

→ Protecting displaced families in Yemen

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Mohammed has been displaced for the last two years from Hodaydah, when the conflict intensified. He has now settled in Amran, where he struggles to make a living. UNHCR's partner assessed his needs and referred him to the community centre. © UNHCR/ June 2020

In 2020, **173,350** individuals will be assessed for vulnerability, **127,840** individuals will benefit from psychosocial support and legal assistance, including as part of case management.

At least **600** survivors of GBV will be given tailored support, through legal, medical and psychosocial services.

Protection in the time of COVID-19

As COVID-19 overwhelms the world including Yemen, displaced families continue to bear the brunt of the combined effects of the pandemic and the conflict. The impact of COVID-19 in Yemen is compounded by dilapidated health services, also because of the conflict; lack or loss of employment opportunities; increasing anxiety, fear and general frustration within households. Women, children and individuals with specific needs, such as persons with disabilities, are particularly affected because of discriminatory social norms, poverty, physical barriers in accessing services and social isolation resulting in neglect, isolation and negative coping strategies.

FUNDING (AS OF 1 SEPTEMBER 2020)

USD 252.1 M* required for the Yemen operation, including the additional response for COVID-19.

Unfunded 44 %
USD 111.2 M



So far this year, more than 21,000 families have been displaced by the conflict and 74,000 families have been affected by the heavy rain and floods, severely undermining their resilience and self-sufficiency. For those identified as vulnerable through UNHCR's and its partners' monitoring and assessments, a range of protection services including psychological first aid and counselling, legal assistance and other support to persons with specific needs are offered through eight community centres across the country and mobile teams. All activities had adapted to the COVID-19 measures, including adopting a remote modality.

Challenges related to the reduction of physical mobility and of face-to-face activities due to COVID-19 slowed down household-level protection assessments. As a compensatory measure, the capacity of protection hotlines was increased to allow for communication and counselling without direct physical contact. Individual protection counselling remained limited to urgent or specific cases. Legal counselling, psychosocial support, services for people with specific needs and emergency cash assistance delivered through community centres were also slowed down but never totally interrupted to provide adequate services to the most vulnerable. Currently, UNHCR partners are resuming their direct work in the field and in community centres, with guidance for partners to observe COVID preventive measures such as protective equipment and social distancing.


Based on an analysis of the current situation, available data and the ongoing reduction of financial



resources, UNHCR is developing **IDP Protection Strategy** that prioritized **protection assessments and analysis, particularly in situations of new displacement; cash assistance to the most vulnerable families; referrals to community centres for specialised protection services and to other services; advocacy with parties to the conflict to uphold their obligations and protect civilians, including through the Protection Cluster.** Limited availability of resource impacts the scale of some services while investment is needed to strengthen the capacity of local partners, particularly in case management, and of the Community-based protection Networks, for a positive impact on the quality of protection services.


HOW DO WE ASSIST?


UNHCR works largely with local partners and with 123 Community-Based Protection Networks across the country, reaching the most affected families, including in the hard-to-reach areas. They identify protection issues in families and communities, help them find local solutions in line with humanitarian and protection principles, and, if needed, refer them to the eight community centres managed by UNHCR's partners.


The community centres managed by UNHCR's partners function as "one-stop-shops" where a multiple range of protection services are available:

 **Psychosocial support**, such as psychosocial first aid and counselling to address distress related to the effects of the conflict and of displacement, loss of assets and property, as well as more structured support for cases with specific needs.

  Protection services such as **child protection**, including **recreational activities**, psychosocial counselling, awareness-raising and facilitation of access to birth registration; individual case management for **gender-based violence (GBV) survivors** including with the offer of psychosocial counselling, cash assistance, legal assistance and referral to medical services.

 **Legal assistance**, such as legal awareness, counselling and representation on various types of issues including access to personal documentation (ID and birth certificates); family issues (marriage/divorce, alimony, guardianship of children); interventions in informal dispute resolution through mediation, including in eviction cases. Awareness and support to access personal documentation is instrumental to facilitate families' access to public services and humanitarian assistance.

 Strengthening **community engagement** through community-based consultations, participatory approaches, and community development projects to promote self-resilience and peaceful coexistence between displaced and local communities.

 **Referral of cases** that require specialised medical care, support for persons with disabilities (physiotherapy and assistive devices) for both children and adults. The absence, or discontinuation, of such services in several areas due to the severe underfunding of many humanitarian programs in Yemen is a growing challenge.

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