

JORDAN

HUDA WINTER STORM UPDATE

9 January 2015

KEY FIGURES

672,059

Persons of concern

Country	Total
Syria	623,112
Iraq	44,575
Sudan	3,267
Somalia	797
Yemen	308

Four months

Duration of the winterization response (Nov. 14/ Feb. 15)

26,843

Syrian households who have received UNHCR winterization cash assistance to date (5 January)

110,000

Additional blankets mobilized for refugees of all nationalities to cope with Huda winter storm

2,000

Plastic sheeting delivered to Zaatari camp

2,892

T-shelters floors cemented in Azraq camp (as of 5 January)

WINTERIZATION RESPONSE BUDGET

USD 16.5 m

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A Syrian refugee in Azraq received extra blankets on Thursday, 8 January to cope with the cold. Each refugee will get two blankets, donated by the Ruler of Dubai as part of the emergency response to the Huda winter storm. ©UNHCR/ M. Hawari.

- UNHCR and partners are carrying out operations nationwide to support hundreds of thousands of refugees who have been struggling for shelter and warmth in both urban areas and camps since winter storm Huda hit Jordan on Wednesday 7 January.
- A key part of the response is the ongoing dispatch and distribution of 110,000 blankets to refugees of all nationalities and vulnerable Jordanians. Close to 90,000 of these were donated by the Ruler of Dubai for Syrian refugees.
- Despite bad road conditions, UNHCR staff are deployed to sites around Jordan to monitor and address the needs of refugees. UNHCR overnight shifts are ensured in both Zaatari and Azraq camps to monitor the situation and address any emergencies. In urban areas, two emergency lines are available for refugees to report emergency assistance needs and any protection problems.
- The current activities and contingency plans are part of an existing winter response operation that UNHCR and partner agencies put in place prior to the current storm (see last page). This winter response included information campaigns for refugees living in camps on the proper and safe use of gas heaters.

WEATHER AND ROAD CONDITIONS

- Snowfall has been particularly heavy in Amman, Ajloun, Jerash, Karak, Salt and Tafilah and more broadly at higher altitude in the western governorates. Snow accumulation reached up to 60 cm in Jerash and Ajloun, with many areas without electricity and telephone service. In the eastern desert areas, high winds have led to reduced visibility and fog. In Zaatari and Mafrq, snow started to melt on Thursday.
- Although the majority of main roads across the country are open as of 9 January midday, the situation deteriorated in the afternoon. Delays are expected in most areas and extra caution is required. Roads to and in Ajloun were virtually closed and access in parts of Amman and Jerash difficult. In the south, Karak and Tafilah are very difficult to access.

AMMAN AND URBAN AREAS

- UNHCR is following up on a report from the authorities about the death in Zaatari village of two members of a refugee family. Three other family members are in a serious condition in Mafrq Hospital as a result of suffocation from gas inhalation.
- On Wednesday UNHCR identified Community Support Committees (CSCs) in Amman, Irbid and other locations for the distributions of 20,000 blankets from its emergency stockpile for Somali, Sudanese and Iraqi refugees. UNHCR teams were able to dispatch 12,500 blankets that day in Amman and Zarqa. Irbid and some parts of Amman could not be reached before Friday due to the bad weather and road conditions. Blankets have been distributed by UNHCR partner IRD and Community-Based Organizations through IRD/UNHCR CSCs.
- Three airlifts from Dubai each carrying close to 30,000 blankets landed in Marka airport, Amman, on Wednesday 7 and Thursday 8 January. Some trucks left directly from the airport for distributions that began immediately.
- Few refugees presented themselves at registration centres on Wednesday. Considering the hazardous road conditions, UNHCR informed refugees that registration appointments for Thursday would be postponed to early next week. Twenty six refugees brought by the authorities to Raba Sarhan were transferred to Azraq in the evening by IOM. There was no transfer of refugees on Thursday.
- Although significant snowfall was recorded in the southern part of Irbid governorate, no major incident has been reported in the area, which hosts a large number of Syrian refugees. An electricity fault in King Abdullah Park (KAP) caused the power outage in two prefabs but was successfully repaired. 24 gas cylinders were distributed at KAP. The delivery and distribution of blankets could not take place before Friday in Irbid due to the bad weather and road conditions. For this reason, blankets have not yet reached Jerash and Ajloun.
- In Mafrq, the Beni Hashem Community Support Committee distributed bread to three areas where refugees had difficulties getting bread Thursday: Der Alkahf, Tal Alroman and Um El Quttien. They also provided gas to three families.



Delivery of blankets to Madaba on Thursday in response to Huda winter storm. ©UNHCR

AZRAQ REFUGEE CAMP

- Refugees in Azraq camp have faced very cold weather and strong winds, reportedly gusting as high as 125 km/h, but no snow. No major incident has been reported. Activities at the hospital have been running smoothly. The camp drainage system is working efficiently but there is a lot of mud in the camp since Thursday night and Friday's heavy rains.
- There was some damage to structures (primarily flashing and some cladding) due to strong winds and some water leakages due to the rain. As of Friday, the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) had repaired some 100 shelters.
- 29,920 blankets donated by the UAE to UNHCR reached Azraq camp on Wednesday. 25,000 blankets (two per person) are for distribution and the remainder will constitute a contingency stocks. The distribution started on Thursday to families of seven or more members. The operation, which is conducted with the support of NRC, is expected to be completed by Monday. As of Friday, close to 10,900 blankets have been distributed.
- NRC has been distributing gas as part of the regular refill cycle, with 274 gas bottles refilled on Thursday alone. Given the refugees' need to keep heaters on 24/7, UNHCR and NRC are considering shortening the gas refill cycle (currently at two weeks). NRC has also distributed warm clothing to 28 families that arrived at the camp recently.
- Refugees have shopped in the supermarket as their e-cards were reloaded on Tuesday.
- UNHCR overnight presence was also ensured to address any weather-related problems.

ZAATARI REFUGEE CAMP

- A number of tents and communal structures have been damaged by the storm. Refugees have been advised to move in temporarily with family/ friends or to emergency shelters. IRD intervened to repair a number of damaged kitchen roofs. UNHCR staff and partners worked through Wednesday night to provide 12 warm, safe centres, run by Save the Children, with mattresses, extra blankets, heaters. Four out of the 12 centres received refugees. Refugees still living in tents have the option of being transferred to Azraq or to the Emirates Jordanian Camps where better shelter is available.
- Several electricity outages occurred due to high load and procedures are being put in place to reduce strain on transformers and reduce the risk of major failures. On Wednesday night the electricity was turned off following the snowfall that raised the possibility of electrocutions. The electricity supplier (IDECO) had maintenance crews present in the camp 24 hours a day to assess and repair electricity problems in coordination with the UNHCR electrical engineer and authorities.
- Melting snow on Thursday resulted in standing water in several areas. Twelve trucks operated by JEN worked to drain water from flooded areas. The NGO is coordinating with UNICEF, which is operating de-sludging trucks, in areas where septic tanks are overflowing from melting snow and rainwater. On Thursday UNICEF operated 20 de-sludging trucks. ACTED will also mobilize 10 de-sludging trucks as of Friday to assist UNICEF's work.
- IRD, NRC, ACTED, OXFAM, UNHCR and other partners worked with community members on shelter maintenance, transportation, dissemination of information and referrals.
- No major medical incident was reported. Medical services were operational with JHAS providing additional transportation and 24 hours a day emergency services. Schools remained closed and besides essential services, most activities remained suspended.



Zaatari camp, Wednesday night @UNHCR/H. Etvomezian

WINTERIZATION PLAN

- Current activities and the activation of contingency plans are part of an existing winter response that UNHCR and partner agencies have organized and implemented since November.
- In urban areas, a total of 26,843 refugee families of all nationalities have received UNHCR winterization cash allowance. 20,773 beneficiary families are those already receiving monthly cash assistance and 5,900 families are among those on the waiting list to receive regular unconditional cash assistance, subject to the availability of funding.
- In camps, UNHCR camp response includes shelter improvement, the distribution of gas heaters, gas cylinders and refills, plastic sheeting, high thermal blankets, winter clothes and vouchers to buy winter items. Apart from the distribution of vouchers to refugee households, due to take place on Sunday 11 January, the winterization plan is fully implemented.



Shelter and Core Relief Items

- **Solid structures:** There are currently 24,000 caravans in Zaatari camp and more caravans being delivered, with a minority of refugee households still in tents. In Azraq, there are no tents and all refugees live in T-shelters.
- **Flooring:** The construction of concrete flooring in T-shelters in Azraq camp helps protect refugees from the cold and humidity. Refugees receive cash incentives for participating in the project. As of 5 January, 2,892 floors were completed out of a target of 6,480 shelters.
- **Flooding contingency plan activities:** Over the past 2½ years, significant work has been done to improve the drainage system in Zaatari in order to prevent flooding. Similar work has been done in Azraq camp. In Zaatari, the existing contingency plan for flooding and cold weather has been updated for the winter. Tools were distributed at district level to refugees in order to dig trenches. This helped preventing flooding during past heavy rains.
- **Plastic sheeting:** 2,000 plastic sheets were delivered in December to Zaatari camp for refugee households in need of additional support. More plastic sheeting is available as needs arise. No plastic sheeting distribution is planned in Azraq camp.
- **High thermal blankets:** Azraq completed in December the distribution of 17,089 high-thermal blankets covering all residents of the camp. In Zaatari, all refugee households received blankets as part of the Saudi National Campaign (SNC) winter contribution.
- **Clothes:** Clothes donated by UNIQLO and SNC were conducted in both camps in November and December.



Access to Energy

- The distribution of 1,853 gas heaters and of 1,853 gas cylinders to refugee households in Azraq camp was completed on 30 November.
- In Zaatari, all 16,500 households will receive UNHCR vouchers to procure gas heaters, cylinders and other winter items of their choice. Voucher distribution will start on Sunday 11 January. For this activity, UNHCR is partnering with NRC and the camp supermarkets.

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