

Jordan: Azraq Refugee Camp

January 2024

Opened in 2014 to avoid overcrowding in Zaatari camp, Azraq currently hosts around **41,000 Syrian refugees**. About 14.7 km² in size, the camp has four operational villages. The village-based approach aims to foster a greater sense of ownership and community among residents. Some of the key facilities in Azraq camp include a hospital, health clinics, a solar power plant, schools and community centres. The Syrian Refugee Affairs Directorate (SRAD) and UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, co-coordinate the camp management.

Key Figures



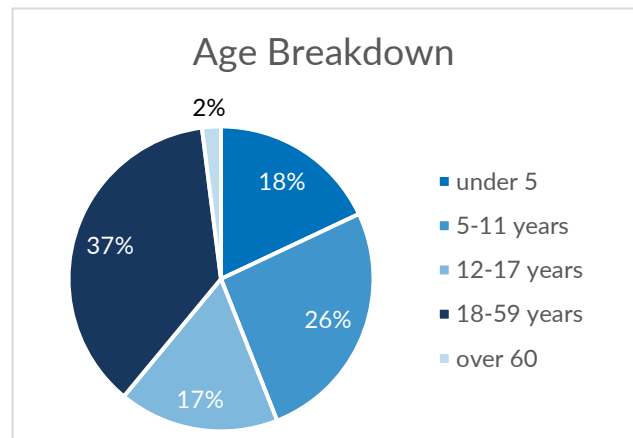
1 in 3 households headed by **women**



4.5 per cent of population are **people with disabilities**



~100 babies born every month



Main Activities

Registration

- UNHCR works to ensure all camp residents are documented and have certificates proving their registration. It is essential for maintaining accurate records of the camp's population and ensuring that individuals' rights and needs are recognized and addressed. The UNHCR registration centre in Azraq covers refugees in Azraq camp, Emirati-Jordanian camp and Azraq town.

Protection

- UNHCR leads the Protection working group and Child Protection and Gender-Based Violence (GBV) sub-working groups in the camp. Through its daily presence in the camp and its leading role in coordination, UNHCR monitors and addresses protection-related concerns including documentation, safety, legal assistance, child protection, GBV, resettlement, etc. UNHCR offers protection counselling, facilitates referrals, and operates a protection hotline.
- UNHCR ensures that its partners adhere to the international protection standards on case management through regular monitoring, capacity development, and advocacy with authorities on individual cases.
- UNHCR also coordinates with the Civil Status Department of the Ministry of Interior and family courts ("Sharia courts") to facilitate issuance of civil status documents i.e. birth, death, and marriage certificates.

Basic Needs

- UNHCR provides refugees with cash assistance package upon their arrival/return to the camp to meet their essential needs and buy household items and consumables, such as diapers, sanitary pads and hygiene kits, from the local markets in Azraq camp.
- Every quarter, refugees also receive cash assistance to replenish essential consumables, namely, cooking gas, baby diapers and sanitary pads. In 2023, UNHCR distributed around \$1.6 million to refugees in Azraq camp.
- UNHCR is transitioning refugee households to digital financial services through shifting the modality of cash assistance transfers to mobile wallets. Almost all households (98.5 per cent) in Azraq have mobile wallet accounts. UNHCR is coordinating with various financial service providers to increase the presence of mobile wallet agents in the camp, while ensuring the constant presence of a third-party agent that supports refugees

with challenges in their day-to-day financial service activities. Lastly, through UNHCR's advocacy, Cairo Amman Bank installed an ATM in the camp to facilitate refugees' regular access to cash.

Livelihoods

- A limited number of income-generating opportunities are available in the camp including through the Incentive-Based Volunteering (IBV) scheme, or through private businesses, either home-based or in the local market. Also, refugees with work permits have access to work outside of the camp.
- The IBV scheme enables refugees to engage in volunteering activities, such as translation, cleaning, admin work, and more, with organizations that work in the camp and receive financial compensation for their contribution. The scheme is an important means of allowing refugees to earn extra income to support their livelihood. In 2023, there were over 3,800 refugees (46 per cent female) engaged in IBV opportunities in Azraq camp.
- The market in the camp hosts around 390 shops owned by refugees and Jordanians. Refugees can earn a living through working in the shops and selling a variety of items including food, accessories, bikes and more.
- In addition, refugees can get work permits for work opportunities outside camp, through the Azraq Camp Employment Office (ACE), established in 2018 to facilitate access to formal work opportunities across Jordan for refugees in the camp. ACE operates in collaboration with UNHCR, the International Labour Organization and the Ministry of Labour and facilitates the issuance of work permits and provides refugees with work-related counselling services, information on labour rights, training opportunities and job matching services. In 2023, over 1,300 active work permits are registered in Azraq camp with 10 per cent for females.

Food Security & Nutrition

- In addition to UNHCR's cash assistance, the World Food Programme (WFP) provides all refugees living in camps with JOD 15 (approximately \$21) per person every month to meet their dietary needs. Due to limited funding, the amount they receive has decreased to 65 per cent of what they use to receive in previous years.
- A card-less EyePay system that uses blockchain and iris scanning technology is used to facilitate payments in WFP facilities. The system helps enhance the efficiency and accountability of food assistance, while also making shopping easier and more secure for refugees. WFP is also expanding the delivery of assistance through mobile wallets which supports financial inclusion of refugees.
- WFP operates a school feeding programme for students enrolled in formal schools within the camp. Specifically, students receive fortified date bars on a daily basis throughout the school year.



Refugees can buy a variety of food items in WFP-contracted supermarkets and bread shops in the camps. @UNHCR/Mohammad Alyounes

Education

- UNICEF supports the Ministry of Education (MOE) to provide access to quality education for all school-aged refugee children in Azraq camp. UNICEF supports operations in all 15 schools and five stand-alone kindergarten centres with some 360 Syrian volunteers serving as assistant teachers.
- Around 11,800 children are enrolled in formal education from Grade 2 to 12 while around 200 children are enrolled in non-formal education accredited by MOE. 50 per cent of the children enrolled in both formal and non-formal education are females.
- UNICEF supports disability-inclusive education for 520 children with disabilities attending MOE schools in Azraq camp through providing learning support services and tackling stigma and discrimination against disability.

- All schools in the camp implement the Learning Bridges programme, an innovative blended learning programme to help students between Grades 4-10 recover and accelerate their learning following the disruption caused by COVID-19. UNICEF also runs a Reading Recovery programme to support students who are slow at reading.
- UNICEF supports capacity building of the school management and teachers through mentoring and training school principals and supporting school improvement planning. UNICEF also trains teachers to use the National Diagnostic Assessment results to identify learning loss and target remedial efforts.
- Higher education is also a priority for refugee students. Currently, there are around 50 refugees from Azraq camp who are studying in universities either by self-sponsoring their tuition fees, or through different scholarship schemes including the Albert Einstein German Academic Refugee Initiative, better known as DAFI, and the Edu-Syria programme.

Health

- UNHCR and partners continue to support refugees with access to quality primary health services in the camp including acute and chronic health consultations, reproductive health, vaccination, mental health, dental health, nutrition and paediatric services. Advanced services, including laboratory tests, X-ray imaging, an emergency department, general surgeries, and delivery and paediatric admissions, are available in the camp's hospital.
- The three primary healthcare centres and one hospital operating in Azraq reach a weekly average of 5,000 consultations, refer 75 emergency, life-saving cases to secondary and tertiary facilities outside the camp and operate an average of 25 live births per week.
- While a large number of patients require specialty healthcare services that are not available in the camp, only life-saving emergency cases are referred to health facilities outside the camp.
- The primary challenge lies in ensuring the continuation of the services to meet the healthcare needs of refugees, given the constraints of the current funding situation.

Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)



More than 500 IBVs help collect and sort waste and raise awareness on waste management. @UNHCR/Mohammad Alyouhes

- UNICEF leads the WASH sector in Azraq camp, providing essential water and sanitation services. The water supply system in the camp consists of two boreholes, two storage locations, and a distribution system that serves the four villages and service areas. Refugees receive between 65 to 68 litres of water per person per day in summer, and over 45 litres in winter.
- Wastewater in the camp is managed safely by collecting it from communal tanks and transporting it to the nearest treatment plant. Solid waste is also collected and then sorted for recycling. The rest are disposed in a landfill.

- Partners in the camp conduct awareness raising sessions and community engagement activities on hygiene issues. In 2023, UNHCR and its partners installed 400 additional private latrines for the most vulnerable families including people with special needs or serious medical conditions. The rest of the population in Azraq camp uses communal bathrooms.

Shelter

- UNHCR provides “caravan”-like shelters called transitional shelters to refugees in the camp. There are a total of 10,545 shelters of which around 9,000 are allocated to refugees. UNCHR conducts regular monitoring to assess the shelter situation and updates the shelter allocation system.

- In 2023, UNHCR upgraded all shelters in Azraq, adding kitchens and expanding the shelter space to 32m². All shelters in the camp are connected to electricity with regular maintenance provided through a private contractor.

UNHCR and the Norwegian Refugee Council Quick Fix Team repaired over 1,600 shelters in 2023. @UNHCR / Mohammad Alyounes



Access to Energy

- Azraq became the first refugee camp in the world to be powered by renewable energy when its solar power plant opened in 2017. A grid-connected solar plant, with a total capacity of 5 MWp, saves up to \$2.75 million per year in electricity consumption costs and reduces CO2 emissions by 6,300 tons per year.
- A grid-connected electricity network connects the solar plant to almost 9,000 refugee shelters, businesses, offices and utilities, providing year-round electricity in the camp.
- On average, each shelter consumes around 4 kWh/day depending on the season, sufficient to operate lights, a refrigerator, washing machine, television, water filter, fans, and charge phones and laptops. The solar plant covers up to nearly 80 per cent of the electricity needs in the camp depend on the season.
- In 2023, UNHCR signed an agreement with the Government which allows for transfer of solar energy from a newly built solar power plant in South Amman to Azraq and Zaatari camps. This complements the energy generated from the solar plant in Azraq. Thanks to this green deal, Azraq camp has been running almost entirely on solar energy, significantly reducing environmental footprint of the camp.
- UNHCR installed fused disconnect switches in Azraq camp which disconnect and shut the circuit in case of a problem. This helped save approximately 87 per cent of the electricity bill compared to previous years and contributed to protecting electricity infrastructure.

Durable Solutions

- UNHCR identifies cases to be considered for third country solutions, coordinates and advocates with authorities to facilitate movement of resettlement cases, enhances referral pathway with partners, and expedites the response to cases with urgent protection risks. In 2023, over 200 refugees from Azraq camp departed Jordan through resettlement.

Working with Partners

- **Governmental partners:** Syrian Refugee Affairs Directorate, Ministry of Labour, Ministry of Public Works and Housing, Ministry of Water and Irrigation, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Justice, and Ministry of Social Development, Sharia'a Court, Civil Registry Department, and Family and Juvenile Protection Department
- **UN agencies:** International Labour Organization, International Organization for Migration, United Nations Population Fund, United Nations Children's Fund, United Nations Office for Project Services, UN Women, World Food Programme
- **International NGOs:** Action Against Hunger, Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development, CARE, Danish Refugee Council, International Committee of the Red Crescent, International Medical Corps, International Orthodox Christian Charities, International Rescue Committee, Mercy Corps, Norwegian Refugee Council, Plan International, Relief International, and World Vision
- **National NGOs:** Al Hussein Society, Arab Medical Relief, Arab Renaissance for Democracy and Development, Business Development Centre, Holy Land Institute for Deaf, Noor Al Hussein Foundation, Save the Children

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