

JORDAN REFUGEE RESPONSE

INTER-AGENCY WINTERIZATION UPDATE

RESPONSE TO SNOW STORM JANA

23RD FEBRUARY 2015



Refugee children playing outside their shelter; Zaatari © UNHCR

Highlights

- **Snow Storm “Jana”** hit Jordan between Thursday 19th February and Sunday 22nd February 2015. Low temperatures, freezing rain and snow have affected urban areas and the refugee camps, triggering emergency measures and contingency plans.
- **Robust contingency planning in the camps** has meant that flooding, shelter and infrastructural damage was prevented or addressed quickly, with partner staff working throughout the weekend to bring services back to normal. **In urban areas**, UN agencies and NGOs have provided non-food items, targeted cash and vouchers and emergency shelter support.
- **All refugees in camps, or 100,000 people**, have received tailored winterization support since November 2014. During the Jana storm, 135 individuals required use of UNICEF/Save the Children Emergency Shelters in Zaatari. This also reflects how the vast majority of the 84,000 refugees have now moved from tents to pre-fabs, with 1,200 caravans provided since January 2015. Over **5,742 cubic metres of melt water was removed** by WASH partners between 20th and 21st February from Zaatari alone. **WFP provided full deliveries of bread** to both Zaatari and Azraq, while ensuring that e-vouchers were filled and the supermarkets were pre-stocked and open.
- **Over 151,468 individuals or 36,581 families have already been assisted in urban areas** through winterization cash programmes and in-kind provision of gas heaters, cylinders and refill, mattresses, blankets and other non-food item since November 2014. For the same period, **218,000 blankets have been provided** in urban areas and camps; while and over **21 million USD has been made available in cash assistance** by over 15 partners as part of both winterization and regular cash assistance.

This update is provided by the **UNHCR Jordan Inter-Sector Coordination**

For more information on the **Jordan Refugee Response**, please visit <http://data.unhcr.org/jordan/>

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SNOWSTORM “JANA” EMERGENCY RESPONSE

Background

- Snow Storm “Jana” is the second snow storm to hit Jordan since the beginning of 2015, affecting settlements with sub-standard shelter in urban areas, and blocking access roads, damaging shelters and causing flooding in the camps.
- This first snow storm, “Huda”, struck Jordan between 7th and 12th January 2015. The response to Huda has been reported in a separate inter-agency update, available on the Winterization Task Force page, at <http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/download.php?id=7928>
- In response to Jana, the Government of Jordan, UN agencies, NGOs, CBOs and local charities have delivered emergency assistance to vulnerable refugees and Jordanians.
- This response has built on months of winterization preparedness and assistance that has set up robust humanitarian response systems, while already strengthening the resilience of refugee and Jordanian communities to cope with sudden shocks.

Lesson Learnt from Snowstorm “Huda”

Following the Huda response, a series of ‘Lessons Learnt’ sessions have been held in Zaatari, Azraq and as part of the urban coordination in Mafrq in January and February. Points included:

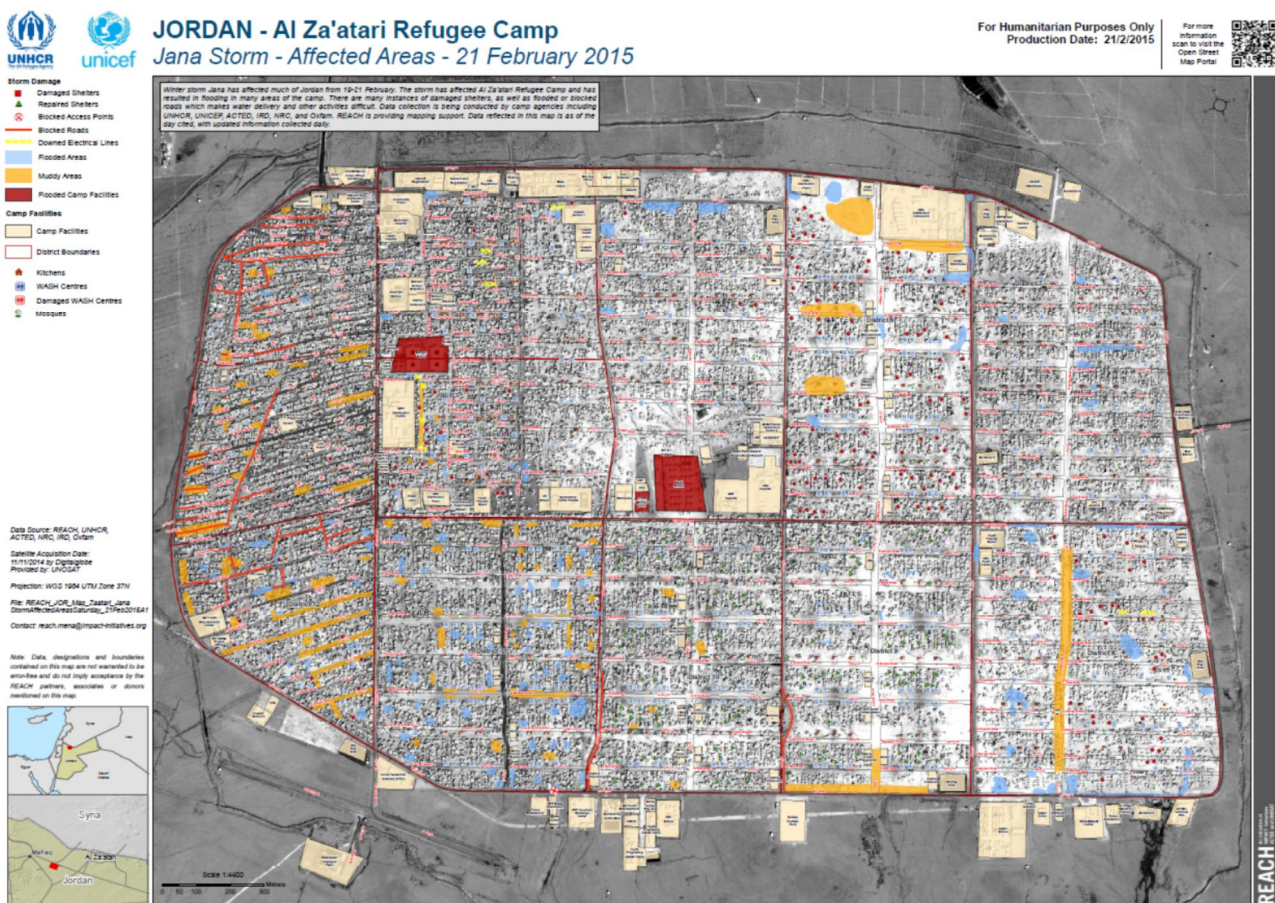
- With limited access to markets due to snow, in-kind assistance should be prioritized for Informal Tented Settlements (ITS), particularly blankets and temporary shelter materials, supported by repair teams. It is important to ensure pre-allocation of sites to assist partners in avoiding duplication and ensure all sites are covered (Mafrq).
- In camps, road access blockages meant some partner staff could not reach the camps. 24hr coverage was maintained through staff staying overnight. Accommodation should be provided. (Azraq)
- Emergency contacts list was a crucial tool between agencies (Azraq; Zaatari). Emergency contact lists for refugees could be made more visible; although Mass Info systems functioned well. Refugee Community feedback on emergency measures was positive in both camps.
- Community Centres and Emergency Shelters were important havens to ensure a safety net for families, children and particularly vulnerable individuals. (Azraq; Zaatari)
- Some items requiring daily travel from urban to camps could be vulnerable to road blockages (Azraq). WFP uploading of e-cards prior to storm (6th) ensured continued access to supermarkets (Azraq; Zaatari) Water stations filled prior to the storm to guarantee the availability of water (3-day buffer); Septic tanks cleared prior to storm (Azraq).
- Summer preparations for drainage and other infrastructural developments reduced flooding problems. Additional WASH measures will be applied in the case of Zaatari, where there were more serious flooding in some parts of the camp. (Azraq; Zaatari).
- With several outages in Zaatari, clearer reporting processes to IDECO on electricity problems are required (Zaatari)

Contingency plans were updated and emergency response measures revised accordingly, before the Jana snow storm



Emergency Response in Zaatari Camp

- Emergency measures were triggered in preparation for the storm, with coordination of the response managed by SRAD and UNHCR. From 1400 on 19th February, the weather deteriorated, with temperatures dropping and heavy wind. Freezing temperatures overnight brought heavy snow of approximately 10 cm. Rising temperatures melted the snow over 20th Feb within 1 hour, leaving excessive amounts of water. Flooding was experienced across the camp, with districts 3, 4 and 11 reported as most affected. Some roads from Zaatari village and Mafrag were blocked, with several partners' staff coming by foot from Zaatari village. By 21st Feb, weather conditions had improved, leaving partners and refugees to manage the clean-up and revert to normal services.
- Essential services operated throughout the period, albeit with reduced staffing and community members. Schools remained closed up to 22nd Feb. Several areas were without electricity, with some areas turned off for safety during the storm.
- SRAD cleared main roads in the camp first thing this morning to facilitate access in the camp, after challenging conditions overnight and limited movement without snow chains. NRC excavators opened roads blocked by snow in Districts 5, 6, 7 and 8 and parts of the ring road.
- The refugee community rallied, with spontaneous and ad hoc volunteers cleaning paths and snow from shelters. Hundreds of Refugee Community volunteers supported emergency shelters, Health and WASH activities, including clearing culverts and drainage.
- UNICEF/IMDAD deployed 20 de-watering trucks and 10 de-sludging trucks. De-watering commenced at 1.00am on 20th Feb and by 21st Feb had de-watered 5,742 cubic metres. This is almost double the water distributed to the camp for consumption. WASH actors, including Oxfam worked with reduced team and community volunteers across the camp with ACTED.
- Additional water had been distributed by UNICEF/ACTED on 19th Feb, as per the contingency plan; a reduced number of water was distributed to public tanks where possible as well as contingency tanks placed by Oxfam and ACTED; in the amount of 936m3.
- REACH provided regular mapping of areas affected by snow and flooding.





- As of 20th Feb, UNICEF/Save the Children emergency shelters were supporting: 13 families/42 individuals in District 5; 5 families /14 individuals in District 8; and 8 families /24 individuals in District 11. By 21st Feb pm, 12 families / 46 individuals (including 30 children) were supported in the District 5 shelter, with families gradually reintegrated into appropriate individual shelters as weather conditions improved.
- IRD visited emergency shelters in coordination with Save the Children and assisted with assessment / referral of community members (women at risk, the elderly and persons with a disability or serious medical condition etc); and prepared information on damaged tents and caravans for referral to UNHCR and NRC. Oxfam refugee teams helped other refugees to move from damaged tents to shelters.
- NRC relocated 38 older caravans and 7 new models (including toilets and kitchens); maintained heaters and provided quick fix and maintenance support. UNHCR has distributed over 1,200 caravans since Huda, which has seen many families move out of tents and into more resilient shelters.
- WFP bread distribution commenced at approximately 9.00am on 20th Feb with all 18 metric tons arriving. Vouchers were uploaded over one week ago and supermarkets had stayed open late. Tazweed reported stock sufficient for up to approximately four days with packed warehouses. While some internet problems were experienced in Safe-way to process transactions it was reported that this did not cause problems overall.
- Information and messaging was disseminated by organisations and community networks. Many community members supported each other with clearing snow and accommodating other individuals and families.



Storm water release, Zaatar Camp © UNICEF



Refugees clearing shelters in Zaatar © UNHCR

- Health services operated under challenging circumstances in deep snow. Hospitals connected to the UNHCR grid—including the Moroccan Hospital and the Saudi Clinic in District 5—were not affected by any power outage, except for the Jordan/Italian hospital which has not been connected to the electricity since January.
- Implementing contingency plans, JHAS services ensured oxygen supplies were refilled, ambulances with four wheel drive were allocated to the camp clinics, and the Zaatar warehouse was replenished by medications and supplies to cover a period of one week. Emergency staff were in place, based on a 24hr roster. Primary health case services supported 244 patients at the JHAS clinic and 42 patients by JHAS mobile team in the assembly points.
- At the UNFPA/JHAS clinic, staff were available as scheduled for delivery and referral purposes. Maintaining Staff available throughout were 1 doctor, 4 midwives, 2 nurses. No shortage in supplies and equipment. Electricity is maintained. Nineteen normal deliveries took place over 19th to 21st, while 6 cases were referred with obstetric complications. Twenty-one antenatal and other consultations were provided.



Emergency Response in Azraq Camp

- SRAD, UNHCR and partner emergency staff have been present on site, while contingency plans were mobilized. Azraq staff residing in Azraq and Zarqa have remained on alert, pre-empting travel restrictions from Amman. Snow accumulations were reported on the Azraq-Zarqa road on 20th Feb, although this was cleared by the evening. By 21st Feb, weather conditions fluctuated, but refugees were able continue with their daily activities.
- In the site, limited damage was reported to shelters, compared to the Huda storm. Water supply was minimally affected, with refugees able to collect water from the tap systems. Waste-water dislodging operations were similarly unaffected. The storm water drainage system functioned well, with minor water ponding witnessed in Villages 3 and 6 on 21st February, in the ditches and around water-tap-stand walkways
- NRC Quick-fix teams were present in villages, dealing with minor shelter and infrastructure repairs. This included a solar light in Village 3, and 20 shelters with damage related to the JANA storm - primarily water leakage. A total of 80 shelters were repaired over this period, including non-Jana related repairs.
- WFP Bread Distributions continued as normal, with Sameh Mall operating from 0900 on 20th Feb.
- NRC provided 361 gas cylinder refills to 1,739 individuals over the 20th and 21st. NRC also provided infant milk to 25 refugee families.
- Reception area for transfers from Raba Sarhan and police referrals continued to function, including support to new arrivals from NRC, IMC and IRC.
- For Health, IMC's Primary Health Clinic and Reception Area 'Safe Haven' services remained open in Azraq Camp, with emergency staff remaining in the Camp overnight. The Primary Health Clinic treated a total of 571 individuals seeking medical attention over the three days, including six individuals in need of reproductive health support. The majority of the individuals attending the Clinic were between 5-59 years of age, and the primary conditions included upper respiratory tract infection and fever, with a minimum number of chronic cases.
- The RC/RC Field Hospital was working as normal and were open 24/7.



Refugees were able to continue their daily activities in Azraq, and even enjoy the snow © UNHCR



Jana Snow Storm hits Azraq Camp © UNHCR



Emergency Response in Urban Areas

- UNHCR made available up to USD 15,000 for emergency responses through a network of Community Support Committees (CSCs). The cash was used for hot meals, bread, gas cylinders and other winterization items necessary to cover urgent needs of beneficiaries.
- Building on the 110,000 blankets distributed one month ago to CSCs, UNHCR also provided additional blankets to Tafleeh, on the request of the Governor.
- In Irbid, UNHCR activated contingency plans for urban areas, Informal Tented Settlements (ITS), and the CyberCity and King Abdullah Park camps. Non-food items and emergency food were provided. With support from the Governor's office, UNHCR, Intersos and the CSC Irbid reached a series of isolated locations to provide emergency assistance.
- Islamic Relief Jordan distributed 1,285 vouchers for winter clothes covering 199 households (1,285 beneficiaries) in Irbid, Ramtha, Jarash, and Mafraq. The vouchers valued at 20 JOD can be exchanged in the local market.
- PU-AMI continued to provide sealing off kits and seasonal cash assistance. Before the storm, 582 households received 340JDs; 83 HH received 190JD; and 407 HH received sealing-off kits.
- From 19th Feb, one INTERSOS-UNICEF mobile team of 4 mobile staff has been on call and ready to respond to possible emergency situations caused by the extreme harsh weather. During storm, the mobile team responded to the calls of 38 living in 5 ITSs, and 4 families living in the urban area of Jordan valley (Aghwar Shamalia), reaching them for assessment and delivery of NFIs.
- Supported by UNICEF and UNHCR, ACTED provided assistance to 5 ITS locations in Mafraq, reaching 796 beneficiaries over the two days. ACTED distributed 796 blankets, 145 children's clothing kits, provided plastic sheeting and repaired/maintained damaged tents.
- For the Health response, by Saturday 21st all JHAS clinics in urban areas opened with full capacity, except Madina which has reduced staff. Referral focal points were present in referral hospitals and are following up on the emergency admission cases. Referral Hub staff are on duty to respond/ advise for all referrals. The JHAS Info Line for the south of Jordan has received calls and facilitated the admission for deliveries and emergency cases.
- Between 19th to 21st, three caesarean section (4) deliveries and normal deliveries (11) were admitted to Badaa Al Bashir, Tutanji and Zarqa hospital. In Ramtha hospital, one case of 6 month old infant with intestinal obstruction and dehydration was admitted. For the South, caesarean (1) and normal deliveries (8) were reported at Tafleeh, Maan, Karak and Aqaba. There were two reported deaths both in Irbid, neither linked directly to the weather or access conditions.



ACTED staff providing blankets in Mafraq © ACTED

The inter-agency responses to the snowstorms Jana and Huda are part of a broader winterization mechanism that has been in place since October 2014.

The Winterization page is available on the inter-agency portal, at http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/working_group.php?Page=Country&LocationId=107&Id=60

Partners active in the overall Winterization Task Force response include:

