

## JORDAN

### UNHCR OPERATIONAL UPDATE

February 2016\*

#### KEY FIGURES

**90**

Percentage of Syrians living out of camps in poverty

**80**

Percentage of Syrians using crisis or emergency coping strategies

**75**

Percentage of Syrians who are highly or severely shelter vulnerable

**115,000**

Syrian school-aged children out of school

**45,000**

Refugees receiving life-essential cash assistance this winter

**US\$ 15 million**

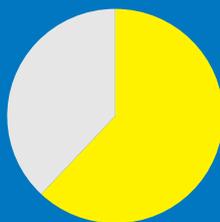
Provided in cash assistance this winter to refugees

#### FUNDING

**US\$ 329 million**

requested for the operation in 2015

Gap  
38%



Funded  
62%

#### HIGHLIGHTS

- UNHCR's target of identifying and screening-in 10,000 Syrians, part of Canada's plans to welcome 25,000 Syrians from the region through its Humanitarian Transfer Programme, was surpassed on 20 December with 11,005 individual files transferred to the Canadian authorities. UNHCR staff volunteered over five weekends and after hours to reach the target before the end of 2015.
- The successful launch of the EyeCloud© system on 17 January marks a massive breakthrough in the delivery of cash assistance to Jordan's most vulnerable refugees. The system, launched jointly with Cairo-Amman Bank (CAB) and IrisGuard, will allow cash machines to "talk" directly to UNHCR's biometric registration database, allowing UNHCR to instantly and securely increase the number of beneficiaries without the bank needing to enroll and re-verify refugees.
- A six-week sit-in protest outside UNHCR offices in Amman ended in the deportation of approximately 585 Sudanese refugees from Jordan on 16 December, despite several appeals from UNHCR to the Government of Jordan.
- The new UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Filippo Grandi, visited Jordan on 18 and 19 January in one of his first field missions after taking office. The High Commissioner's visit included trips to the Zaatari refugee camp, the Anmar Hmoud Registration Centre at UNHCR's Khalda office and refugee homes in Amman, as well as meetings with His Majesty King Abdullah II and Prime Minister Abdullah Ensour.



A UNHCR staff member saying goodbye to a Syrian refugee child at Marka Airport, Amman, ahead of the family's trip to Canada through the country's Humanitarian Transfer Programme. ©UNHCR

## UPDATE ON ACHIEVEMENTS

### Operational Context

The New Year represents a critical juncture for the 636,000 Syrian refugees registered with UNHCR in Jordan, five years into the war and with no end to the crisis in sight. With limited access to formal employment and savings and remittances long depleted, some 90 per cent of Syrian refugees are now living in poverty with 80 per cent of these resorting to crisis or emergency coping strategies. For some in 2015 this included the dangerous strategy of moving back to Syria or the perilous journey towards Europe. Children are now especially vulnerable with many dropping out of school to support their families by working in exploitative and dangerous areas of the job market. The most recent figures indicate that 115,000 Syrian school-age children are currently not accessing any form of education, thereby threatening what many fear the most: a “lost generation”.

The mounting pressures on refugees are compounded by chronic shortages in key infrastructure precipitated by the large influx of refugees into Jordan in recent years. These pressures are leading to cuts in key services for refugees, including the withdrawal of free access to health care for Syrians. Four-fifths of Syrian refugees registered with UNHCR are concentrated in urban areas, mostly in the northern governorates of Amman, Irbid and Mafraq where the competition for resources between refugee and host community is strongest. Reduced international funding levels has also severely impacted refugees over the last year with the reduction of life-essential assistance, including World Food Programme food vouchers.

To respond to these multiplying challenges, UNHCR is continuing to seek out the most effective solutions to protecting those under its mandate. The operation’s cash assistance programme works to improve the ability of refugee households to meet their basic needs and reduce the number living in poverty, all whilst providing a boost for the host economy. The EyeCloud© launch in January represented the latest breakthrough for the programme in what promises to be a groundbreaking year in cash support. The search for durable solutions is also being transformed with a revised refugee status determination and resettlement processing strategy to prioritize the most vulnerable. Last year was the busiest yet for the operation’s durable solutions team and 2016 is set to continue the trend with demand from resettlement countries to refer and submit Syrian refugees in greater numbers as part of international burden-sharing efforts.

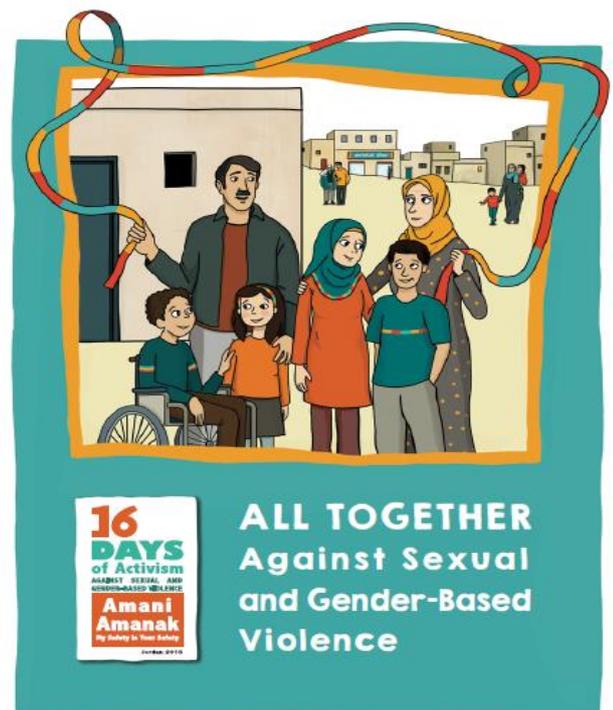
The year ahead will be characterized in other ways by the continued search for longer-term solutions. Host communities will need to sense that a degree of compensation for bearing the costs of large refugee communities is forthcoming from the international community. Refugees will need to be provided with ways in which to sustain themselves and become less reliant on aid and their host communities. UNHCR will continue to work with the Government of Jordan to provide refugees with self-reliance opportunities, whilst also supporting initiatives to lessen the toll of the crisis on Jordanians. The London Syria Donors Conference in February and the *High-level meeting on global responsibility sharing through pathways for admission of Syrian refugees* in Geneva in March will provide two early opportunities in 2016 to articulate meaningful solutions to the most serious displacement crisis for a generation.

A total of **698,805** people of concern are registered with UNHCR in Jordan, including **636,169** Syrians, **53,615** Iraqis and **9,021** others including, **3,552** Sudanese, **3,515** Yemenis and **772** Somalis.

## Achievements and Impact

- Urban registration exercise:** The Ministry of the Interior’s urban verification exercise to re-register Syrian nationals, including all refugees registered with UNHCR residing outside of camps in Jordan, continues across the country. The exercise intends to ensure that all out of camp Syrians are issued with new identity cards to assist them in accessing their legal entitlement to services such as health and education. As of the 31 January, a total of 301,311 cards were issued to Syrians and out of that number, 280,747 to individuals registered with UNHCR. The return of identity documents to Syrians that began as part of the urban verification process in August 2015 has seen 146,323 documents returned to 100,712 individuals; 64 per cent of the total number of documents handed over to Jordanian officials for over a year from 2012 when Syrians refugees arrived in large numbers.
- Regional Conference on Strengthening National Protection Systems in Refugee Settings:** On 9 and 10 December in Amman, under the Patronage of her Majesty Queen Rania Al-Abdullah, and in cooperation with the Public Security Directorate/Family Protection Department (FPD) and the National Council for Family Affairs (NCFA), UNHCR organized a regional conference on strengthening national protection system in refugee settings in the MENA region, with an emphasis on strengthening efforts by national governments and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to respond more robustly to child protection and sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) issues. The overarching aim of the conference, attended by representatives from government, international organizations and national and international NGOs in the MENA region, was to develop specific recommendations in line with the principles of best interest and survivor-centred approaches. The recommendations, that include the social impact of the Syria crisis, guidelines on the application of best interest principles in Islamic and international law, social services including safe shelters, access to justice and medical care for survivors and Early Marriage and Separation, are to be shared with the relevant actors in each of the countries represented in the MENA region and the progress of their implementation assessed in light of national priorities and legal frameworks.
- 16 Days of Activism against Sexual & Gender-Based Violence Campaign:** Various events and activities were organized for the 16 Days of Activism Campaign in refugee settings across Jordan, focusing this year on the importance of engaging men and boys to promote gender equality and support the empowerment of women and girls as leaders and agents of change. Over 150 SGBV case managers and community mobilizers were trained by UNHCR with group discussions facilitated by SGBV Sub-Working Group members reaching more than 3,500 men and boys in schools, community and recreational centres in and out of camps. The activities included the dissemination of 4,000 posters, 2,000 stickers, and 1,000 facilitators’ guides to 30 different organizations working across the country.

**Gender Based Violence Information Management System (GBVIMS) Mid-Year Report 2015:** The report released in December covers incidents reported to the GBVIMS agencies from 1 January to 30 June 2015 in Amman Governorate, Irbid Governorate (including the Cyber City and King Abdullah Park camps), Mafraq Governorate (including Zaatari camp) and the Azraq and Emirati-Jordanian camps. The GBVIMS data shows that domestic violence and early marriage continue to be the main type of SGBV reported by survivors who, in the vast majority of cases, are women and girls (92%). UNHCR and partners have developed a strategy to enhance the engagement and inclusion of men and boys in SGBV prevention and response through awareness-raising activities with refugees and the training of partners working with men and boys. Two workshops are planned in May and September along with the development of posters and a facilitators’ guide.



- Sudanese sit-in outside UNHCR offices ends in deportations:** In mid-November a group of Sudanese protesters began a sit-in demonstration outside the UNHCR Branch Office in Amman to protest against what they perceived to be discrimination in the allocation of assistance and resettlement places. The protesters grew to number on average between 300 and 350 persons camped out in approximately 250 small tents. On the morning of 16 December the Jordanian authorities began an operation to evict and later deport the protesters. In total some 585 individuals were deported to Sudan from Jordan. UNHCR had met with representatives from the protest on several occasions to discuss their concerns in an effort to resolve the sit-in. The levels of assistance provided to Sudanese refugees are equal to, and in some cases higher than, those provided to other nationalities, reflecting the high level of vulnerability within the population. Assistance provided includes monthly cash assistance and urgent cash assistance and, this winter, winterization cash support is being provided to all Sudanese refugees and asylum seekers. Sudanese refugees also receive documentation, legal protection, education support, and health services, and are in regular contact with our staff through monthly meetings and at help desks.



## Health

### Achievements and Impact

- Reopening of the hospital in Azraq Camp:** UNHCR's implementing partner, International Medical Corps, re-opened the hospital in Azraq camp on 20 December after IFRC ceased its operations in October 2015. The break in service was the result of delays in obtaining a new license to operate the hospital. IMC is the main health care provider at the camp where its two clinics are funded by UNHCR for health and co-funded by UNFPA for reproductive health. The services available at the hospital cover reproductive health, where it has the capacity for deliveries and the admission of newly delivered infants, as well as primary dental care, part time general surgery, x-ray services, laboratory services and emergency services. The clinic currently averages 50-80 consultations per doctor per day with 12 live birth recorded per week.



One of the wards at the UNHCR/UNFPA hospital in Azraq camp after its re-opening in December 2015. ©UNHCR/A. Bino.

## Education

### Achievements and Impact

- Increasing refugees' access to education:** On 26 January the UNHCR Representative signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Al-Bayt University in Mafraq and RebootKamp to establish computer training courses for Syrian refugees and Jordanian students. The programme will focus on programming skills for web development whilst promoting other skills including leadership, creative problem solving, collaboration, team building and ethics. The programme incorporates an important mentorship component connecting students to professionals in industry, thereby furthering network-building and immersing students in professional work environments. Pre-testing of the 'bootcamp' methodology will take place at the King Hussein Business Centre in Amman in March, prior to the formal launch of the 16 week pilot programme at the university in April.



## Food Security and Nutrition

### Achievements and Impact

- WFP funding secured until May:** On 6 January the World Food Programme (WFP) announced that it had secured enough funding to provide food assistance to 526,000 of the most vulnerable refugees in Jordan until the end of May 2016. The new figure represents the longest-term funding secured by WFP since December 2013. The resources will ensure that 210,000 refugees classified as “highly vulnerable” refugees will be provided with 15 JD (US\$ 21) per month, whilst another 226,000 “vulnerable” refugees will receive 10 JD (US\$ 14) per month for the next five months. A rapid assessment undertaken by WFP Jordan in October 2015 to measure the impact of food assistance cuts in September found that almost half of the refugees interviewed would consider leaving Jordan (20 per cent to Europe and 26 per cent to Syria) if food assistance were to be cut entirely. In addition, the survey found that 75 per cent of families interviewed were engaged in severe coping strategies to meet their food needs. These included begging, withdrawing school aged children from school to work, or borrowing money.

## NFIs

### Achievements and Impact

- UNHCR in Jordan responds to the cold weather:** The 2015/2016 winter has seen UNHCR’s strongest response yet to the impact of the cold months in Jordan. Winterization cash assistance is being provided to over 45,000 urban refugee families – an injection of US\$ 15 million into the host economy – to ensure that refugees can meet life-saving needs, including through the purchase of gas refills, extra clothes and blankets and food. Another 42,500 thermal blankets have been prepositioned for distribution throughout the country to refugees and host community alike. The completion of the transition of all refugees in camps from tents to solid shelters in early 2015 means that refugees are afforded extra cold weather protection this winter. In Azraq camp all new arrivals are being provided with thermal blankets and a heater with gas refills being issued periodically for existing populations in all camps. Refugees in both Azraq and Zaatari have also received unconditional cash vouchers for the purchase of additional gas refills or other winter essentials. Drainage in the camps and water supply systems has been upgraded to mitigate against the risk of flooding from winter storms, whilst improvements in the thermal insulation of shelters at Azraq camp with concrete flooring has been completed in 3,126 shelters. Shelter upgrades have also been provided to 1,000 of the most shelter vulnerable out of camp refugees in the Amman, Irbid, Mafraq, Ajloun and Jerash Governorates whilst throughout the cold months there will be a 24-hour UNHCR presence at the camps with registration on-going in Khalda and UNHCR offices throughout the Kingdom.

*Distributing winter gas canisters at Azraq camp in January 2015. ©UNHCR/O.Sarrado*



- Successful trial of the EyeCloud© system:** UNHCR in Jordan began the year with another breakthrough in its cash assistance programme with the successful pilot of a system that will allow an ATM to authenticate biometric registration data directly from UNHCR rather than from the bank. The new system will enhance the dignity of refugees whilst allowing UNHCR to instantly and securely increase its number of beneficiaries without having to request refugees to enter into time-consuming iris enrolment at the bank. It will also further increase cash coordination with other humanitarian agencies who will be able to check if refugees have already received cash assistance, as well as further ensuring maximum accountability and further reducing overhead costs. The EyeCloud© system was trialed using a small sample of Somali and Sudanese refugees who had not previously enrolled at the bank. The EyeCloud© will be extended in 2016 to more humanitarian partners in Jordan who will be able to interact securely with UNHCR's database to further their support for refugees. This development will create a foundational building block for a genuine common cash facility, designed with financial service providers, to become a product in the market place rather than as a service that UNHCR would offer at cost. In 2015, UNICEF's use of the cash assistance platform provided more than US\$ 15 million to families with children, while at King Abdullah Park refugee camp the first cash-less payment was made by a refugee using only iris-recognition to purchase an item at a WFP supermarket.



Launch of the EyeCloud© in Amman on 17 January 2015.  
©UNHCR/M.Hawari

## Community Empowerment and Self-Reliance

### Achievements and Impact

- Global Refugee Youth Consultations (GRYC):** The GRYC were held in Amman at the Princess Basma Youth Resources Centre from 7-10 December, 2015. The initiative was organized by UNHCR Jordan in cooperation with the Princess Basma Youth Resource Centre (PBYRC), the Jordanian Hashemite Fund for Human Development (JOHUD), Save the Children and the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC). The GYC is a global initiative coordinated by UNHCR and the Women's Refugee Commission with the support of the Youth and Adolescents in Emergencies (YAE) Advocacy Group. The consultations aim to provide a forum for refugee youth to discuss issues that affect them with host country youth and representatives from the UN, international and national NGOs and other organizations working with youth in Jordan, and to place them at the centre of decision-making processes whilst recognizing them for their potential. Some of the key themes that emerged from the discussions were the need for increased educational opportunities for refugee youth, improved access to basic needs including better healthcare, housing and infrastructure, the lack of livelihood opportunities and issues relating to freedom of movement. Follow-up steps to the event include the creation of platforms to increase the engagement of refugee youth in advocacy initiatives, including online platforms and more youth consultation initiatives in Jordan.

## Durable Solutions

### Achievements and Impact

- In December 2015, UNHCR responded to one of the most ambitious humanitarian transfer programmes ever initiated. Canada's announcement that it planned to welcome 25,000 Syrian refugees from the region by the end of 2015, with a large portion of these residing in Jordan, led to UNHCR working to meet the steep target of identifying and screening-

in over 10,000 Syrians in just over a month. The International Organization for Migration (IOM) lent their support to the effort by providing transport, medical screening and administrative and logistical assistance. UNHCR staff worked over five weekends and after hours to ensure that the targets were comfortably met, with 11,005 Syrians transferred to the Canadian authorities in total by 20 December. On the same day, The Honourable John McCallum, Canada's Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship visited Jordan where he met with the Deputy Representative at the UNHCR Registration Centre in Khalda, Amman, and one of the last families to be submitted by UNHCR. The Minister expressed his appreciation for UNHCR's referrals and submission efforts and used his visit to announce that Canada plans to double its intake of Syrian refugees to 50,000 regionally by the end of 2016. He also visited Zaatari camp and the Marka airport in Amman to meet Syrian refugees preparing to board flights to Canada.



UNHCR field staff meet with a Syrian family in Azraq shortly before their departure for Canada through the Humanitarian Admission Programme in January 2016. ©UNHCR/O.Sarrado

## WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP

### **Launch of the Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan 2016-2017**

- The Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan (3RP) 2016-2017 in response to the Syria crisis was released on 7 December as part of the launch of the Global Humanitarian Overview in Geneva. The 3RP 2016-2017 forms the regional response of over 200 partners including Governments, United Nations agencies, inter-governmental organizations (IGOs) and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey to the crisis.
- The 3RP country chapter for Jordan, the Jordan Response Plan (JRP), will require US \$ 7.9 billion in funding in the three years 2016-2018, or some US \$2.6 billion per year. The refugee component allocated to UNHCR totals US \$ 230 million in 2016 to support refugees and meet their needs.
- The sector with the largest budget requirement for UNHCR is the Basic Needs sector that provides life-saving support in the form of cash assistance, both regular and winterization, and non-food items and vouchers in the camps. The next largest is Protection where funds are required for UNHCR's work in seeking access to territory for asylum seekers, obtaining documentation and furthering their understanding of their right and obligations; empowering, engaging and strengthening families and communities, and advocating for greater access to SGBV and Child Protection support.
- The next largest sectors are Health, Energy & Justice, Shelter, WASH and Education. The Health component aims to provide essential and accessible primary health care services to refugees, support their provision of essential secondary and tertiary health care, and strengthen access, uptake and the quality of integrated community interventions. The Energy & Justice sector aims to support the camps with infrastructural needs, support the host communities by upgrading the existing grids and infrastructure and to improve access to legal assistance and remedies. The Shelter sector aims to improve the living condition inside camps, the WASH sector aims to improve access to better sanitation and improve wastewater management and the Education sector aims to widen the opportunities for learning for vulnerable refugee youth.

## Stories from the field

### “Basma’s best kick”\*

When Basma passed a group of kids one morning running around in white robes fastened with colorful belts, she decided to follow her curiosity. Basma had just arrived at Azraq camp a couple of days earlier and the inquisitive nine year-old wanted to find out what these youngsters in white were up to. After all, she says, she wanted to make friends with kids who “seemed fun”.

Basma followed the group to a sports ground built a year earlier with support from the International Olympic Committee. “When I saw the movements the kids were performing, I knew that was something I wanted to learn”, explains Basma with her dark eyes wide open. More than 50 boys and two girls were part of the training. She decided to join them. “I love jumping and breaking wooden boards”, she says matter-of-factly while standing up to do a little show.

Ruwyda had no idea about her daughter’s new hobby. “Basma used to disappear, but I thought she was outside, just playing with her friends”, she confesses. “One day Basma arrived home and started doing all these weird movements, jumping up and down on my walking aid, so I asked her what on earth she was doing”. Basma announced to her family that she was taking taekwondo classes. “My daughter had never seen this sport before, not even on TV”, mutters Ruwyda. “The only thing she remembers from her childhood is airstrikes and violence”.

Basma speaks loud, clear and with a confidence not common for a girl of her age. Basma does not remember much of the day her family were forced to leave Syria but she is determined: “If someone hassles me or tries to harass me, I need to learn how to defend myself. My brother won’t be always around to protect me, maybe he is at the school or at work... I need to be independent”.

Ruwyda smiles. “Basma has many talents and we are so proud that now she is free to achieve anything she wants in life”, she explains. But in the end, she is just a kid and taekwondo has become the best excuse to fight with her older brother: “I am training myself, mum”, she says quickly excusing herself.

Basma is interested in more sports and has now has enrolled herself in football and volleyball training. She is good at sports but her finest kick is her mind: “Can you imagine ants living in the Arctic?”, wonders Basma.

These questions are her best kick!

*\*All names changed for protection reasons.*

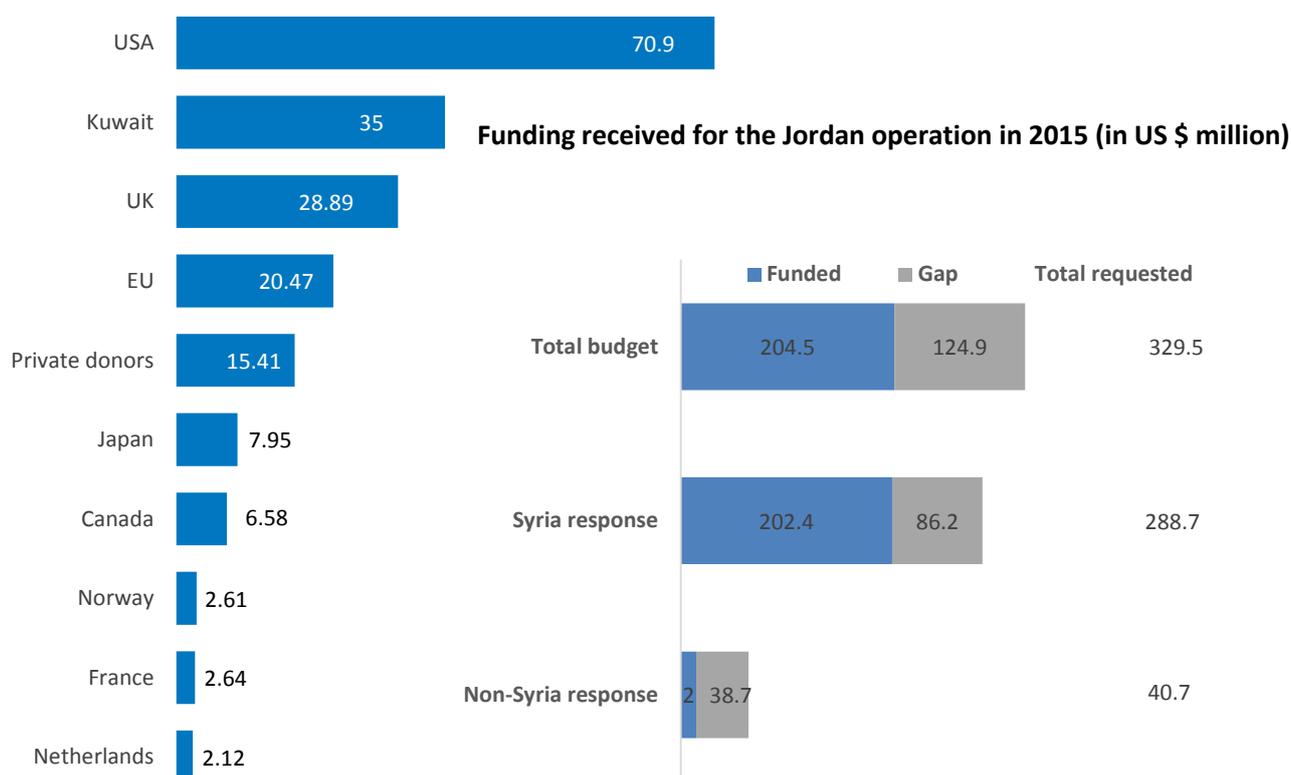


Olga Sarrado-Mur  
Associate External Relations Officer  
Azraq Camp

## FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Total recorded contributions in 2015 for the operation amount to some **US\$ 204 million**, including **US\$ 202 million** for the Syria response and **US\$ 2 million** for the Iraq situation at the country level.

### Funding received in 2015 for the Syria response (in million US \$) in Jordan



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.

### Major donors of unrestricted and of regional funds in 2015 (in million US \$):

United States of America (251 M) | Sweden (80 M) | United Kingdom (53 M) | Netherlands (45 M) | Norway (44 M) | Private Donors Spain (41 M) | Denmark (28 M) | Australia (24 M) | Japan (18 M) | Canada (18 M) | Priv Donors Italy (16 M) | Switzerland (16 M) | France (14 M) | Priv. Donors Republic of Korea (12 M) | Priv Donors Japan (11 M) | Finland (10 M)

*\*The February 2016 Operational Update covers the period December 2015 - January 2016*

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