and Somali Region] under PSNP is a big achievement on its own," reckons an aid worker who preferred anonymity, referring to Afar's notoriety as "Ethiopia's Wild West," where AK-47 wielding pastoralists would rather face a dispute over a livestock theft allegation than do actual physical labor such as planting trees and lifting boulders to shape the course of a river.

Evaluation

"The implementation of the PSNP in Afar and Somali regions of Ethiopia is ambitious," said John Hod-dinott, a senior research fellow at the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), who led the most recent impact evaluation of PSNP and HABP for the World Bank in 2012.

"While high levels of chronic food insecurity are indicative of the need for a safety net intervention, poor infrastructure and widely dispersed populations make implementation challenging. While there is some evidence of program success in reducing food insecurity, we are likely to see additional efforts aimed at strengthening program performance in 2014 and beyond," he added.

The evaluation—a collaborative effort between IFPRI, Institute for Development Studies and Dadi-mos Consulting in Ethiopia—says: "PSNP has significantly improved food security in all regions between 2010 and 2012. While there remain differences in food security across regions, these differences are narrowing. Food security improved for both male and female headed households..." It has also rehabilitated the environment and natural resources, and improved access to education and health care.

"At the end of the day, what PSNP has achieved so far is an example to other developing countries of what political will can do"

The evaluation said that in 2010, PSNP and HABP together increased food security 2.5 times more than PSNP alone.

"In the highlands, the PSNP is well targeted. Beneficiaries are poorer and more food insecure than non-beneficiaries," says the evaluation. But it goes on to note that PSNP is "poorly targeted in Afar and Somali", and that in some areas "beneficiaries are selected by kebele or clan leaders without input from the wider community." Further, the identification of deserving candidates has been marred by sporadic allegations of political influence in drawing up the list of PSNP beneficiaries, though past evaluations have shown that this is not systemic.

DFID's 2014 review said political influence was "scattered and localized" and that it could be countered by strengthening a kebele-level appeal process for deserving people left out of the list, and by conducting roving audits.

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Houthis hand over Al-Qushaibi's corpse to the state

Story and photo by
Ali Ibrahim Al-Moshki

SANA'A, July 21—The corpse of Brigadier Hameed Al-Qushaibi, commander of the 310th Armored Brigade, was handed over by the Houthis and was transported to Sana'a's military hospital late Sunday.

Al-Qushaibi was reported dead on July 9. He was killed during heavy fighting between Houthi rebels and the 310 Armored Brigade.

The corpses of Al-Qushaibi and two of his bodyguards were transported by helicopter from Amran governorate to Sana'a, where they were received by a large crowd of people, many of whom were Al-Qushaibi's relatives.

Various media outlets covered the death of Al-Qushaibi. Some local media reported that he was arrested in Amran and was then taken to Sa'ada where he was executed.

Ali Al-Qushaibi, brother of Brigadier Al-Qushaibi, said that the corpse was transported from Raida in Amran governorate, expressing his conviction that "he was killed in clashes with the Houthis in Amran."

Al-Ghawi stated that he was unsure where the military commander was killed, as there have been multiple conflicting reports about the whereabouts of his death. He said the perpetrators, including Defense Minister Mohammed Nasser Ahmad, will not go unpunished.

Brigadier Ali Aziz Al-Hujairi, the defense minister's adviser, told the



Many relatives and supporters of Al-Qushaibi gathered at the hospital, bearing their weapons and refusing to let journalists inside.

Yemen Times that it was not clear yet whether Al-Qushaibi was killed in Amran or Sa'ada.

A great number of Al-Qushaibi's relatives gathered in front and inside of the military hospital, bearing

their weapons. They vehemently refused to let journalists inside the hospital, even resorting to violence

to prevent them from entering. Dozens of Al-Qushaibi relatives and sympathizers, as well as Is-

lah Party members, have staged a sit-in since late last week in front of the defense minister's house. They demand clarity about the exact circumstances of Al-Qushaibi's death.

"We will not leave this place until the defense minister is replaced, the reasons of Al-Qushaibi's death are clarified and perpetrators are tried in court," said Al-Ghawi.

It was only ten days after Al-Qushaibi's death that the Defense Ministry and the leadership of the 6th Military Command officially announced it.

The exact circumstances of Al-Qushaibi's death are still unknown. Houthis claimed to have found him dead in a house near the 310th Armored Brigade's headquarters.

However, the Al-Sharea daily newspaper cited a soldier of the brigade as saying, "the Houthis killed Al-Qushaibi and his guards at the 310th Armored Brigade headquarters."

Similarly, in a public statement released on July 9, the Islah Party accused the Houthis of having committed a war crime by executing Al-Qushaibi.

According to Omar Al-Qushaibi, son of the deceased Brigadier Al-Qushaibi, the funeral will take place on Wednesday, July 23.

Mediation committee arrives in Al-Jawf

■ **Amal Al-Yarisi**

SANA'A, July 21—Amid the arrival of a mediation committee on Saturday to Al-Jawf governorate, the Houthis and the Islah Party traded blame and put forth differing views on whether a ceasefire is in effect.

Mubarak Al-Abadi, director of Islah Party's Media Department in Al-Jawf, claims the fighting ended and both parties have been abiding by the ceasefire since the arrival of a mediation committee on Saturday.

However, Mohammed Al-Bukhaiti, a member of the Houthi's Political Office, said the committee is still negotiating with the warring parties to reach a ceasefire agreement.

The committee was created by President Abdu Rabu Mansour Hadi

and includes the governor of Al-Jawf as well as several sheikhs and community leaders from the governorate.

Clashes between the Houthis and Islah-affiliated tribesmen in the governorate renewed at the beginning of July. The tribesmen gained control over strategic locations in Al-Safra and Al-Humaida, which had been controlled by the Houthis since 2011.

Al-Abadi asserts that the Islah Party and its allied tribesmen are willing to hand over their positions in Al-Safra Military Camp to the state. Al-Safra is of strategic importance because it connects Al-Jawf with other governorates.

Al-Bukhaiti said the Houthis are ready to abide by the agreement as

soon as the Islah Party demonstrates its commitment. He claims that members of the Islah Party broke the ceasefire agreement by shelling Houthi locations in Al-Ghail, Al-Safra, and Al-Hajr, which Al-Bukhaiti says should be run by neutral military units.

The clashes have caused residents to avoid travelling through Al-Jawf, and have displaced many within the governorate.

Abdulsalam Shihat, a tribal sheikh in Al-Jawf, said that several people in the area of conflict have left their houses in recent days and moved to other areas inside the governorate, asserting that several people from both sides have been killed.

"The same thing that happened in Amran may happen in Al-Jawf but

we will not allow this at any cost," Shihat said.

The clashes follow previous rounds of fighting in June between the Houthis and military units backed by pro-government tribesmen in Amran and Hamdan, to the north of Sana'a.

Earlier in July and following two months of clashes, the Houthis took control of Amran City and the headquarters of the 310th Armored Brigade, and killed its commander, Brigadier Hameed Al-Qushaibi.

"I feel it is a conspiracy because the government only participates with us sometimes. It keeps sending us mediation committees and we are waiting for Al-Jawf to be controlled by the Houthis just like Amran," the Akhbar Al-Youm newspaper quoted

Sheikh Al-Hassan Abkar as saying. Abkar is the head of the Al-Jawf and Marib Federation, a tribal federation opposing the Houthi's expansion.

Abkar asserted that they will gather all tribesmen in Yemen to fight the Houthis. "We warn President Hadi, the defense minister, and all conspirators inside and outside Yemen, that ignoring the Houthi expansion, blood shedding, and looting of properties will cause Al-Jawf to turn to Al-Qaeda."

"We back the military in its fighting against Al-Qaeda but we are paying for this support. Al-Jawf will never be controlled by the Houthis," he added.

Al-Jawf is a vital governorate due to its proximity to the oil fields in Marib.

AQAP orders women in Hadramout not to leave home unaccompanied

■ **Nasser Al-Sakkaf**

SANA'A July 21—Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) militants in Haridha city, Hadramout governorate, distributed brochures to residents on Sunday, listing a number of demands, including that women not go outside unless accompanied by a close male relative.

"The militants gave citizens ten days to abide by the instructions given in the statement," said Mohammed Abdullah, a political analyst living in the area who himself

received the brochure.

The statement added that the group, which brands itself to locals as Ansar Al-Sharia, or supporters of Sharia law, will "punish" residents who do not follow their orders, without going into further detail.

Another demand given in the brochure is that the youth refrain from sitting in cafes where they have "meaningless conversations."

Abdullah pointed out that women in Haridha city are now afraid to go to markets alone but that the youth stay late at cafes as usual.

Two days earlier, on Friday, AQAP supporters distributed brochures in Tabah area, also located in Haridha district. According to Abdullah, the orders were widely accepted by residents of the area.

"The brochure was distributed in public by gunmen in Toyota pickups," he said, referring to both Tabah area and Haridha city. Abdullah noted that "they did not cover their faces like they usually do," indicating that AQAP members in the area are less afraid of reprisal from the government than they used to be.

Salem Sabri, another resident in Hadramout, said that women are already committed to the Islamic tenets and do not need anybody to teach them, adding that AQAP distributed pamphlets to claim having control over the governorate.

According to Saeed Al-Jamhi, an AQAP researcher, the military is unable to enforce the law in Hadramout. "There should be a plan to close all entrances to the governorate connected to Abyan and Shabwa because most AQAP affiliates come from these neighboring governor-

ates," he said.

The Yemen Times contacted Fahd Al-Amri, the security manager of Wadi Hadramout, for information but he refused to comment on the matter.

AQAP appeared in Abyan and Shabwa in May of 2011 and eventually took over Zinjibar, the capital of Abyan, which they controlled from early 2012 until June of the same year. The army expelled them in mid-2012, but they still maintain a fluid presence in some southern areas of the country.

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Eritrea confiscated 863 Yemeni fishing boats since 2006

■ Ali Ibrahim Al-Moshki

SANA'A, July 21—Eritrean authorities have confiscated 863 Yemeni fishing boats since 2006, according to Ali Hassan Buhaidr, the secretary general of the Fishery Cooperative Union.

Over the past two years, Eritrean authorities have arrested about 420 Yemeni fishermen they accuse of straying into their waters and negatively affecting their fishing economy.

Although Eritrea released 135 Yemeni fishermen in January and another 154 in May, it is still in possession of at least 863 confiscated fishing boats.

Without their boats, released fishermen who return to Yemen find themselves in a poor financial state, lacking the necessary equipment to continue their work.

"I could not work since I returned from Eritrea because my boat and equipment are still there," said Aref

Omar, a fisherman released by the Eritrean authorities in January.

In a statement to the state-run Saba News Agency, Buhaidr explained that Yemeni fishermen in the Red Sea continue to run the risk of being detained by neighboring countries, particularly in the Horn of Africa.

"The Fishery Cooperative Union is attempting to release the detained fishermen," Buhaidr said. He called on the Yemeni government to protect Yemeni fishermen by passing and implementing a bilateral agreement with Eritrea to resolve the two countries' ongoing controversies over fishing.

Abdulla Basunbul, deputy minister of the Ministry of Fisheries, denied to comment on the incident, pointing out that the Foreign Ministry was in charge of coordinating Yemeni-Eritrean relations.

The Yemen Times tried to contact the Foreign Ministry but could not get any response.



Although Eritrea released 135 Yemeni fishermen in January and 154 back in May, it kept Yemeni fishing boats, leaving returning fishermen in a poor financial state.

In a previous statement to the Yemen Times, Salem Abdullah Alyan, a member of the Fishery Cooperative Union, said, "the Yemeni fishermen cross the area between

Eritrea and Yemen either intentionally or unintentionally and get arrested by the Eritrean authorities. Sometimes the boats are pushed by winds to Eritrean waters."

Explosive kills two in Dhamar

■ Abdulkareem Al-Nahari

DHAMAR, July 21—Two young men were killed when an improvised explosive device went off on Friday in Otoma district, Dhamar governorate.

A source inside Otoma's police department, speaking on condition of anonymity, said that the explosion took place in Salem Mountain in the Bait Al-Sharfi area, killing two brothers, named Mujahed Mahdi Al-Sharifi, 25, and Jamal Mahdi Al-Sharifi, 23.

Security authorities in Otoma were notified about the accident and the Criminal Investigation Department sent a team to inspect the crime scene, according to the source.

Adel Al-Sharifi, one of the victims' relatives, said that Mujahid, Jamal, and a third young man were on their way to the mosque for prayer when the explosion oc-

cured.

Al-Sharifi links the incident to a long-raging land dispute between the Maooda family and the Rasam and Sahrifi family.

The land dispute, which started early last year, killed 19 people prior to the six-month peace agreement signed in January 2014.

Al-Sharifi explains that the explosion came five days prior to the end of the truce that was signed in January.

Al-Sharifi accuses the Maooda family of having breached the agreement by planting the explosive.

The Masooda family declined to comment on the incident.

On May 24, security authorities in Dhamar defused an explosive in Otoma district that was planted near the house of Jamal Abdulla Maooda, a member of the local council in Dhamar and the General People's Congress.

Post offices in Wadi Hadramout reopen after five-day shutdown

■ Ali Saeed

SANA'A, July 21—Following the armed robbery of a post office in Wadi Hadramout and the consequent closure of all branches in the area on July 15, post offices reopened on Sunday, according to Fahd Al-Amri, security chief of Wadi Hadramout.

"The post offices were reopened yesterday after we enforced secu-

rity at these offices," Al-Amri told the Yemen Times on Monday.

Ibrahim Ba Shuaib, general manager of the post offices in Wadi Hadramout, said last Wednesday that the post offices were closed in order to avoid any attacks by unknown militants.

Government institutions in Hadramout have been the site of repeated attacks and robberies by gunmen. Since the beginning of

this year, four major attacks have been recorded.

In the attack that caused the shutdown last Tuesday, one policeman was killed when twelve unidentified armed men attacked the Hawra Post Office in Wadi Hadramout, making off with YR1.6 million (\$7,500), the state-run Saba News Agency reported.

"The armed men pointed their guns at the staff of the post office,

demanding the keys for the drawers and looted all the money," Saba quoted Ba Shuaib as saying.

On May 23, military, security and financial offices in Seyoun city in Hadramout witnessed deadly attacks by dozens of militants linked to Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP). Bank and post offices in the city were looted, though the government did not disclose how much money

was stolen.

In April, Yasser Ba Ma'afa, secretary general of the Ghail Ba Wazeer local council in Hadramout, told the Yemen Times that unidentified armed men broke into the Ghail Ba Wazeer Post Office and stole YR9.8 million (\$46,000).

On February 17, in Ghail Ba Wazeer district, unidentified armed men attacked the office of

the state-run Public Water Corporation and stole three vehicles belonging to the company.

Yemen Post, a state-run company that runs post offices throughout the country, handles all financial issues for the government. These include the monthly payments of civil servants, and receiving bill payments for electricity, landline telephones, internet, and water.

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The deadline for receiving applications is **July 31, 2014.**

Yemenis arrested for taking injured to hospital

■ Mohammed Al-Khayat

“I suffered from unbearable pain and was shouting loudly after the car accident happened, but nobody took me to the hospital,” said Ehab Masood, a 22-year-old student from Sana’a.

Masood was the victim of a hit-and-run about eight months ago. The driver fled the scene, leaving Masood lying on the street in need of help.

Nobody stopped, however. “I was bleeding and shouting for about half an hour but it was in vain,” Masood recollected. “Everyone tried to avoid me instead of taking me to the hospital, fearing their help could cause them problems.”

Eventually, a stranger took Masood by motorbike to a private hospital. Having been denied any medical treatment there, he then went to a public hospital, all the while losing valuable time.

“I suffer from a permanent disability because of that accident and because I was taken to hospital late,” Masood explained.

Masood’s case is not unique. In fact, it is not uncommon for people who get seriously injured in car accidents or gun violence to be left to fend for themselves, lying on the street, watching seemingly uninterested people passing by.

The story of Mohammed Ibrahim, a taxi driver in Sana’a who once took an injured stranger to the hospital, helps to clarify a behavior that on its face resembles inhumane indifference. Recalling his experience, Ibrahim recalls:

“A man was injured in a car ac-



Many Yemenis avoid taking injured people to the hospital because they fear being arrested, sometimes for days if the patient is unresponsive.

cident at midnight. Several drivers refused to help him, so I took him to the hospital. But once I arrived there, the hospital’s security team confiscated my car for two days, claiming that I was the one who hit the man. I was not able to get out of the hospital until after the injured awoke from his coma and confirmed my innocence.”

Because of incidences like these, several residents in Sana’a openly admit they would not take an injured person to the hospital. Especially those who subsist on their daily wages can not afford, or are not willing to risk, being locked up for several days.

Jamal Saeed, another taxi driver in Sana’a, recounts that a group of people had requested him one day to take an injured man to the hospital. However, he refused, knowing that several of his friends encountered problems and were

maltreated when they tried to help others.

“I was very sad and, in fact, thought that what I did was inhumane. I know that I should have helped him. But I had no choice: I have a family to take care of and they depend on the money I bring in each day,” Saeed explained.

According to Abdulsalam Abu Al-Rijal, former head of the Criminal Investigation Bureau, it is routine that the person taking an injured person to a public hospital is arrested for sometime. If the injured patient confirms their innocence, they are quickly released again. If, however, disagreement arises over who is responsible for the injuries caused, they remain in custody until the matter is investigated by the hospital’s security team. Likewise, if the victim is unconscious, they have to wait until he or she regains consciousness before they

are freed.

“If the victim remains in a coma for a long time or dies as a result of the accident, eyewitnesses need to be questioned before the person who brought them is released,” he added.

Those who are arrested are held in a room—the same room that the hospital’s security personnel use—inside the hospital for about a day, after which they are transferred to a state prison.

“The problem does not lie in the law but in the procedures followed by the hospitals’ security staff,” explained lawyer Salim Alaw, who works for the National Organization for Defending Rights and Freedoms (HOOD).

According to Alaw, “unless orders from the prosecution are on hand, the law neither permits the detention of the person who caused the accident nor of the one who rescued the injured.”

In contrast, Dr. Anwar Mughalis, deputy head of the state-run Al-Thawra Hospital in Sana’a, claimed that the hospitals’ legal procedures vary from case to case, depending on whether the injured is in a coma or not.

“If the victim is conscious, the person who brought him or her to the hospital is released immediately, following some investigation. However, if the victim is in a coma, the deliverer might be kept for some days,” he explained.

Ahmed Omairi, a doctor at the public Al-Jamhuri hospital, clarifies that “the family of the injured criticizes the hospital’s security staff if they release the rescuer, considering he is the only one who might know details about the ac-

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cident.”

Abdulkareem Nasser, a former Sociology Professor at Taiz University, comments that existing hospital procedures “force people to avoid taking the injured to hospitals, which in itself is a moral crime that weakens social ties.”

The fear of being arrested for taking injured to the hospital exists not only in Yemen. An incident in Guangdong, China, for example, caught the world’s attention in October 2011. The video showed how a two-year-old girl, after being run

over by two vehicles, was ignored for more than seven minutes by at least 18 people passing her by without offering any help. In a poll conducted the following month by the China Youth Daily, 71 percent of people said they believe that those who passed the child by were simply afraid of getting themselves into trouble.

As a result of the outrage the video caused, Chinese politicians in Guangdong’s major city Shenzhen passed a Good Samaritan Law in 2013 to protect those who help others.

Perhaps it is time for Yemen to create its own Good Samaritan Law to counter a spreading culture of apathy towards people in need.

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The siege of Gaza

Avi Shlaim
aljazeera.com
First published July 19

As long as the root causes of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict remain unresolved, occasional outcroppings of violence, like the current mini-war in Gaza, are inevitable. This is the third major Israeli offensive against Hamas and the people of Gaza in the last six years. Refusing to accept international legality as the basis for resolving its dispute with the Palestinians, Israel’s right-wing government is ever ready to resort to military force.

With a degree of cynicism that is difficult to comprehend and impossible to condone, Israel’s leaders describe their periodic incursions into Gaza as “mowing the lawn.” Now, once again, and with characteristic callousness, they have unleashed the full force of the IDF against Gaza’s captive population.

The death toll in the current round of hostilities is a grim reflection of the asymmetry of power between the fourth strongest army in the world and a virtually defenseless civilian population. In the first ten days of aerial bombardment, the “score” was 260 Palestinian dead, mostly civilians, and one Israeli.

By launching a ground offensive on July 17, Israel sharply escalated the death toll to over 300; destroyed many more houses, hospitals, and water plants; and displaced some 50,000 people out of their homes. “Operation Protective Edge” has

thus turned the densely populated Palestinian enclave on the eastern shore of the Mediterranean into a living hell.

“Refusing to accept international legality as the basis for resolving its dispute with the Palestinians, Israel’s right-wing government is ever ready to resort to military force.”

Both sides claim to be responding to aggression by the other side. The stated aim of Israel’s incursion into the strip is to put an end to the firing of rockets by Hamas militants on Israeli civilians. Hamas, the Islamic party that rules Gaza, claims it is engaged in legitimate resistance to Israel’s military occupation and that the rockets fired by its military wing were a response to

the violent IDF crackdown on the West Bank following the abduction and murder of three Israeli youth. The chain of action and reaction is endless. But the underlying cause of the violence is the Israeli colonialism.

Collective punishment

In 2005 Israel carried out a unilateral disengagement from Gaza but under international law it is still the occupying power because it controls access to the strip by land, sea, and air. Israel’s pullback did not herald freedom for the Gaza Strip. On the contrary, it turned it into an open-air prison and a convenient punch-bag.

In 2006 Hamas won a free and fair election but Israel and its Western allies refused to recognize the democratically-elected government and resorted to economic measures to overthrow it. In 2007, following the Hamas seizure of power in Gaza, Israel imposed an economic blockade, cutting it off from the West Bank and from the rest of the world and inflicting indescribable suffering on its 1.8 million inhabitants.

A blockade is a form of collective punishment proscribed by international law. So for the last seven years the entire population of Gaza, mostly refugees from previous Arab-Israeli wars, has been subjected to an illegal, inhumane, and unrelenting siege.

Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu’s handling of the current crisis is of a piece with his general approach: to shun diplomacy and rely on brute military force to preserve the status

quo—with Israel in direct control of the West Bank and remote control of the Gaza Strip. His ultimate goal is hegemony, not co-existence. He was actually opposed to the withdrawal from Gaza in 2005 and, rhetoric aside, he continues to reject a two-state solution to the conflict.

During the nine months of Israeli-Palestinian peace talks orchestrated by secretary of state John Kerry, Netanyahu did not put forward a single constructive proposal and all the while kept expanding Israeli settlements on the West Bank. Kerry and his adviser, General John Allen, drew up a security plan that they thought would enable Israel to withdraw from most of the West Bank. Israel’s serial refusenik dismissed it contemptuously as not worth the paper it was written on.

When Hamas and Fatah reached an accord in April, Netanyahu went on the offensive, denouncing it as a vote not for peace but for terror. For him any sign of Palestinian unity or moderation is a threat to the existing order with Israel as the dominant power. The unity government produced by the accord in early May was in fact remarkably moderate both in its composition and in its policies. It is a government of Fatah officials, technocrats and independents without a single Hamas-affiliated member.

To escape isolation and bankruptcy, Hamas handed over power to the Fatah-dominated, pro-Western Palestinian Authority in Ramallah. The unity government explicitly accepts the three conditions of the United States and European

Union for receiving Western aid: recognition of Israel; respect for past agreements; and renunciation of violence.

“What is needed now is an immediate ceasefire. The Egyptian ceasefire proposal of July 15 met Israel’s needs but utterly failed to meet the needs of the people of Gaza.”

Israel responded to this promising development by what can only be described as economic warfare. It prevented the 43,000 civil servants in Gaza from moving from the Hamas payroll to that of the Ramallah government and it tightened siege round Gaza’s borders thereby nullifying the two main benefits of the merger. The military assault on Gaza completely disrupted the

work of the new government, unfairly recast Hamas as a terrorist organization pure and simple, and inflicted additional horrors on the long-suffering population of the strip.

What is needed now is an immediate ceasefire. The Egyptian ceasefire proposal of July 15 met Israel’s needs but utterly failed to meet the needs of the people of Gaza. Israel was consulted before the proposal was announced; Hamas was not. Hamas found out about the one-sided proposal from the media, not through diplomatic channels.

The proposal involved a return to the status quo with calm for Israelis but with the people of Gaza continuing to live under a crippling siege. Not unreasonably, Hamas demands an end to Israeli aggression, the easing of the blockade by Israel and Egypt, and the release of recently rearrested prisoners. It refuses to return to the status quo ante because it is intolerable.

Beyond a ceasefire to end the current round of fighting, the international community will need to tackle the much tougher task of persuading Israel to abide by the laws of war, respect UN resolutions, end the odious occupation, and recognize the natural right of the Palestinians to live on their land in freedom and dignity.

Avi Shlaim is an Emeritus Professor of International Relations at Oxford University and the author of The Iron Wall: Israel and the Arab World and Israel and Palestine: Reappraisals, Revisions, Refutations.

Yemen model won’t work in Iraq, Syria

Katherine Zimmerman
washingtonpost.com
First published July 17

President Obama says the United States is looking to its Yemen policy as a model for what to do in Iraq and Syria. But what the president labels the “Yemen model” has not been as successful as the White House claims; indeed, it is in danger of collapse. Attempting to replicate it in much more challenging conditions in Iraq and Syria will almost certainly fail.

A little background: The United States partners with the government of Yemen against Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, or AQAP, which remains the most imminent direct Al-Qaeda threat to the US homeland. AQAP’s top leadership includes Osama Bin Laden’s former secretary, Nasir Al-Wuhayshi, now reportedly Al-Qaeda’s general manager; former Guantanamo detainee Ibrahim Al-Rubaish; and its innovative bomb maker, Ibrahim Hassan Al-Asiri, who continues to target the United States and US airlines.

The Obama administration defines its objectives in Yemen narrowly as preventing an AQAP attack on US interests abroad and at home. These objectives have shaped a counter-terrorism strategy that relies on a partnership with Presi-

dent Abdu Rabu Mansour Hadi to fight AQAP in Yemen without using US combat troops. The model is one of limited US training and advisory support to help a local partner keep a terror threat in check.

“The appeal of the Yemen model is its low cost and limited US footprint. But does the feel-good solution deliver? In reality, no.”

US military assistance provides troop-transport capabilities to increase the Yemeni military’s operational range; US military personnel train and advise local troops, pro-

viding crucial logistics and intelligence support for Yemeni counter-terrorism operations. US airstrikes targeting AQAP’s leaders and mid-level commanders involved in plots against US interests act as a stopgap to supplement Yemen’s capabilities and degrade the leadership network driving external threats.

The appeal of the Yemen model is its low cost and limited US footprint. But does the feel-good solution deliver?

In reality, no. AQAP has not stopped trying to kill Americans since its establishment in 2009. It is behind at least three attempts to strike the United States—in 2009, 2010 and 2012—and the terror threat that closed more than 20 US diplomatic posts in North Africa and the Middle East in August 2013. In 2011, a year without an attempted attack on the United States, AQAP fielded an insurgent force in southern Yemen and declared an Islamic emirate in the territory it seized. While the Yemeni military pushed back, its operations ended before it eliminated all of AQAP’s havens.

Yemen’s victories against AQAP have been tactical and likely temporary. A military offensive this spring focused on havens such as the group’s mountainous stronghold in Al-Mahfad, which straddles the primary route connecting Yemen’s south to its east. Yemeni troops hoped to disrupt an AQAP

line of communication and remove access to training camps there. But during a similar Yemeni operation in 2012, AQAP appeared to retreat, only to launch a counteroffensive and later regain the territory. Recent AQAP attacks in the cleared areas point to a probable repeat performance.

A key issue is that the Yemeni troops are not prepared for the fight, which began under Hadi’s predecessor. The majority of the force engaged against AQAP consists of regular army units, which do not receive direct assistance from the United States. The bulk of US military aid is oriented instead toward supporting Yemeni counter-terrorism operations, such as raids to detain AQAP cells and disrupt plots. But the fight in Yemen is not primarily counter-terrorism; it is counterinsurgency. US military aid is not wasted, but it will have limited effect as long as the main effort is a ground offensive against AQAP positions.

The assumption underlying the US focus on Yemen’s counter-terrorism capabilities is that AQAP is primarily a local terrorism problem—apart from a small and dangerous faction—that can be addressed over time by Yemeni forces. That assumption is false. AQAP’s shift in 2011 toward an insurgency created new military requirements that Yemen may not be able to ful-

fill. The slow tempo of Yemeni and US counter-terrorism operations has also given the AQAP faction focused on the United States space to regenerate. AQAP’s threat remains

“Not only is the Yemen model not working but the conditions that have delivered occasional successes in Yemen do not exist in either Iraq or Syria.”


viable.

The Yemen model also carries another big risk. To succeed, it is dependent on a continued commit-

ment from President Hadi and his government. Unfortunately, Hadi, like his predecessor, has other priorities. When former Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh was threatened with Arab Spring-like uprisings in 2011, he immediately redeployed government forces fighting AQAP to the capital to protect his regime. Similarly, Hadi faces a growing security threat from the Shia Houthis movement as its fighters push south toward Sana’a, the capital. The Houthis, who receive support from Iran, have engaged the Yemeni military six times since 2004, and the government’s efforts against them will likely drain military resources from the battle against AQAP.

In short, not only is the Yemen model not working but the conditions that have delivered occasional successes in Yemen do not exist in either Iraq or Syria. A cooperating host government? A cohesive military force? A scattered and disorganized enemy? No, no and no. Ultimately, and unfortunately, the only common elements in Yemen, Iraq and Syria appear to be insufficient US assistance to an unprepared force—and probable failure.

Katherine Zimmerman is a research fellow and the Al-Qaeda team leader for the American Enterprise Institute’s Critical Threats Project.



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Nearly 70 percent of Sa'ada food insecure: UN

■ Yemen Times staff

More than 40 percent of the population—over 10 million Yemenis—do not know where their next meal will come from, according to preliminary findings of a new survey released last week by UNICEF and the World Food Programme (WFP).

Food security has improved in Yemen, declining from 45 percent to 41 percent, since the last survey of a similar kind was conducted in 2011. But among the governorates there were huge variations, according to the latest survey.

In war-afflicted Sa'ada governorate, nearly 70 percent of the population was found to be food insecure. That number is as low as 10 percent in Al-Mahra, in the east. "Rural areas are worst affected," the report said.

Food security improved and there was a decrease in hunger levels in

"The Comprehensive Food Security Survey, usually held every two years, also shows that Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM) rates in Yemen are at emergency levels in some areas of the country and are serious across most of Yemen."

Sana'a, Ibb, Marib and Rayma governorates. But Shabwa governorate, which witnessed a recent military offensive against Al-Qaeda operatives, saw a severe deterioration. Shabwa went from being nearly 38 percent food insecure in 2011 to more than 57 percent, according to the survey.

"I am saddened by these continuing high rates. WFP's new operation, which will feed six million people, aims to address the problem," said WFP Yemen Country Director Bishow Parajuli. "We are now focusing more on building sustainable livelihoods and resilience, so that people are able to help themselves."

Parajuli said that food insecurity had an impact on the country's stability.

"For the political process to succeed, people need to be able to live

normal lives and not have to worry about where their next meal is coming from," he said.

About five million people were found to be severely food insecure in the country, "suffering from levels of hunger where external food assistance is generally required and the prevalence of chronic malnutrition among children under the age of five is beyond the international benchmark of 'critical,'" the report said.

The Comprehensive Food Security Survey, usually held every two years, also shows that Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM) rates in Yemen are at emergency levels in some areas of the country and are serious across most of Yemen.

The data for the survey was gathered from all of Yemen's 22 governorates and is based on more than 10,500 household interviews and

measurements.

Treating malnutrition and the complications that arise from it is a costly burden for Yemen's poor. Medical bills mean even less food for money, and a trip to the hospital—given the rising cost of fuel for those who resort to buying it on the black market, can put a family in significant debt.

Less food results in greater health issues, "a vicious cycle," Lenna Al-Eryani, a representative from Yemen's Ministry of Health, previously told the Yemen Times.

According to the report, twelve governorates have critical levels of stunting, "a condition caused by chronic malnutrition, where children fail to grow properly over time and never reach their physical and mental potential," the report said.

The worst-affected is the governorate of Al-Mahweet, where more

than 60 percent of children are stunted. Seven governorates have serious levels (between 30 and 39.9 percent) and two are classified as poor (20-29.9 percent).

"Children remain the most vulnerable in terms of food insecurity and malnutrition in Yemen," said Jeremy Hopkins, acting UNICEF representative in Yemen. "Of the estimated 4.5 million children under the age of five, more than 2 in 5 are stunted while almost 13 percent are acutely malnourished."

The two UN organizations say there is an urgent need for an integrated response in addressing malnutrition.

"UNICEF will continue to partner with WFP in ensuring a coordinated response to address severe and moderate acute malnutrition, especially in areas of greatest need," Hopkins emphasized.

Stand-up comedy: a new wedding fad

■ Ali Abulohoom

Weddings in Sana'a are usually held in private halls rented by the groom's family or in big tents set up in neighborhood alleys. Preparations typically take about two weeks—reservations are made for the hall or tent, traditional clothes are bought for the bride and groom, and catering is arranged. For more elaborate weddings, singers and musicians are often hired, but these days it is becoming increasingly common to see comedians perform at weddings who charge lower prices.

Traditional weddings in Sana'a usually cost between YR300,000 to 500,000 (\$1,400 to 2,340), which the majority of the city's residents are unable to afford. For the most part, couples have to forgo luxuries like singers and musicians. Instead, amateur and semi-professional stand-up comedians are becoming a popular alternative and often make for very lively, humor-filled weddings.

Saeed Al-Sharabi, 31, is due to be married this year. However, instead of a traditional wedding, he has other plans. "I made no reservations in advance because my financial situation is very tough. Instead, I will host a party at my house and enlist one comedian to make my guests happy. It is the only reservation I made in advance," Al-Sharabi said.

Making people laugh at weddings has become a full-time job for many performers.

Nasser Saeed Bakeel, a 44-year-old comedian in Sana'a, said that



With traditional weddings in Sana'a often costing more than residents can afford, many are instead opting to hire stand-up comedians in place of singers and musicians.

five years ago he used to perform at weddings of friends, family and acquaintances without charge. His passion for arousing laughter is now a source of income. "I receive anywhere from YR5,000 to 10,000 (\$25-50)," he said.

"Every comedian has his own style. For me, I provoke the people who sit in front of me and start to make some jokes and remarks to

them. When they start replying, I respond with humorous things and make them embarrassed."

Given the recent popularity of stand-up acts at wedding ceremonies, some comedians have come up with new ideas to make their shows unique.

Ali Al-Kawkabni, a 35-year-old Yemeni comedian, said that when he is invited to any wedding cer-

emony he is accompanied by his friend and they make fun of each other. "I feel ashamed making fun of someone I do not know. Instead, I bring my friend with me who is also a comedian."

Many wedding performers see themselves as professionals but say they lack the opportunity to become official actors with comedy performance groups.

ADVERTORIAL

Mercure Hotel holds the third Chess Tournament

Mercure Hotel, under the supervision of the Yemeni Chess Federation in Aden and the sponsorship of the Yemen National Bank, held the third Chess Tournament on 15/ 07/ 2014. The tournament lasts for a week.

Mr. Fadhil Saleh Al-Helali, general manager of Mercure Aden Hotel, delivered a speech in the ceremony and asserted that the hotel's leadership pays attention to organizing this annual tournament for the third time and activate the chess game, particularly in Aden because chess is known as the game of the smart.

Mr. Amr Al-Awlaqi, Sales Officer in Mercure Aden, asserted the attendance of Mercure to sport and social activities.

He noted that Aden Mercure Hotel is going to sponsor international Marathon in Aden in December, and the preparations for this event will be very huge and at the level of Yemen, the Arab World and the world.

He added this event will give a high status to Aden in particular and the entire Yemen in general.

Ewadh Mashbah, the head of the local council in Khor Maksr district and Mr. Basil, the head of Aden Chess Union, Mr. Alwi Albar and Ahmed Al-Dhalaei, Aden deputy governor, were in attendance.



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Building food security in Ethiopia



Fatuma Ahmed (on the right), a pastoralist in Ethiopia's Afar region, where women are seen and not heard.

IRIN
First published July 18

Ethiopia's Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP), set up in 2005, aims to make fully food secure the millions of people still dependent on food aid, provide support to the vulnerable to prevent the depletion of livestock, and create productive assets at community level. But nearly a decade on and over US\$3 billion spent, how successful has it been?

PSNP claims to be a program that bridges the response gap between emergency relief and long-term development aid, and helps build resilience.

Initially, it was available in four regions—Tigray, Amhara, Oromiya, and the Southern Nations and Nationalities' Peoples' Region—and was later extended to the more re-

mote regions of Afar (in 2006) and the Somali Region (2007), according to the World Bank, one of its main backers.

The Ethiopian government spends 1.1 percent of GDP on PSNP and a complementary scheme called the Household Asset Building Program (HABP).

Both schemes are largely donor funded. The current phase of PSNP (2010-2014) which includes HABP, costs more than \$2 billion. Donors include the World Bank, International Development Association (IDA), the US Agency for International Development (USAID), Danish International Development Assistance (DANIDA), UK Department for International Development (DFID), European Commission, the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), the governments of Canada, Ireland, Netherlands and the World

Food Programme and the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF).

PSNP provides transfers—cash or food—to between six and eight million chronically food insecure Ethiopians for six months each year, according to DFID. At least 85 percent of the beneficiaries receive cash transfers as wages for labor on small-scale public works projects. These projects are selected by the community and contribute to environmental rehabilitation and local economic development, while 15 percent are "direct support" beneficiaries (disabled, elderly, pregnant or lactating women) who receive unconditional transfers.

Both donors and the government have become increasingly aware that PSNP does not really help secure those who have very limited or no assets against shocks, and help them "graduate" from a chronic situation to a state of food security.

Hence HABP was introduced in 2010 to help people build their livelihoods and create assets. Credit, agricultural extension and microenterprise advice, and linkages to markets, are part of the support provided. "These initiatives help households build their asset base, diversify their livelihoods and achieve food security, so 'graduating' from PSNP," according to DFID.

HABP has so far provided technical advice on how to improve livelihoods to 1,059,044 households; of these, 812,655 have prepared business plans.

The government says about 495,995 households "graduated" from PSNP between 2008 and 2012 out of more than seven million beneficiaries (until 2012), a figure some Ethiopian officials acknowledge as low. A household has "graduated" when, in the absence of receiving

PSNP transfers, it can meet its food needs for 12 months of the year and is able to withstand modest shocks.

A recent study by Oxford University ranked Ethiopia the second poorest country in the world after Niger.

A view from the ground

Duba Oundanumo, chief of Anderkelo kebele (municipal ward) in the arid Afar region, a northeastern pastoral community frequently dependent on food assistance, does not think PSNP will help local people emerge from chronic poverty and food insecurity any time soon.

"It is very hard for these families to become food secure. They are too poor... When you have nothing—no animals [no assets]—it is very difficult to recover from shocks [like droughts]," he said.

Fatuma Ahmed, 20, another pas-

toralist here, says the very poor need more support than just PSNP assistance. "We need micro-loans provided by cooperatives to buy animals, assistance with irrigation to be able to grow some crops."

The community has created a protected pastureland in exchange for food from WFP, one of the implementing partners of PSNP.

PSNP is being implemented in places as remote as Seban-Demale, a village just 60km from the Dankil depression in the Afar Region, one of the hottest places on earth, with temperatures of 40 degrees Celsius or more all year round. The village is only accessible during the dry months.

Government insiders say the current focus is on ensuring PSNP is accessible across the Afar and Somali regions; HABP will come later.

Continued on page 12

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5			7	3	6		
	3	2	4	1			7
		1	6				8
		3		9		7	
9		4			5	6	3
	8			3	6	5	
1				9	8		
8				4	1	2	9
	4	9	5				1

Intermediate

	7			4			5
		3		1		6	
		4			8		3
	1	4		7			6
		2			5	3	
5				1	9		
2	4		5			7	
		5		4		8	
3			9				5

Difficult

	6				3			2
		5			4	9	1	
			7					8
							5	
	9						4	
		1						
7					2			
	3	4	6				8	
8			9					7

Chess

White plays and wins in the 4th move

Solutions

Chess: NIS

9	L	E	S	P	6	Z	L	8
5	Z	8	L	L	9	P	E	6
P	6	L	Z	8	E	9	S	L
6	E	Z	9	L	Z	9	L	8
L	9	P	8	S	L	6	Z	E
L	8	S	6	E	Z	L	P	9
8	S	9	L	Z	L	E	6	P
E	L	6	P	9	8	S	L	Z
Z	P	L	E	6	S	8	9	L

Chess: NIS

Z	S	P	9	L	6	8	L	E
E	9	8	Z	P	L	S	6	L
L	6	L	E	8	S	9	P	Z
8	P	6	L	Z	9	L	E	S
L	L	E	S	6	8	Z	9	P
9	Z	S	L	E	P	L	8	6
6	E	L	8	S	L	P	Z	9
P	L	9	6	L	Z	E	S	8
S	8	Z	P	9	E	6	L	L

Sudoku

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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

Building food security in Ethiopia

Aid has failed to protect livelihoods

Over the decades, drought and the inability to produce enough food have pushed millions of Ethiopians into hunger. The World Bank says agriculture accounts for 45 percent of Ethiopia's GDP, while providing a source of income to 80-85 percent of its population. "Any small variation in rainfall or world prices (for coffee) affects the incomes of 30 to 40 million people and can mean hunger for 10 to 15 million people,"

says the Bank.

"Both predictable (chronic) and unpredictable (acute or transitory) needs have largely been met through emergency relief [in Ethiopia]," says the Bank. While aid has saved millions of lives over the decades, it has failed to protect livelihoods and assets. "The unpredictable timing and level of relief resources flowing through the emergency channel means there are few opportunities to do more than address humanitarian needs," it adds.

Meanwhile, the debate continues within aid circles on how to determine if a household is indeed "food secure," as some households who were seen to have "graduated" have sunk back into poverty after a few shocks. IRIN did not come across anyone who had "graduated" in the villages it visited in Afar.

HABP, which could give people a better chance of "graduating" is not available everywhere yet. Getting "people to work in Afar [and Somali Region] under PSNP is a big achievement on its own," reckons an aid worker who preferred anonymity, referring to Afar's notoriety as "Ethiopia's Wild West," where AK-47 wielding pastoralists would rather face a dispute over a livestock theft allegation than do actual physical labor such as planting trees and lifting boulders to shape the course of a river.

Evaluation

"The implementation of the PSNP in Afar and Somali regions of Ethiopia is ambitious," said John Hod-dinott, a senior research fellow at the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), who led the most recent impact evaluation of PSNP and HABP for the World Bank in 2012.

"While high levels of chronic food insecurity are indicative of the need for a safety net intervention, poor infrastructure and widely dispersed populations make implementation challenging. While there is some evidence of program success in reducing food insecurity, we are likely to see additional efforts aimed at strengthening program performance in 2014 and beyond," he added.

The evaluation—a collaborative effort between IFPRI, Institute for Development Studies and Dadi-mos Consulting in Ethiopia—says: "PSNP has significantly improved food security in all regions between 2010 and 2012. While there remain differences in food security across regions, these differences are narrowing. Food security improved for both male and female headed households..." It has also rehabilitated the environment and natural resources, and improved access to education and health care.

"At the end of the day, what PSNP has achieved so far is an example to other developing countries of what political will can do"

The evaluation said that in 2010, PSNP and HABP together increased food security 2.5 times more than PSNP alone.

"In the highlands, the PSNP is well targeted. Beneficiaries are poorer and more food insecure than non-beneficiaries," says the evaluation. But it goes on to note that PSNP is "poorly targeted in Afar and Somali", and that in some areas "beneficiaries are selected by kebele or clan leaders without input from the wider community." Further, the identification of deserving candidates has been marred by sporadic allegations of political influence in drawing up the list of PSNP beneficiaries, though past evaluations have shown that this is not systemic.

DFID's 2014 review said political influence was "scattered and localized" and that it could be countered by strengthening a kebele-level appeal process for deserving people left out of the list, and by conducting roving audits.

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