

JORDAN

UNHCR OPERATIONAL UPDATE

May 2015

KEY FIGURES

683,018

Persons of concern (all nationalities) registered by UNHCR

628,634

Syrians registered by UNHCR

54,384

Iraqis, Somalis, Sudanese, Yemenis and others registered by UNHCR

81,983

Syrians in Zaatari Camp

19,418

Syrians in Azraq Camp

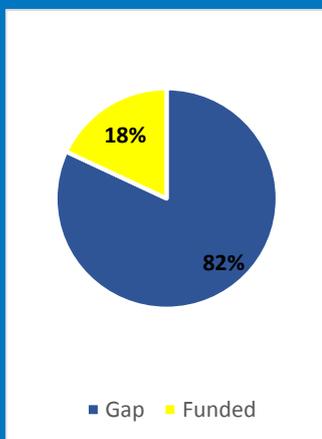
5,994

Syrians in Emirati-Jordanian Camp

FUNDING

USD 289 million

Requested for UNHCR Jordan's refugee response to the Syria crisis



REFUGEES' VULNERABILITY ON THE RISE

The Vulnerability Assessment Framework (VAF) Baseline Survey for Jordan was launched on 19 May to facilitate the targeting of humanitarian assistance to Syrian refugee households on the basis of their vulnerability. The survey, produced in a collaborative inter-agency effort, provides yet more evidence of the severe difficulties facing refugees in Jordan. Some key findings include:

- *86% of Syrian refugees in urban areas live below the Jordanian poverty line;*
- *Northern and Eastern Jordan have the highest proportion of highly and severely vulnerable refugees, whilst also accommodating the highest proportion of Syrian refugees relative to Jordanians;*
- *Over 80% of Syrian refugees are using crisis or emergency coping strategies, including begging or high risk, illegal and degrading jobs.*

The VAF represents a step-change in aid effectiveness, supporting quality and effective humanitarian coordination and delivery, and has been welcomed by the Government of Jordan as a valuable contribution towards the 2016-2018 Jordan Response Plan to the Syria crisis.

<http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/download.php?id=8844>

The VAF steering committee is comprised of five non-governmental organizations, ACTED, CARE, Danish Refugee Council, Handicap International, PU-AMI; five United Nations agencies, UN Women, UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP; the European Commission's Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection department (ECHO), and the U.S. State Department's Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM)

VULNERABILITY ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK
BASELINE SURVEY



HIGH COMMISSIONER: “OPEN BORDERS TO SYRIANS EVERYWHERE”



United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, António Guterres. © AP Photo/Nasser Nasser

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, António Guterres, and UNHCR Representative to Jordan, Andrew Harper, attended the World Economic Forum on the Middle East and North Africa 2015 at the Dead Sea in Jordan from 21 – 23 May. The event was attended by more than 800 government, business and civil society leaders, with part of the programme dedicated to the Syria refugee crisis.

The High Commissioner used the “Responding to the Refugee Crisis” panel discussion on the last day to appeal to the international community to open its borders to Syrians everywhere to help ease the burden on major refugee hosting countries like Jordan. Guterres again appealed for greater financial support to those countries in the region bearing the brunt of the crisis saying that they are “the first line of defense for global collective security and they are pillars, essential pillars, for regional security”.

Later that day, the UNHCR Representative to Jordan was on a panel where he outlined the agency’s engagement with the private sector in providing refugee assistance, notably in the areas of mobile phone and iris recognition technology. He also facilitated two sessions in relation to combating extremism and radicalisation in the region.

UNHCR WINTER CASH ASSISTANCE: MEASURING ITS IMPACT

“Braving the Cold”, a new UNHCR [report](#) measuring the impact of the agency’s one-off “winterization” cash supplement was released in late May. This winter UNHCR provided cash support to 30,000 of the most vulnerable Syrian refugees living outside of camps, with a further 4,000 going without assistance for lack of funds.

The findings show that 87% of this was spent directly on winter needs and that for the most part these needs were related to energy with cash spent mostly on heaters, gas refills, clothes and blankets.

The winter cash assistance programme is provided with the generous support of Canada, European Union, International Humanitarian City, Sweden, United Kingdom and United States of America. This assistance, if increased, would serve to protect thousands more refugees against the cold this coming winter.

UNHCR GOODWILL AMBASSADOR: KHALED HOSSEINI VISITS JORDAN

Khaled Hosseini, UNHCR Goodwill Ambassador and author of “The Kite Runner” and “A Thousand Splendid Suns”, visited Jordan from 5 to 7 May to meet with Syrian refugee families living in and out of camps. The trip was the author’s sixth field mission with UNHCR and included visits to the Azraq and Zaatari camps, as well as meetings with urban refugee families benefiting from UNHCR’s cash assistance programme. A feature piece on his trip to Jordan is available [here](#).

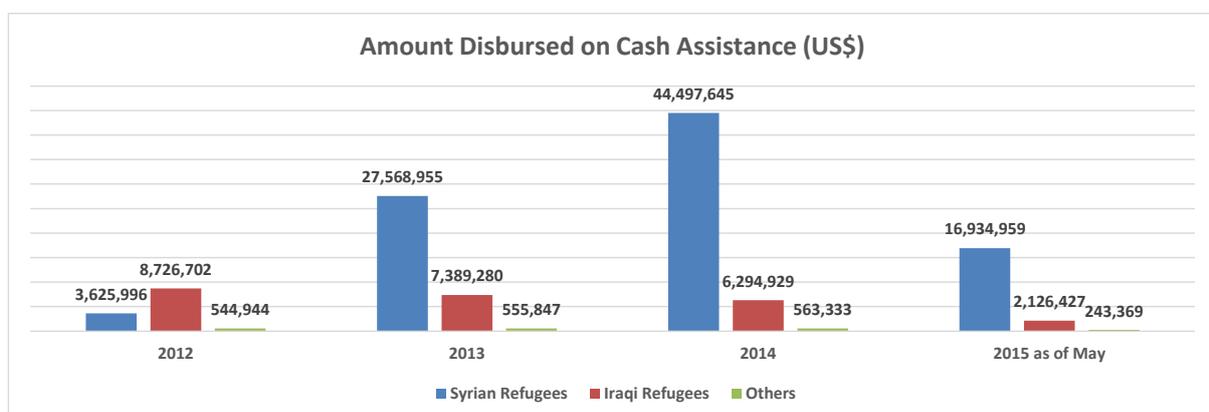
For more information on Khaled Hosseini’s visit to Jordan, please visit: www.unhcr.org/khaledhosseini



Khaled Hosseini at Azraq Camp in central Jordan in May 2015. © Jordi Matas/UNHCR

So far in 2015, the UNHCR cash assistance programme has provided almost USD 20 million to some 22,000 of the most vulnerable refugees living in urban areas in Jordan, the vast majority of whom live in poverty. This assists in preventing refugees from having to rely on destructive coping strategies, like dropping out of school, early marriage, survival sex, entering into a dangerous cycle of debt, or even returning to Syria.

For more information on UNHCR’s cash assistance programme, please visit: www.unhcr.org/lifeline



OUTREACH

“Town hall” meeting for refugees held in Mafraq Governorate

On 28 May the UNHCR Sub Office in Mafraq organized a “town hall” meeting bringing together more than 70 participants including refugee representatives, officials from the Mafraq Governorate, local community-based organizations and NGOs. The event provided an opportunity for refugees to meet, listen to and question key stakeholders in their welfare.

One local government official spoke of the efforts undertaken by the Jordanian authorities in providing basic services to refugees in the areas of health, education and security whilst managing the resulting strains on municipal infrastructure. “The influx has posed a serious burden on our poor infrastructure, but working together with all actors present, we have made considerable progress”, said Dr. Ahmad Al-Hwamdeh, the Mayor of Greater Mafraq Municipality.



The “town hall” meeting drew large numbers in Mafraq. ©UNHCR

Refugee representatives asked questions about the urban verification process, “bailouts” from the Zaatari camp, deportation orders, the reduction of cash and food assistance by the humanitarian community, and increased access to education and health services.

Some 158,000 refugees live in Mafraq Governorate, one-quarter of all registered persons of concern in Jordan, with 82,000 in Zaatari camp and 76,000 living in urban and rural areas. Mafraq Governorate has the highest proportion of Syrian refugees to Jordanians in the country living in urban areas with 38% of the population of Mafraq city and Ba’lama sub-districts originating from Syria.

PROTECTION

Positive news on undocumented marriages in countering statelessness

In May the Government of Jordan announced a two-month-long exemption from penalties for couples who have not officially documented their marriages under law. The decision allows couples to approach a Sharia Court to apply for the exemption from 13 May to 13 July.

This important legal development is the second such exemption issued by the Jordanian Government enabling Syrians and other nationalities unable to benefit from the first exemption to approach Sharia Courts in order to register their marriages legally. This is a prerequisite for documenting a child’s birth and thereby reducing the risk of statelessness. The last Cabinet decision on this issue in 2014 saw 1,947 couples, including 1,032 couples in Zaatari Camp alone, benefit and officially register their marriages in the Sharia Court.

A large number of Syrians in Jordan lack important civil documentation such as birth, marriage and death certificates, mostly through a lack of awareness of Government procedures and challenges in providing the necessary documentation to register. UNHCR and protection partners, including Arab Renaissance for Development and Democracy (ARDD) -Legal

Aid, are working to mobilize the refugee community in raising awareness on the importance of marriage registration, and civil documentation more generally, through “town hall” meetings, information leaflets, legal awareness-sessions and SMS text messages to refugees.

All of these activities form part of efforts to contribute to the “#I Belong” campaign, UNHCR’s global campaign to end statelessness in the next 10 years.



A flyer informing refugees of the time-bound exemption to penalties for undocumented marriages, May 2015. ©UNHCR/Mohammad Hawari

Urban verification continues for Syrians outside of camps

The Ministry of the Interior (MOI) exercise to issue Syrians living outside of camps with new identity documents continues across the country. The aim of the exercise is to improve the legal entitlement of Syrians to key services like education. Some 101 police stations are now functional and open for registration nationwide with UNHCR staff on hand to provide assistance and to monitor any procedural issues.

The Syrian Refugee Affairs Directorate (SRAD), the main Government body for the coordination of refugee issues, is providing detailed statistics on the number of cards issued on a weekly basis, with a break-down between refugees and non-refugees. By the end of May, 92,343 Syrian refugees were issued with new documents, up from 54,794 at the end of April, and accounting for some 17% of the total registered Syrian refugee population. The exercise began in February.

Increasing concern for large numbers of Syrians gathered inside the eastern borders

UNHCR remains concerned for the welfare of large numbers of Syrian refugees who are located on the berm along Jordan’s eastern border. According to interviews undertaken with refugees who have eventually entered Jordan, many of those stranded at the border waiting permission to enter include women, children, elderly and sick. Refugees report that some have had to wait for up to two months in the desert without sufficient shelter, sanitation or medical support.

While UNHCR recognizes the legitimate security concerns of the Government of Jordan it continues to advocate for priority access to be granted to the most vulnerable, noting that excess capacity exists to accommodate new arrivals in Azraq camp. The situation is likely to become increasingly desperate with high seasonal temperatures coinciding with

Ramadan. Refugees indicate that due to a recent upsurge in violence throughout the eastern portion of Syria it is impossible for them to return.

Engaging men and boys regionally on sexual and gender-based violence

UNHCR and the Sexual and Gender-Based Violence Sub-Working Group in Jordan (SGBV SWG) organized the first workshop in the Middle East on “Engaging men and boys in SGBV prevention and response”. The two-day event saw 27 participants actively discuss strategies and tools to engage men and boys in SGBV prevention and response that had been identified as a priority area for 2015 by the SGBV SWG. A briefing note and action plan are being developed to guide the SGBV SWG’s work over the next six months.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Syria response:

UNHCR Jordan’s funding needs: **USD 289 million**

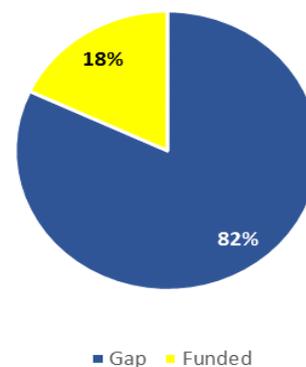
Total recorded contributions: **USD 54 million**

Iraq situation:

UNHCR Jordan’s funding needs: **USD 41 million**

Total recorded contributions: **USD 390 thousand**

UNHCR Jordan Total Funding Needs



UNHCR PARTNERS

Arab Renaissance for Democracy and Development (ARDD-Legal Aid), Care International (CARE), International Medical Corps (IMC), International Organization for Migration (IOM), International Rescue Committee (IRC), International Relief and Development (IRD), Jordan Health Aid Society (JHAS), The Jordan Hashemite Fund for Human Development (JOHUD), Jordan River Foundation (JRF), Ministry of Interior (MOI), Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation (MOPIC) including the Civil Status Department, Family Protection Department & Ministry of Social Development, Noor Al Hussein Foundation (NHF), Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), Première Urgence - Aide Médicale Internationale (PU-AMI), Syrian Refugee Affairs Directorate (SRAD).

DONORS

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