

Thematic Report: Examining the increased impact of armed violence on civilians in Ta'izz city during the UN-mediated truce

October 2022

Countrywide context

Since the countrywide truce in Yemen entered into force at the start of April 2022, there has been an overall decrease in civilian casualties as a direct result of armed violence, more than halving from the six months prior to the truce commencing (2,027) to the six months since (924). Nonetheless, despite the truce, armed violence has continued to impact civilians around the country: Explosive remnants of warfare (ERW) continue to result in civilian casualties in both active and dormant frontline areas, particularly on the west coast; flare-ups in border violence along the northern border with Saudi Arabia are another driver of civilian casualties, amid artillery fire and border outpost shootings; ongoing shelling and drone activity in frontline areas continues to impact civilian homes, threatening civilian harm and displacement; and localised violence also continues to characterise the security landscape across the country, from disputes escalating, to VEO activity, to targeted attacks among local security actors.

Ta'izz city

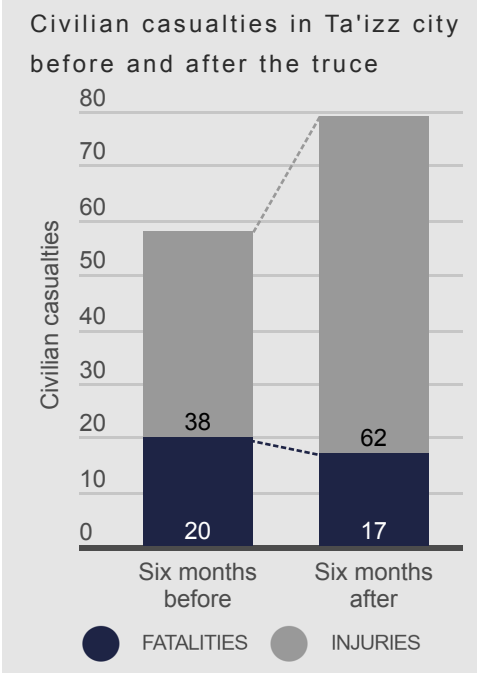
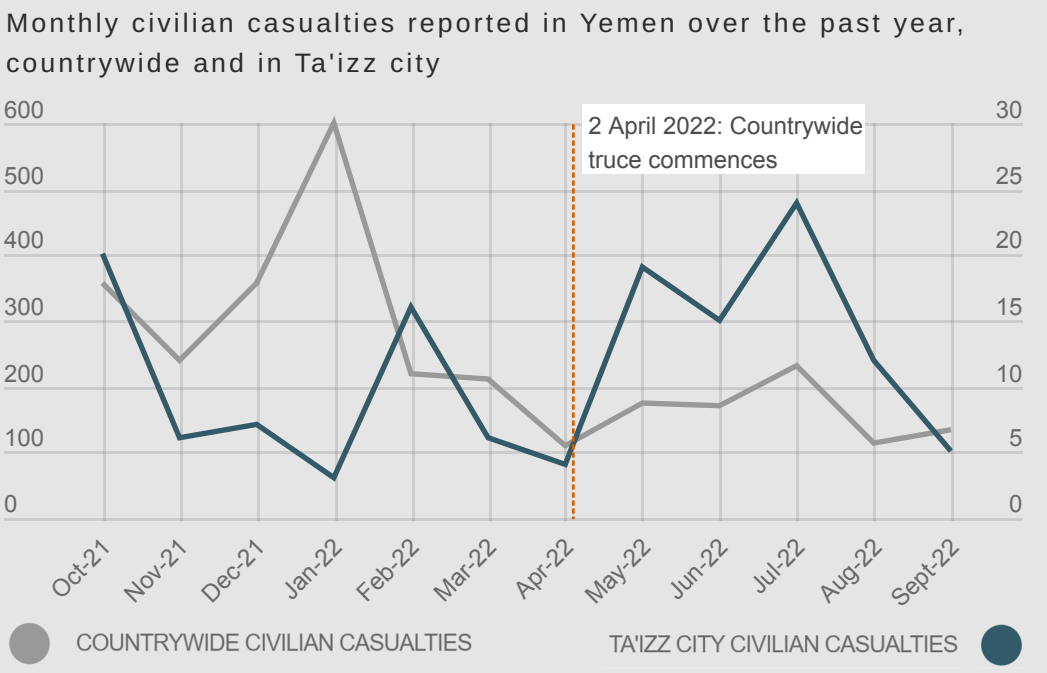
Ta'izz city, the focus of this report, is one pocket where sustained violence drove an increase in civilian casualties in the six months after the UN-mediated truce entered into force on 2 April 2022. As a low level of hostilities persisted on the city's static frontlines, snipers and artillery resulted in further civilian casualties and property damage, along with isolated shooting incidents. This report examines the increased impact of armed violence on civilians in Ta'izz city during the six months of the UN-mediated truce, compared to the six months prior to the truce commencing.

Overview: civilian casualties have increased in Ta'izz city since the truce commenced

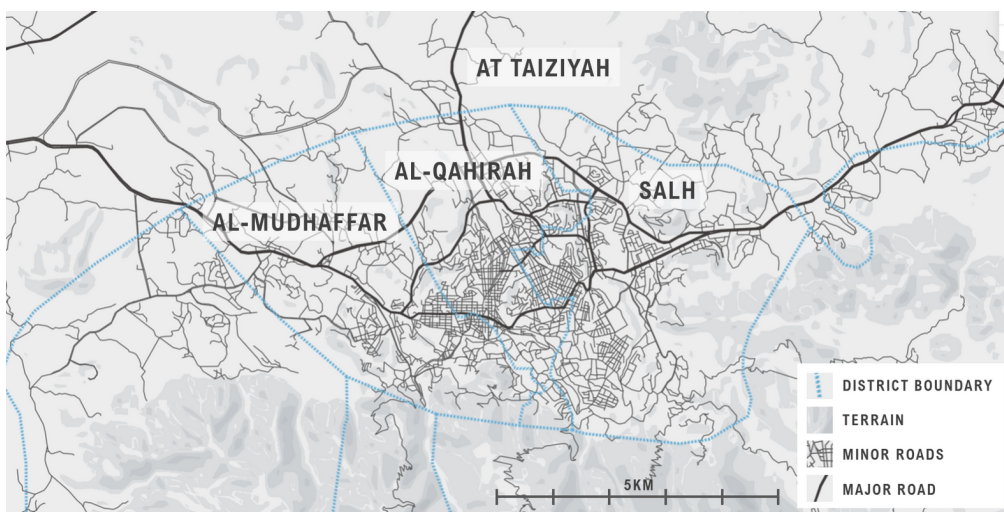
Ta'izz city is the largest city through which Yemen's main lines of control pass, and as a result, the city hosts a number of active frontlines in close proximity to residential areas. Although a countrywide truce entered into force on 2 April 2022, there have been continued reports of hostilities on the city's frontlines, including light and heavy weapons fire, driving further civilian casualties, while also impacting civilian properties and services.

In the six months prior to the countrywide truce commencing, 58 civilian casualties were reported in Ta'izz city and its environs. In the six months since then, however, these numbers increased by 36%, with 79 casualties reported, including 17 fatalities. The number of children among the casualties remained unchanged, with 18 child casualties reported in the six months prior to the truce commencing, as well as in the six months since. On a monthly basis, over the past year, countrywide civilian casualty numbers have generally dropped. In Ta'izz city, however, numbers have seen greater fluctuation in 2022; reports of civilian casualties rose sharply from April to May, and in July, 24 civilian casualties were reported in the city, the highest in over a year.

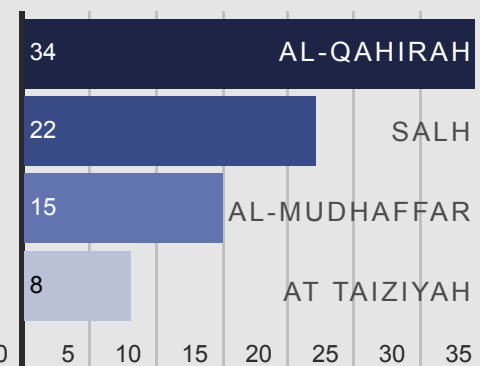
Date delineation:
Six months before:
3 October 2021 - 2 April 2022
Six months after:
3 April 2022 - 2 October 2022
Data correct on 6 October 2022
Please note, all information and numbers included in CIMP reporting are based on information publicly available in open sources, and have not been independently verified.



Central Ta'izz city has seen the highest civilian casualties since the truce commenced



Civilian casualties by district in Ta'izz city since the truce commenced



The district to see the most significant increase in civilian casualties in Ta'izz city after the truce commenced was Al-Qahirah, the city centre. Civilian casualties increased almost fourfold in the district, up to 34, from nine in the six months prior to the truce commencing, due in large part to two mass casualty shelling incidents, detailed below. Despite seeing neither of the mass casualty incidents, the highest frequency of civilian impact incidents since the truce commenced was reported in Usayfirah neighbourhood, to the north of the district, including sniper fire and shelling incidents.

Salh district saw the second highest number of casualties in the six months since the truce commenced, again, predominantly on account of sniper fire and shelling. Although the casualty count was lower, Salh saw more civilian impact incidents than Al-Qahirah, likely due in part to the presence of a number of military camps in the east of the city. Some of the main flashpoints were the Kalabah area, which is next to the Tashrifat military camp, Al-Qasr junction, near Al-Qasr camp, and Al-Jamaliyah neighbourhood, in the south of the district. Throughout 2021, Salh district saw the highest number of casualties in the city, and the second highest in the governorate, at 92 out of 435, superseded only by Maqbanah district.

Al-Mudhaffar, by contrast, saw a higher frequency of isolated shooting incidents, for a host of reasons from dispute-driven violence to clashes among local armed groups. The district has also seen casualties as a result of shellfire and sniper fire, although to a lesser extent. Neighbourhoods to have seen the highest numbers of civilian casualties in the past six months include Bir Basha, Al-Hasab and An Nusayriyah. On the city's northern outskirts, At Taiziyah saw relatively few casualties.

Shelling, sniper fire and small arms fire are the main drivers of civilian casualties in Ta'izz city

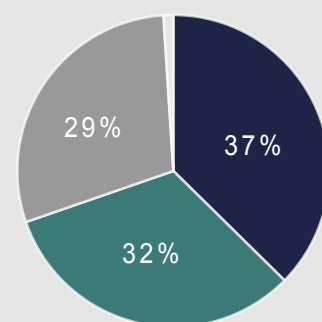
Shelling was responsible for 29 civilian casualties in Ta'izz city in the six months after the truce commenced, including 14 children, a negligible reduction compared to 30 in the six months beforehand, although responsible for proportionately fewer casualties compared to other types of armed violence. The majority of the shelling casualties were on account of two mass casualty incidents, which also had a disproportionate impact on children. On 4 May, ten civilians were injured when artillery shells hit Al-Qiyadah street near Garden City park in the city centre, and then on 22 July, a seven-year-old boy was killed and 11 other children were injured when shellfire hit Ar Rawdah neighbourhood.

The proximity of the frontlines to residential areas has also contributed to high sniper casualty numbers, which have doubled since the truce commenced. In the past six months, 25 civilian sniper casualties were reported in Ta'izz city, accounting for almost a third of the total civilian casualty count. Among the casualties were three women and four children. By contrast, 12 sniper casualties were reported in the six months prior.

Moreover, small arms fire (SAF) resulted in 23 civilian casualties in the six months since the truce commenced, as civil grievances and localised tensions also continue to drive isolated instances of violence in the city. This marks a threefold increase from the seven SAF casualties reported in the six months before the truce started. There were, however, no civilian IED casualties in the six months after the truce commenced.

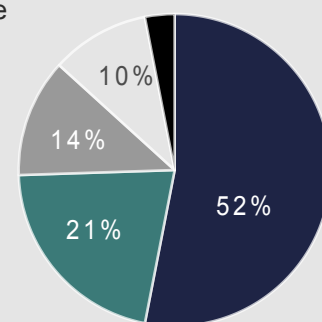
Civilian casualties by type of armed violence in Ta'izz City in the six months of the truce

- SHELLING
- SNIPER FIRE
- SMALL ARMS
- LANDMINES

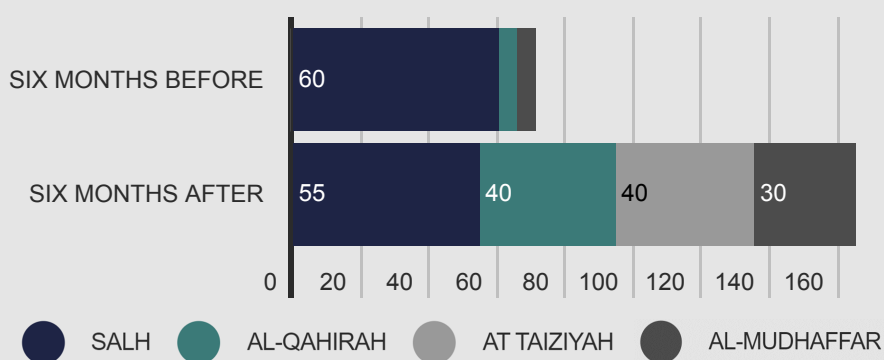


Civilian casualties by type of armed violence in Ta'izz City in the six months prior to the truce

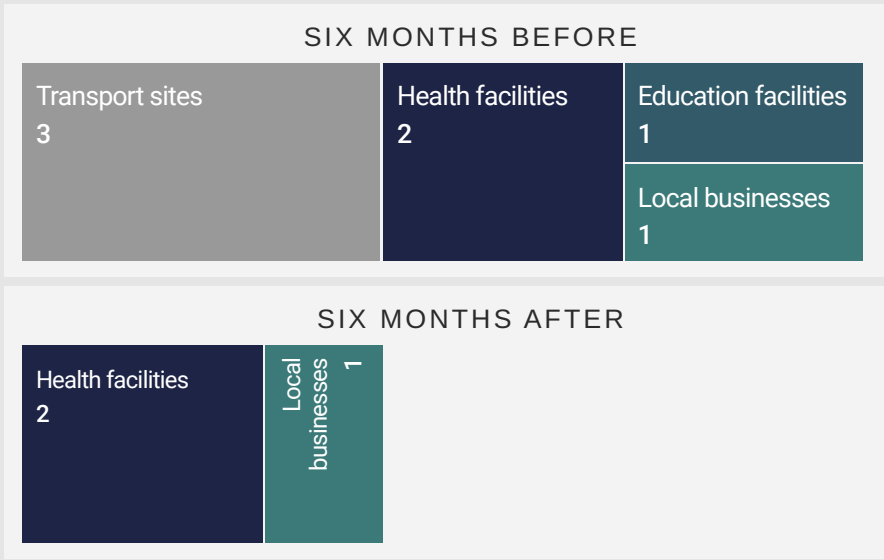
- SHELLING
- SNIPER FIRE
- SMALL ARMS
- LANDMINES
- IEDs



Number of houses impacted by armed violence in Ta'izz city before and after the truce commenced



Number of facilities and services impacted by armed violence in Ta'izz city before and after the truce commenced



There was an increase in reports of houses being impacted by armed violence in the six months after the truce commenced, with as many as 165 properties estimated to have been impacted, more than double the 71 houses reported to have been impacted by armed violence in the six months prior. The vast majority of reports of homes being impacted were on account of shellfire, although two drone incidents were also reported to have impacted civilian homes in the six months since the truce started.

More houses were impacted in Salh district, in the east of the city, than in any other district, with 55 households reportedly impacted in 11 separate shelling incidents. This, however, marked a slight decrease compared to the six months prior to the truce commencing. By contrast, the other city districts all saw an increase in reports of houses being impacted by shellfire. This was most notable in At Taiziyah, where no houses were reported to have been impacted by shellfire in the six months following the start of the ceasefire, compared to 40 in the six months since then.

Other critical infrastructure has also come under fire, including two health facilities. On 8 June, Al-Hamd hospital was hit by artillery shells in Salh. Less than a week later, at least two civilians were injured in a shooting at Al-Riyadh hospital in Al-Mudhaffar.

Forward look

The ongoing proximity of hostilities on the main frontlines to residential and commercial areas in the city will continue to pose the threat of shellfire and sniper fire to civilians, while a backdrop of general insecurity is likely to drive continued SAF shooting incidents. It remains unclear at this stage as to whether the truce will be reinstated or not, but based on the past six months, the risk to civilians from armed violence is likely to persist regardless of whether a truce is in place or not, due to the continued impact of armed violence when hostilities take place in close proximity to civilian areas.

Neighbourhoods near the frontlines are likely to be most at risk of shellfire and sniper fire. In the west of the city, areas near the Air Defence Camp, near Al-Qubba market, and in Bir Basha appear to be most at risk. In the east of the city, in Salh district, the Kalabah, Al-Jamaliyah and Ash Shamasi areas see the highest frequency of civilian impact incidents reported. In the city centre, the Usayfirah area is a longstanding flashpoint which is likely to see continued reports of shellfire and sniper fire.

Civilians in Ta'izz city remain at risk not only of direct harm from armed violence, including shellfire, sniper fire and isolated shooting incidents, but also at risk of displacement and loss of livelihood due to the ongoing impact of armed violence on civilian properties, services and businesses. The city also sees sporadic road closures on account of hostilities, with unrest in the city limiting civilians' freedom of movement and restricting access to critical services.



The Civilian Impact Monitoring Project is a service under the Protection Cluster for the collection, analysis and dissemination of open source data on the civilian impact from armed violence in Yemen, to inform and complement protection programming.

For more information, please visit www.civilianimpactmonitoring.org

