UNHCR The UN Refugee Agency | Yemen

Cash Based Interventions Factsheet

Jamila was supported with multi-purpose cash assistance. ©NMO

Context in Yemen

Yemen is among the worst humanitarian crises globally. Ten years of conflict have created and exacerbated vulnerabilities and eroded resilience and capacities to cope. Yemen is home to an estimated 4.8 million internally displaced people (IDPs) and over 60,000 refugees and asylum seekers.

Forcibly displaced people are particularly vulnerable, with reduced access to basic services and livelihoods, and face numerous protection risks, often daily.

Many are forced to turn to harmful coping mechanisms to get by, including skipping meals, school dropout, child labour, moving to poorer quality shelter, and early marriage.

Why cash? Cash assistance is a fast, efficient, and effective way to support vulnerable people forced to flee their homes. It respects their independence and dignity by giving them the freedom to choose what they need most and over 90% of recipients prefer cash support. Cash also means families buy goods and services locally, which helps boost the local economy

Types of UNHCR cash-based interventions in Yemen: UNHCR uses various types of cash-based interventions in Yemen, tailored to different situations and different intended outcomes.

➔ **Multi-purpose Cash Assistance (MPCA):** MPCA helps families address socio-economic vulnerabilities by enabling them to meet basic needs, reducing the reliance on harmful coping strategies such as skipping meals, pulling children out of school, accumulating debt, or resorting to early marriage.

➔ **Case Management (protection) Cash** Provides targeted financial support to highly vulnerable individuals engaged in case management, addressing specific protection needs while complementing other protection services and interventions.

➔ **Assisted Voluntary Return Cash** Supports safe, dignified, and voluntary return to country of origin in coordination with the country of origin and alongside legal assistance as needed.

➔ **Emergency Cash Assistance** Addresses unforeseen and life-threatening emergencies and is processed within 72 hours. Examples of uses include severe non-chronic medical expenses and cases of home eviction.

➔ **Winterization Cash** Helps cover the increased costs and needs brought on by harsh winter weather, including winter clothing, shelter insulation, and heating expenses.

➔ **Cash for Shelter Rehabilitation, Shelter Maintenance, and Emergency Shelter kits (ESKs)** Improves the living conditions for families in inadequate housing and supports durable solutions by empowering families to rehabilitate their war or flood damaged homes.

➔ **Cash for Documentation/ IDs** Facilitates access to National Identity Documents for vulnerable IDPs and IDP returnees, promoting access to key services, such as healthcare and education, and rights.

Who is eligible for cash?

Eligibility is determined through detailed assessments and selection criteria that identify those most in need. While weighting and criteria differ according to the type of cash-based intervention, the focus is on vulnerability and capacity to cope, including income, reliance on harmful coping mechanisms, shelter conditions, household size, and specific protection vulnerabilities, such as persons living with disabilities and women at risk.

Assessments

Assessments are an integral part of UNHCR's cash assistance.

In 2024, UNHCR had assessed households comprising over 26,000 refugees and asylum seekers and over 680,000 IDPs, allowing a robust understanding of the needs and evidence-based targeting of the most vulnerable.

UNHCR partner staff assesses displaced family in Sa'ada city @YDF

Assessments show that over one-third of refugees, asylum-seekers, and IDPs have no income, while more than half earn less than USD 50 per month. This leaves vulnerable families in extreme poverty, forcing them to rely on harmful coping mechanisms to survive.

For instance, assessments show that 62% of IDPs reduced the number of meals eaten per day, 52% reduced expenditures on essential non-food items, 50% reduced expenditures on healthcare or medicine, and 14% have withdrawn children from school to work and contribute to the household income.

2024 achievements: UNHCR supported close to 547,000 individuals through cash-based interventions.

Cash intervention	Refugees	IDPs	USD in millions
Multi-purpose cash	16,033	418,427	16.6
Case management cash	3,135	-	1.7
Emergency cash	2,955	41,195	1.5
Winterization cash	-	-	-
Cash for shelter rehabilitation	129	54,443	5.9
Voluntary return cash	1,114	-	0.3
Cash for documentation	-	4,742	0.1
Cash for non-food items	-	5,008	0.2
Resettlement cash	40	-	0.004
TOTAL	**23,406**	**523,815**	**26.3**

UNHCR in Yemen has been forced to significantly scale back its cash assistance programming in recent years due to funding decreases.

Despite the reduction, this support has remained critical in facilitating access to shelter and services, mitigating protection risks and reliance on harmful coping strategies, preserving dignity, and enhancing resilience among forcibly vulnerable forcibly displaced communities in Yemen.

Effectiveness, quality, and Post-Distribution Monitoring (PDM)

To assess effectiveness, quality, and suitability of cash assistance, UNHCR conducts regular PDM to gain insight on the experience of recipients as well as the uses of cash to improving programming.

Recent PDM findings showed:

- The most common uses of cash for IDPs were for food, to cover health costs, to pay debt, to pay rent, and to buy hygiene items. For refugees they were food, health costs, water, rent, and to repay debt.
- The majority of respondents reported using at least one harmful coping mechanism in the month before receiving cash, including skipping paying rent, sending a child to work, and reducing expenditure on hygiene items to meet food needs.
- 100% of refugees and 99% of IDPs reported significant (34 and 38%), moderate (38 and 38%), or slight (28 and 23%) improvement in living conditions while receiving cash.
- 100% of targeted recipients received the intended cash assistance.

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