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## Information Bulletin

### Horn of Africa: Population Movement-Yemeni crisis

 International Federation  
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

<b>Date of issue:</b> 15 April, 2015.	<b>Points of contact:</b> <b>In Djibouti:</b> M. Abdi Kaireh Bouh, Secretary General <b>In Somalia:</b> Dr. Ahmed Hassan, President <b>In Ethiopia:</b> W ro Frehiwot Worku, Secretary General.
<b>Date of disaster :</b> April 2015	
<b>Host National Societies:</b> Djibouti Red Crescent Society, Somalia Red Crescent Society and Ethiopian Red Cross Society.	
<b>National Societies currently involved in the operation:</b> International Committee of the Red Cross, International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies	
<b>Other partner organizations involved in the operation:</b> UNHCR, IOM, DRC, NRC, UNOCHA, WFP, UNICEF	

**This bulletin is being issued for information only and reflects the current situation and details available at this time. The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) is not seeking funding or other assistance from donors for this operation. Djibouti Red Crescent Society, Somalia Red Crescent Society and Ethiopian Red Cross Societies will however, accept direct assistance to provide support to the affected population.**

## The situation

Since January 2015, the tensions in Yemen turned into a conflict which forced the President, Mr Hadi, to flee the capital Sanaa in February. In late March, the President requested a coalition led by Saudi Arabia to intervene and launched air strikes on Houthi targets. The coalition comprises five Gulf Arab states as well as Jordan, Egypt, Morocco and Sudan.

The conflict has so far displaced an estimated 100,000 people, according to the International Organization for Migration (IOM). Majority of those displaced have only been able to move short distances, for example from the heavily bombarded capital, Sana'a, to Amran governorate about an hour's drive to the north, and from the southern port city of Aden, another target for air strikes, to Abyan in the south east. Over 600 people have been killed since the bombing campaign and ground combat started. According to the World Health Organization, the Ministry of Health puts the death toll at over 1,000 people.



**SRCS tracing team volunteer providing family reunification services to returnees from Yemen. Photo/SRCS**

With the Saudi-led aerial bombardment of Yemen intensifying and a full-scale civil war appearing increasingly inevitable, as many as a million African migrants and refugees in the country could be looking for the few immediate escape routes (Djibouti and Somalia). Yemen itself is host to over 250,000 refugees, mostly Somalis, and a million migrants, the majority of them from Ethiopia. Along with the Somali refugees, Yemen host lot of economic migrants from Eastern Africa region mainly from Ethiopia, Eritrea and Djibouti. In this context, Humanitarian organizations are looking at the possible evacuation of refugees from Aden to Djibouti. There is great concern about a large number of Somali refugees living among the local population in Basateen on the outskirts of Aden, where fighting has been intense in the last few days.

As fighting intensifies in Yemen, authorities have closed Ports and air traffic is largely restricted to evacuation flights for nationals of western or Asian countries. A few hundred foreign nationals have been allowed to cross a land border into Oman. Due to closure of ports, compounded with fuel shortages, sea crossings to the Horn of Africa are increasingly difficult. The Government of Yemen is closing many of the exit points and people are queuing to depart. For time being this might affect steady flow of returnees and refugees in to Djibouti and Somalia.

### **Djibouti**

Djibouti has received around 600 Yemeni refugees since the conflict intensified. The majority of them are fishermen with their own vessels who managed to cross the Gulf of Aden. Government has designated an area of around 5 km from Obock village in the north of the country for a refugee camp. Djibouti coast guard is directing refugees arriving in Djibouti port to Obock. Currently, the camp is hosting around 232 Yemeni refugees and 250 refugees are on route to Obock that arrived in Djibouti Port on between 8 and 9 April, 2015.

The newly arriving refugees are being registered at the Al-Rahma temporary transit centre near Obock, where they receive food, water, medical care and other assistance. The authorities have identified a site for a refugee camp four kilometres away at Markazi. Djibouti is already home to nearly 15,000 refugees, the majority from Somalia. Most live in two refugee camps in the south of the country. UNHCR has put in place an initial contingency plan to be able to receive up to 30,000 refugees in the next six months as of 10 April 2015.

### **Ethiopia**

Since 3 April 2015, IOM has supported repatriation of 159 stranded Ethiopian migrants to return home from Djibouti to the Ethiopian capital Addis Ababa. The returnees included 131 individuals stranded in Djibouti en route to Yemen and 28 people evacuated to Djibouti from Yemen by sea due to the ongoing conflict in that country.

### **Somalia**

According to the latest statistics and information from the UNHCR and IOM, as of 10 April 2015, the number of arrivals from Yemen was as follows; 277 new arrivals (271 Somalis and 6 Yemenis) reported in Bosaso and Bargal, Puntland. 12 new arrivals (9 Somalis and 3 Yemenis) reported in Berbera, Somaliland. The total number of arrivals has reached 621 in Puntland and 293 in Somaliland making a total of 914. This includes; 155 Yemeni nationals, 751 Somali nationals, 2 Ethiopian nationals and 6 Djibouti nationals.

In Somalia, the first boat of refugees arrived on 28 March at the port of Berbera in Somaliland with 32 Yemenis refugees and on 1 April 2015 second boat caring 90 people (28 male, 30 Female and 32 Children) was received at the Port of Bosaso in Puntland. On Friday 10 April, at 640hrs the Berbera Port Authority and Immigration received a boat with 12 new arrivals from Mukha, Yemen. They were 3 Yemeni men, and 9 Somalis (1 man and 8 women). The Somali nationals are all from Mogadishu. All individuals in the group (Somalis and Yemenis) were living in Sana'a, Yemen. The group has claimed to flee Sana'a, Aden and Mukalla due to violence against Somalis living in Yemen.

On Friday 10 April 2015, at 1730hrs, a boat (the Mukalla 1) carrying 247 persons (85 men, 93 women and 69 children) arrived at the Port of Bosaso, Puntland. Six of these individuals had Yemeni citizenship (2 men, 3 women and 1 child), while 241 were Somalis. Approximately 80 percent were from South Central Somalia. On 10 April, a fiberglass boat called Bina, carrying 30 persons (6 men, 5 women and 19 children), docked at Bargal and Alula towns, Bari region, from Mukalla, Yemen. All arrivals were Somalis from Puntland, with the exception of 3 persons from South Central Somalia. The SRCS Bosaso Branch reported that, on 5 April, 2015, three vessels reached Bosaso Port from Yemen with 99 returnees who were received by staff and volunteers from the National Society together with the local authorities.

Returning migrants from different countries including from Djibouti and Ethiopia are being sent to the Port of Djibouti in the capital, where IOM has taken lead role in repatriation of non-Yemenis migrants.

UNHCR is refurbishing two buildings to serve as reception and transit centres for refugees from Yemen and Somalis who may return home because of the crisis. As of 10 April, 2015 UNHCR and partners have started preparations to be able to receive up to 100,000 people, also over six months.

## Red Cross and Red Crescent action

The IFRC Eastern Africa and Indian Ocean Island Regional office (EAIOI) is keeping close contact with the National Societies in Djibouti and Somalia, which are the main entry points for returnees and refugees in Horn of Africa. IFRC office is also working closely with Ethiopian Red Cross Society for preparation of arrival of returnees from Djibouti and Somalia. EAIOI office has developed a coordination mechanism by linking three national societies together for information sharing. Along with this, EAIOI has also established contact with IFRC Yemen delegation and MENA zone for sharing information about situation in Yemen.

**The Djibouti Red Crescent Society (DRCS)** participated in a joint assessment led by Government of Djibouti, UNHCR and IOM together with other UN and Humanitarian partners in the country. DRCS team is providing the First Aid support to refugees and returnees from Yemen arriving by boat. Together with ICRC team in country, restoration of family links support is provided to the refugees in the camp. DRCS has installed two water storage tanks of 10,000 litres capacity each in Obock (Markasi refugee camp) to provide the refugees with access to clean drinking water. The NS also distributed 400 jerry cans for household water collection and storage. DRCS WatSan technical team is now conducting detailed assessment for providing water and sanitation facilities in the refugee camps (not to forget that there is also a refugee camp in Ali Ade and another in Hol Hol hosting mainly Somali refugees). DRCS has planned to continue supporting new arrivals in the refugee camps and requested IFRC financial and technical support, specifically for coordination at country level for effective responding to the refugee situation in country. IFRC has launched an RDRT alert for Djibouti along with this, IFRC is also in contact with partners for providing additional human resource support in case is needed.

The ICRC continues to support DRCS in the provision of RFL services (Restoring Family Links), offering services to refugees, migrants, and TCN (third country Nationals) affected by the crisis in Yemen to call their relatives and inform them of their safe arrival. RFL services are offered by DRCS in 3 locations in Obock (Rahma centre, sports complex and IOM Centre) and 1 location in Djibouti (Djibouti Port).

**The Somalia Red Crescent Society, (SRCS)** has joined the humanitarian coordination teams and task force led by the Government of Somaliland and Puntland together with the UN Agencies and INGOs. The NS has deployed its health team and disaster management team (Branch Disaster Response Team) to the entry points at the ports where transit centres have been established. SRCS mobile health clinic teams and volunteers are providing First Aid, vaccination and RFL support to the returnees and refugees. The mobile and fixed clinic teams are on standby to scale up the response in case the returnees and refugees number increases.

Clean up of the reception centres by SRCS volunteers in Bosaso is currently underway in anticipation of more returnees expected to arrive within the next 24 hours and coming days and weeks. SRCS is planning to request financial support through the Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) and technical support from IFRC in order to continue the support through mobile clinics, and to conduct further detailed assessment for scaling up of the operation. IFRC Somalia delegation is providing continued support to the NS in responding to immediate needs.

The ICRC has been supporting the deployment of SRCS volunteers who are offering phone call services to the new arrivals in Bosaso and Berbera who wish to contact their relatives in Yemen or Somalia/Somaliland. The ICRC has also made available 730 Non Food Item (NFI) kits prepositioned stock in Bosaso warehouse. This can be increased up to 5000 NFIs kits within two weeks. Along with NFI support the ICRC also has capacity for emergency water supply for 15000 people<sup>1</sup> (10 litres per person) for one month. In addition the ICRC will be

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<sup>1</sup> Based on water available in the area.

able to provide 3 basic health and malaria kits to serve 1,000 people for 3 months. Based on needs ICRC also considering providing cash transfer support to returnees and refugees to cover the immediate needs.

**Ethiopian Red Cross Society (ERCS)** has been working closely with Government to provide support to the returnees. ERCS intervention will focus on providing First Aid support, Ambulance service and hospital referral, and Restoring Family Link (RFL) services to the returnees. ERCS is currently working on the plan that will be shared with ICRC and IFRC.

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## How we work

All IFRC assistance seeks to adhere to the Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in Disaster Relief and the Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response (Sphere) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

The IFRC's vision is to inspire, encourage, facilitate and promote at all times all forms of humanitarian activities by National Societies, with a view to preventing and alleviating human suffering, and thereby

contributing to the maintenance and promotion of human dignity and peace in the world.

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The IFRC's work is guided by Strategy 2020 which puts forward three strategic aims:

1. Save lives, protect livelihoods, and strengthen recovery from disaster and crises.
2. Enable healthy and safe living.
3. Promote social inclusion and a culture of non-violence and peace.

