

## YEMEN

### UNHCR OPERATIONAL UPDATE

February 14 2017

#### KEY FIGURES

**2,007,216**

Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) \*

**1,027,674**

IDP returnees

**724,846**

recipients of NFIs since March 2015

**18.8**

million people in need

**263,432**

people reached by the Protection cluster led by UNHCR in 2016

**279,211**

registered refugees and asylum seekers

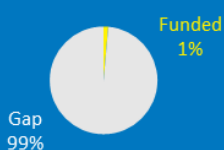
**1,839**

new arrivals to Yemeni coast since 1 January 2017

#### FUNDING

**USD 99.5 million**

requested for the IDP and refugee operation in 2017



#### HIGHLIGHTS

- **UNHCR is mobilizing rapid assistance with partners to help those displaced principally from Mokha and Dhubab in Taizz governorate. Challenges in response include heavy fighting and ongoing military operations which are impeding humanitarian access,** and comprehensive displacement data is currently difficult to verify. Assessment missions and distributions are underway, and UNHCR has pre-positioned emergency stocks in Al Hudaydah, comprising of emergency shelter kits and household assistance consisting of mattresses, sleeping mats, blankets, kitchen utensils and wash buckets.
- **Latest figures released by the 12th Task Force on Population Movement, co-led by UNHCR and IOM, identify 2,007,216 IDPs and 1,027,674 IDP returnees in Yemen.** There is a slight decrease in the numbers of displacement figures overall due to further data collection and validation procedures. The report continues to identify food as the overwhelmingly reported need by IDPs, with 75% of informants reporting it as the priority when compared to 66% in the previous report, in addition to access to income (7%), Shelter/Housing (7%) and cooking/washing water (4%). Priority needs for returnees also continue to be reported as food (36%), financial support (19%), psychosocial support (18%).
- **The United Nations and humanitarian partners launched on 8 February an international appeal for US\$2.1 billion to provide life-saving assistance to 12 million people in Yemen in 2017.** This is the largest consolidated humanitarian appeal for Yemen ever launched.



*Distribution takes place for blankets and solar lanterns in Dhamar through CCCM partner Spirit Youth Foundation*

# UPDATE ON ACHIEVEMENTS

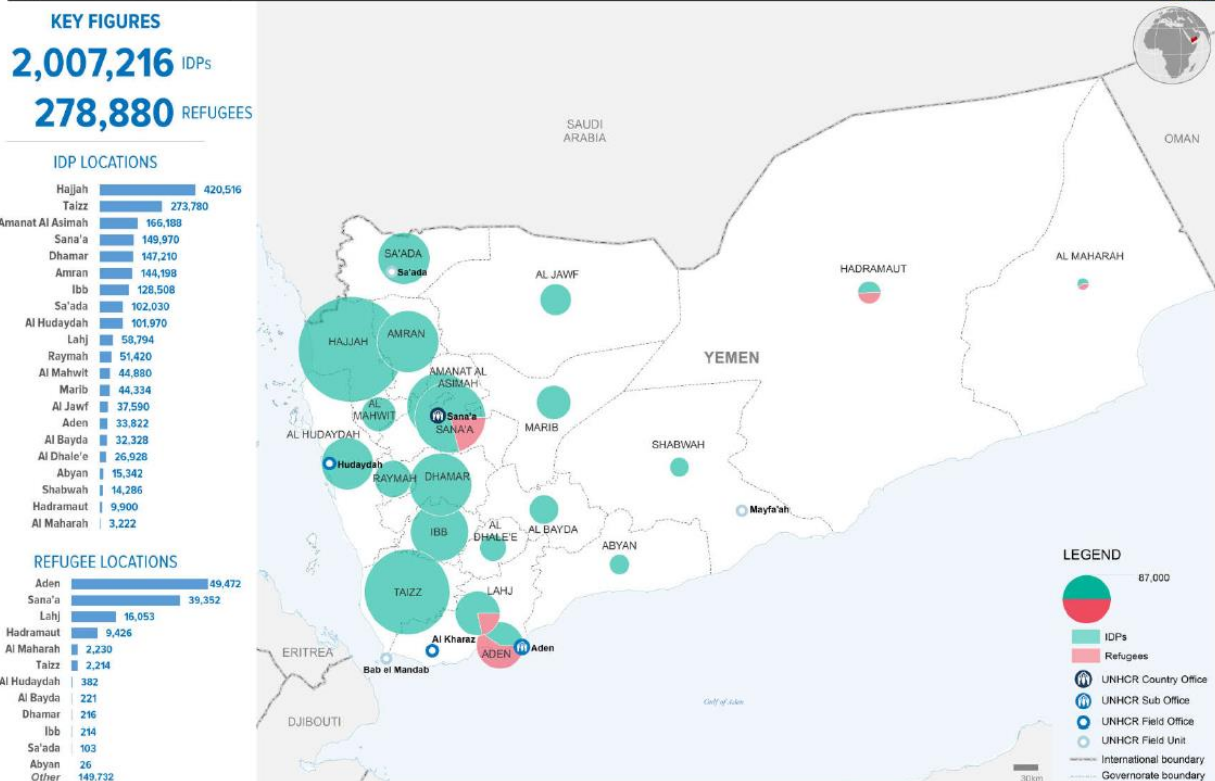
## Operational Context

The onset of conflict in March 2015 has led to a dramatic deterioration in Yemen’s security, political and social sectors impacting both Yemenis and refugees alike in their struggle to find food, shelter and security. Continued hostilities are hastening a humanitarian catastrophe, with civilians paying the highest price including casualties, death and displacement. The impact of ongoing fighting has been felt with the already precarious humanitarian situation substantially deteriorating as a result of damage to civilian infrastructure and the disruption of what were already threadbare basic services affecting refugees, asylum seekers and Yemenis. More than 18.8 million people are in need of humanitarian protection assistance, including 10.3 million people in acute need who urgently require life-saving assistance in at least one sector. A further three million people have been forced from their homes, including two million who remain internally displaced. Of those internally displaced, close to 90% have been displaced for more than 10 months. In addition, Yemen is a historic transit hub for mixed migratory movements of refugees, asylum seekers and migrants from the Horn of Africa to the Arabian Peninsula and beyond, who in search of safety now find themselves among the most vulnerable population in a country at war.

The beginning of 2017 was marked by an escalation in hostilities across Yemen. Resident Coordinator/Humanitarian Coordinator Jamie McGoldrick, announced that the death toll in Yemen has reached 10,000 people, with 40,000 wounded as the conflict approaches two years old. Food prices soared with an increase of 33% recorded as of 14 February impacting families as they struggle to survive. UNHCR is deeply concerned about the plight of thousands of Yemeni civilians fleeing or trapped in heavy confrontation between the warring parties in Taizz governorate. Thousands of civilians are caught in the crossfire, with TPFM estimating that 41,000 people have fled the Red Sea districts of Mokha and Dhubab. Fighting is affecting essential services including medical, fuel delivery and water supply. Whilst others caught up by the violence remain trapped inside Al Mokha and Dhubab, intensified hostilities in Al Hudaydah are also making it difficult for those attempting to escape to safety. The area north of Al Mokha which includes the coastal road to Al Hudaydah remains subject to attack, placing those trying to flee at great risk during flight. Many displaced are being hosted by local families but remain in precarious conditions and in urgent need of aid.

### Yemen

Population of concern | as of 31 December 2016



The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

# IDP PROGRAMME

UNHCR has played an instrumental role in developing a comprehensive IDP strategy for the Humanitarian Country Team to ensure a coordinated and multi-sector response for IDPs in Yemen, taking into consideration the specific needs and vulnerabilities of children and adults at all phases of internal displacement. The strategy, which is to be rolled out in specific locations of large-scale displacement and which is to be tailored to specific needs and locally available response capacity. Most IDPs have lost their livelihoods and have sought shelter with relatives and friends, in schools, public and abandoned buildings, makeshift shelters or in the open with little to no protection.

## Achievements

### Protection

UNHCR leads the Protection Cluster in Yemen, and in coordination with other UN agencies and organisations is working to provide protection to displaced people across Yemen. UNHCR is working through five strategic operational hubs that cover Sana'a, Sa'ada, Al Hudaydah, Taizz/Ibb, and Aden. As lead of the Protection cluster, UNHCR, along with its partners are expanding outreach to communities of large concentrations of IDPs and their host communities, by providing psychosocial care and legal assistance. Target populations are identified through protection monitoring and information collected through community-based protection networks.

### Response

#### Workshop for National NGO partners

The Protection Cluster led by UNHCR, organized a two day workshop in collaboration with Yemen Humanitarian Forum (HFY). The workshop took place in Sanaa with 20 participants from national NGOs and focused on providing an introduction on the cluster approach at global and national level, protection definition, protection mainstreaming and normative framework/IDP national policy.

#### Protection Cluster to deliver International Humanitarian Law (IHL) trainings

The Protection Cluster (PC) is preparing to deliver IHL trainings in Yemen to various actors including PC members at hub level. The trainings on 'Humanitarian Principles and Protection Programming' will reach local authorities, including ExU, Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation, Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour during 2017 and aim to improve the delivery of protection and to address any barriers that protection actors may face.

#### Assistance for families in Sa'ada

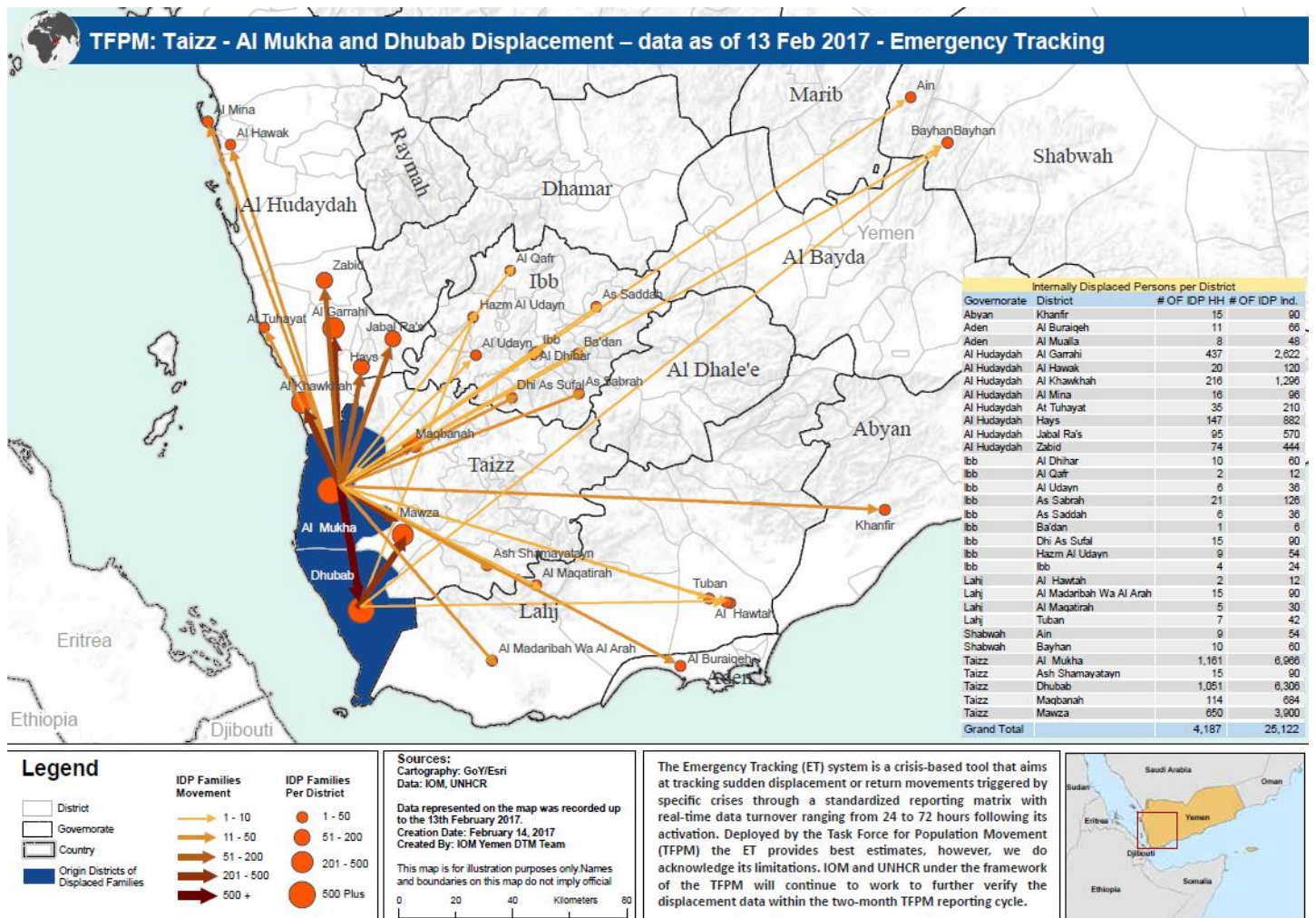
Additional support for IDPs in Sa'ada include the UNHCR community centre run by Al Bena, which receives hundreds of cases a week for psychosocial support, legal counselling, and medical referrals for both medication and hospital treatment. The centre is a safe location for stress relief for children with activities run on a daily basis and also awareness sessions on various issues including support to children during crisis and legal issues such as accessing personal documentation.

#### Release of data from the 12th Task Force on Population Movement

The Task Force on Population Movement (TPFM), co-led by UNHCR and IOM released the latest snapshot on displacement and return in Yemen providing indicative findings related to displacement/return trends, area of origin, and duration of displacement, shelter situation and top priority needs. The report, which covers the identifying 2,007,216 million IDPs and 1,027,674 IDP returnees in Yemen. There is a slight decrease in the numbers of displacement figures overall due to further data collection and validation procedures. The report continues to identify food as the overwhelmingly reported need by IDPs (75% of informants reporting it as the priority when compared to 66% in the previous report), in addition to access

to income (7%), Shelter/Housing (7%) and cooking/washing water (4%). Priority needs for returnees also continue to be reported as food (36%), financial support (19%) and psycho social support (18%). The full report is available here: <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/yemen/infographic/report-task-force-population-movement-12th-report-january-2017>

The TPFM is developing as a tool, now used by all clusters and stakeholders, and is better informing the humanitarian response as an early indicator of requirements on the ground. In February, the TPFM activated a new Emergency Tracking (ET) methodology for the first time in Yemen, in response to the displacement in/from Taizz governorate. The ET methodology will be deployed at the onset of a complex crisis to track displacement figures and locations. Data gathered will be shared with Area HCT for coordination of follow-up assessments by sub-national Clusters. The latest report on Taizz displacement - as of 12 February - has identified 6,882 families (41,292 individuals) to have recently fled from districts throughout Taizz. Specifically from the districts of Al Mukha, Dhubab and Al Waziyah, 5,714 families (34,284 individuals) have fled. UNHCR and IOM, under the framework of the TPFM, will continue to work to further verify displacement data within the two-month TPFM reporting cycle.



Emergency tracking from Mokha and Dhubab situations as of 13 February, TPFM

## Shelter and NFIs

UNHCR is the lead of the Camp Coordination Camp Management (CCCM), Non-Food Item (NFI), and Shelter Cluster supporting partners in ensuring that families in need are receiving adequate and appropriate assistance. UNHCR has distributed NFIs to over 724,846 IDPs since the escalation of the conflict in 20 of the 21 governorates. NFI assistance includes blankets, mattresses, plastic sheeting, kitchen sets along with distribution of emergency shelter kits to families

whose houses have been heavily damaged and destroyed. Despite extremely challenging circumstances, UNHCR and partners are doing their utmost to deliver essential life-saving supplies and services in an impartial and neutral manner.

## Response

### Emergency Response to conflict in Taizz

In response to the escalation in conflict in Taizz governorate, UNHCR began mobilizing rapid assistance together with partners to help those displaced. Challenges in response include heavy fighting and ongoing military operations which are impeding humanitarian access, and comprehensive displacement data is currently difficult to verify. As lead of the Shelter/CCCM and Protection Clusters, UNHCR is mobilising cluster member agencies and formulating coordinated response plans.

UNHCR assistance and assessments continue in response to the displacement in and from Al Mokha and Al Dhubab. In Hudaydah, UNHCR partner has carried out a shelter needs assessment for IDPs in Al Garrahi district, 329 families identified as in need, with NFI and shelter kits for those families loaded and will be distributed in coming days. UNHCR has completed distribution of NFI and shelter kits for 519 IDP families (3,051 individuals) in Al Khawkhah district.

In Ibb Governorate, 65 families have received NFI kits in three locations. In addition, in response to the caseload of IDPs fled from Al Mokha and Dhubab districts in Taizz governorate, UNHCR has mobilized IP ACTED to conduct rapid assessment in the locations where they have been displaced. A total of 65 IDP families/ 362 individuals, of whom the majority are children, were assessed and supported with NFIs. Food, shelter and WASH are identified as three top priority needs of the displaced population. Moreover, five unaccompanied children, two women who are expecting and a further two cases with specific needs were identified.

In Taizz Governorate, UNHCR partners will distribute NFIs to 1,500 families in Al Mokha during the coming days, and a further 1,000 families in Maqbanah will receive NFIs in the coming week. Protection cluster partner also carried out a field mission to recently displaced families in Maqbanah. The situation on the ground is distressing with families lacking humanitarian aid including food and shelter support. The partner observed 26 families sheltering in a school and 27 families sheltering under trees.

### Assessments and Assistance for IDP families in Sa'ada

Despite ongoing aerial military operations across Sa'ada governorate, UNHCR jointly with ExU, continue to conduct assessments in Sa'ada. The joint mission's assessed 511 IDP families, consisting of 2,727 individuals in the Dammaj area of As Safra district, along with a further 131 displaced families and 77 students. Emergency assessments were carried out by UNHCR for a further 320 families. All families visited were identified as in need of support of non-food items and a number also in need of shelter kits which will be distributed as soon security situation permits.

UNHCR distributed NFIs to 217 IDP families (1,291 individuals) in Al Magash and Dammaj areas in As Safra district of Sa'ada. Winterization efforts also continue through UNHCR partner NFDHR, with blankets and solar lanterns reaching Razih & Baqim districts for close to 10,000 families. UNHCR's community centre, through partner Al Bena, continues to receive IDP cases, with 744 cases approaching the centre in the past week. The centre provides services for IDPs including, psychosocial support, legal counselling, medical referrals and awareness sessions.

### Core relief items reach Vulnerable Families

Distribution of core relief items continued across Yemen for IDPs through UNHCR implementing partners, reaching 48,367 individuals (over 7,760 families) since the start of the year. Distributions took place in Taizz, Hajjah, Amant Alasimah, and Al Hudaydah. In addition, hundreds of people sheltering in schools, hospitals and sports clubs in Ras Al-Ara'a districts, in Lahj governorate, received much needed non-food items, including mattresses, blankets, and kitchen sets.



*Support including shelter, NFI and winterization assistance reach in-need families across Yemen.*

### **Rental Subsidies distributed in Hajjah and Hudaydah governorates**

Rental subsidies covering three months were distributed through UNHCR partner, Al Amal to 3,000 extremely vulnerable internally displaced families in Hajjah Governorate, and a further 3,204 families in Al Hudaydah Governorate allowing families to ensure a roof over their heads as the crisis exacerbates an already challenging situation. The financial support is in line with UNHCR policy globally as displaced families find themselves seeking safety in urban centres. In late October, UNHCR Headquarters announced the doubling of funds for cash based assistance to refugees globally by 2020 in the context of growing urbanization and search for alternatives to camps. UNHCR is currently providing cash based interventions in 60 countries and during 2017, as part of the drive to reach 2020 target, UNHCR will introduce and expand cash based assistance to vulnerable refugees and people in need of help in 15 additional countries. For more information on the UNHCR “Policy on Cash-Based Interventions,” at <http://www.unhcr.org/protection/operations/581363414/policy-on-cash-based-interventions.html>

## **REFUGEE PROGRAMME**

Yemen is a historic transit hub for mixed migratory movements of refugees, asylum seekers and migrants from the Horn of Africa to the Arabian Peninsula and beyond, who in search of safety now find themselves among the most vulnerable population in a country at war. The current number of refugees and asylum seekers of various nationalities stands at 279,880, 91% of whom are from Somalia. The vast majority of refugees live in urban centres such as Sana’a and Aden,

while some 18,000 refugees live in Kharaz refugee camp in Lahj governorate, 150km west of Aden. Most refugees live in precarious conditions often lacking the basic necessities and face increasing insecurity along with key protection concerns.

The escalation of the conflict since March 2015 has further exacerbated protection challenges, including increasing lawlessness, arbitrary arrest and detention of refugees and asylum seekers, trafficking and smuggling. Many refugees have been struggling with depleted financial means and reduced coping mechanisms at their disposal. A number of urban refugees have been compelled to relocate to rural areas for security reasons.

## Achievements



UNHCR has maintained a collaborative relationship with authorities to safeguard the protection space and improve access to basic services for people of concern across the country. Regular interaction is maintained with authorities at national and local level, with implementing and operational partners, and with refugee community leaders.

### Response

#### Launch of campaign on dangers of Yemen sea crossings

UNHCR launched a major campaign to spread awareness about the dangers of crossing the Gulf of Aden and Red Sea from Africa to Yemen. The campaign, which highlights the conditions and rising risks in Yemen, has been implemented with the help of prominent musicians from the region. Prolonged conflict and insecurity facilitate the proliferation of criminal networks targeting new arrivals, women and children are at particular risk of sexual violence and trafficking. UNHCR has received reports of physical and sexual abuse, deprivation of food and water, abduction, extortion and forced labour by smugglers and criminal networks as well as arbitrary arrest, detention and deportation. The importance of the campaign was further underlined on Friday, 3rd of February, when eight Somalis lost their lives on the coast of the Lahj governorate, when they fell overboard a smugglers boat which was carrying up to 100 refugees. More than 117,000 refugees and migrants arrived in Yemen in 2016.

#### Decrease in new arrivals in line with Yemeni coast guard increasing presence

A decrease in new arrivals was witnessed so far in 2017, with 1,779 individuals in total approaching UNHCR (1,335 at Mayfa'a Reception Center (MRC) and 444 at Bab Al Mandab). New arrivals meeting with UNHCR report harrowing journeys at the hands of smugglers. The decrease is mostly attributed to the deployment of Yemeni security forces, including the Coast Guard, along the coastal line of Shabwa province, which has reportedly disrupted the presence of smugglers. In addition, it is reported that tightened restrictions by the Puntland government, with the establishment of an inspection and investigation centre coupled with an increase in the number of check points along the route, could also be considered factors leading to the slight decrease in new arrivals. The total new arrivals to Yemen in 2016 stands at 117,107 people, comprised mainly of Ethiopians (82%) followed by Somalis (17%).

#### Verification and Biometric Registration Commences in Kharaz Camp

UNHCR Field Office Kharaz commenced the verification and biometric registration process on 7 February when the Office, supported by partners, conducted a fixing exercise for the refugees who are living in Kharaz refugee camp. Thirty trained volunteers participated in the exercise covering the entire camp in one day.

#### Community service and protection missions

UNHCR mission took place to the Somali Refugee Community Centre and the United Refugees Centre, where staff had to opportunity to speak with refugees and community leaders and to hear their concerns, and to join the graduation ceremony of seven mobile maintenance students. Other missions taking place includes the Al-Rahabi health centre, and the SDF and Azal University where UNHCR met 17 students, who are recipient of the CSSW diploma and bachelor

programme. In addition, as part of regular community based protection outreach, 34 home visits were carried out by child protection partner SDF.

## Education

The government has mainstreamed access for refugees to education – including vocational and technical skills training. Refugee children have access to public education facilities at primary and secondary level. Also, children are provided with specific protection services by UNHCR and its partners. This includes appropriate legal support for children who are victims of violence and also physical protection for children at risk of violations of their basic rights.

## Health

The government has mainstreamed access for refugees into public health services, and provide primary health care, including treatment of conflict related injuries, chronic medical conditions and emergency cases. Prevention and response to GBV and psychosocial counselling are provided through UNHCR's partner-run refugee community centres.

### Response

#### Ongoing Medical assistance for refugees and host communities

UNHCR has launched awareness sessions for all partners in Sana'a to further educate and raise awareness about cholera. Brochures and posters have been disseminated, sessions are taking place in the health centres, community centres, and all partners' centres in Sana'a to reach the refugees. Awareness has been raised also thanks to teams mobilized to visit members of the community in their homes. Awareness sessions on other issues including breastfeeding, HIV along with cholera reached 1,349 refugees and Yemenis since the beginning of the year.

Additionally, to bolster the health response in Yemen and build understanding of HIV, throughout 2016 UNHCR through partners carried out a number of trainings, awareness courses, and held dialogues about discrimination and stigma against people living with HIV Ministry of Health (including hospitals, HIV counselling centres), Ministry of Interior (including police and immigration department, crime investigation department, drug control department) and the Yemeni Women Union.

Since the beginning of the year, at the Al-Rahabi & Al-Hafi health centres in Sana'a, UNHCR's partner provided medical consultations to 1,051 refugees and 1,542 Yemenis from the host community, in addition to provision of essential medicines, psychological support, HIV treatments and tests, life-saving and referral services and reproductive health services. UNHCR's partner in health centres in Kharaz camp and Basateen (Aden) provided medical consultations and essential medicines for over 1,300 refugees and asylum seekers and 920 Yemenis from the host community, cases also received reproductive health services, mental health and psychological support, vaccinations and emergency treatment. Community outreach awareness sessions were provided to 2,851 refugees and Yemenis covering various issues such as watery diarrhea, nutrition, measles, dengue fever and reproductive health. At the Mayfa'a reception centre, new arrivals received medical consultations and vaccinations.

## WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP

### UN-Yemen joint security team on mission to Aden

Inter-agency mission took place to assess and to test the security measures implemented at the UN enclave and guesthouse in Aden. As the Aden hub lead agency, UNHCR has completed all required work to accommodate UN international staff in the enclave, while providing for their safety and security. The Inter-Agency security team were satisfied with the measures implemented and await the wider decision by UN New York for the lifting of evacuation status, which would provide for permanent presence of international staff operating in Aden.

### Humanitarian partners launch US\$2.1 billion appeal for 2017

The United Nations and humanitarian partners launched on 8 February an international appeal for US\$2.1 billion to provide life-saving assistance to 12 million people in Yemen in 2017. This is the largest consolidated humanitarian appeal for Yemen ever launched. For more information see; <http://ochayemen.org/hrp-2017/>

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