

Saudi Arabia

January 2022

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) is not a party to the 1951 Refugee Convention or its 1967 Protocol. UNHCR works closely with the local authorities to **expand protection space** for people of concern.

Strategic partnerships continue to be forged with governments, national institutions, and the private sector. UNHCR efforts are aimed at mobilizing greater support, developing capacity of partners, and raising **awareness on humanitarian and displacement issues**.

FACTS AND FIGURES

- **13,538** total people of concern in KSA, Bahrain and Oman.
- **1,094** registered refugees across Saudi Arabia, Bahrain and Oman.
- **12,799** asylum seekers in KSA.
- **336** registered refugees in KSA.

Cummulative Funding SINCE 2011 (AS OF FEB 2022):

\$322 million

- **\$24.4 M** in government contributions in 2021.

UNHCR PRESENCE

Staff:

16 Local Staff
7 International Staff

Offices:

1 Multi-Country Office (Riyadh)



MAIN ACTIVITIES

SAUDI ARABIA

- KSA remains a **major regional donor** to UNHCR, and among the **top ranking donors globally**. KSA has been a member of the \$20 M club for major donors since 2018
- KSA provides UNHCR with an annual core contribution of \$1 M.
- In 2020, UNHCR signed a memorandum of understanding with its partner Saudi Fund for Development (SFD) that will provide a \$30 M three-year funding in support of returnees and host communities in Afghanistan.
- In 2021, government contributions from KSA to UNHCR totaled \$24.4 M, reaching over \$322 M in the past ten years.
- UNHCR recognizes KSA's remarkable support to the organization, and looks forward to steering this strategic partnership towards **flexibility and sustainability** of humanitarian contributions.
- UNHCR seeks softly earmarked contributions in support of its global **COVID-19 prevention and response** efforts. Flexible funding remains key in allowing a timely emergency response to the evolving needs, allowing flexibility to allocate funds across regions and operations according to priority areas.
- UNHCR is working closely on **strengthening strategic ties** with the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), Islamic Development Bank (IsDB), and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Secretariat, while forging new relationships with the private sector and charitable foundations.
- UNHCR KSA continues to **diversify its partnerships**, particularly in emerging sectors including eSports, resulting in the signing of a partnership agreement with Saudi eSports Federation on 19 September 2021.
- UNHCR signed an agreement with Muslim World League in 2021 for \$500,000 in Zakat funding for Nigeria. Additionally, UNHCR signed an agreement with World Assembly for Muslim Youth (WAMY) on 21 September 2021 for \$240,000 in **Zakat funding for protection activities** including shelter as well as agriculture, livestock and fishery programmes in Nigeria, Bangladesh, and Lebanon.
- The Government of Saudi Arabia continues to maintain a **tolerant approach towards Syrian and Yemeni refugees** with regards to their legal residency in the country, who enjoy special consideration with regards to access to basic services. UNHCR continues to monitor the situation of Rohingya refugees present in KSA and calls for **leniency and fair treatment** regardless of their stay in the country.
- As part of its **COVID-19 response**, UNHCR remains in regular contact with populations of concern through various communication channels, including a dedicated country help page where information on asylum procedures and services are available. A Kobo tool was also developed to receive asylum requests through the dedicated help page.

CONTACT

Dina Madani, External Relations Office, Riyadh
Madani@unhcr.org | Tel: +966 50 5230633

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