

KEY FIGURES

657,621

Syrians registered with UNHCR in Jordan

62,445

Iraqis registered with UNHCR in Jordan

46,000

Work permits issued or renewed over the past year by the Government of Jordan to Syrians

93

Percentage of Syrians living outside of camps and below the poverty line in Jordan

78

Percentage of Syrians registered with UNHCR in refugee camps who are women and children

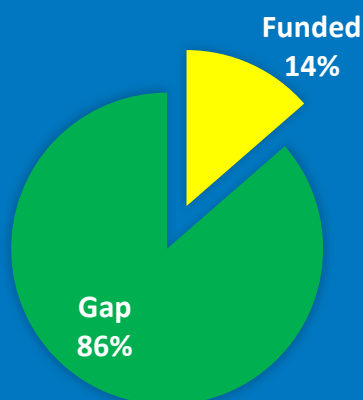
40

Percentage of the registered refugee population who received protection against the cold this winter from UNHCR

FUNDING

US \$ 277 million

requested for the Jordan Operation in 2017



JORDAN

UNHCR OPERATIONAL UPDATE

April 2017

HIGHLIGHTS

- **UNHCR in Jordan concluded its largest ever four-month winter response in March with a record 40 per cent of Kingdom's most vulnerable refugees reached for assistance across camp and urban settings.** A recent survey of refugees conducted by UNHCR confirmed the value of the one-off financial support aspect of the winterization package, helping refugees afford rent, cooking and heating gas. One female head of household told UNHCR that prior to the assistance she had been unable to pay for food for her family, while another had to borrow to buy a US \$ 10 refill gas cylinder. Seven years into the crisis, most Syrian refugees in Jordan are engaged in a bitter struggle against poverty.
- **According to a recent UNHCR [study](#), Jordan hosts the second largest number of refugees relative to the size of its population with 89 refugees for every 1,000 inhabitants.** The study also highlights the considerable impact of Jordan's refugee population on the country's economy, grading it the eighth most severe among refugee-hosting countries. The Government of Jordan responded to the study by stating that it had reached "saturation point" with the influx of refugees, while UNHCR called for more cooperation and solidarity with countries neighbouring war-torn countries like Syria. Jordan remains the sixth largest refugee-hosting country in the world in terms of refugees registered.
- **UN Secretary-General António Guterres visited Jordan's Zaatari refugee camp on 28 March where he appealed to the international community to step up efforts to address the Syria crisis or risk playing into the hands of extremist groups.** "This is the moment to say that if the world fails to support refugees, the world is only helping those [extremist groups] that use these arguments in order to be able to recruit more people to put at risk our global security," he said. "Solidarity with Syrian refugees is ... not only an act of generosity, it's an act of enlightened self-interest." The camp is the largest of its kind in the region and currently host to 80,000 Syrian refugees.



Playtime on a makeshift swing at Zaatari refugee camp shortly before the visit of the UN's Secretary-General. @UN/Sahem Rababah

UPDATE ON ACHIEVEMENTS

Operational Context

The Syria crisis entered its seventh year in March with the number of men, women and children fleeing violence passing the five million mark, a grim milestone in a conflict that has shattered the country leaving its neighbours grappling with the devastating social, economic and political repercussions. There are almost 658,000 Syrians registered with UNHCR in Jordan, including 100,000 children under five who have grown up knowing nothing but shelter from war.

As outlined throughout this month's update, UNHCR provides Syrians, and others seeking safety from conflict, with aid and protection, partnering with other UN agencies and organizations to offer life-sustaining and, at times life-saving, assistance. These efforts are only made possible with the help of Jordan, a country with one of the richest traditions of providing sanctuary in the world, and the commitment and support of the international community.

However, with the passing of each day of unresolved conflict, refugee hardship increases, and with it the funding requirements. A conference in Brussels in early April will assess Syria's future, including humanitarian funding levels. The UN is requesting US \$ 8 billion this year to meet Syrians' needs at home and beyond*. These follow important commitments made at the 2016 London Conference, especially on education and livelihoods, making it essential that efforts are sustained to help Jordan and others support the most vulnerable.

UNHCR works daily to identify those most in need, including Mariam, a 32-year-old mother of five from Aleppo who has been living in Jordan since 2012. Starting early last year, she has been receiving UNHCR monthly cash assistance to help her and her family meet some of their basic living costs. "Before receiving UNHCR cash assistance, I had to send my two eldest children to work instead of attending school," she said. "This academic year, they are back to their studies and doing well. Without this monthly support, I will be obliged to take them out of school." Out of school means an entire generation deprived of the chance to make the best of their lives.

UNHCR also identifies other extremely vulnerable people – including those requiring urgent medical attention, children at risk, female headed households - for resettlement to a third country. One year ago this month at the High-Level Meeting on Syria, UNHCR sought pledges to resettle 10 per cent of all Syrian refugees by 2018. Despite the call during that meeting in Geneva on 30 March 2016 to resettle and facilitate pathways for 500,000 refugees, to date 250,000 places have been made available.

Resettlement is a critically important tool for protecting the most vulnerable refugees, helping them to rebuild their lives in dignity and safety. For two years in a row UNHCR's Jordan operation has been the largest resettlement operation in the world, submitting over 32,000 of the most vulnerable to resettlement countries in 2016. Canada and the United States have led the way taking the majority of those resettled. Further resettlement commitments would allow ordinary people whose lives have been damaged by war to renew their aspirations and [enrich](#) the communities that welcome them.

* US \$ 6 billion was later pledged at the Brussels Conference.

This operational update covers activities for the month of March 2017.

A total of **733,210** people of concern were registered with UNHCR in Jordan as of March 2017, including **657,621** Syrians, **62,445** Iraqis and **13,144** others including, **7,441** Yemenis, **3,466** Sudanese, and **787** Somalis.

Achievements



■ UNHCR completes consultations with Sudanese and Yemeni refugee communities

Following consultations with Jordan's Syrian and Iraqi refugee communities in January and February (*see the February and March Operational Updates for further information*), the UNHCR Representative in Jordan, Stefano Severe, and UNHCR Community Services staff, met with representatives from the Sudanese and Yemeni communities in March to hear of the challenges they face and their proposed solutions.

Yemenis, while registered in much smaller numbers than Syrians or Iraqis, are Jordan's third largest refugee population. UNHCR figures show that 7,441 Yemeni refugees are registered. Some 90 per cent of the population arrived prior to 2016, before the recent crisis, suggesting that most of the Yemeni persons of concern are in situ, including those stranded in Jordan after travelling to the Kingdom for work or medical treatment.

Similarly to other refugee populations, Yemenis expressed concerns over limited opportunities in the areas of education (insufficient access to affordable nurseries, prohibitively expensive tertiary education and no access to scholarships), health (treatment only limited to primary health care) and housing (being unable to afford rent). Yemenis also expressed frustration at difficulty in accessing work permits.

Jordan's Sudanese refugee community are the fourth largest after Syrians, Iraqis and Yemenis, numbering 3,466 and mostly settled in the Amman area. The majority of the community's representatives are from the Darfur, reflecting that most of Jordan's Sudanese persons of concern to UNHCR originate from that troubled region of western Sudan.

While their concerns in the areas of education, health and housing largely matched those shared with other refugees, what set the Sudanese feedback apart were widespread reports of discrimination on the basis of their colour. Also, uniquely, many Sudanese in Jordan are single men (men make up almost 70 per cent of the total registered population), making them less eligible for financial assistance from UNHCR than their female-headed households counterparts.

The fifth and final round of consultations will take place with Somalis in April.



Representatives from Jordan's Sudanese refugee community meet with UNHCR during the latest round of refugee consultations.

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Shelter and NFIs

■ UNHCR and partners accompany media delegations to the north-east border

UNHCR and operational partners working on the humanitarian response at the north-east border accompanied two media missions to the area in March - one organized by the UN and the other by the Jordanian authorities - for almost forty national and international media outlets.

The mission provided media with the opportunity to better understand humanitarian services provided to the population at a purpose-built service area. The facility was built by UNHCR at the Jordan-Syria berm to enable UNHCR, UNICEF and UNFPA to provide much needed health assistance to the population. The delegation met with a number of Syrians attending the service area and heard first-hand of the extreme conditions in which tens of thousands fleeing conflict in Syria live.



A UN vehicle is assisted by the Jordanian Armed Forces after becoming stranded in muddy, flooded terrain close the berm on a recent media mission. ©UN

■ Deliveries of cross border aid resume through Jordan's north-west border

The delivery of cross-border humanitarian assistance to internally displaced persons in southern Syria resumed through Jordan's Ramtha border crossing in March. The convoys were suspended between 12 February and 8 March following the intensification of fighting in the region, including instances of stray shelling near the Ramtha crossing outside Irbid, 90km north of Amman.

UNHCR coordinates with OCHA to support the delivery and provision of aid to southern Syria through its operational partners. Items transported through the convoys included emergency shelters, blankets and sleeping mats for 16,100 people. The items are provided to partner organizations for their distribution to vulnerable populations identified through community monitoring protection networks in close coordination with UNHCR. To date, 486,000 people have benefitted from these distributions since cross border deliveries started from Jordan in August 2014.

Health

■ One million health services provided to refugees in Jordan

On 7 March, UNHCR and partners from the Ministry of Health, Jordan Health Aid Society (JHAS) and the Embassy of Japan gathered at the Madina Clinic in Amman to mark over one million medical services provided to refugees since 2012. The services were provided by UNHCR through their partner JHAS at their clinics in Amman, Irbid, Mafraq, Ramtha, Zarqa and Zaatari refugee camp, as well as through a mobile clinic reaching remoter areas of the Kingdom.

One of the largest contributors to the programme has been the Government of Japan who last year contributed over a quarter – US \$ 5.9 million – of UNHCR’s total health support for refugees in camps and urban settings.

In February, the Government of Jordan revealed that the cost of treating Syrian refugees in public health facilities annually has averaged US \$ 382.4 million, amounting to some US \$ 2.1 billion since the beginning of the Syria crisis. Additionally, the government reported that 1.8 million Syrians had visited or had been admitted to health facilities since the start of 2012.



UNHCR Representative in Jordan, Stefano Severe, expresses his appreciation for the Government of Japan’s support, as well as Jordan’s partnership, in assisting the Kingdom’s most vulnerable refugees access vital health services. ©UNHCR/Mohammad Hawari

Education

■ “These Inspired Girls Enjoy Reading”: Encouraging girls to learn at Zaatari

One of the UNHCR-supported projects visited by the UN Secretary-General on his recent trip to Zaatari camp was TIGER (“These Inspired Girls Enjoy Reading”), a pilot program encouraging the learning needs of adolescent refugee girls between the ages of 9 and 15 who have dropped out of school or who are at the risk of doing so. Girls make up

a quarter of the 80,000 Syrians at Zaatari and household chores, low paid work or early marriage are just some of the factors pressuring them away from precious learning opportunities.

Since TIGER was launched in the camp in December 2015, 130 girls have been benefited from academic support this way, mentored by 12 refugee women trained and employed as TIGER coaches to lead, inspire and help the girls overcome the many challenges they face within the camp. TIGER provides the girls with access to a virtually unlimited online library of open educational resources through colour computer tablets. A learning management system further enables them to plan, track and share their progress on a personal learning ladder.

Speaking to UNHCR, Doaa, one of the coaches in Zaatari's District X said, "Working together, the girls have been increasingly motivated to continue their studies which is a remarkable achievement for us. It's also wonderful to see how they've developed a sense of purpose to find creative solutions that respond to the many challenges they and the community face."

A student, Raghad, agreed: "Being a part of the TIGER programme has helped me a lot. I have a lot of confidence to continue my studies at school. I also had the opportunity to work with a computer for the first time. I enjoyed this a lot, particularly the English language activities. Step by step we are moving forward together to achieve our dreams."

A number of Zaatari TIGER girls were present at a recent No Lost Generation (NLG) EdTech summit held in Amman on 1 and 2 March to showcase TIGER as an example of tech-based solutions to the education and skills challenges caused by the Syria crisis. NLG was launched in 2013 to support children and youth affected by the Syria crisis, led by UNICEF and co-lead by UNHCR, World Vision, Save the Children and Mercy Corps.



One of the TIGER girls at Zaatari camp in March. ©UNHCR/Mohammad Hawari

Community Empowerment and Self-Reliance

■ “Heartbeat of the Camp”: Young refugees launch their own magazine at Azraq refugee camp

At the beginning of March, a group of fifteen Syrian children launched a magazine at Azraq refugee camp. The event was accompanied by a short play portraying a raging character - representing war - swooping down and snatching pens, paper, books and pictures from a group of young children, leading them to grow weak, wither and die. Another figure, strong and confident – representing peace – arrives to restore the creative tools to the children who rise up to transform the figure of peace into a magazine.

In the summer of 2016, two young boys playing between the shelters at Azraq would often stop to talk to UNHCR’s field staff to share their passion for imagery and storytelling. On each occasion they would discuss a new plot, a different scenario and how they would frame it. One day they came up with a new idea: to start a magazine. One of the boys, Mohammad, had fled Syria for Jordan in 2014 with his three sisters and mother after his father was killed. The family reached the safety of Azraq, settling in one of the thousands of shelters that dot the sand in that remote part of central Jordan. It was there that Mohammad met his best friend, Hasan, who would later become his partner in their great magazine project.

Spurred on by their passion, the boys spent their summer days at the camp’s UNHCR/CARE community centre assisted by a Libraries Without Borders’ Ideas Box, a room divided into four areas - internet, books, films, and ebooks. Here they gathered ideas and set about discovering how to run a magazine. Encouraged by what they read and saw, the boys spread out across the camp knocking on shelter doors across the districts to share their ideas with other children. On these trips they also stumbled across a mentor – an old man who had been a poet in Syria and would speak about the power of the word.

The children divided themselves between writers, editors and even directors. Their rationale was straightforward: they wanted to serve as their own voice, to communicate their dreams and frustrations to the outside world, and at the very least, to entertain their fellow Syrians waiting for peace across the border. The name of the newspaper translates as “without a heartbeat there is no life”, emphasizing their determination to engage in positive activities in negative situations. The lettering on the newspaper’s logo spells, “even if we live in the desert, there is hope in the camp, and if we can change the camp, we can change the world.”

Starting with an initial print run of 3,000, their dream is now being realized and is serving to bring more young people together eager to transform their ideas, lives and stories into print. For its part, UNHCR has identified another important use for the paper: providing an avenue to inform refugees quickly, accurately and reliably of any issues that may impact them. That’s a win-win.

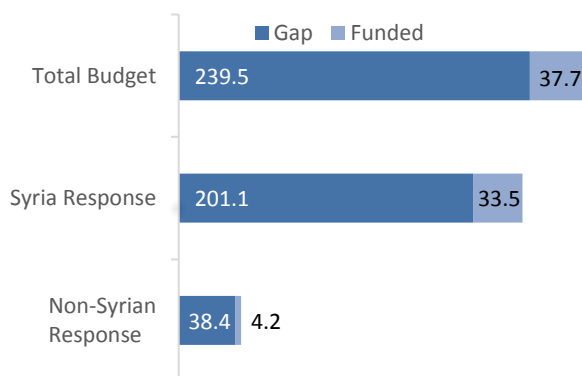


Hasan, centre, with his colleagues in the “editorial room” of Azraq refugee camp’s first magazine. ©UNHCR

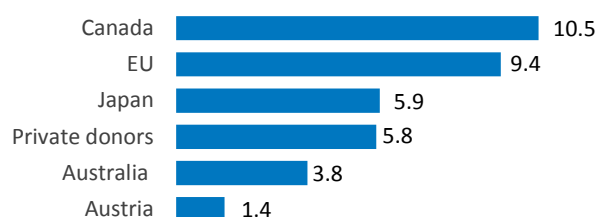
FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Total recorded contributions for the operation amount to some **US\$ 33.5 million** for the **Syria response** (at 31 March) and **US\$ 4.2 million** for the **Iraq situation** at the country level (at 30 March).

2017 funding levels (in US \$ million)



Funding received at the country level for the Jordan operation in 2017 (in \$ US million)



UNHCR is grateful for the critical support provided by donors who have contributed to this operation as well as those who have contributed to UNHCR programmes with unearmarked and broadly earmarked funds.

Special thanks to major donors of unrestricted and regional funds (in US \$ million):

Sweden (76) | Netherlands (52) | Norway (41) | Denmark (23) | Australia (19) | Switzerland (15) | Germany (12) |



A group of visiting students outside UNHCR Jordan's country office in Amman in March under a mural with the message: "As one I am fragile, together we are strong" – an appeal to stand [#withrefugees](#). ©UNHCR

Contacts:

Robert Sibson, Reporting Officer, sibson@unhcr.org, joramextrel@unhcr.org

Links:

data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees – twitter.com/UNHCRJo – facebook.com/UNHCRJordan