



Enhancing Income Generating Opportunities for Vulnerable Populations in southern Yemen: IOM undertakes three-pronged livelihoods restoration assistance to conflict-affected fishermen communities in Abyan

30 October—IOM Yemen's livelihoods field teams have recently distributed fishing kits to 188 fisherman households in coastal areas of Ahwar district as part of IOM Yemen's broader livelihood restoration programming supporting vulnerable, conflict-affected and underserved communities in Abyan governorate.

This intervention – benefitting 1,508 individuals (555 men, 603 women and 162 children) – will be further enhanced by a six-month programme of food voucher distribution targeting the same households, intended to increase access to food in areas characterized by very high levels of malnutrition. The food vouchers will also allow beneficiaries to utilize savings to pay off informal debts accumulated since the end of the Abyan conflict in 2011 and contribute to stimulating local economies.

Women heads of household were given priority in selecting beneficiaries. Selection was conducted through the formation of local committees comprising stakeholders and representatives of youth and women groups. Women are able to rent the fishing equipment distributed by IOM and request monetary compensation and/or a portion of the day's catch. The women can then sell the fish at the nearest market to generate extra income for their household.

To ensure the highest transparency and accountability vis-à-vis the communities receiving food vouchers, IOM livelihoods teams developed a software for digital tablets to track voucher expenditures and to create beneficiaries' profiles. The software also comprises a barcode system to record the types and quantities of goods purchased by the beneficiaries. The software will allow IOM to conduct data analysis and identify patterns and trends in the use of food vouchers, and learn lessons for IOM's future programming



IOM field teams meet with fishermen in Ahwar to discuss their vulnerabilities and immediate needs. © IOM 2014

in this sector.

IOM is planning to support five fishermen's associations in Ahwar in order to ensure greater sustainability of this programme. Although still playing a key role in the fisheries sector, fishermen associations have been weakened by a lack of funding and income from fishing activities; substantial damage to fishing and storage equipment incurred during the 2011 conflict; and limited capacities to generate a more prosperous trade of fish at both the local and inter-district levels.

At the request of these associations, IOM will install four traditional ice refrigerators in Ahwar. The design and materials have been identified through a process driven by the representatives of the fishermen's associations in or-

der to ensure full beneficiary ownership of the project. The traditional ice refrigerators will address the need for various fish storage capacities at low maintenance costs and ensure the continuity of refrigeration during fuel shortages and frequent power cuts in Ahwar.

These activities are being funded by the UK Department for International Development (DFID) under the framework of the Yemen Humanitarian Resilience Programme (YHRP). Government counterparts and local communities have been fully supportive of IOM Yemen's activities and have helped identify the most vulnerable households to benefit from livelihoods restoration interventions, and to ensure smooth implementation of the activities in a volatile security context.

For further information, please contact Marco Chimenton Head of Aden Sub-Office- IOM Yemen at michimenton@iom.int or Dax Bennett Roque Emergency Unit- IOM Yemen at droque@iom.int