

YEMEN SITUATION

UNHCR REGIONAL UPDATE #37

March 2016

HIGHLIGHTS

Yemen:

- On 30 March, the Humanitarian Country Team adopted its strategy for IDP response in Yemen aimed at providing a framework for a coordinated, multi-sector response.
- On 20 March, UNHCR sent thirteen trucks with emergency relief items to Taizz, accessing the governorate from Aden for the first time in nine months.
- Co-led by UNHCR and IOM, the Task Force on Population Movement published its 8th report validating a total figure of 2,755,916 IDPs in Yemen as of 31 March 2016.

Djibouti:

- Based on returned refugee cards and attestations, 555 Yemeni refugees have returned from Obock to Bab-al-Mandab, Yemen.

Ethiopia:

- After UNHCR advocacy, the government authorized preparations for a seventh relocation of 120 registered Somali refugees from Jijiga to Melkadida camps.

Somalia:

- The information campaign launched in September 2015 on the dangers of travelling to Yemen is ongoing.

Sudan:

- The majority of Yemeni children in Sudan do not attend school due in part to associated fees and transportation expenses.

POPULATION MOVEMENTS

Arrivals from Yemen*



Movements of/to	Djibouti	Somalia	Ethiopia	Sudan	KSA	Oman	Total
Yemenis	18,952	3,846	1,289	1,106	30,000	5,000	60,193
Somalis	297	27,657	2,515	42	-	-	30,511
Other nationalities	12,130	258	171	1,301	9,880	46,000	69,740
National returnees	1,961	-	7,548	3,800	-	-	13,309
Total	33,340	31,761	11,523	6,249	39,880	51,000	173,753

*Statistics provided by IOM, Government and partners; Saudi Arabia and Oman: Figures provided by the Government, pending verification by UNHCR

New Arrivals to Yemen

In March, 10,424 new arrivals (mainly Ethiopians – 8,665 individuals) reached the coast of Yemen, bringing the yearly total so far to 28,717. Most asylum-seekers refer to persecution due to political opinion as a motivation for their displacement, while many Ethiopians note they left their place of origin because of the drought. On 1 March, smugglers forced 101 passengers off their boat as they approached the coast in Shabwah governorate. Four persons reportedly drowned. So far in 2016, some 27 individuals have gone missing or have died at sea in Yemeni waters.

KEY FIGURES

3,197,543

People affected by the conflict (in Yemen and adjacent countries), including refugees and internally displaced persons prior to and as a result of the current conflict.

2,755,916

Persons internally displaced prior to and as a result of the current conflict.

173,753

Arrivals to Djibouti, Ethiopia, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, and Sudan mainly by sea or overland since late March 2015.

267,874

Refugees in Yemen assisted with protection assistance and life sustaining interventions and items.

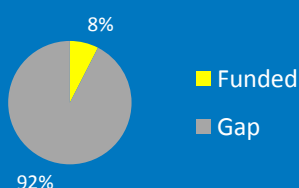
407,576

Internally displaced Yemenis reached in Yemen with emergency relief items since the onset of the crisis by UNHCR and partners.

FUNDING

USD 172.2 Million

Requested by UNHCR for the situation



UNHCR's Supplementary Appeal for the Yemen Situation Emergency Response, January – December 2016, is available [here](#)

UPDATE ON ACHIEVEMENTS

Operational Context

A year into the conflict, on 23 March, the UN Special Envoy for Yemen, Mr. Ismail Ould Cheikh Ahmed announced that parties to the conflict had agreed to a nation-wide cessation of hostilities from 10 April, ahead of peace talks scheduled to begin on 18 April in Kuwait. However, intense fighting continued in other areas reportedly resulting in many casualties. While the Coalition-affiliated forces gained territory in Taizz city's western neighbourhoods in early March, Houthi-affiliated forces reportedly later reclaimed positions. The reopening of key roads into Taizz for the first time in nine months eased transport of humanitarian assistance from Aden to Taizz.

Insecurity and instability across Yemen remains a concern. In Aden, extremist elements continued to undermine security, leading security forces backed by the Coalition to launch offensives against Al-Qaeda. As a result, UNHCR staff was advised, on occasions, to work from home to preserve their safety. Moreover, on 4 March, gunmen stormed an old people's home in Sheikh Outhman district (Aden) run by a Mother Teresa charity, killing various people including one refugee, three asylum-seekers and two migrants working as cleaning staff. In the north, on 9 March, unknown armed men stormed the IOM-managed migrant centre in Al Hudaydah killing a young migrant and threatening the staff.

In Somalia, the number of persons arriving from Yemen to Bossaso, Puntland, appears to be decreasing although continued fighting around strategic cities in Yemen may still result in large displacements. Border monitoring at the ports and along the northern coast of Djibouti reveals a decrease in new arrivals, while Yemeni refugees started to spontaneously return to Bab-al-Mandab (Yemen). In Obock, UNHCR raises awareness of the fragile security situation in Yemen with refugees who are considering returning on their own.

Refugee Response



Protection

Yemen:

- On 10 March, UNHCR and partner Society for Humanitarian Solidarity (SHS) organized burial arrangements in Al Mansoura district (Aden) for the five Ethiopians and one Eritrean who died in the attack on an old people's home on 4 March.
- Arrest and arbitrary detention of refugees and migrants continued across the country. The office is working on access, monitoring detention conditions of refugees and migrants in Yemen, responses and analyzing trends.
- From 11 to 15 March, UNHCR and the Yemeni Bureau for Refugee Affairs were on mission to Hudaydah central prison to interview a group of detained Somali refugees and non-Somali asylum-seekers. UNHCR registered and conducted status determination interviews for 46 Eritreans and five Ethiopians. The Eritreans were all recognized as refugees while one Ethiopian was recognized on first instance. A letter was sent on 30 March to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to inform of the results and request the release of the recognized refugees. In the same period, UNHCR trained Hudaydah authorities and law enforcement officials on basic principles of international refugee law.
- On 17 March, eight Somali refugees and eight Ethiopian asylum-seekers were detained at Al Buraiqeh police station in Aden, but subsequently released after UNHCR's intervention. On 19 March, 34 Ethiopian new arrivals were detained in Al-Jerba camp in Al Dhale'e governorate and released after the intervention of UNHCR's legal partner.
- Country-wide, UNHCR renewed certificates for 304 refugees, registered 40 new-born refugee children. In Sana'a, UNHCR conducted best interest assessments for 26 children and 62 home visits to ascertain living conditions and specific needs of refugee children and their families and legal custodians. In Aden, UNHCR issued 134 refugee and asylum-seekers certificates, conducted general counselling for 34 refugees and asylum-seekers, provided resettlement counselling for 13 refugees, RSD counselling for 15 asylum-seekers and legal counselling for 18 cases.
- On 28 March, two male refugees from Kharaz camp (Lahj) were accepted for resettlement by the United States.

Djibouti:

- Yemeni refugees started to spontaneously return to Bab-al-Mandab (Yemen). According to UNHCR, 555 Yemenis have returned their refugee cards to UNHCR since early March. UNHCR is working in Obock to raise awareness of the fragile security situation in Yemen with refugees willing to return. However, refugees' families and contacts in Yemen allegedly indicate to them that Bab-al-Mandab is safe and that ample humanitarian assistance is being provided there.
- As part of its activities to maintain family links, the Djibouti Red Crescent (CRD) offers phone call services to new arrivals and refugees so that they can call and reassure their families abroad. About 305 refugees in Markazi camp (158 females, 147 males) benefitted from the service in March.

Ethiopia:

- 1,439 Yemeni refugees, including those who arrived before the escalation of the conflict, are assisted by the Urban Programme in Addis Ababa. 1,186 Yemeni individuals have been granted refugee status.
- After successful UNHCR advocacy, the government authorized the preparations for a seventh relocation from Jijiga to Melkadida camps for 120 registered Somali refugees (who were previously in Yemen). Since July 2015, some 2,515 Somalis previously registered as refugees in Yemen arrived in Ethiopia after fleeing the conflict. According to the Government of Ethiopia's policy, all new arrivals of Somali refugees are to be assisted in Melkadida refugee camps. Relocation has been organized jointly by UNHCR, IOM and the Government's Administration for Refugees and Returnees Affairs (ARRA). The seventh relocation is expected to depart from Jijiga on 7 April 2016.

Somalia:

- New arrivals in Somalia reported that the ongoing war in Yemen forced them to leave their homes and that transportation between towns and cities inside Yemen is very difficult, if not altogether impossible in some governorates.
- The information campaign launched in September 2015 on the dangers of travelling to Yemen is ongoing. Information has been translated into four languages and shared through various channels. During the March meeting of the Mixed Migration Task Force, UNHCR and partners discussed updating messaging to address the dangers related to cash incentives allegedly used as an incentive by extremist organizations and traffickers to youth. UNHCR re-emphasized the importance of ensuring campaigns reach people in their areas of origin, particularly in Ethiopia. Once individuals are on the move, they are less likely to change their mind.
- Onward Transport Assistance (OTA) was provided to 69 Somali returnees from South and Central Somalia to enable them to travel from Bossaso, Puntland, to reach their places of origin. The OTA consists of a cash grant of USD 120 per adult to South and Central Somalia, USD 60 for small children, USD 50 to areas in Puntland and USD 70 to Somaliland.

Sudan:

- In Khartoum, UNHCR registered 110 asylum-seekers from Yemen in March. Yemeni asylum-seekers receive assistance from UNHCR based on criteria applicable to other urban refugees and asylum-seekers.
- UNHCR provided emergency financial assistance issued through ATM cards to 177 Yemenis. Financial assistance is disbursed monthly for three months to those identified as extremely vulnerable. Of those receiving assistance in early March, 40 were new recipients. The remaining 173 received their second or third instalment or are special cases who qualify for continued assistance beyond the 3-month period.

Education

Yemen:

- In early March, UNHCR Sub Office in Aden released 20 tents to the Education Cluster. The cluster had requested the tents to support education activities in Lahj governorate through ensuring students are accommodated in a protected environment as some schools have been partly or completely damaged in the conflict.
- In Sana'a, UNHCR distributed school kits to 589 refugee children (279 boys and 313 girls) through the Sustainable Development Foundation (SDF) family centre.

Djibouti:

- As of 23 March, 197 students out of 338 students enrolled in grades 1 to 7 were attending classes at Al Rahma School. According to a preliminary assessment conducted by the Lutheran World Federation (LWF), 82 children have left Markazi camp. Remaining children seem demotivated by the departure of their classmates.

Sudan:

- The majority of Yemeni children in Sudan do not attend school due in part to associated fees and transportation expenses.

Health

Yemen:

- Health facilities of UNHCR partners International Medical Corps (IMC) and Charitable Society for Social Welfare (CSSW) in Sana'a, Basateen (Aden) and Kharaz camp provided medical consultation and essential medicines to 4,463 refugees and 768 Yemenis from the host community, mental health and psychological support to 374 refugees, vaccination to 400 children, reproductive health services to 442 pregnant women, GBV counselling to four rape survivors and life-saving and specialized referral services to 326 individuals. 1,766 persons attended community outreach counselling on health issues.

- In Mayfa'a reception centre (Shabwah governorate), UNHCR's partner SHS provided medical consultations and essential medicines to 4,145 new arrivals, administered 8,393 vaccinations and referred seven new arrivals to hospitals for specialized treatment.
- Between January and March 2016, UNHCR and partner InterSos undertook a mental health assessment in Kharaz refugee camp. Staff members of InterSos and Charitable Society for Social Welfare (CSSW) – the two main organizations involved in psychosocial services – as well as target populations, community leaders, caregivers, psychiatrists and psychologists were interviewed. Gaps and challenges in mental health services were identified (e.g. unavailability of appropriate space for counselling to ensure privacy and confidentiality, insufficient number of psychiatrists and translators and high turnover of staff members). Immediate actions will be taken to address the challenges, including setting up a separate room for counselling, ensuring timely provision of medicines, hiring Somali/Oromo translators and guards for crowd control.

Djibouti:

- Some 755 refugees were treated at the Africa Humanitarian Action (AHA) outpatient clinic in Markazi camp in March. The most common conditions are respiratory infections and diarrhoea.
- AHA organized a one-week polio immunization campaign at the beginning of March. A total of 197 households were visited and 134 children were immunized. AHA also launched an initiative to conduct health promotion activities in school. Through collaboration with LWF and the *Centre Médical Hospitalier* (CMH) in Obock, AHA community workers will conduct bi-monthly sessions at Al Rahma School, located one kilometre from Markazi camp.
- From 20 to 24 March, 288 households were sensitized on voluntary HIV counselling and testing in Djibouti.
- From 27 to 31 March, 300 pamphlets were distributed in Markazi camp as part of a campaign against Hepatitis A.

Sudan:

- A large number of injured Yemeni arrivals remain in government hospitals in Khartoum but are struggling to cover medical expenses. Their transport and initial treatment, as well as ongoing food and accommodation costs, have been sponsored by the Sudanese government, but specialized treatment or surgery in private hospitals has not been covered. Many of the injured are not registered with UNHCR, however UNHCR is monitoring the situation closely. For registered refugees, UNHCR provides medical support to through referrals to the national partner, Al Manar.



Food Security and Nutrition

Djibouti:

- AHA community promoters in Markazi camp sensitized 365 households on community malnutrition management and 244 children were screened for malnutrition. Some 24 children were enrolled in the severe acute malnutrition (SAM) programme and 26 children were enrolled in the moderate acute malnutrition (MAM) programme.
- On 22 March, a total of 2,150 refugees (600 families) in Markazi camp and Obock town benefitted from the monthly WFP food ration distribution.

Somalia:

- The Puntland Students Association, contracted by WFP, provides cooked meals to new arrivals reaching Bossaso Reception Centre 2. In Somaliland, Danish Refugee Council (DRC) collaborates with WFP to provide cooked meals for all new arrivals.



Water and Sanitation

Djibouti:

- Markazi camp currently contains 204 latrines in total. The Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) sensitized the community on maintaining clean family latrines and also conducted sensitization at the household level encouraging the community to keep the camp clean. Six garbage collection points throughout the camp were identified for garbage collection.
- Water availability remains a problem in Obock, though to a lesser extent than over the months of January and February. On 11 March, NRC was again compelled to provide water through trucking from the village of Oulma, 30 kilometres away from Obock, because the motor of the well in Soublali village was not functioning.

Somalia:

- Water, both for drinking and other uses, is provided at the Reception Centre in Bossaso. Sanitation is provided by UNHCR through the Ministry of Interior, which has hired staff to improve sanitation at the Reception Centre.

Djibouti:

- UNHCR cleared 40,000 square meters in Sector Three and Four of Markazi camp, removing its tents and Refugee Housing Units (RHUs) to be replaced by 300 prefabricated houses with air conditioning, a school and a mosque to be constructed by the King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Centre (KSC). UNHCR has reconstructed the tents and RHUs in Sectors Two. NRC also dismantled 62 latrines, 20 kitchens and three showers.

Somalia:

- Since the beginning of the Yemen crisis, 871 Core Relief Item (CRI) kits have been distributed to vulnerable new arrivals.

IDP Response in Yemen

 Protection

- In Amanat Al Asimah governorate, UNHCR's partner Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) provided social counselling to 485 IDPs and psychological counselling to another 30 IDPs, mainly from Marib, Sa'ada and Taizz. Their main issues were related to access to humanitarian assistance, IDP rights, child and female labour and intimate partner violence.
- On 24 March, the UNHCR Representative visited the Tawasul call centre in Sana'a operated by UNHCR and partner AMIDEAST, currently in its fourth month of operation since the start of activities. The call centre functions as a two-way communication channel with IDPs – and increasingly refugees – who call for information, counselling, referrals to service providers but also to lodge complaints. In March, the call centre received over 1,000 calls. The top three issues raised during the phone calls related to lack of food, NFIs and financial assistance.
- On 28 March, UNHCR delivered a training session for Danish Refugee Council (DRC) staff on the in-depth protection assessment tool developed by UNHCR office in Sana'a to help gather data on the current and previous locations as well as the general situation of IDPs. The aim was to train a team, which will be deployed to Al Dhale'e governorate to conduct a protection assessment for IDPs in 52 locations and determine areas to be targeted and plan the scale of assistance.
- On 30 March, the Humanitarian Country Team adopted its strategy for IDP response in Yemen aimed at providing a framework for a coordinated, multi-sector response. The strategy takes into consideration the specific needs and vulnerabilities at all phases of internal displacement, further strengthening the ongoing response and ensuring that it is entrenched in humanitarian principles and keeps protection and human rights principles at its core. The strategy will first be rolled out in Ibb and Hajjah governorates.
- The Task Force on Population Movement (TFPM), led by UNHCR and IOM, released its 8th report on 5 April validating a total number of 2,755,916 IDPs in Yemen as of 31 March 2016. This figure represents an increase of 325,738 individuals as compared to the previous report. This is mainly due to an increase in displacement in 13 governorates, as well as further improvement in the population movement tracking methodology and outreach to additional locations. Some 66% of the IDP population have sought refuge in Taizz (620,934 individuals), Hajjah (367,007), Amran (295,620), Sana'a (272,589) and Sa'ada (245,897).

 Shelter and NFIs

- On 5 March, the Executive Unit for IDPs and local authorities in Amran city handed over three buildings for UNHCR's partner Yemen Red Crescent (YRC) to begin their rehabilitation for use as collective centres (alternative accommodation for IDPs living in schools and in urgent need of shelter).
- On 6 March, UNHCR's partner Sama Al Yemen shared a list of 57 collective centres and indicated that 2,745 persons reside in spontaneous settlements in Marib governorate (Marib city, Madghal, Aljubah, Hareeb Algameesh, Raghwan and Sirwah districts). UNHCR will provide emergency shelter kits based on the list and assessments conducted by Sama Al Yemen.
- From 10 to 13 March, in Amran governorate, YRC distributed CRIs to 1,407 IDPs with specific needs who could not reach the Executive Unit office to record their names on the IDP list. The specific categories include single-headed households, families headed by elderly and/or persons with disabilities, as well as very low-income families.
- In Sa'ada city, UNHCR continued an assessment of 1,504 families and determined that 873 families are in need of CRIs. Distribution of the items to them started on 13 March.

- In 2016 so far, UNHCR reached 119,516 IDPs and other conflict-affected persons in Yemen with emergency relief assistance such as blankets, sleeping mats, plastic buckets, plastic sheeting, kitchen sets, tents, and emergency shelter kits (wooden poles, planks, plastic sheeting, tools such as hammer, axe, rope and nails).
- On 20 March, UNHCR sent thirteen trucks carrying blankets, mattresses, and other badly needed emergency relief items to Taizz governorate in the southwest of the country. These deliveries were possible due to the re-opening of the main roads into Taizz from Aden on 11 March, blocked for over nine months due to fighting. Dispatched in coordination with the Government of Yemen's High Relief Committee, the convoy reached Mashra'a Wa Hadnan, a district immediately south of the embattled Taizz city centre. Distribution targeted 500 displaced people, others who have returned to Taizz and families who remained in the city and were affected by the conflict. Another 13 trucks were sent to nearby Sabir Al Mawadim district and with CRIs for another 500 families. The two districts host over 7,500 displaced people.
- From 20 to 25 March, the UNHCR Field Unit conducted a mission to Ibb governorate and assessed measures needed prior to the rehabilitation of the selected collective centres currently hosting IDP families in Ibb. Shelter and CRI needs of recently displaced IDPs from Taizz governorate were also assessed along with the needs for protection monitoring, mapping of protection services, prioritization of critical protection interventions and protection mainstreaming in the various humanitarian programmes being developed.

Working in partnership

Yemen:

- On 8 March, the UNHCR Representative in Yemen met the Dutch Minister for Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid, the Head of the Dutch Humanitarian Aid department and raised awareness about the humanitarian crisis in Yemen and advocate for support from the international community. He briefed some 80 diplomats and met with main Dutch media outlets, including featuring on prime time Dutch radio.
- On 10 March, UNHCR participated in an International Women's Day event hosted by InterSos in Sana'a, which included discussion sessions with refugees on discrimination, understanding the roots of gender discrimination and its implications for women and society as a whole; the role of women in development, and how to work towards change.

Djibouti:

- On 23 March, the bi-weekly coordination meeting usually held in Djibouti city and co-led by UNHCR and Government counterpart (ONARS) was held at the UNHCR premises in Obock. Community leaders expressed their needs and grievances openly in front and partners answered questions and clarified issues.

Ethiopia:

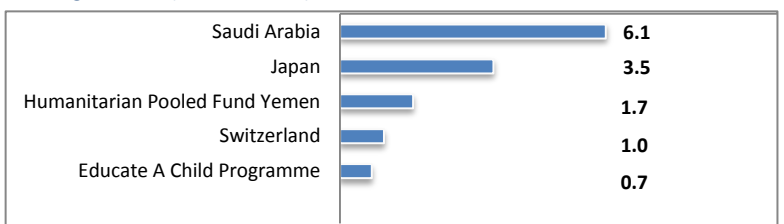
- Information sharing on the impact of the Yemen situation in Ethiopia and the main challenges and coordination of responses are discussed with partners and the government through the Refugee Protection Working Group and the Partners Meeting on Urban and Kenya Borana Refugees hosted and chaired by UNHCR on a monthly basis.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Total recorded contributions for the operation as at 29 March 2016 amount to some **US \$ 13 million**.

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 un-earmarked and broadly earmarked funds.

Funding received (in million USD)



Major donors of unrestricted and regional funds in 2016: Sweden (78 M) | Netherlands (46 M) | Norway (40 M) | Australia (31 M) | Denmark (24 M) | Switzerland (15 M) | Germany (13 M)

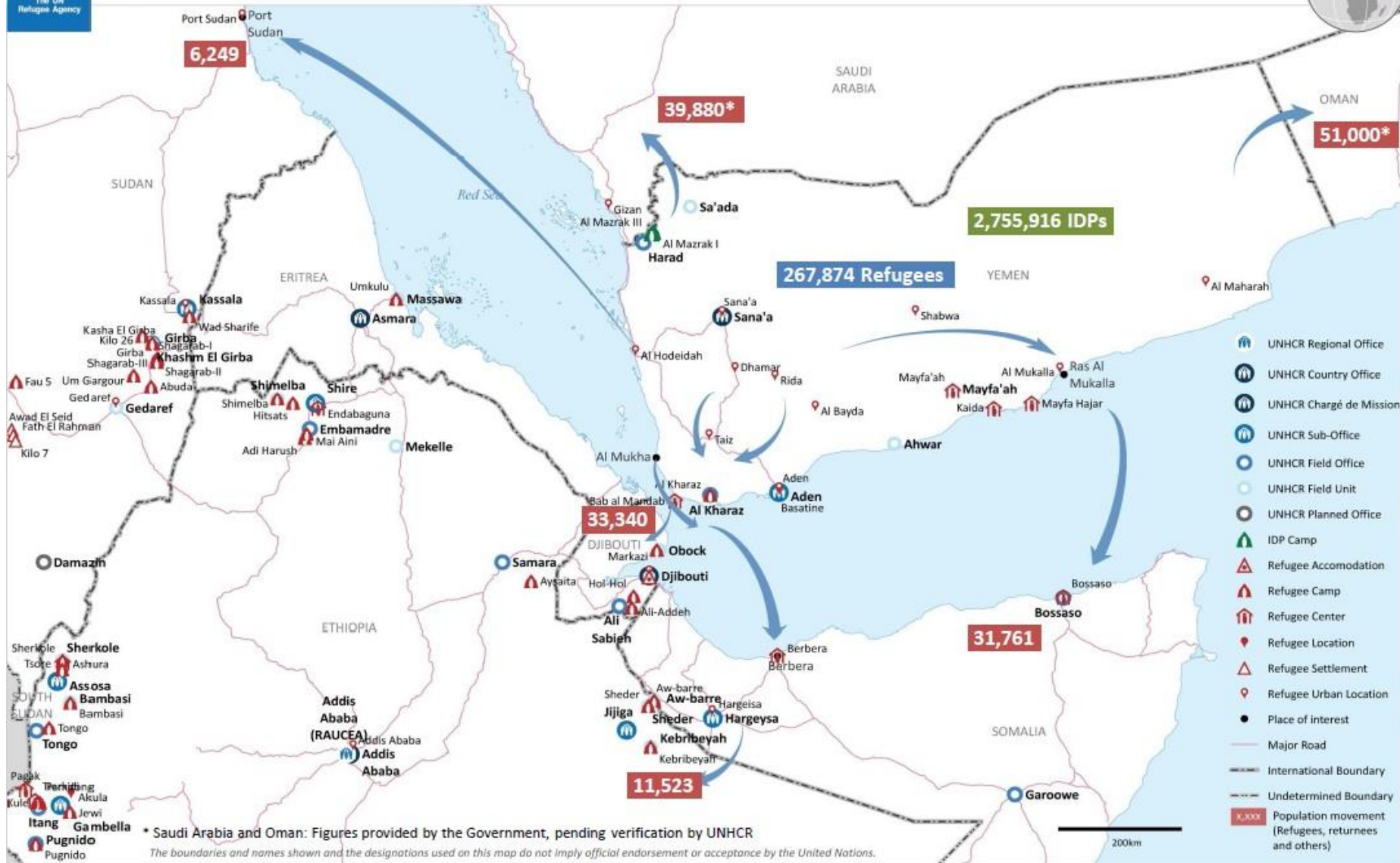
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Yemen Situation: Regional Map (total population movement out of Yemen: 173,753)

31 March 2016



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