

Bahrain

Egypt

Iraq

Israel

Jordan

Kuwait

Lebanon

Oman

Qatar

Saudi Arabia

Syrian Arab Republic

United Arab Emirates

Yemen

The Middle East

Operational highlights

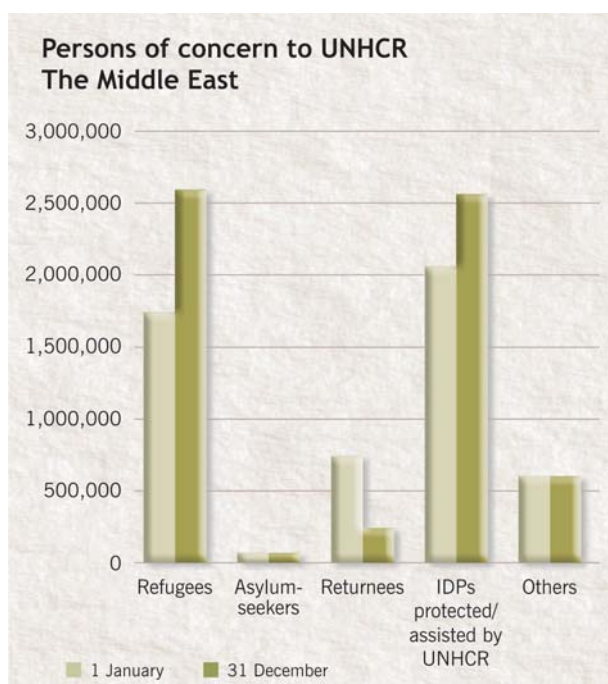
- The Middle East subregion continued to deal with the complex displacement of millions of Iraqis, including 2.2 million people inside Iraq and up to two million refugees. The main countries of asylum, the Syrian Arab Republic and Jordan, have been generous hosts to large numbers of Iraqi refugees and long-staying Palestinian refugee populations.
- Following a slight decrease in hostilities in Iraq, some Iraqi refugees returned home. UNHCR helped the Iraqi Government to assist those who wished to return. The Office urged the Government to develop a national policy on return to prepare the ground for safe and dignified large-scale returns and offered to conduct return assessment missions in the areas of return.



- Mixed migration movements continued to dominate the Yemen operation. Thousands of people, fleeing violence in their country and others seeking better economic opportunities, continued to arrive on Yemen's shores. Reports of hundreds of deaths and instances of torture, abuse and exploitation characterized the dangerous voyage across the Gulf of Aden. UNHCR assisted those of concern in this group, as well as internally displaced persons (IDPs) uprooted by sectarian conflict in the northern part of Yemen.
- With the protection environment for Sudanese refugees in Egypt improving, UNHCR shifted its focus to promoting self-reliance, providing community-based assistance and searching for durable solutions.
- UNHCR strengthened its presence in Israel to support the Government in registration and refugee status determination (RSD). The growing numbers of Sudanese, Eritreans and others arriving in Israel are straining UNHCR's capacity in the country.
- The signing of a Strategic Partnership Agreement with the Saudi Red Crescent Society laid a foundation for the establishment of genuine partnerships with the civil society in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Working environment

The presence of large numbers of Iraqi refugees in both Jordan and Syria puts a significant burden on the economies and social structures of these two countries. Whereas the response of the international community to



UNHCR's appeal for the Iraqi humanitarian crisis was generally good in 2007, direct support to the host governments fell short of expectations.

The number of people crossing the Gulf of Aden and arriving in Yemen increased in 2007. Reports spoke of hundreds of deaths and instances of torture, abuse and exploitation *en route*. The burden on Yemen threatens to reduce the country's willingness to welcome the displaced and ability to help them.

The majority of countries in the region have yet to accede to the international refugee instruments. However, many of these countries have shown greater interest in strategic partnerships with UNHCR, in particular the Gulf Cooperation Council States.

Achievements and impact

UNHCR collaborated closely with the Governments of Jordan and Syria, who have expressed a clear commitment not to forcibly return Iraqi refugees. Such an attitude is noteworthy in light of the heavy economic and social burden on these countries.

In 2007, available resources were used to ensure that basic humanitarian assistance and social services were provided to as many refugees and other people of concern in the subregion as possible.

More than 150,000 Iraqi refugees in Syria and 70,000 in Jordan were given food and non-food assistance. More than 160,000 Iraqi IDPs received non-food items from UNHCR. In Jordan and Syria some 72,000 Iraqi children attended school with the help of UNHCR. The Office also supported some 250,000 medical interventions. Likewise, refugees in Yemen and urban refugees in Egypt and elsewhere in the Middle East were assisted to cover their basic needs. Additionally, UNHCR provided many urban refugees with micro-credits and vocational training opportunities to increase their self-reliance. In Israel, refugees benefited from humanitarian assistance provided by UNHCR, the Government and NGOs.

Constraints

With the exception of Egypt and Yemen, none of the other countries in the Middle East subregion is party to



UNRWA/A. Haaland

Palestinian refugees from Iraq in Al Tanf refugee camp in the no-man's land between Iraq and Syria.

either the 1951 Convention or its 1967 Protocol. Furthermore, the lack of national asylum structures, a significant increase in extremist activities and on-going instability presented major challenges for UNHCR. The increase in the number of people involved in mixed migration movements to Yemen made it challenging for UNHCR to achieve its protection, assistance and durable solutions goals in the subregion.

Operations

UNHCR operations in **Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria** and **Yemen** are covered under separate chapters.

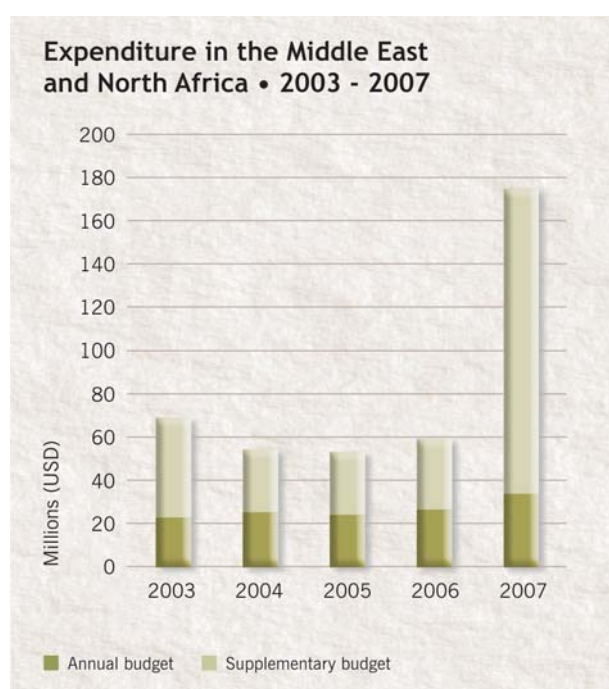
Given the limited socio-economic opportunities available to refugees in **Egypt**, most remain dependent on international humanitarian assistance. In 2007, the Office assisted refugees and provided training opportunities to increase their self-reliance. However, the tolerant attitude of the Egyptian Government towards refugees, coupled with positive developments in the political situation in Sudan, prompted UNHCR to re-focus its programmes in the country away from protracted care and maintenance and towards community-based assistance, self-reliance and durable solutions, the latter through voluntary repatriation to Sudan. Cooperation with the League of Arab States has also been enhanced.

The UNHCR operations in **Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia** and the **United Arab Emirates** are managed by the regional office in Riyadh. The office focused on enhancing partnerships with governments and with international organizations, such as the Gulf Cooperation Council and the Organization of the Islamic Conference. It also enhanced partnerships with civil society and prominent individuals to promote their active

engagement in the protection of refugees and stateless persons in the Muslim world. The signing of a Memorandum of Understanding with the Saudi Red Crescent Society was a model for new relationships between UNHCR and other organizations in the region.

Financial information

Though the budget for the MENA region was well-funded, some of the growing needs could not be fully met, and there was a scaling down of assistance and staff numbers in Yemen and Egypt. In Israel, it was not possible to provide the office with the necessary staff and operational resources needed to manage the increasing numbers of asylum-seekers.



Budget and expenditure (USD)

| Country | Final budget | | | Expenditure | | |
|----------------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| | Annual budget | Supplementary budget ¹ | Total | Annual budget | Supplementary budget | Total |
| Egypt | 3,981,245 | 3,023,905 | 7,005,150 | 3,965,835 | 2,555,904 | 6,521,739 |
| Iraq | 1,397,169 | 36,774,268 | 38,171,436 | 1,387,301 | 29,391,876 | 30,779,177 |
| Israel | 364,196 | 0 | 364,196 | 361,781 | 0 | 361,781 |
| Jordan | 1,657,173 | 39,746,048 | 41,403,221 | 1,570,455 | 38,970,602 | 40,541,057 |
| Lebanon | 7,845,936 | 5,016,513 | 12,862,449 | 7,706,731 | 3,887,067 | 11,593,798 |
| Saudi Arabia | 2,085,430 | 120,344 | 2,205,774 | 2,054,057 | 108,139 | 2,162,196 |
| Syrian Arab Republic | 2,163,456 | 57,131,697 | 59,295,153 | 1,843,483 | 53,546,116 | 55,389,599 |
| United Arab Emirates | 639,185 | 0 | 639,185 | 589,978 | 0 | 589,978 |
| Yemen | 5,653,351 | 1,238,217 | 6,891,568 | 5,625,226 | 935,060 | 6,560,286 |
| Regional activities ² | 0 | 6,614,357 | 6,614,357 | 0 | 4,946,788 | 4,946,788 |
| Total | 25,787,139 | 149,665,348 | 175,452,488 | 25,104,846 | 134,341,553 | 159,446,399 |

¹ Excludes a seven per cent support cost that is recovered from contributions to meet indirect costs for UNHCR.

² Includes emergency assistance for Iraqi refugees and others of concern.

| Restricted voluntary contributions (USD) | | | | |
|--|--|------------------|----------------------|-------------------|
| Earmarking | Donor | Annual budget | Supplementary budget | |
| Middle East | Belgium | 0 | 628,378 | |
| | Denmark | 0 | 10,813,953 | |
| | <i>Deutsche Stiftung für UNO-Flüchtlingshilfe E.V.</i> | 0 | 253,221 | |
| | Estonia | 0 | 31,956 | |
| | Germany | 0 | 933,333 | |
| | Greece | 0 | 251,351 | |
| | Iceland | 0 | 93,000 | |
| | Ireland | 0 | 620,000 | |
| | Italy | 0 | 886,115 | |
| | Netherlands | 0 | 1,148,550 | |
| | New Zealand | 0 | 1,225,050 | |
| | Norway | 0 | 1,308,104 | |
| | Sweden | 2,911,208 | 5,081,902 | |
| | Switzerland | 0 | 1,149,795 | |
| | Turkey | 0 | 2,325,000 | |
| | United Kingdom | 0 | 5,622,899 | |
| | United States | 2,640,000 | 0 | |
| | | Sub-total | 5,551,208 | 32,372,609 |
| | Egypt | Denmark | 17,123 | 0 |
| European Commission | | 230,458 | 0 | |
| Netherlands | | 117,409 | 0 | |
| United States | | 1,216,619 | 0 | |
| | Sub-total | 1,581,610 | 0 | |
| Iraq | Australia | 0 | 864,286 | |
| | Australia for UNHCR | 0 | 7,286 | |
| | Canada | 0 | 2,004,310 | |
| | CERF | 0 | 3,737,000 | |
| | Czech Republic | 0 | 129,563 | |
| | <i>Deutsche Stiftung für UNO-Flüchtlingshilfe E.V.</i> | 0 | 63,417 | |
| | <i>España con ACNUR</i> | 0 | 3,672 | |
| | France | 0 | 603,113 | |
| | Holy See | 0 | 16,064 | |
| | Italy | 0 | 923,404 | |
| | Japan | 0 | 4,672,897 | |
| | Japan Association for UNHCR | 0 | 6,860 | |
| | Norway | 182,149 | 0 | |
| | Online donations (Headquarters) | 0 | 4,874 | |
| | Private donors in Canada | 0 | 62,568 | |
| | Private donors in Germany | 0 | 2,743 | |
| | Private donors in Greece | 0 | 35,494 | |
| | Private donors in Italy | 0 | 36,344 | |
| | Private donors in Luxembourg | 0 | 328 | |
| | Private donors in the United Kingdom | 0 | 1,923 | |
| | Private donors in the United States | 0 | 279,930 | |
| | UNDG Iraq Trust Fund | 0 | 3,116,347 | |
| | United Kingdom | 0 | 264,649 | |
| | United States | 1,000,000 | 0 | |
| | USA for UNHCR | 0 | 20,390 | |
| | | Sub-total | 1,182,149 | 16,857,461 |
| | Jordan | Australia | 0 | 800,000 |
| Belgium | | 0 | 1,530,112 | |
| CERF | | 0 | 934,579 | |
| Denmark | | 152,251 | 0 | |
| <i>España con ACNUR</i> | | 0 | 23,134 | |
| European Commission | | 151,534 | 381,416 | |
| Finland | | 663,717 | 0 | |
| France | | 324,254 | 0 | |
| Germany | | 167,333 | 544,959 | |
| Ireland | | 0 | 335,014 | |
| Italy | | 0 | 923,404 | |

| Earmarking | Donor | Annual budget | Supplementary budget |
|-----------------------------|---|-------------------|----------------------|
| | Japan | 0 | 2,884,094 |
| | Japan Association for UNHCR | 0 | 119,792 |
| | Private donors in Canada | 0 | 20,000 |
| | Spain | 0 | 205,752 |
| | United States | 142,488 | 1,860,000 |
| | Sub-total | 1,601,577 | 10,562,256 |
| Lebanon | Australia for UNHCR | 3,784 | 0 |
| | Denmark | 451,436 | 0 |
| | European Commission | 2,037,739 | 13,826 |
| | Greece | 17,176 | 0 |
| | Japan Association for UNHCR | 40,010 | 0 |
| | Kuwait | 500,000 | 0 |
| | Luxembourg | 0 | 682,000 |
| | Norway | 117,301 | 0 |
| | Private donors in Italy | 23,443 | 0 |
| | United States | 368,138 | 0 |
| | Sub-total | 3,559,027 | 695,826 |
| Saudi Arabia | Saudi Arabia | 314,049 | 0 |
| | Sub-total | 314,049 | 0 |
| Syrian Arab Republic | Australia | 0 | 550,000 |
| | CERF | 0 | 934,579 |
| | Denmark | 82,079 | 0 |
| | European Commission | 88,009 | 614,060 |
| | Finland | 663,717 | 0 |
| | France | 324,254 | 0 |
| | Germany | 167,333 | 722,071 |
| | Ireland | 0 | 335,014 |
| | Italy | 0 | 2,110,638 |
| | Japan | 0 | 5,069,500 |
| | Private donors in Canada | 0 | 20,000 |
| | Spain | 0 | 891,593 |
| | <i>Stichting Vluchteling</i> (Netherlands) | 0 | 235,274 |
| | Turkey | 0 | 465,000 |
| | United Arab Emirates | 0 | 9,300,000 |
| | United States | 30,220 | 3,720,000 |
| | Sub-total | 1,355,613 | 24,967,729 |
| Yemen | Czech Republic | 106,910 | 0 |
| | European Commission | 666,667 | 0 |
| | France | 272,374 | 0 |
| | Germany | 0 | 69,750 |
| | Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization | 5,000 | 0 |
| | Italy | 0 | 250,000 |
| | Japan | 1,000,000 | 0 |
| | Norway | 50,407 | 0 |
| | Red Crescent Society (United Arab Emirates) | 14,866 | 0 |
| | Switzerland | 446,429 | 0 |
| | UNAIDS | 47,880 | 0 |
| | United States | 678,948 | 325,500 |
| | USA for UNHCR | 72,290 | 0 |
| | Sub-total | 3,361,770 | 645,250 |
| Total | | 18,507,003 | 86,101,132 |

Note: Contributions shown exclude indirect support costs that are recovered from contributions against supplementary programmes and the "New or additional activities - mandate related" (NAM) Reserve.