

YEMEN

March 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

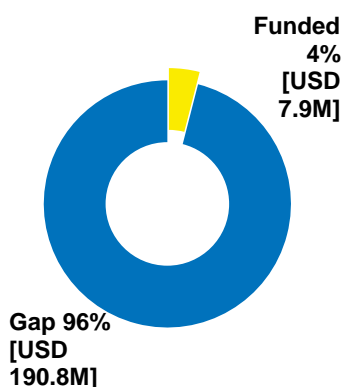
956,076 IDP returnees

338,609 IDP and refugee
recipients of cash grants in
2017

280,692 refugees and
asylum seekers

Funding

USD **198.7 M**
requested in 2018



Humanitarian Challenges and Critical Needs

Conflict in Yemen has left 22.2 million people, 75 per cent of the population, in need of humanitarian assistance and has created a **severe protection crisis** in which millions face risks to their safety and are struggling to survive. As of early 2018, Yemenis are facing multiple crises, including armed conflict, displacement, risk of famine and the outbreaks of diseases including cholera – creating the world’s worst humanitarian crisis. According to the latest Humanitarian Needs Overview for Yemen, more than 5.4 million people require assistance with shelter, core relief items (CRIs) and in collective centres. An escalation of hostilities in late 2017 resulted in new displacement, precluded safe return and increased demands on UNHCR’s emergency response capacity, with more than two million people displaced. Protection space for 280,000 refugees and asylum seekers also continues to shrink, resulting in severe protection gaps. Refugees are at heightened risk of exploitation in the absence of livelihood opportunities and increasing aid-dependency.

Against a backdrop of intensified fighting and soaring needs, UNHCR is facing a funding shortfall despite the situation in Yemen now constituting the largest humanitarian crisis in the world. To address the gap, UNHCR urgently needs USD 198.7M in 2018 to reach the most vulnerable refugees, asylum seekers, internally displaced (IDPs), and IDP returnees.

UNHCR Priorities and Response

More than ever, UNHCR will prioritize maintaining and building its capacity to mobilize rapidly, reliably and effectively in response to emergencies and to strengthen protection response for persons of concern, including through the expansion of the cash programme. During 2018, UNHCR will place particular emphasis on the following activities, which when taken together, will advance protection and solutions for refugees, asylum seekers, IDPs and IDP returnees in Yemen;

- Provide **lifesaving support and legal assistance** (including access to documentation, advocacy against unlawful detention) for refugees, asylum seekers, IDPs and IDP returnees;
- Increase the scope of **cash-based interventions** for refugees, IDPs and IDP returnees as the most effective tool to deliver assistance;
- Jointly with the Yemen authorities, **preserving the protection space** as much as possible for refugees arriving and residing in Yemen (including for child protection, protection from sexual and gender-based violence SGBV, access to registration and civil documentation, processing for solutions), in accordance with the 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol to which Yemen is a signatory;
- Advocate for and support diverse **durable solutions** for all people of concern including voluntary return, in the form of Assisted Spontaneous Return (ASR), self-reliance, and other alternative pathways in support of comprehensive solutions;
- Strengthen protection interventions for returnees and IDPs, particularly through **community-based protection networks**, to provide

- legal assistance and psychosocial support with a focus on SGBV survivors;
- Increase the level of partnerships with all humanitarian actors in Yemen with the aim of **mainstreaming protection** into humanitarian programmes and enhancing **coordination**;
- Strengthen the capacity of **local partners and diversify partnerships** in order to provide effective, efficient and tailor-made interventions for refugees and IDPs.

UNHCR Critical Requirements

As conditions deteriorate in Yemen, UNHCR has responded with prioritised assistance for some of the most vulnerable refugees, asylum-seekers, IDPs, IDP returnees and local host communities, whose needs have dramatically increased over the past three years. UNHCR is requesting USD 198.7M in the Yemen Humanitarian Response Plan. As a lead Agency responding to war-impacted populations, consequences of UNHCR's funding gaps and the absence of peace is resulting in the following;

Internally Displaced Persons:

- With 89 per cent of IDPs displaced for more than one year and amid severe economic decline, they and local communities are rapidly exhausting reserves to meet their needs. The lack of support for basic services see those particularly vulnerable, including those living in public buildings, collective centres or spontaneous settlements, **increasingly face protection risks**.
- Deteriorating shelter conditions are resulting in overcrowding and unsanitary environments in IDP settings, leading to the **increased spread and susceptibility to communicable diseases**.
- Without adequate support and provision of financial support, emergency shelter kits and CRIs, the most vulnerable IDPs living in collective centres, public buildings, spontaneous settlements and makeshift shelters are **enduring deteriorating conditions**, exposed to increased protection risks. A lack of funding will also further impact on UNHCR's preparedness capacity to reach newly displaced populations with life-saving assistance, and could lead to death or negative coping strategies.
- A failure to support those most at risk will result in increased exposure to exploitation, indebtedness and possible radicalization, and has already resulted in a widespread increase in the **resort to negative coping strategies** including through, begging as a means of generating income, child labour, sending children to join proscribed armed groups or forces, and early marriage.

Refugees and Asylum Seekers:

- The availability of humanitarian assistance and protection for those continuing to arrive in Yemen from the Horn of Africa is already very restricted. With the conflict severely impacting Yemen's capacity to receive refugees and asylum-seekers and to deliver basic services to them, **shrinking protection space** will compromise UNHCR's interventions and response to those in need.
- Yemen is experiencing a serious protection crisis as all civilian populations, including persons of concern, face grave risks to their safety, well-being and human rights. A lack of financial support will translate into a **lack of capacity to monitor and advocate for the protection of refugees and asylum-seekers**.
- Crumbling **national services** mean an additional burden on UNHCR to provide services to persons of concern, vital for the maintenance of protection space. **Failing health systems** at a time of unprecedented need have led to a rise in preventable illnesses and mortality. More than 98,000 medical consultations for refugees and host communities took place in 2017. The **closure of schools** due to lack of funding, will hold back a generation of refugee children for achieving their potential, with a lasting impact for a generation to come. Further, the **lack of specialised services** for persons with disabilities and for those with psychosocial challenges are resulting in a further deterioration of their conditions, increasing vulnerability and exposure to harm.
- The dire **socio-economic situation** of Yemen's population has been further exacerbated by a partial blockade on importation of critical goods, resulting in inflation, rapid devaluation of the Yemeni Rial, rising prices of food and fuel, and a continuing threat of conflict-led famine. The Operation revised its criteria to reach the most vulnerable refugees, but funds remain insufficient to cover the soaring needs.