

# YEMEN

15 – 31 January 2018

## KEY FIGURES

**22.2 million**  
people in need

**2,014,026**  
Internally Displaced Persons  
(IDPs)

**89** per cent of IDPs  
displaced for more than a  
year

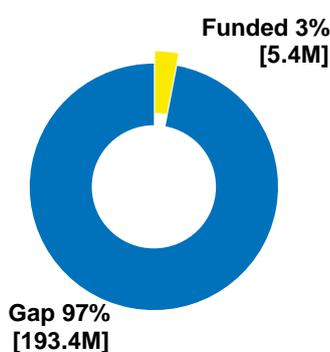
**956,076** IDP returnees

**1,015,375** recipients of  
CRIs since March 2015

**280,539** refugees and  
asylum seekers

## Funding

USD **198.7 M**  
requested in 2018



## Operational Update

Following clashes in Aden, UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, have resumed humanitarian activities with freedom of movement largely restored. Assistance to refugees and asylum seekers has restarted, including preparation for the eighth Assisted Spontaneous Return (ASR) for Somali refugees. Life-saving assistance, including key household materials have been released from the port of Aden, following delays attributable to the unrest in Aden, and are enroute to vulnerable, displaced Yemenis. The release of critical assistance and restoration of freedom of movement is essential, as the number of IDPs fleeing to the south is of great concern as fighting in southern Hudaydah intensifies.

Over 5,800 families, or 40,600 people, have moved to Aden and surrounding governorates in search of safety since December 2017. Speaking to UNHCR and Protection Cluster partners, newly displaced Yemenis described harrowing journeys following their forced displacement from frontline areas including Al Khawkhah. Families spoke of spending what little savings they had left, and selling their precious jewelry and livestock to pay for transportation to safer areas, with the cost to leave prohibitive for many more families caught up in hostilities. IDPs also described scenes of destruction, with forced recruitment, including that of children, increasingly emerging as a worrying trend – placing the lives of those left behind in peril.

UNHCR is alarmed that a military escalation could displace thousands of more people in the coming months, further increasing needs and vulnerabilities of a population already on the brink. The new displacement is in addition the two million already displaced from their homes, the vast majority of whom fled their homes over one year ago. With just 4 per cent funding received for the humanitarian response, UNHCR is facing dire choices, having to prioritize assistance and programmes to reach those most in need.



Winter support has reached close to 130,000 displaced Yemenis, among them, Mohammad and Sara, sheltering in a UNHCR-supported IDP collective shelter in Sana'a. Photo: UNHCR/ S. Abusneida.

## IDP Response

**UNHCR is alarmed as increasing numbers of displaced families seek safety in southern governorates, arriving disheveled, tired and in need of assistance.** UNHCR released CRIs from the Aden warehouse for 1,500 IDPs in Foqum, Al-Buraiqa district, who recently fled from hostilities in Al Khawkhah, with distribution to commence shortly. A further 3,800 newly displaced people in Aden and Lahj, were reached with CRIs, and in addition, emergency shelter kits were distributed to 3,500 displaced individuals in Tur Al-Bahah and Tuban districts of Lahj Governorate. Preparations are also underway to distribute CRIs for IDPs in other areas of Aden including Crater and Dar Sad. More than 40,600 people have fled to Aden and nearby governorates since December, forcibly displaced from escalating hostilities in southern Hudaydah.

**UNHCR's winter assistance programme for 2017-2018 has been completed, supporting 18,451 families (129,157 individuals).** Rising fuel prices have made this winter season increasingly difficult for many displaced families, unable to heat their homes or clothe their children suitably to protect from the cold, with night time temperatures falling to zero degrees Celsius. The one-off USD 200 cash grants were provided to extremely vulnerable displaced families currently sheltering in high altitude areas and poorly insulated accommodation, bringing them a degree of relief.

**In Yemen's northern governorate of Al Jawf, some 10,000 people have been displaced so far this January due to hostilities.** UNHCR CRI and emergency shelter response for 4,300 extremely vulnerable people residing in open areas has begun, many of them leaving their homes with little more than they could carry. Additionally, the UNHCR IDP response continued across the country, including a humanitarian assessment of 1,500 newly displaced people from southern Hudaydah to Dhamar Governorate. Families are living in horrific conditions, with over one third of households headed by women. Distributions of CRIs and emergency cash grants are currently being organized. A rapid assessment of displacement conditions for 1,400 people in Ibb also took place, with an urgent response planned.

**The number of civilian casualties in Yemen's war continues to mount, with the latest tragedy resulting from an airstrike on a house in Shear district, Sa'ada Governorate on 21 January.** The home was sheltering three recently displaced families from the nearby Kitaf district when targeted, resulting in seven deaths, among them five children, and one adult female and male. A further two individuals are in a critical condition. UNHCR visited the site, met with the affected families and provided emergency shelter and CRI assistance.

## Refugee Response

**UNHCR and IOM are responding to the tragic drownings of at least 30 refugees and migrants off the coast of Aden.** Survivors of the incident reported to UN and partner staff that an over-crowded boat packed with at least 152 Somalis and Ethiopians left the Al Buraiqa coast in Aden on 23 January in a boat headed across the Gulf of Aden towards Djibouti. The vessel is believed to have been operated by unscrupulous smugglers who were attempting to take refugees and migrants to Djibouti, while also trying to extort more money from them. The boat capsized, tragically leading to preventable deaths. UNHCR has commenced the provision of much needed psychosocial counselling for survivors currently sheltering in Basateen, Aden. Preparations for the distribution of emergency cash assistance is also underway. Last year, UNHCR launched a regional awareness campaign entitled "Dangerous Crossings," highlighting the dangers of making such crossings in both countries of origin and transit.

**The first Assisted Spontaneous Return (ASR) departure of 2018 took place on 23 January, with 132 Somalis departing by boat from Aden to Berbera, Somalia.** The total number of returnees as part of the ASR programme amounts to 946 returnees since its launch in September 2017. Over 3,000 Somalis have been counselled on the return process, including the support provided by UNHCR to help their reintegration at home. The eighth departure to Somalia is expected to take place in mid-February as conditions in Yemen continue to affect refugee's personal security and well-being.

Contact: Aoife McDonnell, External Relations Officer, [mcdonnell@unhcr.org](mailto:mcdonnell@unhcr.org)

For more information, please follow us on Twitter at @UNHCRYemen and on Facebook at UNHCRYemen