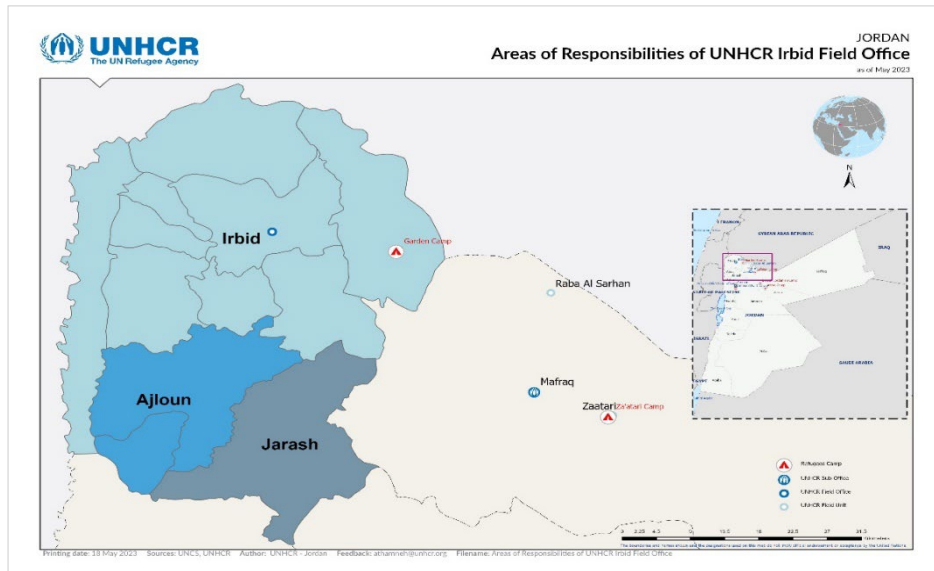


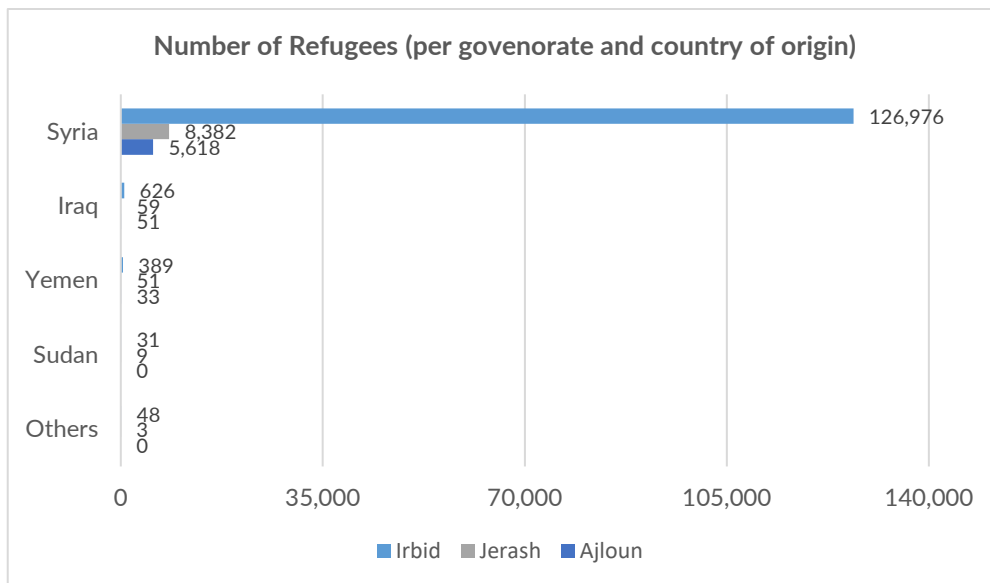
Jordan: Irbid Field Office

January 2024

The northern areas of Jordan host almost 142,000 refugees, with Irbid Governorate hosting the second largest number of urban refugees in Jordan after Amman, accounting for more than 126,000. UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, maintains a robust presence in Irbid through a field office of 40 national and one international staff. UNHCR Irbid Field Office works with refugees and asylum-seekers in Irbid, Jerash and Ajloun governorates, and the Garden Refugee Camp.



Irbid hosts the largest number of refugees out of the three governorates with more than 126,000 Syrian refugees.



Garden Camp, previously known as King Abdullah Park, consists of over 800 refugees (mostly Palestinians and Syrians) and Jordanians. Together with Syrian Refugee Affairs Directorate (SRAD) and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), UNHCR provides assistance to the refugees.

Main Activities

Registration

- Refugees can renew their Asylum-Seeker Certificates or update their documents to reflect family composition changes in the UNHCR Registration Centre in Irbid. UNHCR interview an average of 90 families daily. Almost all (97 per cent) registration or renewal interviews are conducted in person, while a few vulnerable or remote cases are interviewed virtually. People with specific needs or urgent protection concerns are referred for further protection services and assistance.

Protection

- UNHCR provides various protection services and facilitates safe referrals through case management for children at risk, survivors of gender-based violence, and other vulnerable people, such as the elderly and people with disabilities, in coordination with its partners. Refugees who face legal protection risks also receive legal services such as counselling, representation, and mediation through UNHCR and its partners.
- UNHCR provides urgent cash assistance to the most vulnerable refugees facing immediate protection risks. In 2023, about 470 families (over 2,100 individuals) received cash assistance through the UNHCR Irbid Field Office.
- UNHCR and its partners regularly conduct awareness sessions on different topics such as legal rights, prevention of gender-based violence and sexual exploitation and abuse, targeting refugees and host communities. More than 3,500 individuals attended these sessions in 2023.

Community Empowerment

- UNHCR and its partner, the Jordanian Hashemite Fund for Human Development (JOHUD), empower communities through two key components: the Women Empowerment Networks (WEN) and Community Support Committees (CSCs). WEN focuses on enhancing self-reliance, resilience, women's rights, and gender equality, while CSCs promote community leadership, improve communication within the community, and foster social cohesion. In 2024, these two initiatives will merge to streamline efforts, optimize resources, and maximize impact. The newly formed committees, comprised of refugees and Jordanians, will expand outreach, improve communication, identify the most vulnerable, ensure equal access to services, and encourage community participation, focusing on women, youth, the elderly, and people with disabilities.

Basic Needs

- UNHCR provides monthly cash assistance to an average of 7,000 refugee families in the three governorates to help them meet their basic needs.

Livelihood

- In terms of strengthening livelihood opportunities for refugees, UNHCR plays a catalyst role among governmental entities, NGOs, the private sector, and community-based organizations by chairing coordination meetings and organizing joint events such as job fairs and bazaars.
- UNHCR and its partners support refugees with a number of trainings and livelihood opportunities such as vocational training, job matching, cash for work and home-based business licensing and seed grants. In 2023, UNHCR and its partners supported over 360 refugees and vulnerable Jordanians with such activities.
- UNHCR engages with the private sector to increase job opportunities for Jordanians and refugees. In 2023, UNHCR organized a job fair in Irbid offering more than 370 work opportunities in commercial and service sectors, but also business incubation, volunteering opportunities, and legal counselling on the Social Security Corporation and labour law.



A job fair takes place in Irbid with over 700 participants including refugees ©UNHCR/Fadi Sawalha

- UNHCR Irbid Field Office also launched Irbid Forum – Private Sector, an initiative to bring the local authorities, development agencies, and Syrian investors in the private sector together to reflect on the positive impact of Syrian investors, explore potential opportunities for refugees, and discuss ways to empower the refugee community in Irbid.

Education

- UNHCR runs the Albert Einstein German Academic Refugee Initiative (DAFI) scholarship programme to support refugee students with higher education in Jordan. Over 40 Syrian refugees are currently studying at three universities in Irbid governorate through the scholarship programme.
- UNHCR and JOHUD are collaborating to offer digital and blended learning support services for refugee and Jordanian children by integrating JOHUD's innovation labs with the Connected Learning Hubs to enhance the learning experience and promote social cohesion. In 2023, the Connected Learning Hub at the Irbid Princess Basma Centre benefitted over 560 students.

Health

- UNHCR supported access to free medical care for the most vulnerable families through a clinic in Irbid run by partner Caritas. Each month, an average of 1,000 patients benefitted from primary health care services provided by the clinic. In 2024, UNHCR will suspend its support to the clinic to avoid giving support in parallel, as refugees already have access to the public health system. A disengagement plan has been put in place to ensure a smooth transition. Over 770 patients with chronic diseases received the last batch of medicines and were informed of public healthcare facilities they could approach. The most vulnerable cases were also referred to other partners for possible support.
- UNHCR coordinates with its partners to refer cases to secondary and tertiary healthcare facilities.
- UNHCR maintains communication and coordination with the Directorates of Health to include refugees in the public health system more effectively and to ensure standardization of financial processes when providing health care services to refugees.

Durable Solutions

- UNHCR identifies cases eligible for resettlement to third countries. In 2023, the Irbid Field Office referred approximately 200 eligible families for resettlement.

Camp Coordination and Response in Garden Camp

- UNHCR coordinates camp management and response in the Garden Camp with the Government of Jordan, other UN agencies and international and local NGOs. UNHCR also monitors the protection situation for Syrian refugees in the camp and provides referrals to protection services when needed.
- UNHCR covers the electricity needs of the camp by providing 24/7 electricity to the refugees' shelter and partners' offices in addition to the marketplace.
- UNHCR monthly distributes core relief items such as baby diapers, sanitary napkins, mattresses, blankets, and plastic sheets. UNHCR also supports families with cash assistance to cover the cost of cooking gas every quarter. In 2023, UNHCR provided over 10,269 Jordanian Dinars (some \$14,000) to over 120 families. To help refugees prepare for winter, UNHCR distributed thermal blankets to all individuals in the camp and plastic sheets to cover all the caravans in the camp.
- UNHCR provides livelihood opportunities for a few refugees through the Incentive-Based Volunteer (IBV) scheme where refugees receive a small compensation for their time and efforts. There are currently five IBVs working in the camp as electricians, cleaners, and in protection services with UNHCR.

Working with Partners

- UNHCR chairs several sub-working groups in Irbid, including Inter-sector Coordination, Protection, Economic Empowerment, and Health, and the Garden Camp coordination meetings.
- **Governmental partners:** Governor offices of Irbid, Jerash and Ajloun, Irbid Municipality, Syrian Refugee Affairs Directorate, Directorate of Health, Directorate of Social Development, Family Protection and Juvenile Department, Civil Registry Department, police stations, Chamber of Industry, Sharia'a Court.

- **UN agencies and international organization:** International Committee of the Red Cross, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, the United Nations Children's Fund and the World Food Programme
- **International NGOs:** CARE, Caritas, Danish Refugee Council, International Medical Corps, International Rescue Committee, INTERSOS, Islamic Relief Jordan, Jesuit Refugee Service, La Chaine de l'Espoir, Lutheran World Federation, MEDAIR, Mercy Corps, Norwegian Refugee Council, Palestinian Child Relief Fund, and Syrian American Medical Society
- **National NGOs:** All Jordan Youth Agency, AITakaful Center, Arab Renaissance for Democracy and Development, Arab Women Organisation, Business Development Centre, Jordanian Hashemite Fund for Human Development, Jordan Health Aid Society, Jordan River Foundation, and Noor Al Hussein Foundation

CONTACTS:

Marjorie Cabrol, Head of Irbid Field Office cabrol@unhcr.org