

# UNHCR Yemen Operation Refugee Response in 2016

## KEY FIGURES (AS OF MARCH 2016)

<b>267,874</b> Registered refugees	<b>Country</b>	<b>Total PoC</b>	<b>28,717</b> New arrivals to Yemen since beginning of 2016	<b>Country</b>	<b>Total PoC</b>
<b>11,628</b> Registered asylum seekers	Somalia	253,632		Ethiopia	24,372
	Ethiopia	15,420		Somalia	4,343
	Other Nationalities	10,450		Other Nationalities	2
	<b>Total</b>	<b>279,502</b>		<b>Total</b>	<b>28,717</b>

## CONTEXT AND NEEDS

### Overall

Yemen is considered as a transit and destination country for migrants and refugees due to its long coastline and proximity to the Horn of Africa. Yemen is a signatory to the 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol, and has granted prima facie refugee status to Somalis arriving in the country since the outbreak of hostilities in Somalia. UNHCR undertakes RSD for all other nationalities except for Syrians, who are granted status under a temporary protection scheme.

### Kharaz Camp



Kharaz Camp © UNHCR/ A. Fadaaq

The Kharaz refugee camp opened in 1991 and is the only camp in Yemen and home to approximately 18,000 refugees. Located in the Lahj governorate in the south of Yemen, Kharaz refugee camp is isolated from urban areas. While UNHCR and partners are providing basic services including protection, food, shelter, health and education, gender-based violence (GBV), child protection and community mobilisation, refugees struggle with limited livelihood options and harsh weather conditions.

### Urban Refugees



An Ethiopian refugee fled fighting in Aden in 2015 returned to rebuild her life © UNHCR/ D.Ali

Most refugees in Yemen live in urban areas with the highest number of refugees based in Aden governorate followed by Sana'a. Urban refugees have access to basic services provided by the government, including health, education and birth registration. UNHCR through partners provide various services to persons of concern, including protection, GBV, child protection, health, education and community mobilisation services. Community centers run by partners are used as places to meet, access social services and psychosocial support, improve skills through training and classes, and enjoy recreational activities through child friendly spaces. UNHCR conducts registration and RSD and provides documentation and financial assistance to individuals or families with specific needs affected by the crisis and lost employment to cover minimum basic needs (shelter, food, gas). UNHCR together with the legal partner undertakes detention monitoring and advocacy for release of detained persons of concern.

### New Arrivals



People arriving at the Arabian Sea coast © Society for Humanitarian Solidarity (SHS)

New arrivals continue to land despite the on-going conflict. They include refugees, asylum seekers and economic migrants from the Horn of Africa. They are subject to manifold risks, including difficult sea conditions, unseaworthy vessels, trafficking, smuggling, dehydration and lack of food as they cross the Gulf of Aden or the Red Sea. Sub-Office Aden, together with partners, conduct coastal monitoring, screen the new arrivals and provide asylum seekers with documentation. Vulnerable asylum seekers and refugees are transported to Aden where UNHCR and partner work to provide basic support. Some new arrivals who enter Yemen from Bab Al-Mandab approach the Kharaz refugee camp, where they receive assistance.

## CHALLENGES DUE TO THE ESCALATION OF THE CONFLICT

---

### Security from Violence and Exploitation

The escalation of the conflict since late March 2015 has further exacerbated protection challenges, including increasing lawlessness, arbitrary arrest and detention of refugees and asylum seekers, trafficking and smuggling, as well as underage military recruitment and participation in hostilities. Human rights violations against persons with critical specific needs include, gender-based violence (GBV), arrest and detention amongst others. Violations of child rights are reported to be widespread, particularly in conflict-affected areas. The number of persons with specific needs such as women at risk and single parents and individuals who have been severely affected by the crisis in Yemen has increased. Children have been greatly affected by the conflict and require need of psycho-social support and safe learning and recreational spaces.

### Livelihoods

Despite several challenges in practice, refugees are generally granted access to employment opportunities and public services. The escalation of the conflict since late March 2015 has, however, further deteriorated the precarious socio-economic and security conditions of refugees. The current political uncertainty in the country has further hindered refugees' access to livelihood opportunities. Many refugees have lost their means of livelihoods with a significant increase in the number of persons with specific needs within the refugee communities. Urban refugees in need of assistance - i.e. women at risk, single parents without any source of income/lost their jobs, older persons, persons with disabilities, unaccompanied and separated children, persons with chronic medical conditions - will be identified and referred for support through outreach activities and through community centres.

### Humanitarian Access

The operating environment continues to be characterised by marked insecurity which has greatly affected accessibility, limiting staff movement and hampered delivery of assistance in a timely manner. Due to security concerns, UNHCR and partners have suspended protection and assistance activities in some areas, notably the reception centre in the Bab Al-Mandab region which remains closed to this date.

## PLANNED RESPONSE

---

The 2016 priority will be to ensure that the current asylum space is maintained in Yemen within the broader context of refugees and mixed migratory flows. UNHCR will also ensure that refugees and asylum seekers have access to basic services and livelihood opportunities and continue protection activities to allow that persons of concern can enjoy their basic human rights in line with Yemen's international obligations. Specifically, UNHCR's refugee response in 2016 will encompass the following:

- Strengthen child protection, education and GBV activities, in particular the legal aspects and procedures, and the availability of safe shelters, psycho-social and medical support
- Enhance detention monitoring for potential asylum seekers arrested for irregular entry into the country, as well as for refugees
- Provide cash assistance to persons with specific needs to meet basic needs (i.e. food, supplementary food for chronic medical conditions, rent, foster care arrangements for unaccompanied and separated children)
- Further consolidate registration and RSD procedures, establish sustained identification of cases with specific needs, fast track such cases and work to further reduce the current backlog
- Improve data management to produce reliable and meaningful statistics that can inform the planning and decision-making processes
- Mainstream activities in support of refugee health, education, self-reliance, as well as livelihoods to facilitate the socio-economic integration of refugees
- Strategically use resettlement, humanitarian admission programmes and humanitarian visa schemes as a protection tool for individual cases

## FUNDING (AS OF 12 APRIL 2016)

---

**USD 128.6 M** required for the Operation.

UNHCR is grateful for the generous contributions of donors who have given contributions to the operation and situation.

