





KEY FIGURES

 **22.2M**
People in need

 **2M** IDPs
89% of IDPs displaced
for more than a year

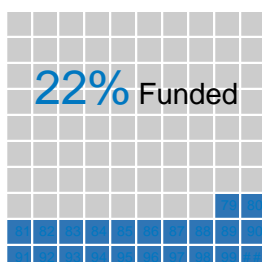
 **956k**
IDP returnees

CRI **1M** recipients
of CRIs since March 2015

 **280k**
refugees and
asylum seekers

 **\$198.7M**
requested in 2018

\$44.3M funded
as of 17 April 2018



OPERATIONAL UPDATE

UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, is extremely concerned by a worsening situation for newly-arrived refugees, asylum seekers and migrants in Yemen. Conflict, deteriorating economic conditions and now increasing criminality are exposing people to harm and exploitation. As prolonged conflict and insecurity threatens state institutions and weakens the rule of law, there are growing accounts of extortion, trafficking and deportations. Many persons of concern are arrested, detained, abused, and pushed out to sea or forcibly returned by the very same smugglers who brought them to Yemen.

State and non-state actors are effectively controlling detention facilities where new arrivals are being held, and UNHCR perseveres in working with all actors to ensure that those being detained are treated humanely and with dignity in accordance with refugee and human rights law. UNHCR also seeks unfettered access to assist those in need of international protection in accordance with international law and advocates for any return arrangements for non-refugees to be done in coordination with international agencies, ensuring humane and dignified treatment in conditions of safety. UNHCR has been supporting authorities in Yemen to receive, register and document refugees and asylum seekers and is seeking to increase support to the Immigration, Passport and Naturalization Authority (IPNA) to further improve reception arrangements for new arrivals seeking international protection. UNHCR continues to work with the Ministry of Interior to access detention facilities and pursue solutions for persons of concern.

UNHCR is also deeply shocked and saddened at the loss of life at a compound sheltering 128 IDP families, in an aerial attack in Hudaydah on 2 April, killing 16 people, including 12 children. Those impacted by the incident were sheltering in the compound on the outskirts of Hudaydah City, and were recently displaced by hostilities in frontline areas of Hays, Al Khowkha, Al Jarrahi and Jabal Al Ras. UNHCR and operational partner Danish Refugee Council, provided emergency cash and core relief items (CRIs) to the affected families, based on a rapid assessment by local protection partner, Hudaydah Girls Foundation. The incident demonstrates yet again the extreme threats facing IDPs, who in their desperate search for safety, continue to be exposed to danger. UNHCR appeals to all parties to the conflict to ensure their utmost in the protection of civilians.



Juma is one of two million people in Yemen who have been forced to flee their homes due to conflict. Photo: UNHCR/ S. Mantoo

IDP Response

UNHCR has established its sixth IDP Community Centre in Yemen, responding to the protection needs of IDPs both in Ibb and neighbouring Taizz Governorate. Large numbers of IDPs are approaching the centre in Ibb on a daily basis, requiring various forms of assistance including psycho-social, legal and emergency financial support. UNHCR's partner managing the centre, Yemen Women's Union has been actively engaged in outreach efforts and providing information on available services, given the large cross-cutting protection and assistance needs displayed through initial assessments. **In Aden**, UNHCR is working alongside the Civil Registration Office to expedite procedures and ensure that new born children of IDP households receive birth certificates in a timely manner, along with other vital documentation.

The latest Civilian Impact Report released by the UNHCR-led Protection Cluster, reported a 21% decrease in incidents during February and March with 252 recorded incidents, compared to the previous reporting period. Yemen's northern governorate of Sa'ada continues to bear the brunt of hostilities, recording the highest number of incidents, 141, which was more than twice as many as the next highest, Hudaydah, where 65 incidents were recorded. As a result of this decrease in incidents, there was a corresponding fall in the number of civilian casualties, which reduced from 818 to 439, a 46% decrease. Alarmingly, the percentage of civilian casualties that were children or women more than doubled from 16% to 36% in the two month period, although the overall number of civilian casualties decreased. UNHCR continues to respond to the needs of communities impacted by hostilities.

On Yemen's western coastline, where an increasing number of IDPs have fled to areas of perceived safety, UNHCR continued its assistance and outreach efforts. Emergency kits containing essential household items were distributed to 662 newly displaced families in Hudaydah City, reaching some 4,500 individuals. A further 1,885 families were identified as in need of core relief items (CRIs) or emergency shelter kits during an assessment in Qanwes district, with distribution to take place shortly thereafter. Also in Hudaydah, reflecting the needs of displaced families in urban areas, a distribution of rental assistance is underway for 250 households. The US \$300 cash grant will support families newly displaced from frontlines including Hays and Al Khowkha to cover their rent for a period of three months.

In neighbouring Hajjah Governorate, a distribution of CRIs with partner Jeel Al Bena reached over 1,000 families, supporting some 6,515 individuals in Kua'ydinah district. UNHCR continues to expand its cash programme in response to the increasingly protracted nature of the conflict, with 158 IDP families in Abs district also receiving financial support. **In Sa'ada, where intensifying hostilities continue to cause displacement, UNHCR provided CRIs to 973 families, reaching close to 6,500 people in Baqim district.** In light of the dire needs of the IDP families, a further distribution of emergency shelter kits to 500 families will take place. Rental assistance is also underway in Razih district, targeting 500 extremely vulnerable households.

UNHCR continues its efforts to deliver assistance in frontlines areas, with preparations underway to assist 3,800 families in Taizz. Due to the volatile situation, the distribution of CRIs in the districts of Dhubab and Mokha will be done through partners and coordinated from the UNHCR office in Aden, providing much needed relief to conflict-affected communities. Shelter assessments and focus group discussions to determine additional needs will also be conducted during the distribution. In addition, in the governorate of Lahj, 818 families displaced from Yemen's frontlines, received CRIs in Tuban district.

Refugee Response

Since February this year, UNHCR are working on finding solutions for some 100 new arrivals to Yemen who were arrested and are currently arbitrarily detained by the authorities. Those individuals have been faced with threats of deportation, as well as subjected to extortion and various forms of abuse either at the hands of traffickers or during their detention. Survivors have described to UNHCR being shot at, regular beatings, rapes of adults and children, forced nudity, denial of food and being forced to witness summary executions.

The 12th Assisted Spontaneous Return (ASR) boat movement departed from the Port of Aden on 9 April, with 126 Somalis on board. A total of 1,613 individuals have now landed safely in Berbera, Somalia as part of the UNHCR ASR programme, in coordination with IOM. Some 3,700 Somalis have been counselled at Return Help Desks established in Kharaz camp and Basateen, with efforts underway to extend the programme to Sana'a in support of those Somali refugees who wish to return home.