

YEMEN

1 – 14 January 2018

KEY FIGURES

22.2 million
people in need

2,014,026
Internally Displaced Persons
(IDPs)

89 per cent of IDPs
displaced for more than a
year

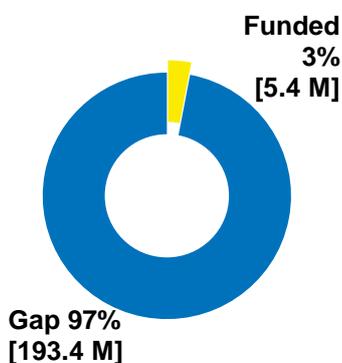
956,076 IDP returnees

1,015,375 recipients of
CRIs since March 2015

280,539 refugees and
asylum seekers

Funding

USD **198.7 M**
requested in 2018



Operational Update

UNHCR is responding to new displacement as families continue to flee hostilities in Hays and Al Khowkha on Yemen's western coast.

An estimated 1,457 families (10,200 individuals) have fled to other parts of Hudaydah, along with neighbouring governorates of Taizz, Ibb, Dhamar, with a further estimated 1,500 families (10,500 individuals) also traveling south to Aden, Abyan and Lahj since December of last year. The needs of those forced to flee this latest escalation in fighting are immense, and UNHCR and partner assessments reveal families urgently need food, shelter and household items, as well as nutrition, health care and sanitation. Families have sought temporary lodging in abandoned buildings, shelters run by local authorities, NGOs and host families, with entire families often sharing one room. While relieved to have found safety following harrowing journeys, IDPs emphasized their reliance on humanitarian assistance in order to survive.

UNHCR teams are on the ground providing relief as part of Inter-Agency efforts, and monitoring new arrivals. A distribution of 500 core relief item kits, which include mattresses, blankets, hygiene items and kitchen sets in Al-Jarahi and Jabal Ras districts of Hudaydah Governorate has been completed, supporting 421 newly displaced IDP families and 79 vulnerable households from the host community. UNHCR also participated in a joint multi-sector assessment mission to Foqom area in Aden Governorate, where the team assessed the needs of 92 families with an urgent response planned. UNHCR is relying on donor contributions in order to ramp up the delivery of critical humanitarian assistance. At the end of 2017, UNHCR's operations were only 50 per cent funded and as of mid-January 2018, just 3 per cent of UNHCR's much needed funds have been received.



UNHCR responds to newly displaced families fleeing hostilities in Al Khowkha. Among them, Haiat and her four children, sheltering in a run-down building in Foqom, Aden following three days travel. Photo: UNHCR/ N Schmidthaeussler

IDP Response

UNHCR's winter assistance response is well-underway, with close to 60 per cent of the distribution to 18,451 families (129,157 individuals) now complete. Such is the level of desperation among IDPs, that partners' offices and distribution locations have been overwhelmed by IDPs in anticipation of receiving the USD 200 assistance. The one-off winter cash grants are intended to provide extremely vulnerable displaced families currently sheltering in high altitude areas with a degree of relief, as temperatures reach as low as 2 degrees Celsius. Increasing economic hardship and the rising cost of fuel have impacted IDP families' ability to insulate or heat their shelters, or clothe children appropriately to protect from the winter chill. Distributions are taking place across northern governorates including Sa'ada, Sana'a, and Hajjah.

The number of displaced families to receive rental subsidies has been increased by UNHCR to reach an additional 6,000 households covering 25,000 families (175,000 individuals) in total. The increase is in response to greater needs in a worsening situation fueled by ongoing hostilities and economic hardship. Rental subsidies are a cornerstone of the UNHCR response, targeting IDPs in urban settings, addressing cross-cutting shelter and protection needs by providing families with a financial safety net from eviction and dangerous coping strategies, including child labour, early marriage and withdrawal from school for children. The USD 300 cash grant covers rent for three months, supports local communities and since 2017 has been received by 14,816 families in Aden, Lahj, Taizz, Amran, Marib, Dhamar, Amanat Al Asimah, Hajjah, Hudaydah and Sa'ada following assessment and verification of their needs. Families have reported smooth distributions at financial services providers countrywide, with UNHCR undertaking frequent monitoring missions.

A UNHCR shelter project for a vulnerable displaced community in Abs district, Hajjah Governorate is ongoing despite a worsening security situation. During 2017, 680 shelters were completed in settlements which are home to families displaced by conflict for more than two years. The traditional shelters were designed in partnership and consultation with the community, and are constructed using local materials with thatched roofs, mud walls, plastic sheeting and a wooden frame for increased comfort and privacy. In total, 1,700 homes will be constructed, supporting a community of some 12,000 people.

Refugee Response

Despite a dramatic deterioration in conditions in Yemen, new arrivals, among them children, continue to reach the country from the Horn of Africa. The average of number of monthly arrivals is estimated at 5,000 individuals. New arrivals include Somalis fleeing conflict and in search of security in Yemen, and non-Somalis, many of whom arrive hoping to transit through the country, of which some 10 per cent seek asylum. Refugees and migrants alike face life-threatening conditions at sea, at risk of abduction, extortion, physical abuse and arbitrary detention upon arrival in Yemen. They arrive dehydrated, malnourished and often in shock, and in urgent need of assistance. A large majority are unaccompanied children. In 2017, UNHCR in Aden registered over 199 unaccompanied children; an 8 per cent increase compared to 2016. In the past week alone, two unaccompanied children from Ethiopia arrived in Yemen describing distressing experiences including being detained by smugglers, with pressure placed on families to pay for their release. A further three unaccompanied children were counselled by one of UNHCR's child protection partners, Intersos. In 2017, UNHCR launched the "Dangerous Crossings" campaign, highlighting the risks of traveling to Yemen, and in 2018 UNHCR will continue to roll out the campaign locally in the Horn of Africa countries.

UNHCR continues to support clinics and hospitals to ensure refugee access to life-saving healthcare, reaching some 65,000 refugees and members of the host community at four hospitals and clinics. UNHCR provides medicines, equipment, and care for survivors of sexual and gender based violence, community outreach, mental health and psychological support services and secondary health care, including specialised care and referral services. UNHCR is also responding to concern regarding Diphtheria, with a team of health outreach workers reaching over 3,000 refugees and Yemenis with prevention awareness sessions since early December. Thus far, there have been no Diphtheria cases reported among the refugee community.

Contact: Aoife McDonnell, External Relations Officer, mcdonnel@unhcr.org

For more information, please follow us on Twitter at @UNHCRYemen and on Facebook at UNHCRYemen