

Yemen



Main objectives

- Ensure effective protection for all refugees, asylum-seekers and other persons of concern.
- Work with the Government to strengthen the legal framework and institutional capacities for refugee protection and assistance in order to limit irregular movement of refugees.
- Regularly review and assess the refugee situation and evaluate prospects for durable solutions within the framework of the Comprehensive Plan of Action for Somalia.
- Provide basic humanitarian assistance and services to refugees and asylum-seekers in the refugee camp and urban areas.
- Support education for refugees both formally and through training followed by income-generating opportunities.
- Seek to empower the refugee camp community, particularly refugee women, as partners in planning and managing programmes through participatory community development activities and a multi-sectoral approach.

Planning figures		
Population	Jan 2006	Dec 2006
Somalia (refugees)	70,000	70,000
Ethiopia (refugees)	2,000	2,000
Various (asylum-seekers)	990	990
Various (refugees)	880	920
Ethiopia (asylum-seekers)	300	300
Yemen (others of concern)	680	680
Total	74,850	74,890

Total requirements: USD 5,168,295



Yemen

Somali refugee children at a day care centre for preschoolers in Al Kharaz refugee camp. *UNHCR / N. Jbour*

Working environment

Recent developments

UNHCR has recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Government of the Republic of Yemen to establish six permanent

centres to register refugees and issue identity documents. This will resolve problems such as arrest and detention due to lack of identity cards. Refugee registration will also advance their access to certain rights such as registration of births and marriage, freedom of movement, access to education and access to courts.



While the election of a provisional government in Somalia is a welcome development, the general situation has yet to prove conducive to the promotion of mass return. Assistance has been provided to some families to facilitate their return to a limited number of safe areas in Somalia.

However, many from the Horn of Africa continue to try to cross the Gulf of Aden to reach Yemen; including considerable numbers of asylum-seekers from Somalia. UNHCR is deeply concerned about the tragic loss of life during this perilous journey as many attempt to cross in unseaworthy boats in the hands of unscrupulous people smugglers. New Somali arrivals have *prima facie* refugee status and are transferred to a UNHCR reception centre where they receive basic humanitarian assistance.

Constraints

During the first half of 2005, there were over 7,500 new arrivals, mainly Somalis, and it is anticipated that this number will continue to rise, putting more pressure on limited resources in Yemen. The increased proportion of foreign residents in Yemen has given rise to xenophobia within certain quarters of the press and the public. This is having a damaging effect on broader public attitudes towards refugees and on the prospects for integration.

Strategy

Protection and solutions

UNHCR works closely with the Yemeni Government to strengthen the legal framework and institutional capacity and to establish a national refugee law. Technical workshops held with government officials will continue for this purpose. UNHCR will also continue to support the Government's efforts in registering all refugees and asylum-seekers in Yemen.

Furthermore, UNHCR will continue to provide protection to all refugees, asylum-seekers and persons of concern by conducting refugee status determination for non-Somali asylum-seekers, until a governmental refugee institution is established. UNHCR will also provide essential humanitarian assistance and services at the Mayfa'ah reception centre, Bir Ali area in Shabwa Governorate, as well as in Al Kharaz refugee camp.

Due to the transitory movement of refugees and asylum-seekers in Yemen, UNHCR has a limited resettlement programme which applies mainly to refugees with special needs. The Office has only a limited voluntary repatriation programme. The fragile and unstable situation in Somalia from where most refugees in Yemen originate, does not render repatriation feasible.

UNHCR held consultations with the Yemeni Government regarding the proposed Comprehensive Plan of Action for Somalia, aimed at ensuring further protection for Somali refugees and creating opportunities for durable solutions.

Assistance

The UNHCR multifunctional gender, age and diversity team, established in Yemen in May 2005, conducted participatory assessments with refugee women, men and children. Findings revealed several protection risks and possible solutions to the occurrence of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), the low level of attendance and retention at schools, as well as instances of psychosocial problems due to unemployment and lack of livelihood opportunities. As a result, UNHCR plans to increase support to the Yemen programme in 2006.

A major goal for 2006 is to improve access to education and long-term school attendance in the refugee camp and urban areas and also expand vocational training opportunities for refugee youths to reduce poverty and achieve greater self-reliance. Primary education offered in the camp will place emphasis on the retention of girls in schools, through appropriate extra-curricular activities. Further education will be made available through vocational training and computer and language courses so that adult refugees can acquire marketable skills. Literacy courses, particularly for refugee women, will continue to play an important role in local integration and the refugees' education.

There will be a stronger emphasis on income-generating projects. Agricultural activities will provide a profitable source of income for refugees.

Refugees will be allocated garden plots and receive seeds and tools as well as livestock.

UNHCR and its implementing partners will provide refugees in Al Kharaz camp with essential goods and services including access to adequate water, sanitation, shelter, household items and medical care. WFP will continue to provide food rations in the camp.

UNHCR-funded community centres will offer a safe environment for refugees. They will provide social and legal counselling, language and computer training, daycare for children, as well as recreational, social and cultural activities.

The Office will provide protection and assistance to urban refugees settled mostly in Sana'a and Aden (Basateen) and new arrivals at the Mayfa'ah reception centre. Financial and material assistance will be provided to vulnerable individuals as a matter of priority.

Refugee health clinics will offer preventive and curative treatment and will refer more serious cases to local hospitals. Reproductive health and HIV/AIDS related services will also be made available. More emphasis will be placed on health and nutrition education in community outreach programmes in the refugee camp and the urban areas.

Desired impact

Refugees and asylum-seekers in Yemen will be adequately protected and assisted according to international human rights standards. Public awareness and outreach efforts should also result in increased awareness of the plight of refugees and a more tolerant attitude towards refugees by the Yemeni Government and the public. Through collaboration between the Government of Yemen and UNHCR, the legal status of many undocumented refugees will be regularized. There will be a greater focus on refugees' self-reliance, education and their participation in community-based activities.

Organization and implementation

Management structure

The UNHCR Office in Yemen will continue to be headed by a Representative and will include 11 international staff, 32 local staff and four international UNVs. Due to the increase in the number of Somali refugees, UNHCR has requested the creation of new posts in 2006, including one international and four national staff, in order to assist and reinforce the existing team to respond efficiently to the operation's demands.

Coordination

UNHCR activities are implemented in collaboration with the Government of Yemen and with the support of national and international NGOs as well as UN agencies. WFP supplies a basic food ration for all refugees living in Al Kharaz camp. Discussions with UNFPA for reproductive health activities are under way. Efforts to address the needs of refugees within the Common Country Assessment and UN Development Assistance Framework are ongoing.

Offices
Sana'a
Aden
Al Kharaz

Partners
Government agency
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
NGOs
Charitable Society for Social Welfare
<i>Cooperazione Internazionale</i>
Interaction in Health and Development
Marie Stopes International (Yemen)
Save the Children (Sweden)
Society for Humanitarian Solidarity
<i>Triangle génération humanitaire</i>

Budget (USD)	
Activities and services	Annual Programme Budget
Protection, monitoring and coordination	1,952,070
Community services	189,885
Crop production	13,640
Domestic needs	100,750
Education	316,051
Food	108,946
Forestry	5,023
Health	490,194
Legal assistance	280,224
Livestock	3,680
Operational support (to agencies)	428,668
Sanitation	18,360
Shelter/other infrastructure	159,615
Transport/logistics	220,882
Water	73,735
Total operations	4,361,723
Programme support	806,572
Total	5,168,295