

YEMEN

11 – 18 December 2017

KEY FIGURES

20.7 million
people in need

2,014,026
Internally Displaced Persons
(IDPs)

89 per cent of IDPs
displaced for more than a
year

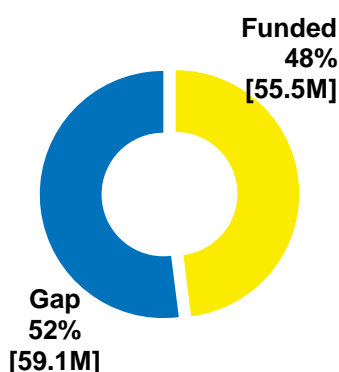
956,076 IDP returnees

1,015,375 recipients of
CRIs since March 2015

280,539 refugees and
asylum seekers

Funding

USD **114.6 M**
requested in 2017



Operational Update

UNHCR is bracing for further displacement and a spike in humanitarian needs as hostilities intensify in frontline areas on Yemen's west coast. This follows the recent fighting in the capital, Sana'a, and neighbouring northern governorates. Over the past number of days, UNHCR has received reports of new displacement from Hudaydah and Taizz Governorates. UNHCR and partners are still assessing the situation, but initial reports are that more than 1,400 people have fled from Taizz and Hudaydah to locations in Southern Taizz and Lahj. With numbers expected to rise further, UNHCR is working with partners to support and help those fleeing, with emergency relief items for 2,000 families in Hudaydah, and a further 2,000 aid kits are on their way along with 2,000 emergency shelter kits.

Meanwhile, following recent clashes, the situation in Sana'a has returned to relative calm, with UN humanitarian flights resuming a reduced service. UNHCR offices in Sana'a reopened as of this week with a core team of international staff, and is working with partners to resume humanitarian operations that were put on hold due to insecurity in early December. As a matter of urgency, UNHCR is restoring services where possible and resuming assistance for the most vulnerable IDP and refugee families, particularly a winter cash assistance programme aimed at 17,000 families.

On 17 December, humanitarian organizations in Yemen issued a [statement](#) emphasizing neutrality and condemning any allegations of corruption and bias in the provision of relief assistance by parties to the conflict. UNHCR continues to work to serve the growing needs of those in Yemen and advocates for a political solution to put an end to the suffering.

In Aden on 10 December, following repeated delays caused by difficulties in receiving clearance, the fourth Assisted Spontaneous Return (ASR) departure took place. A total of 108 returnees arrived safely in Berbera port in Somalia on 11 December, supported with return cash grants to assist their reintegration. On 18 December, a fifth movement took place. So far, a total of 676 individuals have returned to Somalia through the UNHCR-led programme in coordination with IOM.



Single mother Dheka is returning to Somalia with her four children following nine years in Yemen. Photo: UNHCR / N. Schmidhaeusler

IDP Response

Against a backdrop of increasing hostilities, UNHCR is ramping up support to the coastal city of Hudaydah. Assessments have taken place in the city, with 1,000 internally displaced families identified as in need of financial support. The vulnerable families are at risk of eviction, with distribution of rental assistance expected to be finalised during the coming week. The rental subsidy, which amounts to USD \$300, covers three months' rent. At the same time, in neighbouring Hajjah Governorate, UNHCR partner, Jeel Albenah, commenced a detailed assessment of vulnerable families in need of core relief items (CRI) and shelter support in the Mustaba district. UNHCR is aiming to assist 3,000 households with CRI kits and a further 1,000 households with emergency shelter kits, which will provide privacy, dignity and comfort to the displaced.

In early December, UNHCR partner YARD, completed an urgent distribution in the northern governorate of Al Jawf. In total, 100 CRI kits and 25 emergency shelter kits reached war-impacted families in Barat Al Enan district, a densely populated residential area, when an incident in mid-November led to the deaths of 19 people, injured 44 more and caused considerable damage to nearby buildings. The response was part of an Inter-Agency effort to support the community, who remain deeply impacted by the conflict.

In addition to ongoing displacement and rising needs of the Yemeni population, the Saudi-led Coalition (SLC) imposed blockade continues to remain in effect. The blockade continues to be keenly felt within the operation, leaving UNHCR with little option but to divert cargo intended for delivery to the port of Hudaydah to Aden port instead. So far, 43 UNHCR containers of emergency assistance destined for the north, have been re-routed to Aden, with over land transport now required in order to reach northern governorates. Transporting supplies from other ports will add an estimated 1-3 weeks to delivery times and generate additional costs, including warehousing. Price fluctuations have also impacted all local sourcing and purchasing with all manufacturing coming to a halt as a result of the blockade, affecting production of shelter materials. UNHCR reiterates that the overwhelming needs of the Yemeni population can only be addressed through the full resumption of both humanitarian and commercial activities.

Refugee Response

As the security situation on Yemen's Red Sea coast deteriorates, UNHCR is particularly concerned for civilians, among them a community of Eritrean refugees. The 1,460 Eritreans are living in an isolated coastal location in the Al Khowkah area, 117 kilometres south of Al Hudaydah City. The area has been declared a military zone, with active hostilities presenting a risk to life in addition to challenges for the refugees in accessing food, fuel and clean water. UNHCR is in the process of providing urgent cash grants to this vulnerable community, which will provide a temporary degree of relief.

Education continues to be a critical tool in helping refugees become self-reliant as Yemen faces an uncertain future. This week, UNHCR and partner INTERSOS finalised the university admission for 30 new recipients of the DAFI scholarship programme. Among them, 10 students are from Kharaz camp, 13 from the city of Aden, and a further seven students from Sana'a, who will study a variety of courses including medicine, engineering and teaching. Rehabilitation work is also underway at Kharaz camp schools, with the creation of shaded areas and improvements to school washrooms and classrooms close to completion.

UNHCR continues its capacity building efforts for authorities and those working with refugees. In the neighbourhood of Basateen on the outskirts of Aden, which is home to more than 50,000 urban refugees, training on the prevention of sexual abuse of children also took place for partner staff and counsellors from local schools with the view that they are equipped with the tools to pass on critical knowledge. As a result, UNHCR together with INTERSOS, school counsellors and teachers, launched a campaign this week in three schools, aimed at informing children from first to fifth grades on how to protect themselves and who to report incidents of sexual abuse to.

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