



# **COUNTRY OPERATIONS PLAN**

**Executive Committee Summary**

**Country : Yemen**

**Planning Year : 2007**

# 2007 Yemen Country Operations Plan

## Part I: Executive Committee Summary

### 1. Protection and socio-economic operational environment

Due to its strategic location, Yemen has been a centre for transitory population movements throughout history. An increased influx into the country was prompted by the outbreak of the civil war in Somalia following the fall of Siad Berre regime in 1991 and the subsequent collapse of government administrative structures. The consequent deterioration of the socio-economic situation in certain parts of the Horn of Africa had further contributed to a continuous and significant increase of population displacement.

Yemen is a signatory of the 1951 Convention and the 1967 Protocol relating to the status of refugees, Yemen grants *prime facie* refugee status to Somalis arriving in the country since the outbreak of hostilities in Somalia. However, Yemen does not have national refugee legislation or an asylum policy/institution to deal with issues relating to refugees and other asylum seeking populations in the country. Refugee and other asylum-related matters are mostly governed by different provisions of the national laws.

In 2005, 15,253 persons (Somalis: 13,222, Ethiopians: 2,005) arrived in Yemen, bringing the total number of Somali refugees in the country to 78,582.

Most Somalis and Ethiopians are smuggled into Yemen from the Seaport of Bossasso in north-east Somalia (Puntland). They cross the Gulf of Aden by small and makeshift vessels operated by ruthless individuals working for smuggling networks in Bossasso. Out of the estimated 15 entry points in Yemen along its coast of 2400 km, the main point of entry is the coastal village of Bir Ali. UNHCR runs a reception centre at Mayfa'a (close to the seaport of disembarkation of Bir Ali) where refugees and asylum seekers are registered and provided with basic assistance, including accommodation, food and medical care. They are offered transportation to Kharaz refugee camp in Lahj governorate should they opt for such kind of assistance from UNHCR. Otherwise, they may proceed on their own to live in the urban areas, having in their possession a temporary registration document with 3-month validity.

UNHCR called for international action to stem the flow of people falling prey to smugglers leaving hundreds of people dead. UNHCR has been working with local authorities in north-eastern Somali (Puntland) region on ways to inform people about the dangers of using smugglers to cross the Gulf of Aden. UNHCR is also working with other actors to uphold the integrity of the international maritime search and rescue regime, and to safeguard the humanitarian tradition of rescue at sea.

Apart from assisting the Somali refugees since the opening of the office, Somali asylum-seekers entering Yemen are being granted refugee status by the authorities on a prima-facie basis, UNHCR has been involved in the

eligibility determination of refugee status for non-Somali asylum seekers, providing legal protection and seeking durable solutions. UNHCR provides protection and other forms of assistance to refugees and other persons of concern directly or through its specialized implementing partners at its four locations in Yemen, the Branch Office in the capital Sana'a and the Sub-office in Aden, the Kharaz camp in Lahj governorate and the Mayfa'a Reception Centre in Shabwa governorate.

Iraqis are still governed by the Temporary Protection Regime recommended by UNHCR since the fall of the former regime in April, 2003.

Currently, there are more than 8,000 *prima facie* refugees residing in Kharaz camp (Somalis: 7,510, Ethiopians: 716) where UNHCR under its care and maintenance programmed, together with its four implementing partners and the WFP, is engaged in various programmers of assistance and training activities such as monthly food distribution and variety of non-food items in addition to health care, primary education, school feeding programmed, water & sanitation, vocational training, income generating projects, gardening and other projects targeting and benefiting refugee women.

Apart from UNHCR direct involvement in the procedure of refugee status determination, protection & social counseling for refugees and its active search for durable solutions, refugees in the urban areas are furthermore in receipt of basic medical care and reproductive health from two implementing partners in Sana'a. Other forms of assistance include educational materials for school children, some clothes for needy families, legal assistance & representation, search for job opportunities, home visits for identifying poor families with a referral system to UNHCR for determining the form of assistance needed, and financial component for most vulnerable families among the refugee communities.

As regard durable solutions, UNHCR was able to identify and process requests from a number of refugee families who opted for repatriation, though on a low scale. The effort is ongoing and more refugees are voluntarily opting for repatriation. While a segment of the Somali refugees found themselves inserted in the Yemeni society in a de facto manner, this durable solution may not materialize for other segments of the Somali communities. Prospects of local integration for non-Somali refugees are not existent at all. However, self-reliance may lead to a situation whereby some refugees from other nationalities may also find themselves integrated in the local communities. Iraqis are believed to fall under this category of refugees, and government authorities are of the opinion that Iraqis in Yemen need not be refugees as they occupy a large portion of the foreign workforce and they are very skilled individuals.

Resettlement is another durable solution which UNHCR is pursuing for specific refugee groups with different categories of vulnerability. In 2004, only 66 individual refugees were resettled while in 2005, 638 refugees were accepted for resettlement in a third country. Resettlement will continue to be used by the office in Yemen as an effective tool to ensure protection for

certain groups of refugees. In 2006, an average of 600 refugees will be selected and submitted for resettlement, using the same vulnerability criteria. However, this figure may be increased or decreased depending on the office processing capacity, which might be strengthened and enhanced through provision of additional support staff in the course of 2006.

As regards activities towards capacity building and promotional activities within the context of public awareness, UNHCR teams in Sana'a and Aden embarked on a number of training activities targeted a wide range of government institutions, including border and detention centers police as well as security forces, decision making entities at the immigration office and the security personnel and their lawyers. University students were also the target of the office protection team for training on refugee law and asylum principles. As a result of UNHCR ongoing training programs, the faculty of law at the University of Sana'a is in the process of introducing a subject of refugee law in its curriculum.

Between May, 2002 and June, 2003 a mass registration exercise was concluded jointly with the government of Yemen whereby 47,000 Somali refugees were registered and documented. All refugee cards expired on 31 December, 2004 and since May, 2003 more than 36,000 new Somali refugees arrived in Yemen without being documented properly. In July, 2005 UNHCR signed an MOU with the government of Yemen for the opening of six registration centers in six governorates to renew the expired refugee cards and to properly register the new arrivals after May, 2003. The registration commenced in Sana'a on 24 December, 2005.

The 2007 programme places stronger emphasis on partnership – above all with government partners and NGO – as the platform for achieving established goals. It is assumed that there will be greater co-ordination, collaboration and resource inputs in the programme by the other partners and operators than ever before.

Together with the direct implementing partners, a comprehensive operational review of the Yemen operations was undertaken in Dec. 2005. The pace of implementation and attainment of set objectives as of that stage were reviewed in detail, with particular focus on the qualitative changes that would have then been achieved in line with established base line standards, indicators and data.

## **2. Operational goals and potential for durable solutions**

Derived from UNHCR Global strategic objectives and considering the transitory nature of the majority of the refugee caseload in Yemen, the fact that the country is a signatory of the Refugee Convention and Protocol, and the overall positive attitude of the GOY to Somali refugees, the following are the strategic goals of the 2007 UNHCR Yemen Assistance refugee program:

- Provide adequate forms of protection and assistance services for the refugees in Yemen during 2007 in order to meet the minimum acceptable

living standards and welfare, focusing particularly on the policy priorities relating to women and children, refugees with special needs, HIV/AIDS, the environment, and ensuring minimum standards of humanitarian assistance in the sectors of shelter, health care, water, sanitation, and community services, as well as providing support to the refugee hosting communities as and when required.

- Facilitate the voluntary return of refugees to their countries of origin, based on an assessment of the reintegration prospects of returnees, and the sustainability of return, to reduce potential internal displacement, or reverse migration.
- Vigorously pursue all other feasible initiatives and opportunities for durable solutions for refugees, including enhancing reintegration prospects wherever possible, and maximizing resettlement opportunities for deserving refugee cases to third countries as appropriate. A key objective will be to act in accordance with the global resettlement criteria, taking into consideration the specifications of the host countries.
- Foster partnership and complementarities between UNHCR and other operational partners, particularly NGOs and UN system agencies, as the essential platform for attaining the objectives of the 2007 programmed. As well, enhancing the role and capacity of the Government to get involved in protecting and assisting refugees.
- Protection and assistance for urban refugees and asylum-seekers: This programmed would support several activities with the overall objective of ensuring proper treatment for refugees, especially women, girls and children and elderly refugees. It would include provisions for protection activities in exceptional security cases, including secure accommodation, and also catering for medical referrals. Other Protection activities include addressing arrest and detention cases and transportation services of asylum-seekers and refugees in an appropriate and dignified manner. Primary and other education for refugees would be provided for refugees with special circumstances.
- Provide capacity building for government departments: Particularly in effecting the Refugee Act and institutionalizing Government protection and management structures (assist in the establishment of a Regional Committee for Refugee Affairs). In addition to establishment and functioning of a Government-based system through six registration centers in main refugee-presence governorates to ensure registration and documentation of all refugees and new arrivals, and prevent arbitrary arrests and detention of refugees.
- Tackle in a more effective and determined manner, the eradication of sexual and gender based violence through organization of women committees, training, sensitization programs and liaison activities with other operational partners.

- Environmental protection and management, to ensure continued environmental management and rehabilitation, including provisions for tree plantation and management of forestry activities, etc.
- External relations: Designed to raise awareness on the UNHCR Yemen refugee programmers among the public at large such as, civil societies and other government institutions and foreign missions.

## **Part II: COMPREHENSIVE NEEDS AND PARTNERSHIP**

### **Outcomes of joint planning and management of identified gaps**

The National Committee for Refugee Affairs (NCRA) formed in 2000, has been further enhanced with the establishment of the Legal Committee responsible for the new draft refugee bill. Although no deadline was set for the presentation of the draft bill to the ministerial council, it is seen as a renewed expression of interest on the part of the government. The committee, chaired by the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs for International Organizations, is comprised of representatives from the ministries of Human Rights, Justice, Interior, Foreign Affairs, and political security. The full responsibility for refugee affairs has been granted to the Ministry of Human Rights within the proposed refugee national bill.

The National Committee for Refugee Affairs was established at the country's capital level to be the interlocutor between the Government and UNHCR. The necessity to create a Regional Committee for Refugee Affairs (RCRA) as an operational branch of the National Committee (NCRA) has been raised and discussions with the regional governorate is underway in order to establish a similar body in the operation area, Aden. The proposed regional committee will be staffed with government officials seconded from various ministries and departments to ensure liaison with, and act as an interlocutor between UNHCR Sub-Office and the Regional political and security authorities. The RCRA will be supported and trained by UNHCR, and will participate in a roaming team to monitor protection of refugees in the areas of operation.

Joint planning meetings/workshops in Sana'a' and Aden were organized to develop the operational objectives for 2007, highlight lessons learned during the previous implementation years and indicate the gaps and areas of concern. UNHCR presented the parameters for the program in 2007 reinforcing the application of Usher's overall mandate objective to lead and coordinate the international protection of refugees and other persons of concerns and seek permanent solutions to their problem. Specifically, partners were sensitized on Usher's policy priorities (promotion of refugee participation, empowerment of refugee women, age, gender diversity mainstreaming, etc.).

2007 UNHCR program in Yemen will be implemented by five implementing partners, of whom three are international and two national NGOs. Partners

provide the refugees with humanitarian assistance in Karaz camp, urban areas of Aden and Sana'a and the reception center in Mayfa'a.

### **Implementation and Coordination strategy**

UNHCR Yemen will work towards the promotion of community development approaches in all aspects of its operations. This will be achieved by facilitating regular participatory assessment by multi-functional teams using age, gender, and diversity perspective to fully understand the refugee population and its sub-groups, their protection concerns and priorities and resources available to them.

The following is the distribution of responsibilities envisaged for 2007 in Yemen:

- **Protection:** The government of Yemen and UNHCR will collaborate to provide overall protection for refugees in Yemen. UNHCR will focus in the orientation and training for government authorized personnel on UNHCR mandate and the government obligated responsibilities as per the international laws. The Office will continue to provide protection and various forms of assistance to the most vulnerable refugees, particularly in Kharaz camp, whose fears of the uncertainty and the unknown remain valid and legitimate due to the continuous absence of strong and stable central government in Mogadishu.  
UNHCR Yemen will work in an integrated approach to ensure coordinated efforts with all stakeholders including refugee's community, in early identification, prevention, response and follow with survivors of SGVB.
- **Food:** As per the MOU signed between UNHCR and WFP, refugees will continue to receive agreed food rations in the camp and supplementary feeding for identified beneficiaries (schools, clinics, new arrivals, vulnerable persons). UNHCR undertakes the distribution responsibilities in coordination with its partners. . In Basateen urban area, the two sister agencies will continue to assist most vulnerable refugees, who receive treatment at Basateen clinic, and their families to improve their nutrition. As well as the feeding programmed for school children in Basateen which will continue to support nutritional status of children and encourage school attendance.

Other partners include those with sectoral responsibilities in each camp or in urban areas:

- Marie Stopes International (MSI)
- Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA)
- Society for Humanitarian Services (SHS)
- Charitable Society for Social Welfare (CSSW)
- Save the Children – Sweden (Radda Barnen)

All implementing partners will be guided by the Usher's global strategic objectives for 2007-2009 in all aspects of operations. Community participation will be emphasized through the creation of sectoral committees at camp level and by the identification of key persons at urban areas.

Through the implementation of strategic planning workshops and other mechanisms, UNHCR will maintain interactive participation by the implementing partners and Government counterparts and promote team synergy and shared vision in addressing the needs and durable solutions for the refugees. In line with the policy of joint funding, UNHCR will encourage the partners to take over and implement in entirely selected services with their own sources. The partner staff will continue to benefit from training, workshops and planning exercises that will enhance their knowledge and skills in running the programmed. UNHCR will continue to give attention to developing knowledge and skills of the Government counterparts in protection delivery, strengthening asylum system, security and the management of refugee/asylum seekers affairs.

### **Assistance to Urban Refugees – Sana'a**

In Sana'a, the implementing partner will place a greater emphasis towards the insertion of refugees into the local communities by introducing empowerment programs (IGA, skills training, literacy education for e.g.). There is need to identify and implement suitable training and income generating activities for refugee women to ensure that women have full access to such programmes. Access to legal employment of refugees guaranteed under the Geneva Convention and Protocol will have to be secured in a joint effort by UNHCR and the relevant government authorities. The extension of community-based day care facilities for working parents can create conducive conditions to foster employment.

Also, monitoring of access to basic education in Sana'a will have to be improved and supported by appropriate measures, such as providing school bags and school uniforms in collaboration with specialized organizations such as UNICEF.

Basic primary health services will be integrated with the reproductive health services using community participation approaches particularly on awareness programs. Improvements in drug supply and drug management will be enhanced in coordination between UNHCR Health Coordinator, Ministry of Public Health and the partners.

### **Assistance to Refugees in Kharaz camp (including surrounding local communities)**

**Physical security:** There were several security incidents during 2005 inside Kharaz camp despite security enforcement and continuous training for government officials. During multi functional teams' exercises within the participatory assessment activities, the security incidents were attributed to improper lighting in some camp sites. Refugees were motivated to participate in addressing the problem by encouraging able refugees (those with personal generators) to extend the power to their respective blocks. To ensure



maximum physical security and safety of refugees, the project will be carried over in 2006 and 2007 respectively.

**Food:** in Kharaz, cooked food for new arrivals and supplementary feeding programs will continue with the collaboration with WFP. The provision of the full food basket of 2100 kcal has to continue in 2007 with improved food basket monitoring. Cooked food for new arrivals will be provided by UNHCR for a maximum period of two weeks, WFP will be provided with necessary information to include new arrivals in the general food distribution accordingly.

**Water and sanitation:** The already existing water resources in Kharaz camp will be maintained with the full participation of refugee communities through specialized committees. There is a high need to increase the current system to absorb the expected increase of population. UNHCR will work with other partners/donors to ensure the appropriate planning of funded water projects in the area (encourage the inclusion of refugee areas in the national water system). Care and maintenance for existing sanitation facilities will continue through created committees with construction of new facilities for the new arrivals/facilities. In the area of latrine coverage, UNHCR meet the minimum standard for stable refugee situations of 1 latrine per family, UNHCR would need to construct 500 family latrines for an expected increase of 2,500 persons during 2007.

**Health:** The level of involvement of the Provincial of Public health will be increased ensuring that refugees are adequately included in national health programs. Through the UNHCR Health Coordinator (UNV) UNHCR will provide capacity building and technical support to health partner and government health departments involved in refugee medical services (improvement of referral system for e.g.). Emphasis will be made on health and nutrition education in community outreach programmes in cooperation with UNICEF and WHO.

**Shelter:** New arrivals and those who arrived late 2006 will have access to shelter that provides privacy, safety and dignity. The shelters will consist of cement brick walls, corrugated iron roofing, and a family latrine. Construction will take place through a system of considerable refugee participation, coordinated by the implementing partner. Due to resources limitations, approximately 500 shelters could be provided within 2007 UNHCR budget with the advocacy for another 500 to be implemented by interested donors and international communities (for e.g. ECHO).

**Education/Vocational Training:** Improving the quality of education for the refugee children in the camp, and expanding opportunities for refugee youths in technical/vocational training will continue with the objective of reducing poverty and achieving a greater self reliance of refugees in Yemen. Targeted beneficiaries will include girls dropped out from schools as per the findings of the MFT needs assessments. Vocational training provided for youth during 2005 indicated positive prospects for some refugee families.

The Provincial department of Education will be fully sensitized to ensure that refugee children's right to basic education is granted as per international laws. Efforts will also be made to allow the refugee children to have access to their national curricula. Basic education programmers will have to place more significance on the retention of girls in school by appropriate extra-curricula activities. UNHCR will continue to advocate for the improvement of teaching and learning materials and create a better learning environment. Successful activities in the mother-and child center and in pre-school will continue to attract parents to the idea of 'community school'. Literacy and 'functional literacy' courses, particularly for refugee women and elderly refugees will continue to play an important role in enhancing their self reliance and overall empowerment.

**Income Generation:** As of 2006, UNHCR has started to largely emphasize and advocate for the empowerment of refugees through income generating opportunities. This trend is planned with due consideration to the isolation of the refugee camp in Kharaz and the competitive surrounding urban environments. Income generation projects will be designed according to needs assessments, local market demands as well as demands at areas of origin. A community development approach is understood by all players stressing the participatory role of refugees in design and implementation.

**Community Services/Development:** The collaboration of UNHCR staff and the implementing partners, line government departments is crucial to increase participation of refugees in various sectors, to effectively address social problems particularly for the refugees with special concerns, to counter the growing dependency of refugees, and in gradually handing over responsibilities to functioning refugee committees, e.g. in camp management, water management, income generation, education, etc. The program will continue to address negative traditional practices through community services NGOs and UNHCR staff (female genital mutilation (circumcision) is widespread among Somali refugees). The programmed will also address the exclusion of women from community decisions. .

The standard Operational Procedures for prevention and response to SGVB incidents were developed and implemented by 2005, UNHCR will continue to monitor and evaluate the full implementation by various actors. The program will continue to provide refugee women in the reproductive age with sanitary towels being one of the five commitments of HC to refugee women.

The program will continue to identify and address needs of refugees with special needs through various levels of MFTs and in collaboration with other actors.

### **Assistance to urban refugees in Basateen**

As of 2003, UNHCR increased its intervention in Basateen by strengthening the MCH clinic, supporting social activities in a community center and continuing its support to the Basateen primary school in coordination with line government departments and local and international NGOs. The limited

intervention aimed at a more thorough insight into the causes for refugee movements between the camp and the urban location. Based on the recommendations of the JAM Report (WFP/UNHCR, March 2005), a school feeding programmed, family rations for vulnerable families attending the MCH clinic are designed to assist defined target groups in Basateen using a community-based approach.

### **Assistance to New Arrivals at Mayfa'a Reception Centre**

UNHCR Mayfa'a Reception center caters for basic needs of an estimated total of 15,000 new arrivals per year. Somali refugees are registered and issued with temporary registration documentation, provided with temporary shelters, cooked food, medical assistance and necessary awareness/information before those interested are transported to Kharaz camp. As for non-Somali arrivals who apply for asylum, a temporary protection letter, valid for 10 days, is given to them until they approach either BO or SO for RSD.

### **Cooperation within the UN system and with other agencies**

Within the context of the Yemen UN Country Team in Sana'a', UNHCR will endeavor to disseminate information on the refugee operation among the UN agencies to benefit from their existing country programmers. The Office will maintain close working relationships with WFP to ensure that each refugee receives the minimum 2,100 kilocalories daily nutritional energy. It will make joint assessments in refugee camps and make recommendations if agreed arrangement should continue on a long-term basis. UNHCR will proactively link and address environmental concerns through the involvement of concerned development actors, and will continue to avail itself of advice and support from UNICEF on water supply both within the refugee camps and the host communities in the immediate vicinity. To further expand and intensify its efforts to combat HIV/AIDS pandemic, UNHCR will increasingly seek expert advice from UNAIDS, UNFPA on reproductive health care for refugees. The Office will regularly update the UN, donor agencies (ECHO, Dutch, USAID, EU, DFID, Embassies) and rights-based organizations for the improvement of the refugee programmed in Yemen.

### **Strengthening Protection with Effective Assistance Programs within the CPA Framework**

The guiding principles for strengthening protection activities and making assistance programs more effective will be derived from the needs as identified by the participatory assessment approach and the Multi Functional Teams created to lead the process with the participation of refugees, partners and government line departments. Within the framework of the Comprehensive Plan of Action "CPA" for Somali refugees, government interlocutors are being sensitized to the specific needs of the Somali refugees in Yemen and to assume further responsibility for their protection in order to prevent the common phenomenon of irregular secondary movements to the neighboring countries, and beyond.

By December 2005 project proposals presented for Yemen under the CPA initiative were clustered into themes, each addressing gaps at main refugee locations (Mayfa'a/Shabwa Governorate, Kharaz Refugee Camp, Basateen, Sana'a). The themes mainly address 1) Capacity building of Government of Yemen agencies and NGOs, and enhancing the quality of asylum in Shabwa, Kharaz, Basateen (Aden) and Sana'a, improved legal and physical protection, and improved assistance basic services, and 2) Promoting self-reliance of refugees to improve their quality of life in exile, and enable refugees to contribute to the reconstruction of their country of origin. Total estimated project cost under the CPA for Yemen is USD 7,045,600 (Ref. Yemen CPA document issued December 2005).

### **Voluntary repatriation**

There has been an increase in requests for voluntary repatriation during the last months of 2005 and the beginning of 2006. This has led to 70 of Somalis returning to Puntland, Somaliland and south and central Somalia. However, since the end of February 2006 the voluntary repatriation to South and central Somalia has been put on hold, for an indefinite time period due to severe drought. This leaves 150 individual repatriation requests pending. New requests are registered and put on hold.

It is expected that voluntary repatriation will continue to Somaliland and Puntland in 2007. For planning purposes a total of 500 individuals are estimated to return during 2007, including voluntary repatriation to Ethiopia and Iraq. In recognition to problems faced during 2005 and 2006 with insufficient cash grant/person compared to distances and other factors, the repatriation grant will be USD100 for adults and USD 50 for children under 18. Provisions are also made for transportation (air tickets, visa, clearance, etc.).

In order to ensure refugees make an informed decision to return to the COO, UNHCR will continue to coordinate information campaigns (go and see visits, cross border meetings with UNHCR/ government authorities).

### **Resettlement**

By the end of 2005, some 701 refugees successfully resettled to third countries (including 544 Ethiopians). Currently there are more than 30 pending cases from 2005 in addition to new submissions of 150 cases early 2006.

In 2007 some 600 individuals are planned for resettlement taking into account possible resettlement of most needy individual from the Oromo's (Ethiopians) in Kharaz camp. The exact population data of this ethnic group (Oromo) will be ascertained once the profiling exercise is resumed and completed. A resettlement grant of USD50 per person (irrespective of age) will be allocated to enable the refugees to prepare for their departure.

A major concern is to ensure that Resettlement activities function with quality and integrity. Confidential and sensitive cases are handled with

professionalism. In that sense, UNHCR will continue resettlement processing of deserving cases following the established Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), while focusing also on improvement in case identification.

Particular attention will be given to priority cases and the strategic and careful use of the group resettlement methodology – whilst maintaining quality, credibility, and predictability. Group resettlement initiatives, however, will only be pursued where strategic benefits are evident and resettlement serves to enhance, rather than diminish, prospects for other durable solutions.

In accordance with Usher’s global strategy on resettlement the Branch Office will explore comprehensive approaches to ensure regional harmonization and integration of broad-based durable solutions initiatives. The objective is to ensure that resettlement does not function as a disincentive to other more desirable durable solutions.

### **Insertion into the local communities (Efforts towards local integration)**

Relatively increased allocations are made for self-reliance and empowerment projects particularly in urban settlements (in Sana’a and Aden). Initiatives of refugees to become self-reliant and in that way render a contribution to the Yemeni community will be supported in close collaboration with other actors.

UNHCR plans to step up efforts in vocational and informal skills training in marketable and income-relevant skills, and develop a mechanism for a micro credit scheme to increase refugees’ access to resources and enhancement of their productive capacity.

As already planned in the COP 2006, additional projects are needed to stimulate the self-reliance of refugees living in the urban areas, especially in urban settlement where self-reliance projects have been limited so far. UNHCR plans the re-establishment of a day care center in Sana’a for small children of single parent families. Both in the Aden and in the Sana’a urban area the established community center will be utilized to provide for a ‘safe space’ for refugees, particularly for refugee women, elderly and youths, to be handed over to the community. UNHCR will use the center as an entry point and communication channel to the refugee community. Skills and professional training will particularly be developed for school leavers, refugee women and men with basic schooling.

To establish the needs of the urban refugee community in Sana’a, a participatory assessment is underway, incorporating the “age, gender and diversity mainstreaming approach”, to take into account diverse and appropriate measures for men, women and youths.

### **Other Refugees**

Under the same and relevant multi-years strategy described above, UNHCR will continue its effort to improve the protection and assistance levels for

refugees from other countries such as Ethiopia, Eritrea, Sudan, Iraq, Palestine, etc...

Given the fact that non-Somali refugees do not enjoy the same prima-facie status granted by the government of Yemen, a considerable number of them remains in a vacuum of legal status due to absence of the same degree of tolerance they receive as the Somali refugees do, and the limited form of protection that UNHCR-issued documents provide.

Registration and regularization of the legal status of the non-Somali refugees are two major points reflected in the final version of the MOU which was signed with the government for the registration centers in six governorates in Yemen. It is expected that registration for non-Somalis will be initiated by 2007.

### **Registered new arrivals in Maifa'a Reception Centre (MRC)**

<b>Name of Beneficiaries: Somali Refugees</b>						
<b>Age Group</b>	<b>Male</b>		<b>Female</b>		<b>Total</b>	
	(in absolute numbers)	(in %)	(in absolute numbers)	(%)	(in absolute numbers)	(In %)
0-4	95	0.9	88	3.2	183	1.4
5-17	522	5	414	14.8	936	7.1
18-59	9811	94	2279	81.7	12090	91.4
60 and >	6	0.1	7	0.3	13	0.1
<b>Total:</b>	<b>10,434</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>2788</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>13,222</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Major locations:</b>						
Bir Ali, Mayfa'a Reception centre						

### **Kharaz Refugee Camp Populations**

As of 01 January 2006 there are 8226 refugees in Kharaz camp, mostly Somalis with smaller numbers of Ethiopians (mainly Oromo ethnic groups). The gender distribution among the refugees in Kharaz is almost 50%, while children of school-going age represent 40%.

The vast majority of the population is composed of prima facie Somali refugees. The camp also hosts some 716 Ethiopians. The high mobility of the refugee population is a constraint in obtaining accurate data.

The camp is located in an isolated semi-arid area with harsh climatic conditions and scarce job opportunities. Therefore, a large No. of refugees moves between Kharaz and surrounding areas in Lahaj and Aden Governorates seeking job opportunities.

### **Refugees in Kharaz Camp as of 31 Dec. 2005**

<b>Name of Beneficiaries: Somali and Non-Somali Refugees</b>						
<b>Age Group</b>	<b>Male</b>		<b>Female</b>		<b>Total</b>	
	(in	(In %)	(in	(In	(in	(in %)

	absolute numbers)		absolute numbers)	%)	absolute numbers)	
0-4	689	16	700	18	1389	17
5-17	1634	38	1504	40	3138	41
18-59	1872	44	1784	42	3656	41
60 and >	28	0.7	15	0.4	43	1
<b>Total:</b>	<b>4,223</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>3,746</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>8,226</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Major locations:</b>						
Kharaz Camp in Lahaj Governorate						

### **(b) Results of the participatory assessment with the refugees/persons of concerns**

With the aim of translating the SGBV Guidelines into concrete actions tailored to address the protection concerns of the Somali and Ethiopian both camp and urban caseloads, preventive mechanisms were introduced through workshops aiming at both raising awareness amongst the refugees, as well as enhancing the protection monitoring capacity UNHCR partners in the field. Furthermore, greater emphasis was placed on developing a more systematic approach in identifying the needs of refugees through the establishment of the multi functional teams which was the result of the training conducted by HQ at SO Aden for most of UNHCR staff, NGOs and refugees.

During May 2005 UNHCR HQ mission visited Yemen to introduce the participatory assessment tool, several BO and SO staff ,all implementing partners and refugee representatives created multi functional teams and met with groups of refugee women, men, boys and girls of all age groups both in Kharaz camp and in the urban area of Basateen. An action plan was developed that took in account age, gender and diversity of the refugees in Yemen

The plan of action was reviewed in October by Multi Functional Teams (MFT); some recommended activities were implemented by the end of 2005 and mainstreamed into the 2006 activities and will be continued in 2007.

### **c) Assumptions and constraints**

UNHCR expects that in the current situation, durable solutions will only be available to a relatively small number of refugees. Once a large-scale repatriation of Somali refugees becomes a reality, prospects for phase-out might become more credible.

Despite the international efforts towards peace and stability in Somalia, UNHCR does not anticipate that the developments thus far will create conditions conducive for large-scale repatriation of Somali refugees as early as 2007. Therefore, the provision of protection and assistance under a care and maintenance programmed, oriented towards the attainment of basic humanitarian standards will remain essential. The major constraint is the challenge for the organization how to mobilize sufficient resources to bridge

the existing gap between the minimum standards and what is actually delivered.

In 2007, UNHCR will sustain its efforts to address the dire conditions in which refugees in Kharaz camp have been accommodated for the past 14 years. To mitigate the malnutrition, UNHCR would need to engage in regular distribution of complementary food to the entire refugee population. Given resource constraints, UNHCR can only hope to curb the rise in malnutrition through increased complementary feeding, sensitization, improved access to non-food items, and income-generation activities.

Issues associated with physical protection, particularly of women and children, will remain a programmed priority. The fight against harmful traditional practices, including female genital mutilation (FGM) and abductions, as well as violent crime will continue to characterize much of the intervention of UNHCR, the Government of Yemen, and implementing partners in protecting physical safety, security, and dignity of refugees. In this respect, strengthening of the judiciary through the continuous training of police and judiciary will remain a priority, along with a constant process of community mobilization.