

Yemen

25 February 2021

Yemen remains the world's largest humanitarian crisis. Some 20 million people are currently in dire need of humanitarian assistance, many of whom are displaced individuals and refugees forced to flee their homes and seek shelter elsewhere.

Without your urgent support, UNHCR will not be able to provide life-saving protection and assistance to the more than four million displaced Yemenis and 137,000 refugees and asylum-seekers across the country, leaving them at critical risk.

Out of the USD 271 million UNHCR requires in 2021 to protect and assist those most affected by the ongoing conflict in Yemen, only USD 16.1 million has been secured to date, just 6 per cent of the total needs.

The USD 230 million outlined below represent funds required for the continuation of critical humanitarian and protection programmes from March to December within UNHCR's overall funding requirements for Yemen in 2021.

Key Figures

 **20.7 million**
people in need

 **12.1 million**
people in acute need

 **4 million**
displaced Yemenis

 **73%**
of IDPs are women and children

 **1.3 million**
IDP returnees

 **137,000**
refugees and asylum-seekers

Funding Needs: March – December 2021

IDP activities	Beneficiaries	Budget in USD
I. Shelter support	670,000+	19 million
II. Protection services (including GBV and child protection)	330,000+	22 million
III. Core relief items	900,000+	17 million
IV. Unconditional cash assistance	1,000,000+	110 million
V. Sites management	500,000+	8 million

Refugees activities	Beneficiaries	Budget in USD
I. Unconditional cash assistance	36,000+	19 million
II. Healthcare support	100,000+	22 million
III. Protection services (including GBV and child protection)	20,000+	7 million
IV. Education support	16,000+	6 million
TOTAL¹	3,000,000+	230 million

¹ The total number of beneficiaries represents an estimate of individuals reached through the different activities. A number of individuals may receive assistance from different interventions.

Operational Context

Six years after the start of the conflict, Yemen continues to face a devastating and unrelenting humanitarian and protection crisis that risks turning into famine if the international community does not act urgently. According to the latest humanitarian needs overview, some 66 per cent of its 30 million population depends urgently on humanitarian assistance for their daily survival, including five million on the brink of famine, most of whom are displaced individuals.

In 2020, over 172,000 Yemenis were newly displaced and in 2021, raging conflict continues to force thousands of families to seek refuge elsewhere. Internal displacement remains one of the defining features of the Yemen conflict. The country currently hosts over four million internally displaced persons (IDPs), making it the fourth largest IDP crisis in the world, 73 per cent of whom are women and children. In addition, Yemen also hosts some 137,000 refugees and asylum-seekers, mainly from Somalia and Ethiopia.

Current Challenges

Ongoing conflict

Since the beginning of 2021, the conflict in Yemen has taken a sharp escalatory turn following the most recent offensive in Marib Governorate. **The increase in hostilities has so far forced more than 1,000 families (6,000 individuals) in Sirwah district to flee their homes.** Only a peaceful political resolution of the conflict can halt further suffering.

Famine and displacement

Some 16 million persons across the country are currently food insecure. Latest UNHCR and [Food Security Phase Classification](#) data reveal that there is a strong correlation between displacement and extreme food insecurity. **Displaced families are four times more at risk of falling into hunger than other Yemenis.** Out of the total four million IDPs, over 67 per cent live in districts categorized as being in an emergency food insecure situation, a phase just below famine.

Collapsed economy

Following years of conflict, Yemen's economy and currency have collapsed. A situation that has only worsened after the outbreak of COVID-19. Up to 80 per cent of Yemenis live below the poverty line. **Some 92 per cent of displaced families have reported not having any income at all or living with less than YER 25,000 (USD 40) per month.**

UNHCR Response

As the security environment deteriorates, the protection environment shrinks and new and protracted displacement continue across Yemen, UNHCR remains unconditionally committed to stay and deliver. With your ongoing support, UNHCR aims to continue assisting hundreds of thousands of vulnerable displaced Yemeni and refugee families throughout the country.

Internally displaced persons

UNHCR leads the Protection, Shelter/Non-Food Items (NFI), Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM) Clusters for IDPs.

Country-wide, UNHCR addresses the immediate needs of vulnerable IDP families by providing basic household items, shelter options, and cash assistance to help families afford food, healthcare, rent, and additional winter clothes. UNHCR further ensures IDPs have access to protection services such as legal counselling, psychosocial support, and prevention of gender-based violence, and encourages social cohesion with the host communities by implementing community projects and improving services at IDP hosting sites. These projects include the rehabilitation of vital infrastructure such as hospitals and schools, among others.



A vulnerable displaced Yemeni family currently living in an IDP hosting site. One of the more than 200,000 Yemeni families that benefitted from UNHCR cash support throughout the country in 2020. Photo © UNHCR

Refugees and asylum-seekers

UNHCR is the **lead agency for ensuring the protection and well-being of 137,000 refugees and asylum-seekers** across Yemen, mainly from Somalia and Ethiopia. UNHCR also co-leads with IOM the Refugee and Migrants Multi-Sector for refugees and asylum-seekers. Refugees are registered on a regular basis and provided with assistance in a wide range of areas including access to documentation, legal assistance, food, prevention of gender-based violence, cash assistance, and referrals to other critical services such as health and education, among others.



A 12-year-old child going back home from school in Al-Hudaydah Governorate, Yemen. UNHCR supports refugee children to ensure enrolment in primary and secondary education. Photo © UNHCR

Consequences of Underfunding

IDP programme

Protection services

Lack of funding will risk leaving over 330,000 vulnerable displaced Yemenis without access to critical assistance and protection services such as legal assistance, psychosocial support, prevention and response to gender-based violence, child protection, and referral of persons with specific needs to specialized services. This will result in increased exposure of more than 55,000 displaced Yemeni families to human rights abuses and protection risks such as arbitrary arrest and detention, child labour, and forced marriages, to name just a few.

Shelter and site management

If funding is not urgently received, more than 670,000 vulnerable displaced Yemenis risk not having access to adequate shelter, exposing them and their families to increased protection risks. Without funding, UNHCR will not be able to provide shelter and critical core relief items such as blankets, mattresses, and hygiene kits to displaced families. UNHCR will be further forced to stop key coordination activities in IDP hosting sites across the country, including WASH, protection, and healthcare services.

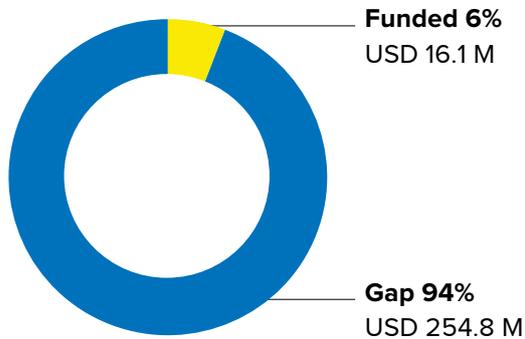
Cash assistance

Without donors' support, over a million vulnerable displaced Yemenis will suffer from heightened protection hazards, potentially leaving many of them at critical risk of falling into hunger. Out of the total four million IDP population across Yemen, over 2.6 million individuals live in districts categorized as being in an emergency food insecure situation, a phase just below the famine phase. UNHCR's cash support helps them meet their most immediate needs, including food, healthcare and rent.

Refugee programme

Limited funding will leave more than 137,000 refugees and asylum-seekers without access to regular food, healthcare and education assistance. Lack of resources will further result in a drastic reduction in protection services such as legal assistance, prevention and response to gender-based violence, registration and documentation services, and child protection. This will likely increase mortality and morbidity rates significantly among the refugee population, and will immediately raise their exposure to harmful coping mechanisms such as child labour, begging, and the sale and exchange of sex.

2021 Financial Requirements



USD 271 million requested for UNHCR's Yemen Operation in 2021. The Operation is currently funded **USD 16.1 million (6%)** as of 23 February 2021.

Special thanks to donors

UNHCR is grateful for the critical support provided so far by donors to the 2021 humanitarian response in Yemen:

Canada | Japan | Qatar | Sheikh Thani Bin Abdullah Bin Thani Al-Thani Humanitarian Fund | Spain

And by major donors of unearmarked contributions:

Belgium | Denmark | Germany | Ireland | Netherlands | Switzerland

At this critical time, humanitarian action to save lives and alleviate the suffering of vulnerable populations across Yemen remains imperative. UNHCR appeals to donors to prioritize their funding now more than ever to the response in Yemen to avoid a devastating humanitarian disaster.

Contact

Alejandro Staller, External Relations Officer, staller@unhcr.org

Marie-Joelle Jean-Charles, Associate External Relations Officer, jeanchar@unhcr.org

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