

## YEMEN

# UNHCR OPERATIONAL UPDATE

1 - 15 March 2017

## KEY FIGURES

**18.8**

million people in need

**1,991,340**

Internally Displaced Persons (IDP)

**84**

Percentage of IDPs displaced for more than a year

**1,048,896**

IDP returnees

**786,452**

recipients of NFIs since March 2015

**279,480**

registered refugees and asylum seekers

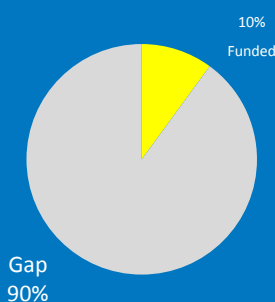
**9,969**

new arrivals to Yemeni coast since 1 January 2017

## FUNDING

**USD 99.6 million**

requested for the IDP and refugee operation in 2017



## HIGHLIGHTS

- **UNHCR shocked and dismayed at loss of civilian lives at a market in Khawkhah town, in Hudaydah Governorate.** UNHCR urges all parties to the conflict to ensure the utmost respect and adherence to the protection of civilians in Yemen, as up to 22 people lost their lives in an incident on 11 March.
- **UNHCR and humanitarian actors join in warning of looming famine compounded by access constraints to most vulnerable families.** A united call to donors has been put forward, appealing for immediate funds to alleviate hunger, disease and provide urgent assistance to displaced families.
- **UNHCR-IOM led Task Force on Population Movement (TFPM) release the 13th TFPM report,** with 1,991,340 IDPs and 1,048,896 IDP returnees identified in Yemen as of 1 February, 2017. This report does not reflect recent displacement in Taizz and Hudaydah, which will be reflected in the next TFPM report. Food assistance was once again reported as the top priority need among 75% of identified IDP locations and 51% of returnee locations.



*Liyam and Wiyam from Taizz play together with Nur from Somalia at a UNHCR –supported community center. Photo UNHCR/ S Mantoo*

# UPDATE ON ACHIEVEMENTS

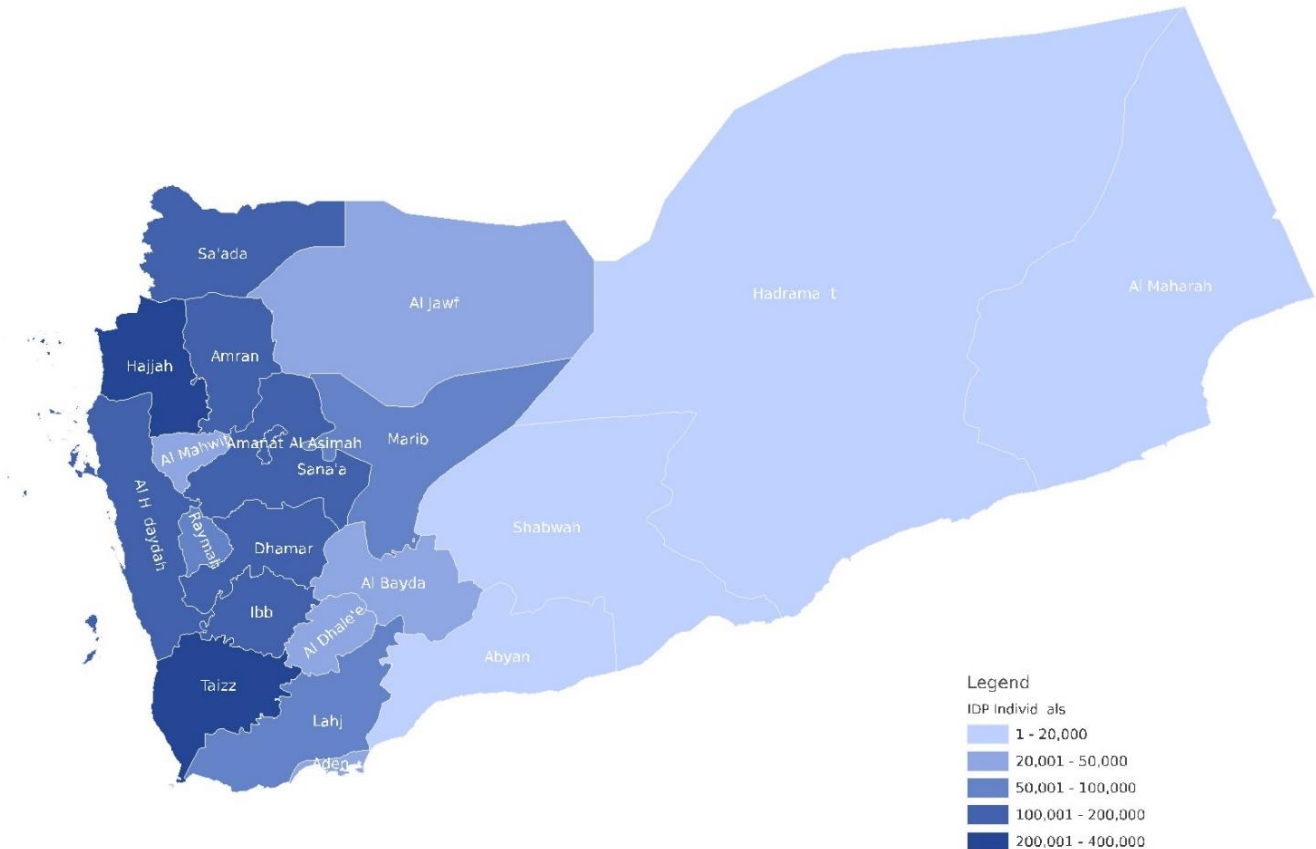
## Operational Context

As the battle for control of the Red Sea port of Mokha on Yemen’s west coast rages on, renewed fighting across western and central Yemen has displaced more than 62,000 people in recent weeks, with many facing malnutrition, disease and inadequate shelter. Of those forced from their homes, 48,400 are from the west coast governorate of Taizz, where Mokha is located. UNHCR teams have observed that the majority of displaced families are in dire need of assistance and are sheltering in crowded public spaces, including schools and clinics. Other families lack shelter completely, instead currently living in the open or in unfinished buildings which are open to the elements. UNHCR is hugely concerned for the well-being of the displaced, with increasing reports of unhygienic and unsanitary conditions, contributing to an unsafe living environment, especially for children.

UNHCR and its partners have responded swiftly to the needs of those displaced from Taizz to Hudaydah and others across the country, providing shelter and emergency relief items, which many recipients reported as being the only humanitarian assistance they have so far received. However, fighting is currently hampering access to more than 35,000 people displaced within Taizz governorate itself, and UNHCR is calling for the resumption of humanitarian access to the area while trying to mobilize a response with all national actors on the ground.

Meanwhile, against a backdrop of intensified fighting and looming famine, humanitarian agencies are facing a funding shortfall. The situation in Yemen, constituting the largest humanitarian crisis in the world, is especially bleak with two thirds of the population — 18.8 million people — needing assistance and more than 7 million who do not know where their next meal will come from. Yemen is a country which depends heavily on imports, but hostilities have damaged and destroyed critical infrastructure.

### Yemen: Number of IDPs per governorate based on the latest population tracking



# IDP PROGRAMME

## Achievements

### Protection

UNHCR leads the Protection Cluster in Yemen, and in coordination with other UN agencies and organizations, is working to provide protection to displaced people across Yemen through five strategic operational hubs that cover Sana'a, Sa'ada, Al Hudaydah, Taizz/Ibb, and Aden. UNHCR and partners are expanding outreach to IDPs and host communities with the target population identified through protection monitoring and information collected through community-based protection networks.

### Response

- **Food remains top need for internally displaced and returning families**

Food assistance was once again reported as the top priority need among 75% of identified IDP locations and 51% of returnee locations in the latest update from the UNHCR-IOM led Task Force on Population Movement (TFPM) tracking. The 13<sup>th</sup> TFPM report was released, with 1,991,340 IDPs and 1,048,896 IDP returnees identified in Yemen as of 1 February, 2017. Other key findings include 75% of conflict IDPs originate from four governorates: Taizz (25%), Hajjah (19%), Amanat Al Asimah (16%) and Sa'ada (15%), and 84% of IDPs have been displaced for more than one year.

Displacement figures in the 13<sup>th</sup> TFPM report are slightly reduced from previous reports due to further data collection and validation procedures. However, the most recent large scale displacement seen along the western Coast of Yemen is not fully reflected within this report as data collection concluded prior to the surge in hostilities. Nonetheless, emergency population tracking is ongoing for locations, including Taizz governorate, where an outbreak in fighting has forced an estimated 48,000 people to flee, and will be reflected in the upcoming TFPM report.

The TFPM implements an information management tool that gathers data on the status and location of displaced persons across Yemen, and is used by all clusters and stakeholders, to better inform the humanitarian response as an early indicator of requirements on the ground. For more information and the full report: [TFPM 13th Report](#).

**2 Million**

Internally displaced persons

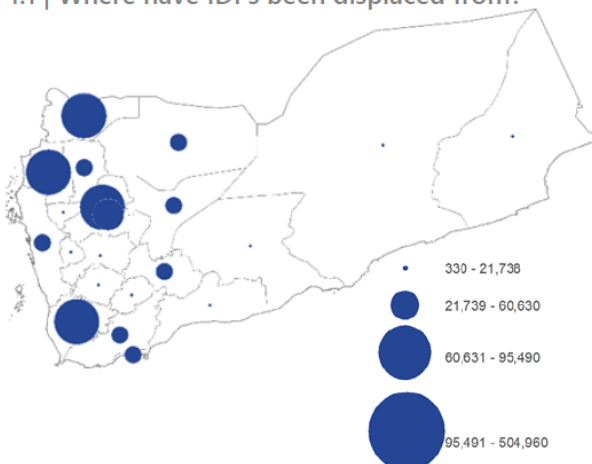
**1 Million**

Returnee individuals

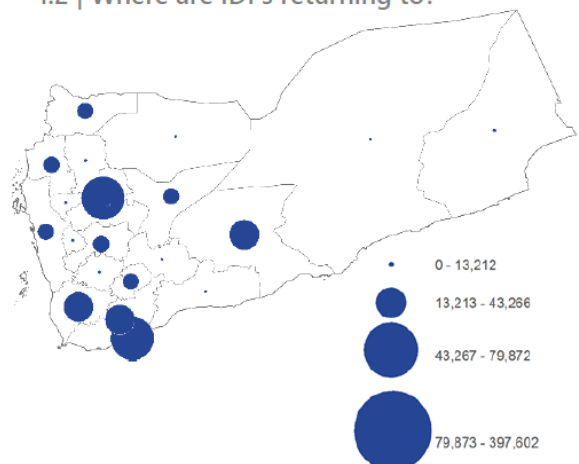
**11.3%**

of the total population of Yemen remain displaced and or have returned.

1.1 | Where have IDPs been displaced from?



1.2 | Where are IDPs returning to?





## Shelter and NFIs

UNHCR is the lead of the Camp Coordination Camp Management (CCCM), Non-Food Item (NFI), and Shelter Cluster, supporting partners in ensuring that families in need are receiving adequate and appropriate assistance. UNHCR has distributed NFIs to over 786,452 IDPs since the escalation of the conflict, in 20 of the 21 governorates. NFI assistance includes blankets, mattresses, plastic sheeting, kitchen sets along with distribution of emergency shelter kits (ESKs) to families whose houses have been heavily damaged or destroyed. Despite extremely challenging circumstances, UNHCR and partners are doing their utmost to deliver essential life-saving supplies and services in an impartial and neutral manner.

### Response



*Distribution of NFIs takes place for those who fled hostilities in Taizz. Photo: UNHCR/S Mantoo*

#### ■ **Helping those who have fled conflict in Taizz**

As the situation in Taizz Governorate continues to force families to flee their homes, with an estimated 48,400 people displaced, UNHCR is providing life-saving assistance where possible. In neighbouring Hudaydah Governorate, against a backdrop of intense aerial bombardments, UNHCR partner Al-Amal, completed a shelter needs assessment for IDP families in Al Mina, Al Hali and Al Hawak districts, who recently fled from Al Mokha, with distribution planned for 415 IDP families identified as being in need for NFIs and shelter kits.

In the past week, close to 300 families, covering 2,000 people from Al Mokha, received NFIs and emergency shelter kits (ESKs). In Al Khawkhah district, UNHCR partners distributed NFIs for 518 households and ESKs for 854 households. Since the outbreak of hostilities six weeks ago, UNHCR has reached 2,164 households with NFIs and 2,560 households with ESKs for IDPs who have fled from Mokha and Taizz areas to Hudaydah Governorate.

Four trucks carrying NFIs moved from Ibb warehouse to complete a planned distribution of NFIs for 3,000 families in Al-Taizziyah district, of Taizz Governorate. This distribution was halted in early February due to restricted access. However critical assistance is on its way, and will soon be in place to reach families who desperately need assistance.

On 9 March 2017, UNHCR conducted a monitoring visit and attended a NFIs and shelter distribution event for newly displaced persons in Bayt Al Faqih district of Al Hudaydah governorate and met with some of the displaced:

**“We faced danger from both the sky and the land. We hid at home for most of the time, but when we were nearly killed and our house damaged by the fighting, we just had to leave. We couldn’t take anything with us – no food, clothes or any belongings because there was hardly any space for the people. So we left with nothing,”** Amina, 28-year-old mother of three, following 150km journey to safety.

Another explained:

**“Even before the current escalation in Taizz we were suffering, but now the situation is unbearable. We saw people dying in front of our eyes. Others were injured. So we decided to leave,”** Adnan 26, who first fled Mokha a year ago, but had just returned with his chronically ill wife and young daughter last month, when almost immediately, fighting drove them away from their home once more.



*Adnan and his daughter Asal, safe for now in Hudayah following flight from Taizz hostilities. Photo: UNHCR/S Mantoo*

Despite help from the local community and relief items including mattresses, blankets, sleeping mats, buckets and kitchen sets from UNHCR, Amina and Adnan’s situation remains precarious along with the growing numbers of families displaced. Many have found shelter in communal and public spaces, including schools and health facilities, whilst others are living in unfinished buildings or out in the open. A number of those

displaced, including many children, have been reported as suffering from malnutrition, with overcrowding and unsanitary conditions in areas of displacement also leading to outbreaks of diseases. Furthermore, fighting is currently hampering access to more than 35,000 people displaced within Taizz governorate itself. UNHCR is calling for the resumption of humanitarian access to the area while mobilizing a response with all national actors on the ground.

#### ■ **Assistance to returnees in Dhamar Governorate**

Following a flare-up in hostilities and a subsequent surge in displacement during the past month, the security situation in Dhamar Governorate has improved with the first indications of families returning home. An urgent needs assessment through UNHCR partner ACTED is currently underway in the Uthmah district. A total of 735 returnee families have been identified in Alhawadeth, Rabia bin Bahr and Alsharma Alali sub-districts. The assessment has identified NFIs, water and sanitation as top priorities for returning families. Preparations for distribution of NFIs and return kits are on the way, and distribution should be completed in the coming days.

## REFUGEE PROGRAMME

### Achievements

#### Protection

UNHCR is maintaining a collaborative relationship with authorities to safeguard the protection space and improve access to basic services for people of concern across the country. Regular interaction is maintained with authorities at national and local level, with implementing and operational partners, and with refugee community leaders.

#### Response

#### ■ **Ensuring protection for Yemen's most vulnerable refugees**



*Refugee and asylum seekers children avail of services at UNHCR partner Intersos premises, Sana'a, Yemen. Photo: Intersos, 2017*

The war-torn country of Yemen on the cusp of famine, is a temporary home to 279,480 refugees and asylum seekers, the vast majority of whom are from Somalia (255,598) and Ethiopia (13,540). Within the population of Yemen, refugees are among the most vulnerable and in urban areas, including in large cities, it can be a challenge to ensure that refugees find and receive the vital support they need. However, today as the crisis in Yemen intensifies, UNHCR is witnessing increasing numbers of women, as well as children, who require special assistance. Refugees are among those most vulnerable to acts of violence, including sexual and



gender-based violence (SGBV). SGBV has been both a cause of forced displacement and a terrible consequence of the breakdown of family and community structures that accompanies displacement.

As UNHCR, we are mandated to provide international protection to refugees, and in Yemen, UNHCR and partner Intersos are committed to prevent SGBV before it happens and to respond appropriately to the needs of all survivors, who can be women and girls, but also men and boys. Through a 24-hour, seven days-a-week hotline, trained counsellors can be reached by refugees for providing immediate referrals to a medical facility, psychosocial support, and/or providing legal support to survivors of domestic violence, including a financial component for those most in need.

Speaking to UNHCR partner Intersos, Majida, a refugee from Palestine, described her situation following years of physical and verbal abuse from her then-husband:

***“We were living in a nightmare. I was always afraid that he was going to hurt my children so every night I made sure to lock our bedroom doors.”***

She and her children suffered in silence until she took the decision to approach a UNHCR-supported Intersos drop-in centre in Sana’a, for survivors of gender-based violence. To help protect their rights, ensure their safety, as well as their physical and mental well-being, Majida and her children were provided with psychosocial support as well as legal and financial assistance at the centre. Majida’s children, including 21 year old Dalia, who had previously dropped out of university owing to the abusive treatment suffered, were also referred by the centre for educational assistance and subsequently won tertiary educational scholarships to complete their studies. Dalia is now in her third year of university studying to become a pharmacist and her sister Dania is in her second year as an engineering undergraduate. Regaining confidence and strength, Majida also took the decision to leave her abusive husband and received a divorce.

***“I am very thankful for this vital help for me and my family. Life has opened up for my children now and we now sleep with our bedroom doors wide-open.”***

UNHCR and partners continue in their efforts to ensure protection of refugees and SGBV survivors, including through provision of counselling, legal assistance and community services through trained teams visiting families in their homes, help in providing essential documentation such as birth certificates, and the provision of financial assistance to avoid a family resorting to negative coping mechanisms.



## Health

### Response

#### ■ **Critical medical assistance for refugees and host communities**

The health of those forced to flee is a major priority for UNHCR. In Yemen’s capital, Sana’a, UNHCR is providing medical care to refugees and to the host community in two health centres located in areas with high concentration of persons of concern. During the first half of March, consultations for close to 1,000 people were carried out, half of them for host communities. Reproductive care was provided to 84 expectant mothers from the refugee community, and through UNHCR health partner International Medical Corps (IMC), essential medicines reached to 725 vulnerable refugees, and facilitated emergency referral services to 71 vulnerable refugees and asylum seekers. Furthermore, at both supported healthcare centres, IMC conducted preventative awareness sessions to 678 refugees and host community individuals on health issues including cholera.

In the south Of Yemen, UNHCR’s partner Charitable Society for Social Welfare (CSSW)’s health centres in Kharaz camp and Basateen, provided medical consultations and essential medicines for 1,129 refugees and asylum seekers and 865 Yemenis from the host community, reproductive health services to 183 refugee and Yemeni women, mental health and psychological support services to 180 refugees and Yemenis, and vaccines to 389 refugee and Yemeni children. In both Basateen and Kharaz, 47 cases received a higher level of treatment, and a further 551 refugees and asylum seekers and Yemenis also received emergency treatment. Community outreach awareness sessions were also provided to more than 2,529 refugees and Yemenis covering various health issues such as communicable diseases, importance of vaccinations, malaria

and child nutrition. A further 772 vaccinations were administered at Mayfa'a Reception Center for newly arrived persons.

## FINANCIAL INFORMATION

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Total recorded contributions in 2017 amount to US\$ 10 million received from the Government of Japan, the Government of Sweden, Private donors in Germany, Educate a Child Programme and Private donors in the UK.

US\$ 89.9 million is still requested for UNHCR's operation in Yemen in 2017.

UNHCR is grateful for the critical support provided by donors who have contributed to this operation as well as those who have contributed to UNHCR programmes with unearmarked and broadly earmarked funds in 2017.

**Special thanks to the major donors of unrestricted and regional funds to UNHCR in 2017 (in USD):**

Sweden (76 M) | Netherlands (52 M) | Norway (41 M) | Denmark (23 M) | Australia (19 M) | Switzerland (15 M) | Germany (12 M)

**Thanks to other donors of unrestricted and regional funds**

Algeria | Austria | Belgium | Bosnia and Herzegovina | Costa Rica | Estonia | Finland | Iceland | Indonesia | Lithuania | Luxembourg | Malta | Monaco | Morocco | New Zealand | Qatar | Republic of Korea | Singapore | Sri Lanka | Thailand | Turkey | United Arab Emirates | Uruguay | Zambia | Private Donors

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