

## Yemen Factsheet

### March 2013

#### Background

Yemen is the only country in the Arabian Peninsula that is a signatory to the 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol. UNHCR established operations in Yemen in 1987 and expanded its work in the southern governorates in 1992 in response to the large-scale influx of Somali refugees. Yemen faces major challenges with a high number of refugees, internally displaced persons (IDPs) and mixed migration. Somalis arriving in the country are granted *prima facie* refugee status, while UNHCR conducts Refugee Status Determination (RSD) for other nationalities. UNHCR also coordinates on protection activities and provides assistance to IDP populations in the Yemen.

#### Impact of Humanitarian Crisis on Refugees and IDPs

Yemen remains in the midst of a complex emergency and humanitarian needs continue to grow at an alarming rate. Yemen has been receiving an unprecedented influx of people fleeing from the Horn of Africa across the Gulf of Aden and Red Sea in search of safety, protection and better economic opportunities. However, with the worsening economic situation and insecurity in Yemen, many refugees who were once self-reliant have become increasingly vulnerable.

Yemen also has been experiencing internal displacement. Several rounds of fighting in and around Sa'ada Governorate since 2004 have caused repeated and protracted large-scale internal displacement. Moreover, fighting that began in May 2011 in Abyan Governorate resulted in significant internal displacement; however, since July 2012, as hostilities subsided and security began to improve, over 140,000 IDPs have returned to Abyan. For all IDPs in Yemen, UNHCR, with other humanitarian organizations, is promoting durable solutions, including supporting IDPs who decide to return by providing them with life-saving assistance and monitoring their protection. UNHCR also is providing technical assistance to the Government to develop a national policy for addressing and resolving internal displacement throughout the country.



Over 100,000 IDPs have returned to Abyan and begun to resume their daily life amid the destroyed buildings, damaged infrastructure and lack of basic services. (UNHCR/Amira Al-Sharif)



New arrivals from Horn of Africa making their way to Yemen (UNHCR/A. Fazzina)

#### Refugee Population (as of 1 March)

##### Refugees registered at reception centres (*prima facie*)

Somali	229,447
<b>Refugees recognized under UNHCR's mandate</b>	
Ethiopian	5,229
Eritrean	1,124
Iraqi	3,917
Others	618
<b>Total</b>	<b>240,335</b>

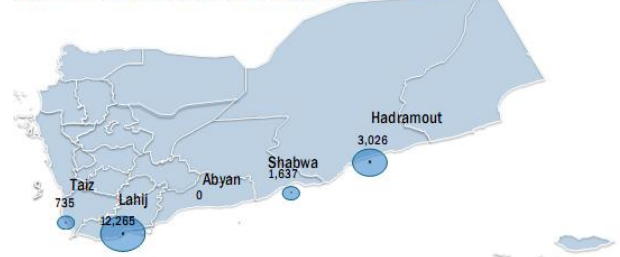
##### New Arrivals at the Coast for 2012

<b>Somalis</b>	<b>Ethiopians</b>	<b>Others</b>	<b>Total</b>
23,086	84,376	70	107,532

##### New Arrivals at the Coast for 2013 (as of 1 March)

Months	Somalis	Ethiopians	Others	Total
January	1,286	6,231	1	7,518
February	1,387	8,746	12	10,145
March				
April				
May				
June				
July				
August				
September				
October				
November				
December				
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,673</b>	<b>14,977</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>17,663</b>

##### PLACE OF ARRIVAL BY GOVERNORATE



#### Internally Displaced Persons by Governorate (as of 1 March)

Governorate	Registered IDPs	Returnees
Sana'a	38,640	
Amran	39,780	4,778
Hajjah	110,653*	25,081
Al Jawf (estimates)	24,700	
Sa'ada (estimates)	103,014	6,986
Dharmar (estimates)	5,657	
<b>Sub Total - north</b>	<b>322,444</b>	<b>36,845</b>
Aden	11,344	91,424
Abyan	-	33,319**
Lahj	10,185	15,878
Shabwah	960	475
Hadramout	3,328	1,676
Al-Bayda	736	319
Al-Maharah	272	96
<b>Sub Total - south</b>	<b>26,825</b>	<b>143,187***</b>
<b>Total Registered Population</b>	<b>349,269</b>	<b>180,032</b>

\*Includes 16,384 IDPs originally from Hajjah, not Sa'ada Governorate.

\*\*Includes 21,148 estimated returnees who have yet to come forward for returnee registration.

\*\*\*Registration of returnees ongoing

## Highlights of the Month

- The UK hosted a Friends of Yemen meeting on 7 March, during which UN ASG Sima Bahous very much welcomed the decision of the Secretary General to accept Yemen's eligibility to receive support from the Peacebuilding Fund, and noted that there can be no sustainable political transition and long term development without responding to the humanitarian needs in the country. She also highlighted that Yemen has continued to live up to its international obligations and stands out in the region for its hospitality towards refugees, and noted the importance of addressing internal displacement in order to promote stability in the country
- Also during the Friends of Yemen Meeting in London, Japan announced a special contribution of 47.2 million US dollars to support reconstruction efforts in Yemen. Japan's Ambassador to Yemen, Katsuyoshi Hayashi, attended a special ceremony at the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation in Sana'a on 11 March in which he announced that the funds would be disbursed to several UN agencies, of which 7.6 million US dollars will be contributed to UNHCR for IDP/returnee activities in Abyan. UNHCR's Representative in Yemen attended the ceremony along with the acting UN Resident Representative and Humanitarian Coordinator in Yemen, and representatives of other UN agencies.
- The National Dialogue Conference (NDC) that brings together a broad geographic and political cross section of the country with the responsibility of addressing the major crises and drafting a new constitution commenced on 18 March. This will be followed by a referendum on the new constitution with parliamentary and a presidential election planned for 2014. UNHCR has strongly advocated for the inclusion of IDPs in NDC and has provided a report on the consultations UNHCR conducted with IDPs and returnees to the Office of the Special Advisor to the Secretary General, and will disseminate it to the delegates of the NDC and Government officials in order to bring forward the recommendations of the IDPs to the process.
- UNHCR participated in a consultative meeting with the Ministry of Human Rights in Sana'a to review the cooperation between UNHCR and the Ministry in 2012 and on future cooperation in 2013. The Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs expressed appreciation on behalf of the government for UNHCR's role in addressing the needs of refugees and asylum seekers, and on the valued cooperation between UNHCR and the government.



To provide for the shelter needs, UNHCR has built huts using local available materials for extremely vulnerable individuals from the IDP and host communities in Haradh. (UNHCR)



This Somali refugee is one of some 45,000 urban refugees in the Basateen neighbourhood in Aden. (UNHCR/Teddy Leposky)

### Refugees

- Due to multiple displacements and separation during flight, there are relatively high rates of divorce among the refugee community. Many refugee women are unaware of their legal rights during the divorce process. To address this gap, UNHCR's implementing partner, INTERSOS, conducted training for 20 refugee women in Basateen, Aden on Yemeni Family Law with a focus on child custody and alimony.
- UNHCR conducted a mission to Taiz Governorate to introduce the protection mandate and activities of the agency to the newly appointed Governor. UNHCR also visited the Taiz prison and held discussions with the prison director with the aim of securing access to persons of concern who express the wish to seek asylum while in detention.

### IDPs

- UNHCR launched in Amran, Haradh and Sana'a reports (published in Arabic and English) summarizing the findings and recommendations from UNHCR's and Executive Unit for IDPs' joint consultations with humanitarian actors and IDPs/returnees and other stakeholders from Amran, Hajjah, Sa'ada and Sana'a Governorates on "Developing an IDP Policy for Yemen" (a similar report on consultations with stakeholders from Abyan and Aden was launched last November). Drafting of the IDP policy by the Government is now well underway, with support from UNHCR on behalf of the Protection Cluster, for which adoption by the Government of the policy is a core aim for 2013. Consultations to formulate recommendations for the IDP policy also are being held with other Clusters, most recently with the Education and Health Clusters.
- To assist some 150 women from the internally displaced persons (IDPs) and host community that recently graduated from high school, UNHCR handed over a 26-seat bus to the Haradh local council on 24 February to enable their transportation each day to attend classes at the University of Abs. The handover of the bus comes as part of UNHCR's ongoing cooperation with the district authorities and local council in Haradh to build capacity and support the government's efforts to assist IDPs. Of the female students benefiting from the transportation, 30 are IDPs from Sa'ada who have found shelter in the host community and IDP camps in Haradh.

#### For further information:

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UNHCR Yemen



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UNHCR Website: [www.unhcr.org](http://www.unhcr.org)

Mixed Migration Task Force Website: [www.mmyemen.org](http://www.mmyemen.org)