

YEMEN



IN SHORT

Main Objectives

- Protect refugees from Somalia, Ethiopia, Sudan, Iraq and several other Arab countries.
- Care for and assist destitute and vulnerable groups of Somali refugees in Al Gahin camp, pending their relocation to a new site that will allow them a degree of self-sufficiency.
- Run basic health care and education facilities as well as training for increasing numbers of refugees in major urban centres.
- Nurture government efforts to improve safety in the country.
- Help develop appropriate government policy on asylum-seekers and refugees.
- Facilitate voluntary repatriation to countries of origin and seek resettlement opportunities for vulnerable and security cases.

Planning Figures

Population	Jan. 2000	Dec. 2000
Somali Refugees*	70,500	80,000
Ethiopian Refugee	2,700	3,000
Eritrean Refugees	2,500	2,500
Other Refugees	300	300
Total	76,000	85,800

* Includes an estimated influx of 1,000 asylum-seekers per month.

Total Requirements
USD 3,090,192



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WORKING ENVIRONMENT

Recent Developments

Democratic and economic reforms are now under way and efforts are being made to comply with recommendations of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank.

On the diplomatic front, Yemen has restored ties with a number of countries in the Gulf including Kuwait. A major foreign policy issue remains the border dispute with Saudi Arabia where bilateral negotiations are underway.

Constraints

The security situation in Yemen has prompted international agencies to use armed Government escorts for visits to the camps. A combination of diminished tourist revenue and low world oil prices will continue to constrain overall growth and social investment.

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STRATEGY

Protection and Solutions

Although Yemen is a signatory to the 1951 Convention, it has neither legislation nor a clear policy for dealing with the entry and presence of refugees in the country. Moreover, the Government does not play an active role in providing material assistance to refugees in Yemen. UNHCR will therefore continue to concentrate its efforts on protection training for government officials. These will involve the provision of computers for the Immigration Department to help them register and document the refugees. In collaboration with several government bodies, UNHCR will also continue to carry out periodic revalidation of refugee Identification Cards, and provide one-off cash assistance to vulnerable individuals and financial assistance for medical cases requiring treatment abroad.

The Government of Yemen extends *prima facie* recognition to Somali refugees who arrive in the country through official entry points and are registered with UNHCR. Protection measures include providing documentation, screening, release of detainees, legal counsel and, if required, intervention with the authorities on essential rights such as freedom of movement, access to health and education, and employment opportunities. While the majority of the 70,000 Somali refugees live in

the urban areas of Sana'a and Aden, 13,500 are accommodated in the Al Gahin camp, in the south of Yemen, pending their transfer to a new camp, in Al Kharaz (Lahej Governorate). Despite the fact that a large number of Somali refugees have integrated locally, repatriation remains the best option as well as official government policy. Resettlement has occasionally been an option to reunify families, help women at risk and vulnerable refugees.

The Government recognises Ethiopian refugees who formerly served in the Navy and arrived in Yemen in 1991. UNHCR's protection strategy for this group is similar to that for the Somali refugees. Since very few have volunteered to repatriate, the only durable solutions are local integration, despite the existence of cultural and social differences, or resettlement (for those qualifying according to UNHCR criteria).

Most of the Eritrean refugees who entered Yemen during the war for independence from Ethiopia have been integrated locally. UNHCR's involvement is therefore limited to facilitating their voluntary repatriations as and when feasible.

Regarding asylum-seekers from the Sudan and other Arab countries, the Government prefers that they hold a valid travel document with a visa as a condition of their stay in Yemen. UNHCR's protection strategy will continue to include status determination, issuance of standard recognition letters – as opposed to the Identification Cards given to Somalis – intervention with the authorities for the release of detainees, and the provision of legal counsel and support. Repatriation does not appear to be feasible and the recognised refugees are tolerated by the authorities, hence allowing for informal local integration on the basis of cultural affinities.

Assistance

The influx of new arrivals from the Horn of Africa, mainly from Somalia, puts additional demands on the assistance programme. A reception centre in Mayfah in south Yemen provides shelter, food and emergency medical services to new arrivals, while they are screened and registered for transfer to Al Gahin camp.

Limited assistance with health, education, counselling and skills training will be provided to the urban Somali refugees residing in Sana'a and Aden, and who form the majority of the refugees residing in Yemen. Women and children, repre-



senting more than 70 per cent of the refugee population, are the primary recipients of this assistance. Women, who are encouraged to play an active role in food distribution, also benefit from special courses in sewing, weaving, literacy classes, language and computer skills aimed at enabling them to earn money. The clinic in Al Gahin provides supplementary feeding for pregnant mothers and malnourished children, while in Sana'a, a nursery takes care of children while their mothers are working. Children benefit from primary and secondary education in the camp and in the urban area of Aden. Refugee children are regularly vaccinated. In order to protect the environment, kerosene is distributed to refugees in the camp for cooking purposes.

Multi-sectoral assistance will address the basic needs of 13,500 vulnerable and destitute Somali refugees living in Al Gahin camp. This covers the provision of shelter, drinking water, basic health care, sanitation, primary and secondary education in both Somali and Arabic, as well as income-generating activities. A relatively large reconstruction project, is underway in Al Kharaz to build a new camp to which Somali refugees will be relocated from the temporary facility of Al Gahin.

For the voluntary repatriation programme, cash grants and air fares will be provided.

Desired Impact

While the flow of Somali refugees into Yemen continues, UNHCR plans to repatriate those willing to return to their country. For the Somali refugees who will be moved from Al Gahin camp to Al Kharaz camp (Lahej Governorate), the ultimate purpose is to help them achieve a degree of self-sufficiency. In addition, UNHCR also intends to help local authorities deal with refugee and asylum issues in a more consistent and systematic manner.

support with administration, interpreting and camp monitoring.

Coordination

Apart from being an active member of the UN Country Team, UNHCR chairs the UN Working Group on Humanitarian Affairs, and works with WFP for the provision of food to refugees, as well as with WHO and UNAIDS to ensure that in the surveillance and treatment of HIV and AIDS, refugees are treated the same as the local population. Regular coordination meetings are held with implementing partners.

Offices
Sana'a Aden
Partners
NGOs
Charitable Society for Social Welfare Cooperazione Italiana Nord Sud International Cooperation for Development Partners for Development Radda Barnen Society for Humanitarian Solidarity Triangle Génération Humanitaire

Budget (USD)	
Activities and Services	Annual Programme
Protection, Monitoring and Coordination	696,607
Community Services	129,000
Crop Production	33,900
Domestic Needs/ Household Support	324,800
Education	151,000
Food	32,000
Health/Nutrition	331,700
Income Generation	23,800
Legal Assistance	247,400
Operational Support (to Agencies)	288,100
Sanitation	19,400
Shelter/Other Infrastructure	26,200
Transport/Logistics	268,800
Water (non-agricultural)	69,700
Total Operations	2,642,407
Programme Support	447,785
Total	3,090,192

ORGANISATION AND IMPLEMENTATION

Management Structure

UNHCR maintains a Branch Office in Sana'a and a Sub-office in Aden. There are five internationals, two in Sana'a and three in Aden, working with two United Nations Volunteers and 13 national staff in the two locations. A total of 15 project staff (nine in Aden and six in Sana'a) also provide



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