

The Vulnerability Assessment Framework:

The basics for Syrian refugees in Jordan | December 2014

What is the Vulnerability Assessment Framework

As refugees, your lives were turned upside-down when you had to flee your Syrian homes and seek a safe haven in Jordan. You may know the totals: 3.1 million Syrians fled to neighbouring countries since the outbreak of civil war in 2011. As of the end of November, 618,615 Syrians had come to Jordan.

The humanitarian community knows that these are difficult times for all of you. Some of you need a specific type of assistance because your family has a specific challenge that you cannot overcome without help. Some of you need greater help because you have so many challenges and so few resources of your own. Others might be more able to take care of their own needs and so require less help from humanitarian organizations– which means more can be given to Syrians who cannot help themselves at all. To provide the most accurate, the fairest and the most effective help possible, humanitarian organizations need the most accurate, fairest and effective methods possible to determine families' circumstances and match assistance to needs.

The Vulnerability Assessment Framework, which includes a detailed questionnaire and a complex computer program to study and analyze information about Syrian refugee households, should be ready for humanitarian organizations to use sometime in 2015. Through it, organizations can study the situations of Syrian refugees living outside of camps in Jordan and determine which families have more challenges and what type of assistance they need, and which families are stronger and need less assistance. We have consulted many Syrian community members and they have told us that in your communities at home, when you gave charity you tried to donate to people who needed your help the most and to do so in a dignified way for the recipient. Those are the same principles that UNHCR, WFP and NGOs are using in determining how to provide services.

How this new framework could affect your household

For humanitarian organizations, this project is about learning more about Syrian refugee households in Jordan, sharing that information, and working together to provide effective services.

The part of the technical process that will be most visible to you is the detailed questionnaire that has been created for examining the circumstances of Syrian refugee households outside of camps in Jordan. Staff or volunteers from organizations that participate in this project will ask you many questions during household visits.



Using a computer program to analyze this information about your households may seem like an impersonal process. But applying the same standards to all refugees allows for the fairest possible distribution of assistance. It doesn't matter if you tidied up your house when humanitarian organization staff visited your home or if you dressed up and tried to look nice for the visit. Some refugees have told UNHCR that they fear decisions about assistance have been made on how they or their household looked during home visits. With the VAF, factors affecting your household's well-being will contribute to decisions about assistance, including:

- The amount of money your household requires for infant needs, rent and utilities, and other expenses;
- Information about school-age children in your household and if any of them have a physical or mental disability;
- Your household's source of water;
- The health condition of family members;
- Whether your nuclear family (parents, children, siblings) are together in Jordan;
- If any of your children experienced violence or exploitation in Jordan.

Humanitarian organizations participating in this project will not base their decisions on any one answer to all of the questions. Instead, the analysis of information from refugees will consider the overall circumstances of Syrian refugee families living outside of camps in order to get a complete and more accurate picture of who needs what.

Because mistakes are sometimes made or because humanitarian organizations do not have the most current information about each Syrian refugee household, the Vulnerability Assessment Framework also includes an appeals process so refugees who experience a reduction in or end to assistance can apply to get the decision reversed based on documented facts.

There is one more aspect of this project that you might be interested in: The framework encourages humanitarian organizations to work together to collect information. Why should you care about that? Closer collaboration should mean fewer NGOs knocking on your door for home visits, asking you the same questions. Your time is precious and we want to respect that.

The humanitarian organizations and international donors that are participating in the Vulnerability Assessment Framework have prepared this leaflet because we want you to know how hard we are trying to provide the right assistance to the Syrian refugees most in need. We will continue to try to serve refugee needs in the best way possible.

If you have questions or comments, you can call the UNHCR helpline at 06 400 8000.

Thank you very much.