

YEMEN

25 August - 7 September 2017

KEY FIGURES

20.7 million
people in need

1,980,510
Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)

84 percentage of IDPs displaced for more than a year

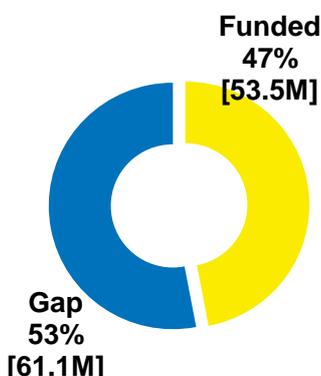
946,044 IDP returnees

865,121 recipients of NFIs since March 2015

280,421 refugees and asylum seekers

Funding

USD **114.6 M**
requested in 2017



Operational Update

UNHCR continues to be alarmed by the impact of hostilities on civilians, including on displaced families and refugees in Yemen. A report released by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) on the situation of human rights in Yemen on 5 September, finds at least 5,144 civilians have been killed as a direct result of the conflict, among them 1,184 children. The report also finds that more than 1,700 children, some as young as 10, have been recruited and used in hostilities. The war has resulted in close to two million people being displaced, 84 per cent of whom have been out of their homes for more than 12 months. UNHCR reiterates its call to all parties to the conflict to ensure the protection of civilians in Yemen and to do their utmost to mitigate suffering. The war in Yemen, now in its third year, is exacting an unacceptably high toll on civilians.

The crisis in Yemen has been further compounded by the outbreak of cholera since April 2017, which has put much of the population at risk, including persons of concern. UNHCR efforts have largely focused on placing the refugee community at the centre of prevention efforts, providing them with accurate information on the spread of cholera, coupled with early case detection and surveillance, and the timely referral of suspected cases to UNHCR-supported health and community centres. Members of the UNHCR-led Protection Cluster also boosted cholera prevention efforts through the community based protection network (CBPN), tasking volunteers equipped with printed materials to reach out to communities in 25 districts, beyond areas with refugee populations. The prevention and awareness activities are currently taking place in public places including mosques, schools, hospitals and markets and are carried out in close coordination with authorities, and WASH and Health Clusters.



Cholera prevention and awareness activities are underway countrywide, equipping populations of concern with accurate information to protect themselves and their families from the epidemic. Photo: YFCA/ UNHCR

IDP Response

The conflict in Yemen has now surpassed two and a half years in duration, with the impact of hostilities felt across every facet of daily life. IDPs face increased protection risks, particularly with regard to securing sustainable shelter and a lack of legally-sound housing contracts. Eviction from rented shelters continues to emerge as a major concern for those who have fled conflict, who have often long since spent life savings on basic necessities including food. In response, UNHCR through its partners is providing legal support to those in need, including resolving disputes through negotiations with landlords and allocating rental subsidises to prevent families from becoming homeless. In addition, UNHCR and partners are providing legal counselling for obtainment of critical civil status documentation and birth registration documents, along with mediating conflicts such as divorce. Since January of this year, over 4,000 individuals have received UNHCR-supported legal assistance.

Providing access to adequate shelter and core relief items for persons of concern remains a critical priority. On 23 August, UNHCR conducted a field visit to Hays district to monitor the distribution of enhanced emergency shelter kits to 1,009 households and core relief items to a further 120 families who have recently fled from the conflict in Mokha. The displaced families were identified as particularly in need, having fled hostilities in haste. In the northern governorate of Sa'ada, UNHCR also carried out a distribution of core relief items, including blankets and kitchen sets in Majz district. Over 1,060 core relief item packages were handed out, helping some 7,000 displaced individuals.

UNHCR is responding to the new displacement of some 300 IDP families from Taizz who have fled their homes and settled in neighbouring Lahj Governorate. The families are living in dire conditions, settling in open areas or in unfinished buildings without proper shelter or water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) facilities. UNHCR and partners carried out an assessment at both Almehqafa and Albaitra areas, in Tuban district, to better identify the needs of the newly arrived, and distributed core relief items and plastic sheeting to 300 families on an emergency basis. Considering the scale of the vulnerability of the community, UNHCR is planning to provide financial support to top up assistance provided to the newly displaced.

Refugee Response

In Sana'a, UNHCR is implementing a self-reliance and livelihoods project, including a micro-loans scheme, to assist persons with specific needs to establish their own businesses. Efforts to increase livelihood opportunities have been challenging in 2017, due to the overwhelming deterioration in the socio-economic situation in Yemen. Nonetheless, livelihood activities remain an important protection response, with 253 microloan recipients so far this year. The goal of the programme is to support vulnerable families to become self-reliant, allowing them to be removed from the financial assistance programme, thereby making room for other families in need. To support the success of the new businesses, UNHCR through partners, provides a variety of complementary programmes to boost the entrepreneurs' capacities. So far this year, 56 refugee students are enrolled in long-term technical scholarship programmes and an additional 156 persons are attending short-term vocational trainings such as solar system maintenance, computer and mobile phone maintenance, beauty salon training and incense-making.

Training and capacity building for authorities and key interlocutors continues to be a cornerstone of the UNHCR protection response in Yemen. In late August, a two day in-depth training on the 1951 Convention and 1967 Protocol was conducted by UNHCR and partner, the Migration and Refugees Studies Centre of the University of Sana'a, for 40 officials from the police academy in Sana'a. The training also included sessions on UNHCR's mandate and activities, and information on persons of concern, to better equip police to protect refugees and asylum seekers in line with international law.

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