

Djibouti—Response to the Yemen Situation

October 2017

Since conflict in Yemen erupted in early 2015, thousands have been fleeing the country for safe haven. The situation has worsened as Yemenis also suffer disease and famine. Djibouti has welcomed around 38,000 Yemeni refugees, many of whom have moved on to

other countries, but those who have stayed, live in the Markazi refugee camp at Obock and in urban areas. As Djibouti struggles to build the capacity to effectively address the steady influx of refugees, it counts on international efforts to effectively respond to the needs of this vulnerable community.

As there is no end in sight for the conflict, UNHCR and its partners stand committed to protecting these refugees and ensuring their safety and access to basic needs and services as durable solutions are sought.

KEY INDICATORS

38,000

Number of Yemenis who have come to Djibouti since the start of the conflict in March 2015

4,474

Current population of Yemeni refugees in Djibouti—of which, **2,170** live at the Markazi camp in Obock and **2,304** in the capital city, Djibouti.

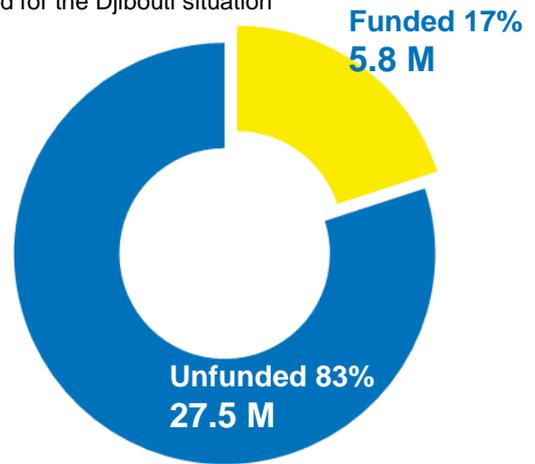
48%

Percentage of youth (18 and under)

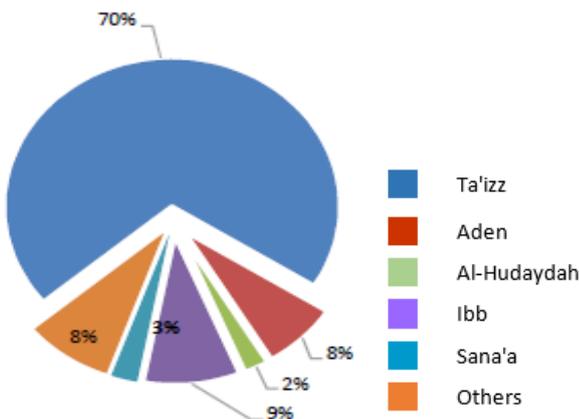
FUNDING (AS OF OCTOBER 2017)

USD \$33.3M

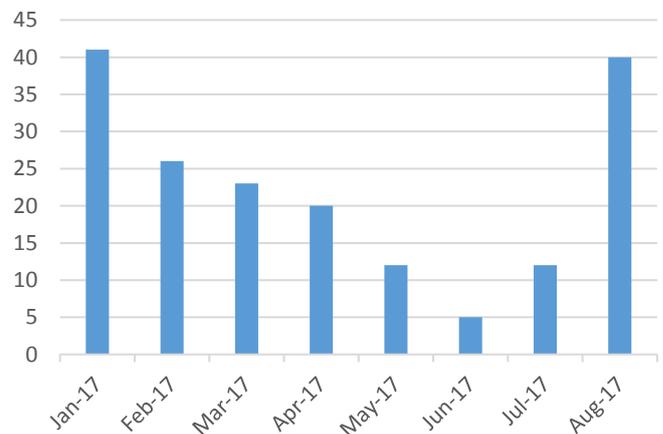
requested for the Djibouti situation



Arrivals by Region



Trend in 2017 Arrivals



Update on Achievements

Operational Context

Two and a half years since conflict and fighting broke out in Yemen, thousands of Yemenis continue to flee the country in search for safety and protection. People in Yemen are contending with a worsening situation and the insufferable combination of conflict, famine, and disease. Djibouti is among the handful of countries taking in refugees escaping the conflict.

The camp at Markazi, at Obock in the north of the country, is entirely comprised of Yemenis. The total population as of August 2017 stands at 2,170. UNHCR and its partners strive to provide them with the basics like food, shelter, and healthcare, but also pave paths to durable solutions with livelihoods activities and education and vocational training. Meanwhile, there are 2,304 Yemeni refugees in the capital city, Djibouti. Most have come with adequate means and assets, developed self-sufficiency, and managed to be independent of aid, allowing them to thrive outside of the camps.

UNHCR Djibouti stands committed to working together with its partners to effectively respond to the Yemen situation and protect the individuals fleeing for safety. The operation aims to gather and mobilize resources, expertise, and manpower to bolster progress in establishing long-lasting solutions. Moreover, in seeking to empower refugees into crafting their own independence and putting themselves on paths to self-reliance, the ideals of the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) impart guidance on aspirations to also leverage a level of local integration that also produces advantages for the host communities.



A father and his children recently arrived, fleeing the war and seeking refuge in the Markazi refugee camp at Obock. ©UNHCR/VPanaligan, 2017.



A young boy stands outside of a shower near his tent at the Markazi camp. ©UNHCR/VPanaligan, 2017.

Achievements



PROTECTION

Achievements and Impact

- Upon arrival at Obock, refugees are registered by UNHCR and ONARS (*Office National d'Assistance aux Réfugiés et Sinistrés*), and given an ID card, which enables them to receive shelter, NFIs, and food.
- UNHCR provides a comprehensive protection response to Yemeni refugees, identifying and addressing vulnerabilities through advocacy for refugees' rights and integration.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- UNHCR, together with *l'Union Nationale pour les Femmes Djiboutiennes* (UNFD) and the Danish Refugee Council (DRC), provides legal and psycho-social support to SGBV victims and runs periodic awareness campaigns on women's empowerment and protection from

sexual violence. UNFD and DRC are in the process of forming a SGBV committee. Nonetheless, SGBV remains a challenge among the Yemeni refugee community, mainly due to cultural pre-dispositions and frequent appeal to the traditional legal codes instead of civil ones. UNHCR ensures that a global human rights perspective is taken into account in the judicial response to SGBV cases, and it is working to provide socio-economic support to reintegrate SGBV survivors into society.

- In cooperation with the International Children's Action Network (ICAN), UNHCR ensures that children have a dedicated safe-space in the camp. However, despite UNHCR and partners' child protection response, school dropout and early entry into the labor market still affect a remarkable percentage of children.
- With the unpredictability of the conflict, larger exoduses of people could be anticipated and thus, current host countries like Djibouti are advised to be prepared to effectively respond to such influxes. In its planning, UNHCR strives for durable and results-driven strategies to, among other things, cushion any shock or strain of such further demographic changes.



EDUCATION

Achievements and Impact

- Of the child population at Markazi, a total of 75 individuals are enrolled in pre-school, 304 in elementary school, and 20 in secondary school.
- UNHCR, in cooperation with the Minister of Education (MENFOP) and Lutheran World Federation (LWF), champions refugee children's equal access to education, both in camps and host communities, landmark objectives for the CRRF. A recent MoU signed with the MENFOP has granted the integration of refugee children into the national education system.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- As the quality of education offered is a top priority, UNHCR advocates for improved equipment in schools, up-to-date curriculum and teaching materials, as well as access to comprehensive textbooks.



HEALTH

Achievements and Impact

- UNHCR's partner in covering refugee health needs, Action Africa Help-International (AAH-I) has a clinic on the camp grounds and takes care of more than 200 cases per

week. UNICEF and UNFPA also offer support in dealing with medical care for women and children.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- UNHCR foresees a close working relationship with the Ministry of Health, aiming toward the inclusion of refugees in the national health services and medical insurance plan.
- UNHCR and partners hope to recruit experts to aid with refugees' psycho-socio needs and counseling. Tending to their wellbeing after the traumatic experiences they have undergone since leaving their homelands, UNHCR understands the importance of mental health in individuals' overall welfare and aims to provide the resources and aid necessary for refugees in this fragile time.



FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION

Achievements and Impact

- WFP takes the lead in a monthly food (flour, oil, salt, lentils, etc.) distribution program, which is facilitated by UNHCR and its main government counterpart ONARS. A nutrition center established by UNICEF is also present on the camp.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- Markazi is currently attending to nine cases of malnutrition—three of which are severe and six that are moderate. While these cases are monitored by medical teams at the local hospital in Obock, UNHCR aims to ensure proper and effective treatment as well as prevention. Collaboration with partners also targets the provision of quality food that would be the cornerstone of nourishment programs.



WATER AND SANITATION

Achievements and Impact

- At the Markazi camp, the standard of 25 liters per person per day is now made possible by the connection of a pipeline through the national water provider ONEAD (national institution for water and sanitation) that also serves the local community, bolstering Djibouti's commitment to the CRRF. The NRC, an implementing partner, is in the process of forming a WASH committee, using specific tools to ensure the maintenance of water points by the refugees themselves.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- NRC ensures that periodic garbage collection is carried out regularly and that hygiene campaigns are promulgated throughout the camp. Five hygiene promoters currently work in the different camp's sectors.

**SHELTER AND NFIS****Achievements and Impact**

- Currently, some 282 housing units were donated by the Qatar Red Crescent, adding to the more than 300 tents provided by UNHCR. Most recently, 200 more housing units along with a school and mosque are being constructed by the King Salman Center on the camp grounds.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- The climate in Obock can be unforgiving, reaching very high temperatures and ushering in searing heat. In respect to housing, heat is always a concern, and it is important to construct shelter that will shield refugees from the harsh climate. UNHCR and partners aspires to provide good housing solutions that can weather these difficult conditions, but also those that uphold dignity to the families and individuals living in the camp.

**ACCESS TO ENERGY****Achievements and Impact**

- The Markazi camp is fueled by electricity three hours per day. ONARS provides the necessary logistical support and ensures that the camp is lit at night.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- UNHCR hopes to extend the camp's lighting up to 24 hours a day. The German Embassy in Djibouti is supporting UNHCR with a feasibility study and future implementation of a solar energy project.



COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT AND SELF RELIANCE

Achievements and Impact

- LWF manages a community center for women at the camp, where they are taught to sew and create handicrafts such as straw and embroidered bags and baskets. The products that are made are available for sale to locals and visitors to the camps. These programs help develop their skills as well as endow them with business savvy.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- The Yemeni work ethic and business savvy are well-known. This invaluable motivation drives UNHCR and partners to help seek outlets for growth and development through livelihoods activities. While, the refugees are offered the training sessions mentioned above, the local job market remains poor and offers limited revenue for the refugees' independent ventures.

Moreover, UNHCR is currently advocating for the implementation of the Decree (from the National Refugee Law promulgated in January 2017) to grant work permits to refugees throughout the country, which offers legal protection as well as access to the formal labor force.



DURABLE SOLUTIONS

Achievements and Impact

- UNHCR's three principal targets for durable solutions include voluntary repatriation, resettlement, and local integration. Since repatriation is an undesirable concept given the volatile environment in Yemen, we strive to help Yemeni refugees integrate into Djiboutian society, an objective that is part of UNHCR's commitment to achieving durable solutions.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- Whenever possible, UNHCR advocates for resettlement of refugees in third party countries. However, as more countries have adopted stricter refugee acceptance policies, it is becoming more difficult to succeed on this pathway.
- Yemeni refugees have a reputation of being industrious, resourceful, and hard working. As such, this is a good foundation to develop a livelihoods strategy that would enable refugees to be their own agents of change. In line with the CRRF, the strategy would aim to make refugees more self-reliant and be active contributors to their host communities.

Working in Partnership

- UNHCR leads the multi-sector response for Yemeni refugees and asylum-seekers at the Markazi camp and in urban settings, in addition to the Ali Addeh and Holl-Holl camps in the south. Close collaboration is maintained with the Government of Djibouti and authorities at national and local levels, with international and national NGOs, and with refugee community leaders to ensure an optimal coordination of response for refugees.
- UNHCR works through national and international partners; namely, the NRC (water, sanitation, shelter, hygiene); the LWF (education and community services); AAH-I (health/reproductive health, HIV/AIDS, and nutrition); UNFD (SGBV) and the Ministry of Habitat, Urban Planning and Environment. UNHCR also collaborates with NGOs such as the DRC, Al Rahma Association, Caritas, and ICAN. The government agency in charge of refugee-related issues is ONARS, who manages the refugee camps.
- UNHCR also co-leads the Mixed Migration Task Force (MMTF) with IOM to strengthen regional and international co-operation enhancing national response to reduce irregular migration flows.

For more information on UNHCR's regional response to the Yemeni refugee situation, please visit: <http://data.unhcr.org/yemen/regional.php>



The variety of shelters found at the Markazi camp. Side by side are tents with the newly constructed housing units contributed by the King Salman Center. ©UNHCR/VPanaligan, 2017.

Financial Information

External / Donors Relations

Donors who have contributed to the operation

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