

Yemen Factsheet July 2012

Background

Yemen is the only country in the Arabian Peninsula to be signatory to the 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol. UNHCR established its operations in Yemen in 1987 and in the south in 1992 in response to the large-scale influx of Somali refugees. Yemen is a country that faces major challenges with refugees, internal displacement (IDPs) and mixed migration. Somalis are granted immediate prima facie refugee status, while other nationalities must go through a Refugee Status Determination (RSD) and UNHCR has also been providing assistance to IDP populations in the north and south.

Unrest in Yemen: Impact on Refugees and IDPs

Yemen remains in the midst of a complex emergency and its humanitarian needs continue to grow at an alarming rate with record-high levels of displacement of its own citizens. Conflict in the north since 2004 has caused repeated large-scale displacement. Insecurity hinders large-scale return and recent tribal clashes have created new displacement. In the south, conflict that began in May 2011 in Abyan Governorate resulted in significant displacement. The Government's retaking control of significant parts of Abyan Governorate in mid-June has opened up the possibility for return of IDPs.

Yemen continues to receive an influx of people fleeing from across the Arabian and Red Sea in search of safety, protection and economic opportunities. However, with the worsening economic situation and insecurity, many refugees in Yemen who were once self-reliant have become increasingly vulnerable.



*IDP from Abyan taking shelter in a collective centre in Aden
By Samuel Aranda*



IDPs in Amran receiving assistance

Refugee Population

Refugees recognized by the Government (*prima facie*)

Somali	215,371
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Refugees recognized under UNHCR's mandate

Ethiopian	4,882
Eritrean	851
Iraqi	3,905
Others	609
Total	225,618

New Arrivals at the Coast for 2011

Somalis	Ethiopians	Others	Total
27,350	75,651	153	103,154

New Arrivals at the Coast for 2012

Months	Somalis	Ethiopians	Others	Total
January	1,997	8,465	25	10,487
February	1,958	10,488	8	12,454
March	2,425	8,268	0	10,693
April	2,318	7,445	4	9,767
May	1,489	6,544	7	8,040
June	919	3,784	2	4,705
Total	11,106	44,994	46	56,146

Refugees Resettled

Destination	Somali	Ethiopian	Iraqi	Eritrean	Other	Total
Canada				2		2
Denmark	6					6
Finland			5		1	6
Sweden	10	7		3		20
USA	59		15	1		75
Total	75	7	20	6	1	109

Refugees Voluntarily Repatriated

22 Iraqis • 6 Somalis • 3 Ethiopians

Registered Internally Displaced Population through Government and UNHCR*

Governorate	IDPs	Reg. Returnees
Sana'a	38,640	
Amran	40,378	50
Hajjah	121,697	
Al Jawf	24,700	
Sa'ada	110,000	29,367
Sub Total - north	335,415	
Aden	150,411	
Abyan	25,572	
Lahajj	25,961	
Shabwah	2,108	
Hadramout	4,194	
Al-Bayda	1,649	
Sub Total - south	209,895	
Total Registered Population	545,318	29,417

*New displacement will be included following proper registration and verification process.

Figures as of 30 June 2012

Highlights of the Month

Refugees

- UNHCR opened a new Reception Centre in Sana'a which will conduct registration, RSD, resettlement, community services and protection counselling.
- To address the growing needs for refugees in Yemen and through UNHCR's liaising and advocacy efforts (including the MENA Director's request during his mission in May to Yemen), on 25 June, the Prime Minister sent a directive to the Governor of Lahj to expand Kharaz camp.
- Despite the generous hospitality Yemen has traditionally provided to new arrivals, following the assassination in Aden of the Southern Military Commander, General Salem Qaten, and the erroneous reports that a Somali had been involved, police rounded up and detained refugees and migrants. UNHCR expressed concerns to the Government at the highest level and received assurances that the matter would be addressed. UNHCR continues to monitor the situation to ensure that international human rights and refugee laws are adhered to.
- UNHCR conducted a 5-day workshop in Aden on Health Information System (HIS) for implementing partners from Aden, Sana'a, Kharaz camp and the coastal areas. The participants also developed an epidemic preparedness and response plan.
- UNHCR conducted a workshop for the Heads of Sana'a Airport and the Airport National Security to explain UNHCR's mandate and agree on liaison mechanisms for timely responses for stranded refugees and asylum seekers in airports.

- As part of the World Refugee Day campaign, UNHCR, in collaboration with the Embassy of the Netherlands and Embassy of Spain, presented a photographic exhibition entitled Refugees and IDPs in Yemen, featuring the work of Samuel Aranda, winner of the prestigious World Press Photo of the Year for 2012. The exhibition opened on 30 June in the Spanish Embassy, Sana'a.

IDPs

- In Abyan there have been some spontaneous returns to safe areas and there is a possibility that returns could increase. At the same time protection concerns such as landmines/UXOs, lack of security and services, loss of livelihoods and extensive damage to infrastructure remain obstacles to safe return. As areas become conducive to return, UNHCR is set to respond to ensure protection and shelter needs and concerns are properly addressed as well as support other activities that enable sustainable return.
- In the north, the Executive Unit, local authorities and UNHCR have identified three potential locations for accessible and viable new sites to relocate the IDPs presently living in sub-standard spontaneous camps, and as a contingency measure or any new wave of displacement. UNHCR expects to be able to accommodate around 6,000 families in the three locations.
- UNHCR held a consultation/workshop in Sana'a with the Executive Unit for IDPs regarding Durable Solutions for IDPs in the northern Governorates.



Refugees in Kharaz camp receiving new shelters built through ECHO funding

For further information:

Dania Khan • Executive Assistant/Reporting Officer • khan@unhcr.org
Teddy Leposky • Public Information/External Relations Officer • leposky@unhcr.org