

YEMEN SITUATION

UNHCR REGIONAL UPDATE #39

May 2016

HIGHLIGHTS

Yemen:

- UNHCR joined two missions to Aden in May, during which UNHCR international staff visited Kharaz refugee camp for the first time in over a year.
- Co-led by UNHCR and IOM, the [Task Force on Population Movement published its ninth report](#), validating a total figure of 2,053,093 IDPs.

Djibouti:

- Yemeni refugees continue to spontaneously return to Yemen, though to a much smaller extent than in previous months. In February and March, there were 604 returns, 242 in April and 53 in May.

Ethiopia:

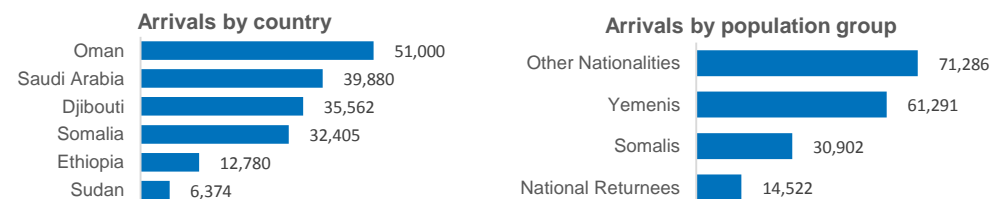
- Community leaders reported that some 20 Yemenis who were previously in Addis Ababa spontaneously returned to Yemen in the past months.

Somalia:

- Among new arrivals, five had already been to Somaliland, returned to Yemen and are now back to Somaliland. They claimed that they had returned to Yemen because they believed the situation had improved, only to realize that conditions are still very difficult in the country and consequently decided to go back to Somaliland.

POPULATION MOVEMENTS

Arrivals from Yemen*



Movements of/to	Djibouti	Somalia	Ethiopia	Sudan	Saudi Arabia	Oman	Total
Yemenis	19,636	4,089	1,336	1,230	30,000	5,000	61,291
Somalis	297	28,047	2,515	43	-	-	30,902
Other nationalities	13,665	269	171	1,301	9,880	46,000	71,286
National returnees	1,964	0	8,758	3,800	-	-	14,522
Total	35,562	32,405	12,780	6,374	39,880	51,000	178,001

New Arrivals to Yemen

In May 2016, 9,835 people arrived in Yemen (8,496 Ethiopians and 1,339 Somalis), representing a 15 per cent decrease compared to the previous month. So far, the 2016 yearly total of new arrivals is 49,797 persons (including 43,095 Ethiopians and 6,698 Somalis), representing more than half of the 2015 total.

Sadly, the dangerous sea journey continues to take its toll on people travelling irregularly to Yemen: seven persons died or went missing at sea in May along the coast of Hadramaut (Arabian Sea), including a pregnant woman. So far in 2016, 39 individuals went missing or have died at sea in Yemeni waters.

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

KEY FIGURES

2,499,429

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.

2,053,093

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

178,001

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

268,335

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

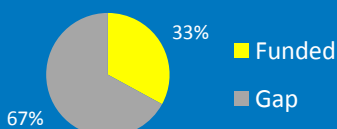
495,562

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



UPDATE ON ACHIEVEMENTS

Operational Context

UN-led peace talks continued in Kuwait, although with occasional disruptions due to delegations trading accusations on violations of the truce and duplicity in the negotiations. Nonetheless, the UN Special Envoy for Yemen, Mr. Ismail Ould Cheikh Ahmed, assessed that the parties moved closer to a comprehensive agreement, with negotiations focusing on military and security issues including a prisoner exchange to coincide the holy month of Ramadan. Despite the ceasefire and the peace talks, fighting and airstrikes continued especially in Nihm district near Sana'a, Sa'ada, Hudaydah and Taizz governorates.

Despite the official launch of the UN Verification and Inspection Mechanism (UNVIM), significant delays are still experienced in all major Yemeni ports, reportedly because of congestion and reduced operational capacity. UNVIM aims to ease the flow of commercial goods and services to Yemen. The month of May saw an increase of fuel imports, although only 30 per cent of the estimated monthly fuel needs were met. In late May, several media outlets reported a worsening of the humanitarian situation especially in the north (Hudaydah) and the South (Aden) due to hot weather coupled with a fuel crisis and sharp increase of prices of commodities due to the dramatic devaluation of the local currency. There are also growing concerns about the deterioration of the health system and increasing food insecurity. In his briefing to the UN Security Council on 25 May, the Special Envoy proposed the creation of an Economic Task Force to prevent a total collapse of the Yemeni economy. UNHCR joined two missions to Aden in May, primarily aimed at reviewing the security context, which has improved although targeted assassinations of officials are still prevalent. The Military Police, currently in charge of protecting UN premises, expressed full commitment to supporting the eventual return of international UN presence to Aden. Led by UNHCR and including UNDSS, OCHA, WFP and UNDP, the second mission (29 May-2 June) focused on programmatic issues, e.g. improving the coordination of life-saving and protection interventions; assessing potential international staff accommodation; assessing the road between Aden and Kharaz camp (140 km west of Aden) and the airport for possible UNHAS use. Cut short because of a security incident on 31 May, the mission could not address all objectives. Re-establishing international presence in the South is fundamental to UNHCR given the large numbers of refugees there and mixed migratory arrivals.

In May, only two boats arrived in Berbera (Somaliland) from Yemen. However one of the boats carried 111 individuals, the highest number on a single boat to Somaliland since the peak of new arrivals in August 2015. New arrivals from Yemen to Puntland increased compared to the last reporting period, yet numbers continue to be relatively low.

Though boats from Yemen continue to arrive, only a small number of Yemenis seek asylum in Djibouti (25 individuals per week on average). Rather, they transit in Djibouti before travelling onwards to other countries. Meanwhile, Yemeni refugees continue to spontaneously return to Yemen, though to a much smaller extent than in previous months. In February and March, there were 604 returns, 242 in April and 53 in May. UNHCR continues to advise refugees on the dangers of return and continues to remind partners, diplomats and the Government of its no-return policy.

Refugee Response



Yemen:

- Countrywide, UNHCR renewed certificates for 300 refugees, registered 60 new-born refugee children and issued nearly 200 refugee and asylum-seeker certificates. In Sana'a, UNHCR conducted Best Interest Assessments for 13 children and ascertained, through over 100 home visits, the living conditions and specific needs of refugee children and their families/legal custodians. In Aden, UNHCR provided counselling on resettlement and refugee status determination to about 70 refugees and asylum seekers.
- Arbitrary arrests and detention of refugees and asylum-seekers remain of concern to UNHCR, especially as legal partner INTERSOS, responsible for detention monitoring, was barred in May from accessing detention facilities in Sana'a. UNHCR is negotiating with relevant authorities to regain access. Nevertheless, UNHCR and INTERSOS secured the release of over 30 refugees and asylum-seekers from detention facilities in Sana'a, Aden, Ibb and Hudaydah. The UNHCR Representative particularly discussed with the governorate's Security Office the situation of refugees and asylum-seekers in Hudaydah's central prison and advocated for their release. The officials agreed that, upon central authorities' approval, Somali refugees would no longer be incarcerated; detained refugees would be released; and a mechanism would be set up to allow UNHCR to verify the informed and voluntary nature of Somali returns to Somalia.
- UNHCR and the government's National Committee on Refugee Affairs (NACRA) organized a workshop on Refugee Status Determination (RSD) in response to Sana'a authorities' request to gradually take over RSD procedures. Participants included officials from the ministries of Foreign Affairs, Interior and Human Rights, National and Political Security, and the

Bureau for Refugee Affairs. The workshop also looked at state obligations under international refugee law, the use of country of origin information, interviewing techniques and credibility assessments.

- UNHCR organized a workshop in Aden on Best Interest Determination guidelines and child protection within the framework of the project “Live, Learn and Play Safe”. Participants included UNHCR’s partners Solidarity Association for Development and INTERSOS, IOM and the authorities. The aim was to improve stakeholders’ understanding of the issues and encourage more effective child protection responses and enhanced cooperation.
- UNHCR met with the director of the Office of Migration in Aden and the head of the government registration centre in Basateen. They discussed the reopening of the centre (closed last year due to damage sustained in the conflict), resuming the issuance of ID cards for Somali refugees and staffing needs at the registration centre. The authorities agreed to reopen the centre pending some repairs. The issuance of ID cards will also resume shortly.
- In late May, during the second mission to Aden, UNHCR Deputy Representative and the Field Security Advisor visited Kharaz refugee camp (Lahj governorate), the first time international staff reached the camp since March 2015. They met with UNHCR national staff (who remained in the camp all along), partners, refugee leaders and local security to discuss *inter alia* refugee needs, the working environment, a possible verification exercise and refugee interest to return to Somalia. They observed the continued delivery of services in the camp, although WFP warned that lack of funding may lead to a break in the food pipeline. Hosting about 18,000 refugees, the camp provided safety and security during the conflict. Many urban refugees preferred to reside in the camp in 2015, but have now returned to Aden.
- On 30 May, the Representative and UNHCR staff in Sana’a discussed with the Acting Minister of Human Rights the 2016 partnership agreement’s main orientations, which encompasses activities linked to awareness raising, capacity development, improving the complaints mechanism, mixed migration and anti-trafficking. Workshops and trainings on refugee protection will be organized in response to recent waves of arbitrary arrests and detention of foreigners.

Djibouti:

- UNHCR and the *Office national d’assistance aux réfugiés et sinistrés* (ONARS) registered 63 Yemeni individuals (32 families), three Somali individuals and one Ethiopian.
- UNHCR conducted a physical verification exercise from 22 to 25 May to identify the number of Yemeni refugees present in Markazi Camp and Obock town, revealing the presence of 1,311 refugees in Markazi and Obock. UNHCR is currently updating its database based on the new figures.
- The Danish Refugee Council (DRC) organized an awareness campaign on child protection and gender-based violence in Markazi camp linked to a UNICEF visit. Fifteen children performed four short plays, filmed by the Guardian, on the most frequent violations against children and gender-based violence. Some 101 refugees, in addition to donors and partners, attended the performance.
- 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. During the reporting period, a total of 185 refugees in Markazi camp benefitted from the service.

Ethiopia:

- During the reporting period, eleven new Yemeni refugees arrived in Ethiopia and were registered in Addis Ababa.
- On 25 May, UNHCR met with Yemeni refugees and community leaders to discuss challenges raised by the community in relation to their lives under the Urban Programme in Addis Ababa. Since refugees are not allowed to work in Ethiopia, those living under the Urban Programme in Addis Ababa receive a monthly subsistence to cater for their basic needs. Yemeni refugees stated that this monthly assistance is insufficient in such an expensive urban centre. Refugees stated that accessing public health centres is challenging, despite the fact that treatment costs are reimbursed by UNHCR’s partner, as they do not always have enough cash to pay up-front, particularly for emergencies. UNHCR is currently negotiating agreements with health centres, to allow urban refugees to access their services without having to pay up-front. Refugees also stated that the language barrier presents a great challenge for children’s access to education. Classes in public schools under Grade 5 are only available in Amharic. Yemeni refugees also sought clarification on their eligibility for resettlement and were informed about the criteria and procedures applicable to all refugees, regardless of their nationality.
- During the same meeting, recent arrivals stated that fewer Yemenis are able to travel to Ethiopia as the Ethiopian Embassy in Sana’a is closed. As a result, the journey has become more expensive because individuals travel irregularly with no visa. Most of them are taking boats from Aden or Mukalla towards Berbera (Somaliland) and from there travelling irregularly by land to Addis Ababa, with smugglers.
- Community leaders reported that some 20 Yemenis who were previously in Addis Ababa spontaneously returned to Yemen in the past months. The main reason stated for return was access to work in Yemen and that many still count on

the strong support of relatives and the community. The reported route for returns from Ethiopia was by plane (Addis Ababa – Cairo – Amman – Sana'a); and by boat from Berbera to Aden or Mukalla.

- Somali refugees from Yemen relocated to Melkadida camp have indicated that they would like to be prioritized for resettlement, having experienced multiple displacements. UNHCR is in close coordination with community leaders and started screening new arrivals to assess their specific needs and find solutions, including access to livelihood programmes.

Somalia:

- Six boats arrived from Yemen, four in Puntland and two in Somaliland, carrying a total of 243 individuals, including 86 Yemeni refugees, 154 Somali returnees and three third country nationals.
- Among these new arrivals, five had already been to Somaliland, gone back to Yemen and have now returned. They claimed that they had returned to Yemen because they believed that the situation had improved, only to realize that conditions are still very difficult in the country and consequently decided to return to Somaliland.
- Most new arrivals reported that the ongoing war in Yemen had forced them to leave their country and that transportation between towns and cities inside Yemen is difficult, if not altogether impossible in some governorates.
- During the reporting period, 15 Somali returnees from South and Central Somalia were provided with Onward Transport Assistance (OTA) to enable them to reach their places of origin in a safe and dignified fashion.

Education

Yemen:

- UNHCR's partner Millennium Development Foundation (MDF) delivered stationary to primary schools in Basateen (Aden) and a photocopier machine to the primary school in Kharaz camp to assist in arrangements for final exams. MDF and the Lahj Governorate's Education Department also organized a training on early reading for 22 camp teachers of grades 1 to 3.
- Over 3,300 solar lamps were distributed to school children in Kharaz camp to improve the conditions in which they study.



School children received solar lamps, Kharaz refugee camp, 28 May 2016 © UNHCR/ A.Fadaaq

Djibouti:

- Primary school students completed their examinations in May and received their exam certificates. A total of 170 students sat the exam, of which 154 students passed.
- Nine preparatory school (grade 9) students passed their exams in Djibouti city at the end of May. They were accompanied to Djibouti city by UNHCR's education partner Caritas.

Health

Yemen:

- In Sana'a, UNHCR's partner International Medical Corps (IMC) provided medical consultation and essential medicines to over 1,500 refugees and 1,100 Yemenis from the host community, psychological support to 300 refugees and life-saving and specialized referral services to about 380 individuals. IMC also held community outreach counselling and awareness sessions for over 900 refugees and 490 Yemenis on issues such as family planning, breastfeeding, diarrhoea and measles.
- In Kharaz camp and Basateen (Aden), UNHCR's partner Charitable Society for Social Welfare (CSSW) provided medical consultations and essential medicines to over 4,750 persons, reproductive health services to 250 pregnant women, mental health and psychological support services to about 160 cases and vaccines to 710 children. Community outreach awareness sessions were provided to 900 persons on issues such as diarrhoea, safe delivery, HIV/AIDS, polio, hygiene and malaria prevention. At the Mayfa'a reception centre, over 6,300 new arrivals were vaccinated.

Djibouti:

- Africa Humanitarian Action (AHA) conducted the second phase of a campaign against water-borne diseases in Markazi camp. AHA staff sensitized 100 households on hand washing practices and how to clean jerry cans, and distributed 2,000 Aquatab water purifiers.
- The AHA outpatient clinic treated 1,018 refugees in Markazi camp in May, for respiratory tract infections, diarrhoea and skin infections. Many children have complained of intestinal worms. Hence, a door-to-door anti-parasite campaign is scheduled to start in June to ensure all children under the age of five are treated.

- Since snakes have been detected in Markazi camp, health partners are taking measures to ensure treatment is available at Obock hospital and the health clinic in the camp.
- The French NGO *Pompiers d'Urgence Internationale* (PUI), visited Djibouti to train health workers, partners and refugees on first aid and emergency response following a donation of an ambulance to IOM facilitated by the French Embassy in Djibouti. The PUI also trained staff and refugees on fire detection and management and donated five fire extinguishers to UNHCR for Markazi camp. PUI provided UNHCR with aerial views of Markazi camp using a drone, which will help identify areas where additional shelters could be added. The ambulance is expected reach the camp soon.



Food Security and Nutrition

Djibouti:

- On 1 May, King Salman Centre for Relief and Humanitarian Aids distributed food rations to refugees in Markazi camp. A total of 400 food baskets with rice, flour, sugar, powdered milk, oil, tomato paste, beans and spaghetti were distributed.
- Some 1,496 individuals (468 families) in Markazi camp and Obock town received food and non-food items donated by the African Development Bank and distributed by ONARS under the auspices of the Ministry of Social Affairs. The donation included flour, sugar, oil, tuna, pasta and tea, as well as mattresses, soap, jerry cans, detergent and baby nappies. WFP assisted ONARS with the composition of daily ration so as to provide the same calories to refugees. In light of the generous donation from the African Development Bank, WFP suspended its distribution for the month of May.
- Some 140 children under the age of five (73 boys and 66 girls) and 34 pregnant and lactating women benefitted from blanket feeding, conducted in the second half of May. There are currently six cases of severe acute malnutrition and 24 cases of moderate acute malnutrition receiving treatment in the nutrition unit in Markazi camp.



Water and Sanitation

Djibouti:

- Showers in Markazi camp are accumulating stagnant water and are ground for breeding insects. NRC stopped construction and is revisiting the showers design to ensure water is properly drained thus prevent insects from hovering around them.
- During the first week of May, hygiene promoters cleaned the water points in Sectors 1 to 3 of the camp with assistance from the refugee population, and sensitized the community on ways to manage and save water.



Shelter and NFIs

Somalia:

- Thirty-three vulnerable families were provided with Non Food Items (NFIs) in May. Since the beginning of the Yemeni crisis, 935 NFI kits have been distributed to vulnerable new arrivals.

Djibouti:

- UNOPS and the Norwegian Refugee Council both conducted solar energy missions to Markazi camp in May to assess lighting parameters and extend existing lighting in the camp.
- DRC distributed NFIs including diapers for children and adults, wheelchairs and sanitary pads. The distribution was carried out on a case-by-case basis for the protection of vulnerable refugees and persons with specific needs in Markazi camp. DRC also distributed 206 NFIs including 32 mattresses to 32 malnourished children in Markazi camp.



Durable Solutions

Yemen:

- 56 Somali refugees from Kharaz camp, who were accepted by the United States for resettlement, were transported to Sana'a. 36 of them departed to the Emergency Transit Facility for Resettlement in Slovakia on 2 May. The remaining 20 individuals could not yet travel due to expiry of security clearances and medical issues.

IDP Response in Yemen



Protection

- UNHCR Aden agreed with partner INTERSOS to establish a mechanism to identify and assist persons with specific needs among IDPs from Taizz governorate who are displaced in Aden. This mechanism will be part of the protection monitoring

and response project “Provision of life-saving and protection services to Internally Displaced People and conflict affected communities in Al Mukalla, Taizz and Aden” ongoing since September 2015 under a partnership agreement with UNHCR.

- The [ninth report of the Task Force on Population Movement \(TFPM\)](#), led by UNHCR and IOM within the Protection Cluster, identified 2,053,093 IDPs in Yemen (a reduction from the last report’s figure of 2,755,916 issued in late March) and 764,979 returnees. Two out of three IDPs have now been displaced for a period of ten months or more. Food is identified as the primary concern of IDPs followed by access to drinking water and shelters. Returnees remain within the displacement cycle as they are in need of continued assistance to ensure their sustainable reintegration.

Shelter and NFIs

- In May, UNHCR considerably stepped up the delivery and distribution of NFIs. So far in 2016, UNHCR reached over 208,000 individuals with NFIs, more than 32,000 persons with full Emergency Shelter Kits, and over 3,100 individuals with tents in 16 of Yemen’s 22 governorates.
- Moreover, for the first time since March 2015 and following weeks of negotiations for safe passage, UNHCR managed to transport relief items from its warehouses in Hudaydah to Al Mukha coastal district in Taizz governorate for IDPs and other conflict-affected populations. Likewise, for the first time since the escalation in the conflict, UNHCR managed to transport NFIs and emergency shelters for thousands of households in Marib governorate via Aden, thus avoiding front lines to reach IDP populations, who so far had been deprived of humanitarian assistance.
- In mid-May, UNHCR’s partner Sama Al Yemen distributed emergency shelters in Sirwah district of Marib governorate, targeting 536 IDP households including 112 female-headed households affected by the recent flooding. A post distribution monitoring followed to identify protection concerns and measure the quality of assistance provided to IDPs. This was the first time UNHCR delivered assistance in Sirwah district since March 2015.
- During a field mission to Ibb governorate, the sub-national shelter cluster was established and the protection cluster team laid out for humanitarian actors the main elements and guiding principles of protection mainstreaming and modalities to ensure community participation in programming. UNHCR aims to gradually establish a permanent presence in the governorate to scale up humanitarian aid in Ibb and Taizz.
- UNHCR’s rehabilitation activities of collective centres have also accelerated with the restoration of a building and a school while the rehabilitation of two other schools has been launched in Hajjah governorate. Moreover, 250 individual homes in Abyan, 250 homes in Al Dhale’e, and 188 homes in Hadramaut were recently identified for rehabilitation.

Working in partnership

UNHCR response to the Regional Yemen situation is coordinated with the governments and humanitarian actors through the OCHA-led Yemen Humanitarian Response Plan and the Yemen Refugee and Migrant Response Plan (RRMRP) co-led by UNHCR and IOM. Launched in December 2015, the RRMRP interagency appeal (USD 94.1 M) brings together the respective country plans of Djibouti, Ethiopia, Somalia and Sudan. It covers the requirements to provide protection and assistance in the Horn of Africa to refugees, returnees and migrants fleeing the conflict in Yemen.

Yemen:

- On 5 May, UNHCR signed a Partnership Project Agreement (PPA) with the government’s Executive Unit responsible for IDPs. The overall objective is to promote effective collaboration between the Executive Unit and UNHCR to ensure efficient and timely delivery of humanitarian assistance to IDPs, through exchange of information, analysis and good practices in the delivery of life-saving services and critical protection interventions. Particular attention is given to prioritizing those with specific needs, as well as mainstreaming gender and protection principles.
- On 18 May, UNHCR trained partners on the ActivityInfo online tool for humanitarian projects’ monitoring, ahead of launching the tool to track UNHCR’s activities for 2016. A plan of action was established with partners aiming at completing data entry by late-June to ensure all UNHCR’s performance data is available for the mid-year review.

Djibouti:

- US Ambassador to Djibouti, H.E. Mr. Thomas Kelly, visited Markazi camp on 17 May with a delegation of US civil affairs officers based in the neighbouring prefecture of Tadjoura. The Ambassador met with partners on the ground and discussed with them their activities, challenges and future prospects. Accompanying the US Ambassador was a delegation from BPRM’s regional office in Addis Ababa and main office in Washington DC on a monitoring mission to assess the conditions of refugees and services in the camp. The French Ambassador to Djibouti also visited Markazi camp briefly on 23 May on an unofficial visit. He met with UNHCR staff and visited the health facilities in the camp.

Ethiopia:

- On 24 May, the agencies part of the UNCT Joint Programme on Human Trafficking and Migration (IOM, UNHCR, ILO and UNODC) agreed to establish a Migration Working Group, to meet on a monthly basis to discuss joint initiatives and other relevant issues on mixed migration. This is the first forum established between UN agencies in Ethiopia to regularly discuss migration issues.

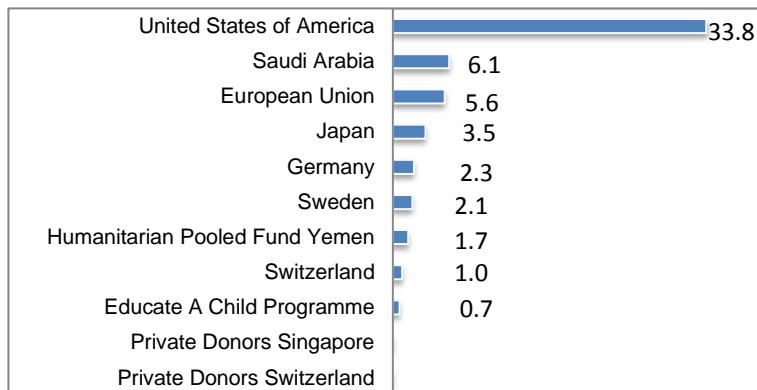
FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Total recorded contributions for the operation as at 31 May 2016 amount to **US \$ 56.7 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.

Major donors of unrestricted and regional funds in 2016: Sweden (78 M) | United States of America (78 M) | Netherlands (46 M) | Norway (40 M) | Australia (31 M) | Denmark (24 M) | Private Donors Spain (16 M) | Canada (16 M) | Switzerland (15 M) | Germany (13 M)

Funding received (in million USD)



Contacts:

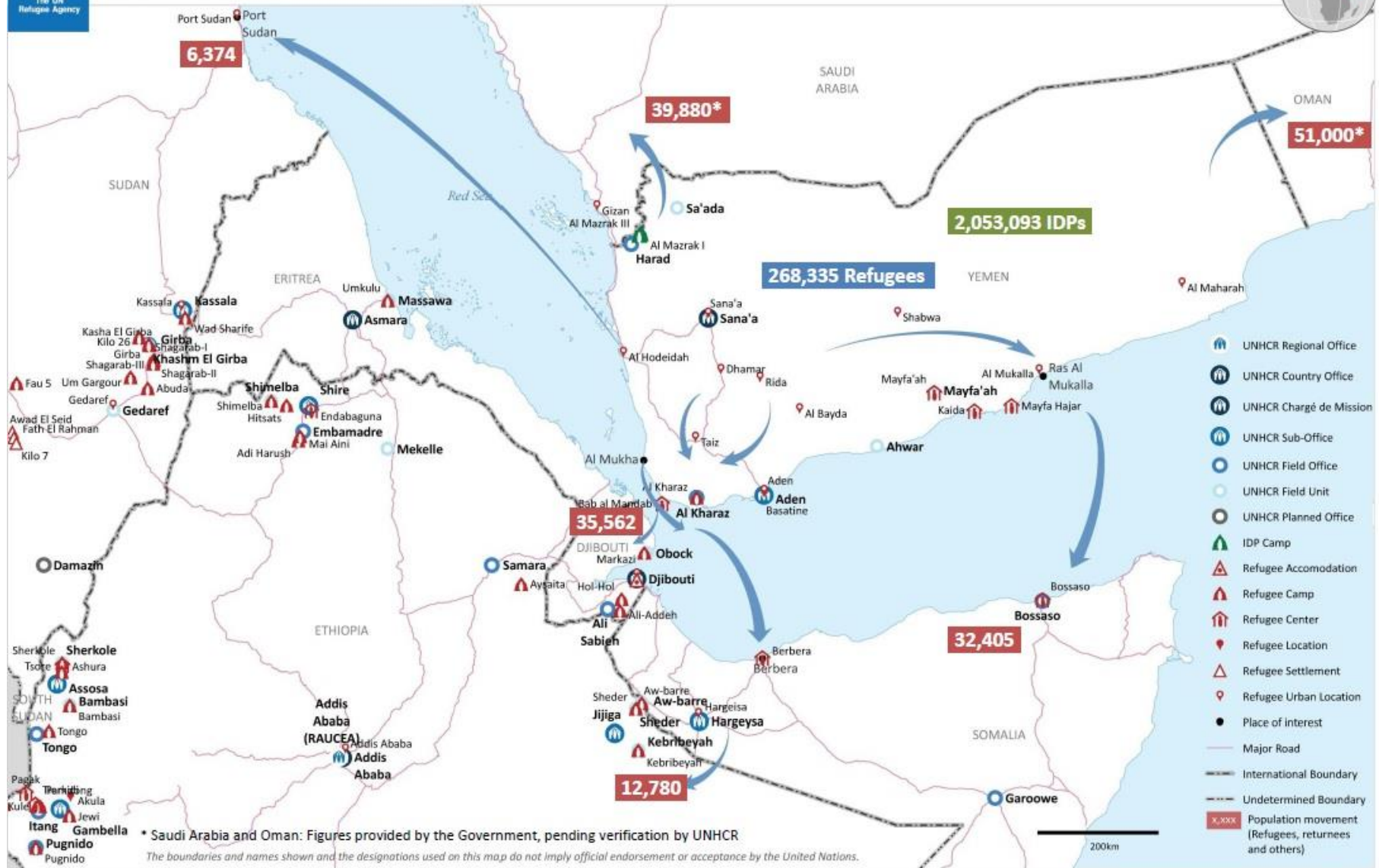
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Yemen Situation: Regional Map (total population movement out of Yemen: 178,001)

31 May 2016



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