UNHCR The UN Refugee Agency | Yemen

Shelter and NFIs

Non-food item distribution targeting displaced and host families in northern parts of Yemen, Sa'ada governorate. ©UNHCR

Context in Yemen:

Yemen is among the worst humanitarian crises globally. An estimated 7.5 million people need shelter and non-food item (NFI) assistance (HNRP 2025).

The protracted crisis and conflict has caused severe housing damage and destruction as well as mass internal displacement, with 4.8 million still internally displaced in 2025.

Related economic hardship and loss of livelihoods exacerbates vulnerabilities and reduces capacity to address shelter needs. An estimated 308,000 people are at high risk of eviction due to unaffordable rent.

Without proper shelter options, individuals and families live in conditions of reduced dignity and are exposed to greater protection risks. For example, harmful coping strategies such as child marriage and begging become more prevalent.

Approach in Yemen: UNHCR's shelter and NFI response targets vulnerable IDPs, returnees, and host community members. The support includes a range of interventions depending on the circumstances and needs of an individual or household and is targeted based on assessments to ensure assistance goes to those most in need. The range of assistance is designed to address emergency needs, while also helping reduce reliance on humanitarian assistance over the longer-term, including by supporting people to return when conditions permit.

➔ **In-kind non-food item (NFI) kits:**

Displaced households often flee without their belongings. Floods wash everything away. NFI kits ensure a household has the basic items needed for day-to-day life and a minimum standard of living. NFI kits include kitchen sets, blankets, sleeping mats, mosquito nets, buckets, jerry cans, solar lamps, and plastic sheets. In SO Aden 356 HHs benefited from in-kind tent distribution.

➔ **Transitional shelter units (TSUs)**

TSUs are more substantial shelters than ESKs, with a concrete base and bricks or a metal frame, and last for longer. They provide greater protection from the elements and improve living conditions. TSU designs are tailored to the location in which they will be used to ensure they are adapted to the climate.

➔ **Emergency shelter kits (ESK and NFI)**

New displacements happen all the time. Floods wash shelters away. Fires destroy shelters. In emergency situations, households need a shelter solution quickly. ESKs are a quick shelter solution which ensure minimum shelter conditions are met, either delivered in-kind or using a cash modality. In SO Aden **911** HHs benefited from ESK assistance, and **335** HHs benefited from NFIs assistance through cash modality.

➔ **Shelter maintenance**

UNHCR provides households with cash assistance to make repairs to their shelters, extending the life of provided shelter assistance and improving living conditions for the most vulnerable. In SO Aden 316 HHs benefited from this assistance through cash modality.

➔ House rehabilitation

Homes have been badly damaged by the war in Yemen, often preventing displaced Yemenis from returning home. UNHCR's house rehabilitation programme supports households to repair their homes damaged by conflict and climate change and to provide them with a solution to their displacement. The support can be provided through a cash modality, empowering households to contribute while also supporting the local economy. In SO Aden **1,346** HHs benefited from this assistance.

Before Rehabilitation

After Rehabilitation

Flood waters in an IDP site in Sa'ada. ©YDF

Flood mitigation and IDP site improvement

Climate change and severe weather events are a growing concern in Yemen, causing severe damage to housing and shelters, as well as loss of life.

Around 1.6 million IDPs, a large proportion of whom are Muhamasheen, have sought refuge across close to 2,300 IDP hosting sites across the country. An estimated 40 percent of these sites are at high risk of flooding on a regular basis, causing repeat trauma and requiring assistance year after year.

Assessments show that implementing flood mitigation measures can reduce impact, save lives, and protect assets, while also reducing the need for and cost of repeated humanitarian assistance.

In 2024, UNHCR and its partners conducting technical assessments in 18 high risk sites for flood mitigation measures and implemented solutions in eight IDP hosting sites.

UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, is grateful for the support of:

With additional flexible funding support from:

Sweden | España con ACNUR | Norway | Japan for UNHCR | United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland | Denmark | Netherlands | France | Private donors Republic of Korea | Germany | Private donors Italy | Switzerland | Republic of Korea | USA for UNHCR | Sweden for UNHCR | Japan Private donors Netherlands | Belgium | Ireland | Australia for UNHCR | Australia | UNO-Fluchtlingshilfe | UK for UNHCR

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