

MAY 2023

PEOPLE ON THE MOVE IN MAY 2023

 11,463

Migrant Arrivals

 1,470*

New Displacements

 5,466

Yemeni Returnees



Stranded migrants prepare to embark on IOM's Voluntary Humanitarian Return flight to Ethiopia from Aden. © IOM 2023/ Eva Noma Sibanda

SITUATION OVERVIEW

In May 2023, the security and political situation continued to be relatively stable. Frontlines in south Ta'iz and to the north of Ma'rib remained calm. However, clashes resumed in Harib and Ma'rib Al Wadi districts in Ma'rib governorate, as well as in areas along Yemen's west coast, which led to civilian casualties.

IOM's Displacement Track Matrix (DTM) estimated that 245 households (HHs), or 1,470 individuals, were newly displaced in May, mainly due to flooding and tribal clashes in Ma'rib and violence in Ta'iz. Tribal conflicts near Al Maseel site in Ma'rib Al Wadi district forced all residents (approximately 356 HHs) to leave and relocate to other areas. However, they were able to return to the same site after violence ceased. Clashes in the west coast, particularly a drone attack in Al Hayma site, also led to civilian casualties, increased humanitarian needs and displacement. Furthermore, OCHA and other partners continued to report civilian casualties, including of children, caused by explosive remnants of war in the north and south of Yemen, especially in Al Hodeidah.

Rain and flooding continue to impact internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Ma'rib, Ta'iz and Ibb. Many IDPs already live in precarious conditions, with heavy rain damaging their shelters, destroying their belongings, and putting their health and safety at risk. IOM's Camp Coordination Camp Management (CCCM) team responded in the most affected areas, however the team was unable to assist the affected HHs in At Tuhayta due to access issues. The teams also conducted awareness sessions about rain and flood mitigation and fire risk reduction in the affected sites.

January to May 2023 has seen a significant increase in migrant arrivals with over 66,330 migrants arriving to Yemen's shores, approximately 90 per cent of the total 73,233 arrivals in 2022. IOM expects the number of new migrants in 2023 could double that of 2022. The overall increase could be linked to weather conditions, sea tides and decreased coast guard patrolling in Djibouti. Ethiopian migrants continued to cite economic reasons as their primary reasons for migration while most migrants from Somalia left for conflict-related reasons. Migration flows inside Yemen changed in May as many migrants preferred to use road transportation instead of walking due to the increase in temperatures. This created undignified means of movement where migrants travelling between Aden and Lahj were placed in congested trucks and often exploited for cheap casual labor (such as offloading the trucks).

* Displacement in Yemen refers to the 13 governorates where IOM DTM's team has access, namely: Abyan, Ad Dali', Aden, Al Bayda, Al Hodeidah, Al Jawf, Al Maharah, Hadramawt, Lahj, Ma'rib, Shabwah, Socotra, Ta'iz.

TOP HEADLINES IN MAY

INCREASE IN ARREST CAMPAIGNS OF MIGRANTS AND SMUGGLERS

During the month of May, steady flows of migrants continued to arrive through various informal points across Shabwah, Abyan, and Aden.

However, the presence of migrants in Aden has been often perceived by local communities as a source of tension. Local authorities, media and security forces in Aden have been using discriminatory rhetoric depicting migrants as a threat. In May reports have indicated tightened measures to block migrants from entering through ports, increased targeted arrest campaigns, and detentions in unsafe and insecure centres.

These arrest campaigns against migrants come in conjunction with efforts to target smugglers, particularly in Lahj. A military campaign on containment sites run by smugglers in Lahj led to firing between both sides in which African migrants were

used as human shields. This caused the death of one migrant and injury of another. These smuggler den raids were thought to be a result of alleged disagreements between the smugglers and local authorities. Additionally, some migrants being held by smugglers were released during the raids.

Migrants in Yemen are among the most vulnerable populations with acute humanitarian needs. Although IOM and the local authorities are working together to provide migrants with lifesaving assistance, and supporting voluntary humanitarian return (VHR) when possible, their needs remain critical. All returns facilitated through VHR remain voluntary and focused on supporting stranded migrants who want to return home. There continues to be a backlog of migrants waiting for their opportunity to safely go home.



Migrants receive health care at Al Shahid Hospital in Ma'rib. ©IOM 2023/ Haithm Abdulbaqi

WEST COAST AND SOUTH TA'IZ

The frontlines in the west coast of Yemen continued to experience sporadic clashes that resulted in civilian casualties. On 20 May 2023, a drone attack in Al Hayma resulted in the death of one child and injury of another which forced the families to leave their displacement site and settle to another displacement site in the area. Access to Al Hayma is still restricted to all humanitarian actors where over 10,000 IDPs remain without consistent humanitarian assistance. In the event of a possible escalation of the security situation in Al Hayma and widespread displacements, contingency plans to accommodate new arrivals to existing sites away from Al Hayma are being developed by IOM and partners. A full conflict analysis is needed to understand the likelihood of a worsening security situation. Partners on the ground stand by guiding principles of community engagement and the voluntariness of relocation.

Furthermore, housing land and property threats continue to affect displaced families. In south Ta'iz, 120 households were forced to leave Jabal Zaid site and relocate to Al Makdoosh site due to a dispute with landowners. Similarly, 17 households were evicted from Al Dehywi, Al Qamus and Al Ershad sites. However, with the assistance of IOM, these households were able to be relocated to new lands within the same sites.

MA'RIB

In May, Ma'rib saw a flareup in tribal clashes, causing several casualties. Armed clashes reportedly erupted between tribes due to a land dispute at the end of May. The clashes resulted in numerous deaths and casualties, and multiple houses and vehicles were burnt down. No incidents with direct impact on IOM were recorded, except for a slight suspension of field visits in some areas in Ma'rib Al Wadi due to tribal clashes, with the suspension lifted following a locally mediated truce. Violent clashes forced about 280 displaced HHs in five camps to move to safer areas, and IOM referred evicted IDPs to relevant partners. Military activities also continue to increase in other areas in Ma'rib between Raghwan and Al- Gadhafer frontlines.

To respond to the critical needs of stranded migrants, IOM continued its voluntary humanitarian return (VHR) programme in Ma'rib, resulting in the safe and dignified transportation of 908 migrants (872 male, 36 female) to Addis Ababa via chartered flights that departed from Seiyun. Delegates from Ethiopia began another round of verification for more migrants who wish to travel back to Ethiopia.

While VHR is often the only viable durable solution for stranded migrants, there are glaring gaps in protection and mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) services and specialized support for survivors of gender-based violence (GBV). There continues to be a lack of access to specialized care and the resources to provide holistic route-based support from arrival to departure in Yemen predominantly due to limited funding and partner capacity to support all of migrants' needs.

SA'DAH

In Sa'dah governorate, a main transit point for migrants attempting to cross the border into the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA), there was a reported increase in the number of minors and unaccompanied minors travelling as compared to months prior. There was also an observed increase of minors stranded at the border point of Sa'dah. Furthermore, three to four migrants came to IOM-supported Monnibeh Hospital per day in May with severe injuries from the border area, while others visited the hospital to receive treatment for illnesses such as malaria, chickenpox and fever.

lbb


Furthermore, displacement sites in lbb were affected by floods and heavy rains which led to an increase in the need for shelter and non-food items (S-NFI). However, the lack of access and presence in lbb of humanitarian actors has presented significant challenges. Despite IOM's continued efforts to advocate for the referral of cases to other partners, no partner has been able to intervene to respond to these needs in the governorate. Greater funding and access to some areas in lbb continues to be crucial to meet the needs of those affected.



A woman enters Al Yabli health facility in Mokha, Yemen. ©IOM 2023/
Angela wells

DISPLACEMENT TRENDS

In May, IOM Yemen's DTM reported that 245 households (1,470 individuals) were displaced at least once in May in 13 governorates where teams have access, namely: Abyan, Ad Dali' Aden, Al Bayda, Al Hodeidah, Al Jawf, Al Maharah, Hadramawt, Lahj, Ma'rib, Shabwah, Socotra and Ta'iz.

 The UN estimates there are a total of 4.5 million internally displaced persons in Yemen.*

Most displacements in the governorate originated from Ta'iz (84 HHs), Al Hodeidah (40 HHs) and Ma'rib (62 HHs) while those displaced moved into/within Ma'rib (86HHs), Al Hodeidah (61 HHs) and Ta'iz (61 HHs) governorates.

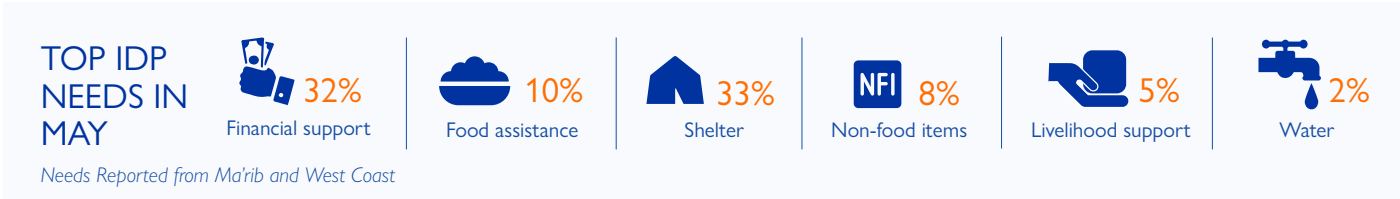
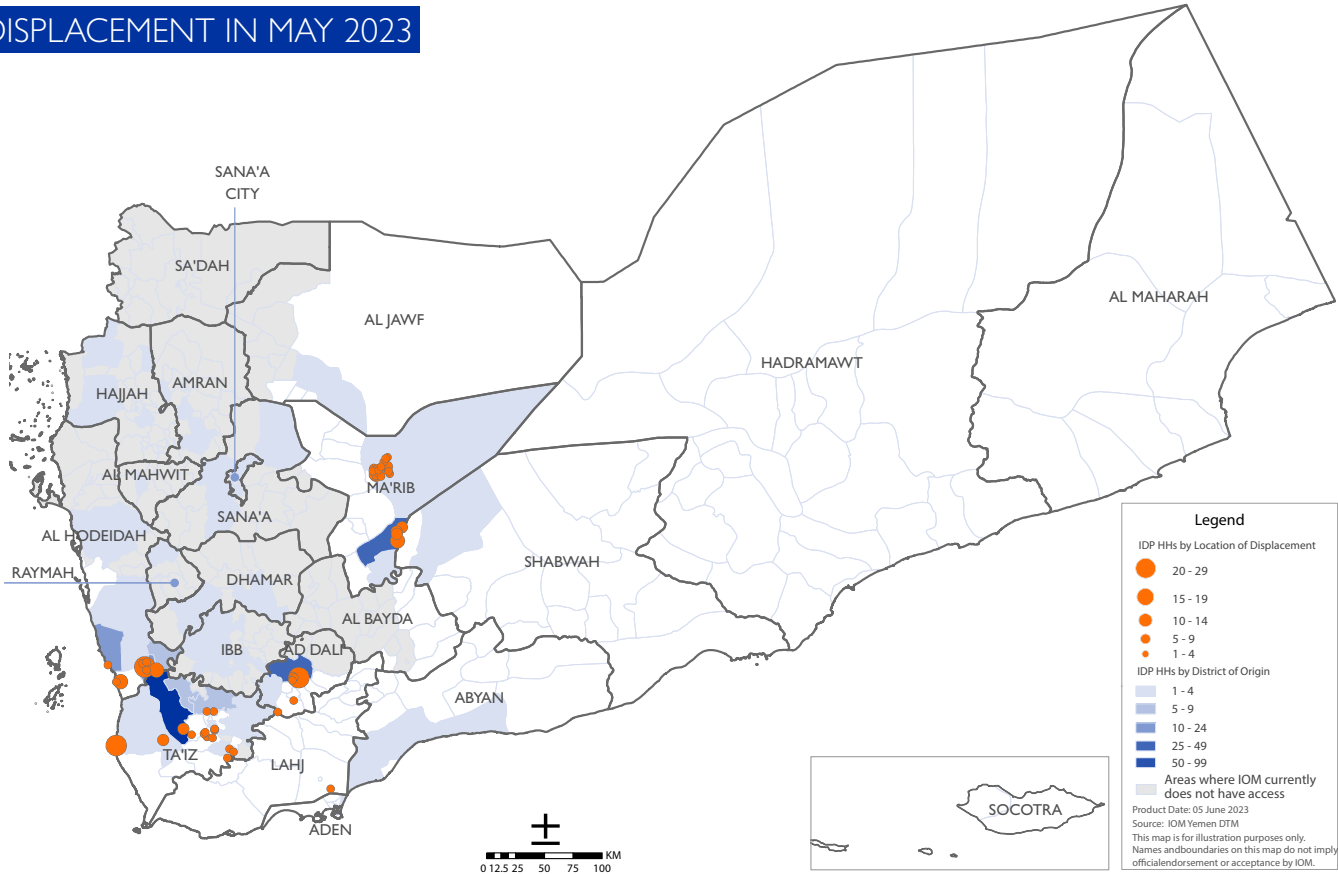
The majority of the displacements (85%) were caused by conflict, with the remaining IDPs citing economic reasons (15%) and disasters (1%) as their reasons for displacement. This represents an increase in economic instability and disasters as driving factors for displacement compared to previous months.

Armed clashes in Ma'rib Al Wadi forced about 280 displaced HHs in five sites to relocate. Now, the majority of those displaced already returned to the site and reported that there were several damages to their assets, including tents, water tanks and livestock.

Additionally, the spread of dengue fever in Al Husoon site caused the infection of more than 700 people, most of whom are displaced.

From 1 January to 31 May 2023, IOM Yemen DTM tracked 3,301 HHs (19,806 individuals) who experienced displacement at least once.

DISPLACEMENT IN MAY 2023



* According to the United Nations Humanitarian Needs Overview 2023.

MIGRATION AND RETURNEE TRENDS



The UN estimates there are a total of 209,000 migrants in need in Yemen.*

In May 2023, a total of 17,056 individuals (11,463 migrants entering Yemen, 77 migrants transiting through Yemen, 50 migrants exiting Yemen, and 5,466 Yemeni returnees) were recorded at the Lahj, Shabwah and Hadramawt Flow Monitoring Points.

The number of migrants arriving on the coast in Shabwah saw a dramatic 57 per cent increase (from 1,755 in April to 2,748 in May) possibly due to the truce established between the conflicting parties in the Bari Region in Somalia, which is a main route used by smugglers. However, there was a 25 per cent decrease in the number of migrants arriving through Yemen's Lahj coast (from 11,656 in April to 8,711 in May).

Some 77 migrants were recorded traveling through Hadramawt coming from Shabwah and Ma'rib governorates and heading to Al Maharah governorate.

Furthermore, a worrying trend observed was the number of migrant girls and women being exploited and abused by other migrants and smugglers. Health staff of IOM's Migrant Response Point in Aden responded to many female migrants suffering from physical pain and trauma. Some had been confined and exposed to gender-based violence on a daily basis for months until they could find a means to escape or were released after becoming pregnant.

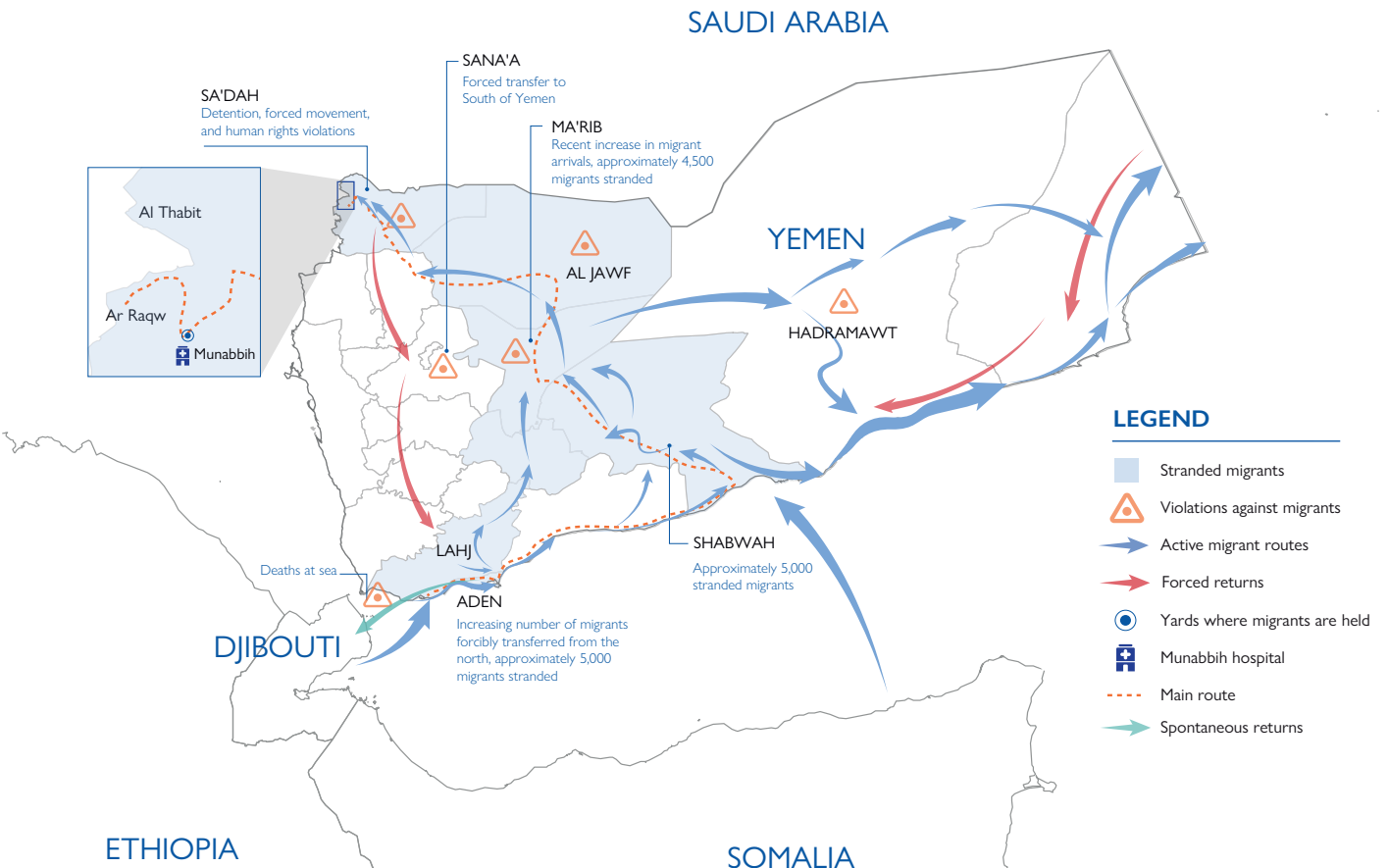
Many of these women are looking for safe shelters or ways to return to their country of origin.

There was also a 20 per cent increase in the number of Yemeni returnees from KSA through Al Wadea'ah land border in the last month (from 4,548 in April to 5,466 in May). IOM cannot confirm if these are forced returns.



Migrants prepare to start their Voluntary Humanitarian Return from Aden to Addis Ababa. ©IOM Yemen 2023/ Eva Noma Sibanda

MIGRANT MOVEMENTS IN YEMEN



STORIES FROM THE GROUND

AFTER EXTREME HARDSHIP, SINGLE MIGRANT MOTHERS SUPPORTED TO SAFELY RETURN HOME

Sana'a – “My journey to Yemen was very difficult, we walked for days, until our shoes and clothes wore out,” recalls Amene* of the grueling journey she embarked on over a year ago with false promises of high earnings and a better standard of living in Gulf Countries.

Amene is one of more than 800 Ethiopian migrants who have safely and voluntarily returned home on flights supported by the King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Center (KSrelief).

The International Organization for Migration’s (IOM) Voluntary Humanitarian Return (VHR) programme offers a lifeline for migrants stranded throughout the country.

Like most migrants who travel on this route, Amene was unaware of the dangers she would face when she reached Yemen: exploitation, extortion, harsh living conditions, among others.

She departed from her home in Ethiopia side by side with her husband, but was separated from him by traffickers who put them in different traveling groups when they reached Djibouti. Since then, her journey became unimaginably difficult.

“They melted plastic on our skin to force our families to send money. When I called my family, no one could help me,” Amene recalled from an IOM-supported shelter.

Here, she met Marsani*, another migrant who took last month’s flight after a similarly harrowing experience of extortion.

She used to work as a merchant – buying and selling clothing between Djibouti and Ethiopia. One day, her goods were seized, and she lost her sole source of income. Traveling to the Gulf to make an income seemed like her next best option to support herself.

[Read more about Amene's journey to safety.](#)



Marsani is one of more than 800 Ethiopian migrants who has safely and voluntarily returned home on flights supported by @KSRelief_en. ©IOM Yemen 2023/ Sahar Alshawafi

VIDEO

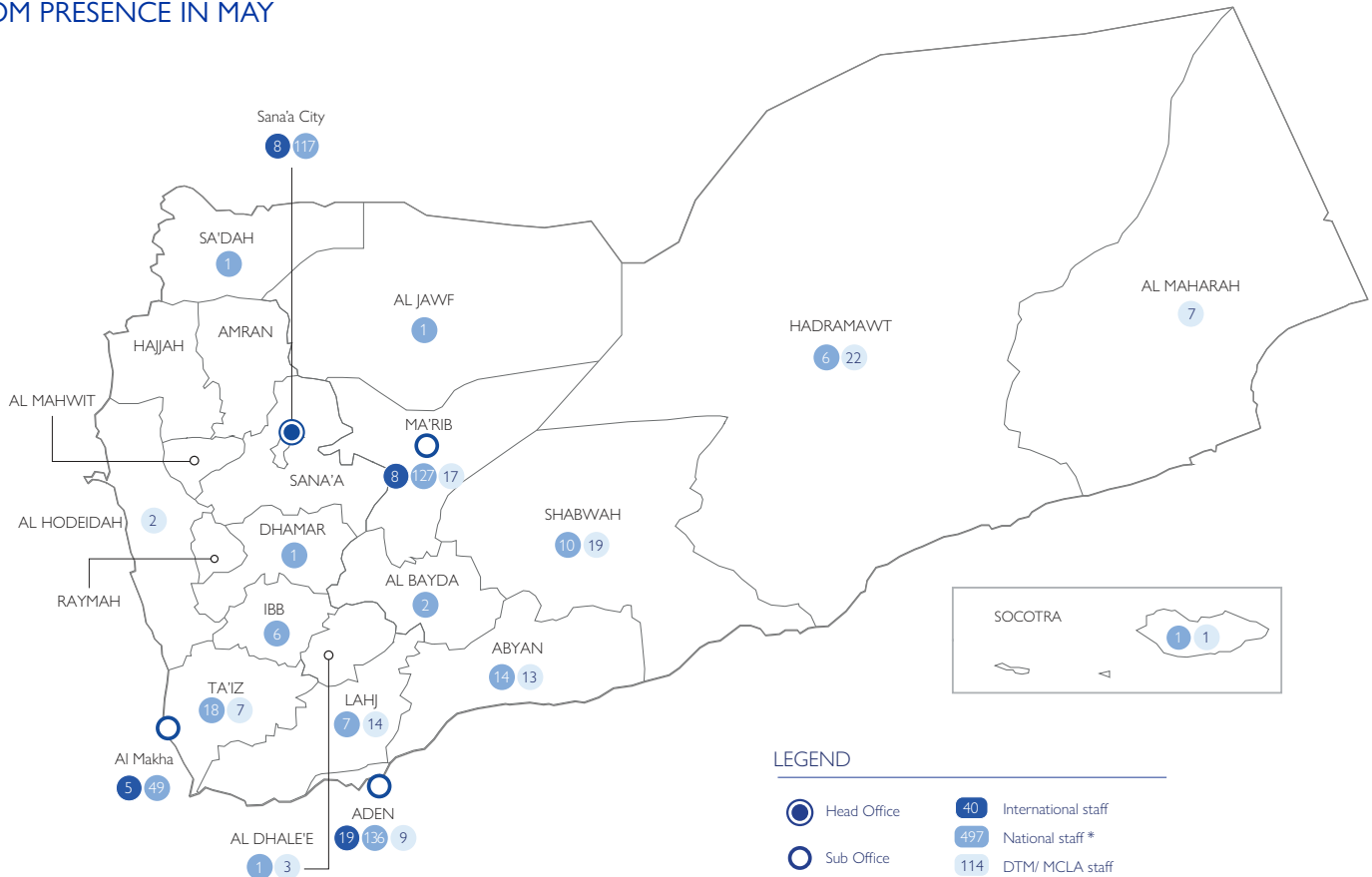
“NOW WE HAVE A PROPER HOME”: TRANSITIONAL SHELTERS CREATE A SAFE ENVIRONMENT FOR MA'RIB'S DISPLACED



IOM'S RESPONSE IN MAY

The International Organization for Migration has well-established offices in Sana'a, Aden, Ma'rib and Al Makha in the west coast region which support vulnerable groups throughout Yemen, including displaced people, conflict-affected communities and migrants.

IOM PRESENCE IN MAY



CAMP COORDINATION CAMP MANAGEMENT

185,510
Total people reached

86 sites supported by IOM in Ma'rib, Al Hodeidah, South Ta'iz and Ibb

IOM CCCM teams continued regular site monitoring and coordination activities including service mapping, gaps and needs analysis, referrals, and updating the population movement tracker for 86 supported sites where 36,016 displaced households (185,510 individuals) are hosted.

In Ma'rib, IOM conducted 76 rapid assessments, two multi-sectorial need assessments, and 34 service monitoring visits on water, sanitation hygiene (WASH), Rapid Response Mechanisms (RRM), and protection for 31,760 HHs to support them with assistance in 27 displacement sites. The engineering support unit is currently conducting flood risk reduction interventions to assist the IDPs affected by the flood and repair the damaged infrastructure at Al Jufainah site. IOM also completed the construction and rehabilitation work for 16 schools across sites in Ma'rib. In south Ta'iz the team installed children's playgrounds in three IOM-managed sites benefiting 853 displaced children.

In the west coast, IOM distributed 225 solar panels to families in Al Dehywi and Al Shaihal sites where there had been no electricity since 2017.



IOM's CCCM team distributes solar panels to households displaced on Yemen's west coast. ©IOM 2023

HEALTH

48,553 Total people reached

3,202 children under the age of five screened for malnutrition

3,266 migrants received pre-embarkation medical checks for their registration of VHR movements

Across Yemen, IOM has contributed towards reducing morbidity and mortality of IDPs, host community members, and migrants through the provision of emergency, primary and secondary health services, including nutrition screenings for patients at risk of famine and extreme hunger. IOM supported an estimated 48,553 individuals with healthcare consultations in May 2023, including 1,799 pregnant women with antenatal care services; 1,451 women with family planning support; 159 women with birth deliveries and 11 cesarean sections. Over 3,200 children under the age of five were screened for malnutrition, of which 185 children were treated for severe acute malnutrition, and 559 children were treated for moderate acute malnutrition.

IOM supported four health facilities in Ma'rib and Aden with medications. IOM also enhanced the community-based health approach and trained 24 community health volunteers in Ma'rib. Furthermore, IOM conducted a sensitization workshop on migration health for 20 healthcare providers in Aden, Lahj, and Shabwa governorates, areas of the country that receive high numbers of migrant arrivals.

In addition, pre-embarkation medical checks were performed in Ma'rib, Aden, and Sana'a for 3,266 migrants (2,096 Marib, 432 Aden and 738 Sana'a) travelling on VHR movements to Ethiopia. Out of the total, there were 100 medical cases (23 in Marib, 10 in Aden and 67 in Sana'a) that were escorted home by IOM medical staff.

CASH-BASED INTERVENTIONS (CBI)

15,232 Total people reached

2,176 HHs provided with multi-purpose cash assistance

518 HHs registered for RRM assistance

504 HHs provided with RRM kits

Despite an increase in fire incidents in displacement sites in Ma'rib and floods observed in areas of Al Hodeidah, displacement remained mostly limited during the month of May. For the coming months, IOM's field teams are preparing to respond to any potential floods that may occur between June and August. In May 2023, IOM's Rapid Response Mechanism team registered 518 HHs affected by conflict (407), floods (56) or fires (46). RRM kits were distributed to 504 HHs, or approximately 3,528 individuals, in Ma'rib, Ta'iz, and Al Hodeidah governorates. Additionally, the daily remittance data collection was conducted in Ma'rib City district supporting the Cash Consortium for Yemen.

PROTECTION

8,032 Total people reached

1,001 migrants returned home via 12 voluntary humanitarian return

3,517 migrants verified for VHR in Aden and Ma'rib

IOM supported an estimated 8,032 people (5,481 migrants and 2,551 IDPs) with integrated protection services across Yemen. In addition to delivering support through its mobile teams along key migration routes, IOM continued to manage its Migrant Response Points in Ma'rib, Aden and Sana'a which are one-stop centres for migrants in need of key emergency relief assistance. IOM's mobile teams conducted daily protection monitoring activities along migratory routes. Information gathered feeds into overall IOM analysis on trends and protection vulnerabilities – which are used to publish products to inform programming and advocacy efforts. Immediate humanitarian assistance included lifesaving interventions that include NFI kits (including clothes, shoes and personal hygiene items), minimal food assistance, water, as well as first aid and health referrals to primary and secondary facilities.

This month, IOM supported 1,001 migrants with 12 voluntary humanitarian return (VHR) flights to their country of origin from Aden and Ma'rib and 3,517 migrants with nationality verification, a key milestone in ensuring that migrants have access to documentation to be assisted with VHR.



IOM protection staff meet newly displaced families in areas along the west coast of Yemen. ©IOM 2023/ Angela wells

WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE (WASH)

 **204,265** Total people reached

IOM WASH teams continued operations to respond to the new and protracted displacement in Ma'rib, West Coast, south Ta'iz, and northern Yemen. In addition to emergency WASH activities for vulnerable populations, urban and rural durable water supply infrastructure works continued with the rehabilitation and expansion of water schemes. Furthermore, IOM ensured safe and dignified sanitation, risk communication, hygiene kit distribution, as well as community engagement activities such as hygiene promotion and awareness activities. This also entailed the construction and rehabilitation of household latrines, fecal sludge management, and solid waste management activities. In Ma'rib alone, 124,597 individuals were supported with WASH services in May.

SHELTER AND NON-FOOD ITEMS (S-NFI)


 **20,986** Total people reached

 **1,379** NFI kits distributed

 **1,787** HH received shelter support

Shelter and non-food items (S-NFI) needs continued to be critical due to the flooding which impacted many governorates across the country. In response to ongoing and growing needs, IOM provided 1,379 NFI kits, 659 emergency shelter kits, 25 plastic sheets, 939 family tents, 12 nylon ropes, and one insulation roll to 2,813 displaced HHs or 19,691 individuals affected by conflict, flood, fire and eviction in five governorates (Ma'rib, West Coast, Abyan, Ad Dali and South Ta'iz) through IOM field teams and implementing partners. IOM also built transitional shelters and provided shelter rehabilitation support to families in need.

TRANSITION & RECOVERY

 **115** Total people reached with MPCA

IOM's Transition and Recovery Unity (TRU) continued providing multipurpose cash assistance (MPCA) to the most vulnerable households from the displaced and host communities in Lahj governorate. In May, IOM supported the distribution of the first round of MPCA to 20 vulnerable households (3 male-headed HHs and 17 female-headed HHs) or 115 individuals in Lahj governorate. IOM continued conducting the assessment and collecting primary data of one water supply project and four irrigation projects in Ma'rib governorate, with 208,100 individuals expected to benefit from this project once completed.

DISPLACEMENT TRACKING MATRIX (DTM)

 **4** weekly Rapid Displacement Tracking (RDTs) reports published

 **1** Flow Monitoring Registry report published

The Flow Monitoring Registry (FMR) data collection for the month of May has been completed and verified, and the monthly FMR dashboard was published. Rapid Displacement Tracking (RDT) weekly data collection during May was finished, and the RDT weekly reports for the previous period were published. The Flow Monitoring Survey data collection is ongoing, and the first quarter report for 2023 was published. In DFA controlled areas, DTM continued the discussion with the authorities regarding finalizing and agreeing on the operational framework. In IRG controlled areas, the DTM conducted the central workshop in Aden for local authorities and training of trainers in Aden for all focal points. [All DTM reports here.](#)

CALLS TO ACTION

IOM remains dedicated to addressing the critical needs of migrant, displaced and host communities while advocating that:

- Parties to the conflict respect International Humanitarian Law, avoid the targeting of civilians at all costs and pursue a locally-owned, community-driven peace process.
- Humanitarian partners work across the humanitarian-development-peace nexus and toward durable solutions that are inclusive, sustainable and effective.
- The humanitarian community include migrants in all humanitarian programming, based on needs and not status.
- Donors increase their commitments to the UN's 2023 Humanitarian Response Plan for Yemen, which is only 24 per cent funded as of May 2023.

IOM'S RESPONSE IN YEMEN IS SUPPORTED BY

