

## UNHCR Refugee Program in Sanaa / Amanat al-Asimah January/ September 2020



At the end of September, the current number of registered refugees and asylum seekers targeted by UNHCR for assistance stands at some 135,000 individuals. Of those, some 47,000 (35%) are registered in Sanaa / Amanat al-Asimah, while some 65% are registered in southern Governorates, largely Aden, Hadramouth, Lahj, Shabwah. Most of the refugees and asylum seekers are of a Somali nationality, followed by Ethiopians. Countrywide, 39% of refugees and asylum seekers are female and 23.1% are children (under 18).

During 2020, refugees and asylum seekers have been heavily affected by the deteriorating socio-economic situation in Yemen, further aggravated by the impact of COVID-19. As a result, their vulnerability and need for humanitarian support increased, as self-reliance opportunities shrank. Key findings of needs assessments continued to reveal a high presence of persons with specific needs, including households headed by single mothers, unaccompanied and separated children, older persons and persons with chronic medical conditions or disabilities.

### Response Overview



Between January and September 2020, through its seven partners operating in Sanaa / Amanat al-Asimah UNHCR provided a range of protection services and assistance activities to refugees and asylum seekers.

UNHCR supported partners to manage a series **community centers** providing a safe communal space and a platform for services and activities for refugee communities, households and individuals, including vulnerable women and children. Those include recreational activities for children and youth, also with the direct participation of the refugee communities; case management for extremely vulnerable individuals, including psychosocial support for women and children; support to best-interest determination and community-based caregiving arrangements for unaccompanied children; legal counselling and advice including on civil documentation and registration of vital events. Overall, more than





4,100 refugees and asylum seekers received psychosocial support; more than 1,000 refugees and asylum seekers benefitted from basic legal counselling services; 355 were directly facilitated in obtaining civil documentation and 157 refugee children received specific support to obtain their birth certificates through the Civil Registration Authority (CRA). Awareness sessions on the importance of civil status documentation – particularly birth registration – were also conducted.



Based on vulnerability assessment conducted by its partners, UNHCR provided **multipurpose cash assistance (MPCA)** to refugees and asylum-seekers households in dire socio-economic conditions and with specific needs, reaching a total of 5,518 HHs. MPCA was utilized to address the families' immediate basic needs, such as food and health care and was intended to help the families improve their living conditions, reduce their financial burden, deter negative coping mechanisms that increase protection risks, and eventually enhance their self-reliance. A post-distribution exercise is currently undertaken to better assess the impact of cash assistance, including on the local economy.



An ad-hoc cash distribution of three instalments for some 4,000 particularly vulnerable household was undertaken from July to provide an extra support to refugees and asylum seekers affected by the socio-economic and health consequences of the COVID-19 (e.g. loss of source of income in the informal sector; increasing difficulties in payment of rent, leading to threats of eviction and sub-standard living conditions; additional health expenses).



Through its specialised health partner, UNHCR continued to support refugees and asylum seekers to receive primary **health care** services and to be referred to secondary and tertiary health services in public and private health institutions. Aside covering the cost of health treatments for the most vulnerable refugees and asylum seekers, UNHCR has supported health care structures with equipment and material. This includes the

provision of medication, equipment, and support to expand the capacity to respond to COVID-19. In 2019 a contract has been also signed with the Blood Bank in Sana'a considering the government requirements for asylum seekers to undergo various tests prior to the registration of a refugee or asylum seeker claim, when they resume.



Through its **education** partner in Sana'a', UNHCR is supporting almost 2,700 refugee children in primary schools, including with education material and on information/counselling for the families on the procedures for enrolment. UNHCR also plans for a training for teachers on child-protection and education-related topics. As part of its education support, through its education partner, UNHCR offers literacy and numeracy courses to school-age children also to facilitate their future enrolment. In order to

support the integration of children in local schools, UNHCR currently plans to provide equipment and material support to 20 selected public schools hosting refugees as well as Yemeni children.



Through an expert partner, UNHCR started some initiatives to increase the **self-reliance of refugees**. 436 refugee entrepreneurs were provided with micro-loans to support their newly established or ongoing micro income generating activities such as door-to-door selling, tailoring, beauty salons, etc. So far, the repayment rate has been encouraging, despite the effects of COVID 19. In addition, 3-6 months vocational training courses and on-the-job training is planned for the end of 2020 and beginning of 2021, targeting some 275 refugees.



As part of the measures to mitigate the **risks of COVID-19** on refugees and asylum seekers, UNHCR increased its awareness-raising sessions and organised dedicated sensitisation activities with general information and preventive measures via multiple channels in refugee-hosting areas. Additionally, over 45,000 COVID-19 brochures and almost 3,600 hygiene kits were distributed to refugees and asylum-seekers in Sana'a. An additional distribution of hygiene kits is planned in November, if funding allows.

Furthermore, a pilot project engaging 19 refugees produced some 41,000 face masks for protection against COVID-19. This pilot project provided the selected refugees and asylum seekers with tailoring skills and source of income, while responding to the shortage of COVID 19 personal protective equipment in the market.

Most of the training and capacity building or awareness raising activities planned for the year could not materialise due to the COVID-19 restrictions. Some activities have been gradually resuming since September, with COVID 19 precautionary measures. UNHCR also had to reduce some of its activities of socio-economic support as well as protection services to refugees and asylum seekers through its partners due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Several activities were conducted remotely, where possible, prioritising emergency-responses for the most vulnerable, including multi-purpose cash assistance, COVID-specific cash assistance, distribution of hygiene items and of awareness material.

From September 2020, all activities have progressively resumed, including in Community Centres, with COVID-19 mitigating protocols for the safeguard of persons of concern as well as for UNHCR and partners' staff.

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES		Achievement Jan-Sep 2020
 <b>Child protection</b>		
# of refugee/asylum seeker children supported with birth registration		157
# of best interests' assessments conducted for refugee/ asylum seekers children (including unaccompanied and separated children)		162
# of refugee /asylum seeker children receiving regular support in the Family Center		323
# of refugees and asylum seekers assisted (including support in family centres, recreational activities, home visit, provision of assistive devices, support to obtain birth certificates etc.)		1,157
 <b>Protection</b>		
# of Community Centers providing specialized services to refugees and asylum seekers		6 (in Sanaa)
# of refugees/ asylum seekers assisted with civil status registration or documentation [marriage, divorce, death]		355
# of refugee community members participated in awareness raising sessions		4,495
# of refugees/ asylum seekers assessed for vulnerability		3,192
# of refugees/ asylum seekers with disabilities (including children) receiving specific support (including Assistive devices)		184
# of vulnerable refugees/ asylum seekers receiving cash grants (HHs / ind.)		5,518/ 16,554
# of refugees/asylum seekers with psychosocial needs receiving psychosocial support		4,128
# of refugees/ asylum seekers receiving legal assistance		1,036
# of refugee/ asylum seekers in detention monitored and individually recorded by age and sex		163
 <b>Education</b>		
# of refugee/ asylum seeker children enrolled in primary education		2,681
# of refugee / asylum seeker students enrolled in upper secondary education		352
# of refugee /asylum seeker students who receive tertiary education scholarships		93
# of refugees/ asylum seekers enrolled in language and numeracy classes		646
 <b>Health</b>		
# of community health workers		9
# of health facilities equipped/constructed/rehabilitated (medical items and technical support)		5 (790,000 USD)
# of health workers trained		92
# of consultation at primary health care structures		15,984
# of persons referred to secondary and tertiary medical care		2,244
 <b>Self-reliance</b>		
# of refugees enrolled for certified skills training (3 years) and entrepreneurship training		73
# of refugees and asylum seekers receiving loans through UNHCR partners		436
 <b>COVID 19 Emergency Response</b>		
# of refugees/ asylum seekers receiving hygienic supplies		3,536
# of vulnerable refugees/ asylum seekers receiving dedicated CASH for COVID-19 (HH/ ind.)		4,039/ 12,117



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