

KEY FIGURES

656,231

Syrians registered with UNHCR in Jordan

61,995

Iraqis registered with UNHCR in Jordan

39,000

Work permits issued over the past year by the Government of Jordan to Syrians

93

Percentage of Syrians living outside of camps and below the poverty line in Jordan

78

Percentage of Syrians registered with UNHCR in refugee camps who are women and children

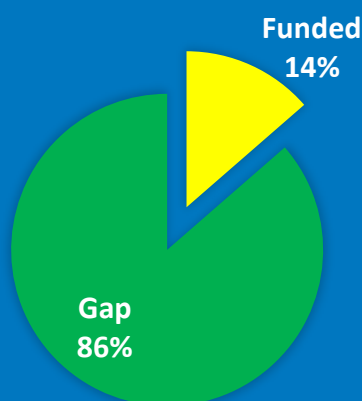
40

Percentage of the registered refugee population receiving protection against the cold this winter from UNHCR

FUNDING

US \$ 277 million

requested for the Jordan Operation in 2017



JORDAN

UNHCR OPERATIONAL UPDATE

March 2017

HIGHLIGHTS

- **The majority of refugees cleared for resettlement to the United States at the time of the suspension of the country's resettlement programme left Jordan in February with UNHCR's support.** Shortly before leaving to Dallas, Texas, Firas, a 30-year-old Syrian refugee, told UNHCR, "Syria is everything, it is everything to me. The minute the war is over I will go back. Even now I wish it would end today, before we leave, so that we could go home." The United States has been the world's top resettlement country in recent years.
- **The escalation of conflict in southern Syria, particularly in and around Dara'a, just north of Jordan's Ramtha border, suspended the delivery of cross-border humanitarian assistance in February.** UNHCR supports the provision of core relief items through the formal Ramtha crossing in north-west Jordan where instances of stray shelling have been reported in recent weeks. Interventions in 2016 benefited an estimated 30,000 households of vulnerable internally displaced persons (IDPs), largely in the Dara'a and Quneitra Governorates.
- **UNHCR welcomed the Government of Jordan's February decision to extend free work permits to Syrians living in camps, allowing refugees to leave and return for work.** The move adds to the 39,000 Syrians in towns and cities across the Kingdom already accessing formal employment. Livelihood and work opportunities form part of wider UNHCR-supported efforts to dignify refugees' lives in Jordan while preventing recourse to dangerous choices such as those outlined in a recent UNHCR [report](#).



Syrian garment workers in Irbid employed over the past year through a UNHCR-supported Government of Jordan-led initiative to increase access to opportunity for refugees. ©UNHCR/Mohammad Hawari

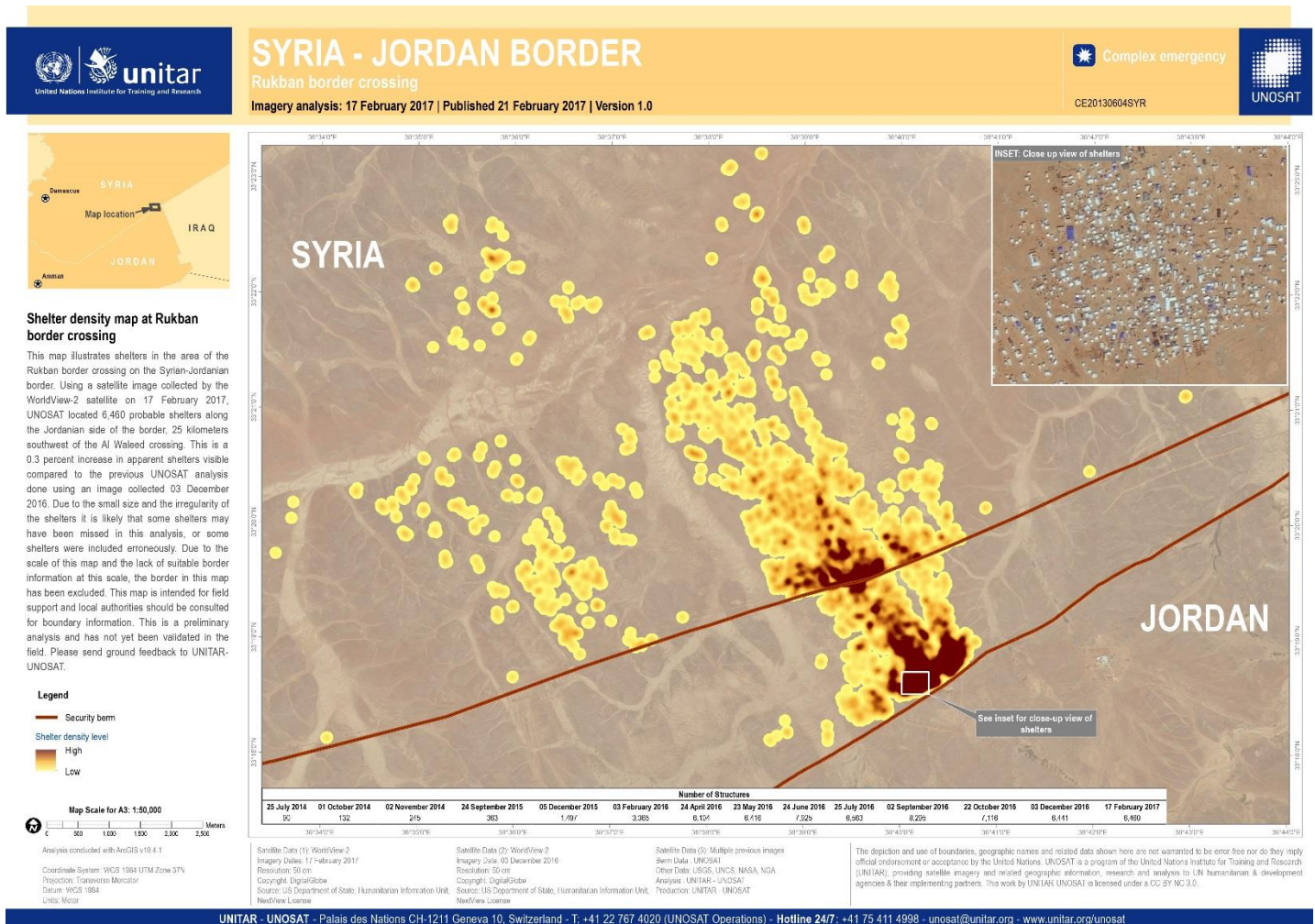
UPDATE ON ACHIEVEMENTS

Operational Context

UNHCR and partners are preparing a second round of humanitarian aid distributions to tens of thousands of people, two-thirds women and children, located on Jordan's closed north-east border and seeking safety from conflict in Syria. A first round was completed between November and January through a distribution point built by UNHCR in Rukban, reaching almost 15,000 families with food, water and items including blankets, plastic sheeting and warm clothing. Supplies of water have continued uninterrupted at both informal settlements in Hadalat and Rukban.

A UN service centre constructed by UNHCR in December on the Jordanian side of the berm has managed in close cooperation with the Jordanian authorities to receive and treat the most serious medical cases from the area. The clinic has so far treated 785 people, with another 50 of the most serious cases referred inside Jordan for further medical attention. The most commonly reported conditions are anemia, gastroenteritis and respiratory infections. The service centre is also used for meetings coordinated by UNHCR with community representatives at the berm to ensure a better understanding of the populations' needs and vulnerabilities.

**This operational update covers activities for the month of February 2017.*



A satellite [image](#) captured on 17 February 2017 showing 6,460 probable shelters in the Rukban area where large numbers of forcibly displaced people are living in dangerous conditions. ©UNITAR-UNOSAT

Achievements

Protection

■ Confronting the challenges facing Jordan's Iraqi refugees



A painting activity for Iraqi children at a UNHCR Community Support Committee in East Amman. ©UNHCR

Jordan's 62,000 Iraqis represent the country's second largest UNHCR-registered refugee population, a much smaller and lower profile number than Syrians, but with equally pressing challenges. Almost 90 per cent are settled in the Amman with half originating from Baghdad. The largest numbers arrived in recent years from 2014 onwards following repeated upsurges of violence in Iraq. As part of UNHCR's nationwide refugee consultations initiated in January and expected to conclude in March, UNHCR met with 24 Iraqi refugees and their representatives on 2 February to hear first-hand of the difficulties and needs facing their community.

At present, UNHCR assistance to Iraqis includes monthly financial support to just over 7,000 people with the greatest needs; cold weather support in the form of an additional cash subsidy, blankets, and cooking and heating gas; access to free primary health care services through Jordan Health Aid Society international (JHAS); the referral of 1,680 of the most vulnerable Iraqis last year for resettlement; training and recreational activities run through UNHCR's Community Support Committees (CSCs), and the provision of legal aid through ARDD-Legal Aid. However, significant social, economic and protection concerns remain with face-to-face consultations providing the most direct way to relay these to UNHCR.

On education, Iraqis told UNHCR that some children are discriminated against and that secondary school students have had to pay higher inscription fees to sit and reserve exam places. Recommendations to UNHCR include advocating in support of free education and providing cash support for education. There were also complaints that scholarships are not available to Iraqi students wanting to access higher education and that university attendance was prohibitively expensive. UNHCR is already advocating for the inclusion of non-Syrians in higher education scholarship programmes.

On housing, Iraqis report being targeted for higher rent by landlords who believe Iraqis to be wealthier than refugees of other nationalities, and difficulties in settling disputes with landlords. These have led to some choosing to live further from the centre of Amman, increasing the cost of transport to reach essential services including medical care. UNHCR was urged to advocate with the authorities against discriminatory practices and to widen the net of financial support to Iraqis.

There were also concerns at the difficulty in obtaining work permits leaving them open to exploitation, including low pay and long working hours, by unscrupulous employers. UNHCR was asked to advocate for the extension of the current work permit initiative to other refugees.

The next round of consultations will include Jordan's Sudanese and Somali refugee communities in March. Once complete, UNHCR plans to share the outcomes with the Government of Jordan, the donor community and other relevant stakeholders. The points raised will also serve as discussion points at "town hall" meetings between refugees and representatives from government line ministries, including the Ministry of Labour and the Ministry of the Interior.

■ Refugees promoting refugee protection inside Zaatari camp

UNHCR conducted interviews to identify the latest intake of protection volunteers from Zaatari camp's population in February. The Protection Team of Volunteers (PTVs) initiative was established in 2015 having evolved from a community-based protection network set up in 2013 by UNHCR shortly after the camp's inception in July 2012.

PTVs are run by refugees for refugees and are paying significant protection dividends by ensuring that more of Zaatari's residents can access the assistance they need. Refugees assist in the identification, monitoring and reporting of protection issues from within the camp's community, serving as the protection "eyes and ears".



A Syrian husband and wife protection team, part of the PTVs, speak with UNHCR at their home in Zaatari camp. ©UNHCR/Mousa Jeris

The composition of the teams are intended to reflect the camp's demographics, particularly with regards to age, gender, area of origin within Syria, and location within the camp's 12 districts. The volunteers are identified, interviewed and trained by UNHCR at a two-day workshop covering areas including UNHCR's mandate and guidelines on international protection, basic human rights and refugee law, confidentiality, and sectoral areas including health, shelter and WASH, to support their activities. There are currently 66 volunteers, 29 women and 37 men.

Volunteers meet from across the camp's districts every two weeks to compare and discuss feedback before submitting a monthly report to UNHCR to complement mass communication efforts already being carried out in the camp. The report features protection concerns identified in the district according to sectors, their proposed solutions, trends and gaps identified, and the status of referred cases. Volunteers are rewarded for their work with stationary, phone batteries and vouchers, and other suitable training opportunities.

UNHCR met with some of the camp's volunteers in February:

"I decided to become a volunteer to help my fellow refugees access help. When my family and I arrived at Zaatari we were unaware of the services available at the camp. It was the same for other refugees who had fled Syria, taking with them only a small suitcase containing the most necessary items. These people need someone to help them access the necessary assistance. I wanted to give back – and to be that person."

Another explained:

“I’m a tailor and many women visit my shop. I wanted to benefit the community in any way I could. When I heard about the PTVs network I thought of making use of my profession not only to generate income but also to help others, so I started to volunteer with UNHCR. When women enter my shop to order a dress or ask for alterations, they tell me many stories relating to not having a marriage certificate, family violence, family reunification, and deportation issues, to mention only a few. I do what is best for them and direct them to the people who can help.”

Education

Refugee student finishes top of the class with UNHCR’s support

A Syrian refugee living in Zaatari, Monther Hoshan, finished top of his class at Al al-Bayt University’s (AABU) Faculty of Law in February, with the support of UNHCR’s DAFI scholarship programme. Monther joined three other refugees graduating in February from AABU, the Jordan University of Science and Technology (JUST), and the Al- Balqa' Applied University (BAU). The academic success rate has increased thanks to the rising number of tertiary scholarships that are now available to refugees, including through DAFI and EduSyria. Unfortunately due to funding constraints the number of scholarships available falls far short of demand. For the current academic year, 1,300 refugees applied for only 220 places available.

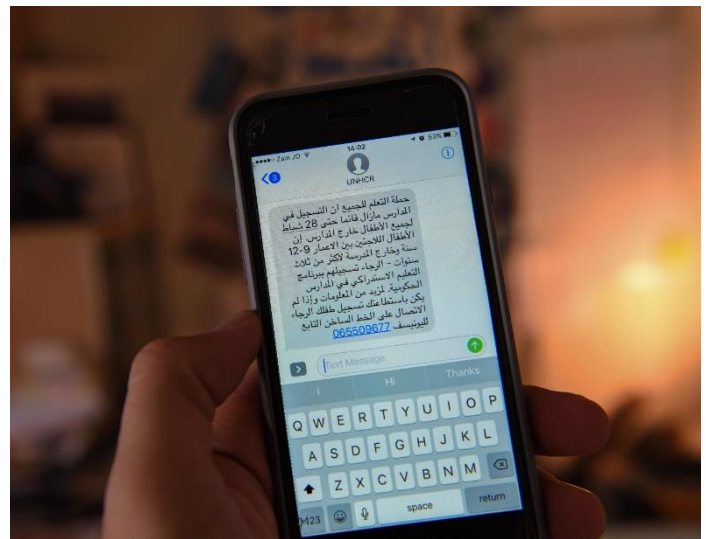


Monther celebrates his achievement at AABU in February.
©UNHCR/Balqis Albsharat

Jordan introduces second semester intake to increase opportunities for refugee students

As part of education commitments outlined through the Jordan Compact, Jordan announced in February that it would allow a second semester intake of refugee students to help maximise their learning opportunities. The Government of Jordan has also agreed to hold summer schools during the holidays to help refugee children who started in the second semester to catch up and progress to the next grade in September. UNHCR supported the campaign led UNICEF by sending text messages to 90,000 refugee families with school-aged children, and disseminating flyers and posters in camp and urban UNHCR operational sites, including at UNHCR’s registration centre in Amman that receives up to 5,000 people a day.

One of the text messages sent by UNHCR in cooperation with UNICEF encouraging school registration: “School registration is open until 15 March for all out-of-school children. Refugee children aged between 9 and 12-years-old out of school for more than 3 years can register for Catch-Up programs in public schools. Call the UNICEF hotline +962-6-5509677 for guidance or if you are unable to register your child”. ©UNHCR/Mohammad Hawari





Public Information

- “Zaatari may be a place without a history or a future, but for the children it is a home.”



[Zaatari Djinn](#), a Dutch documentary filmed with UNHCR’s support, was given a special screening at the camp on 6 February in the presence of refugee children involved in the project, along with director Catherine van Campen and patron, the Ambassador of the Netherlands to Jordan, Ms. Lidi Remmelzwaal.

The documentary was shot over a two-year period between 2014 and 2016 following the lives of four children growing up in the camp. The film premiered at the International Documentary Film Festival in Amsterdam in 2016 and will feature at the UNHCR Refugee Film Festival (RFF) in Japan later this year.

- Celebrating refugees’ creativity @#homeawayfromhome

The [@ZaatariCamp](#) Twitter account, managed by refugees and supported by UNHCR, featured a month of photos in February celebrating the creativity of refugees in decorating their homes. With a different home showcased each day of the month, #homeawayfromhome shows how refugees have used materials given to them by UNHCR on their arrival, as well as material procured at the camp’s market, to define and dignify their living space.

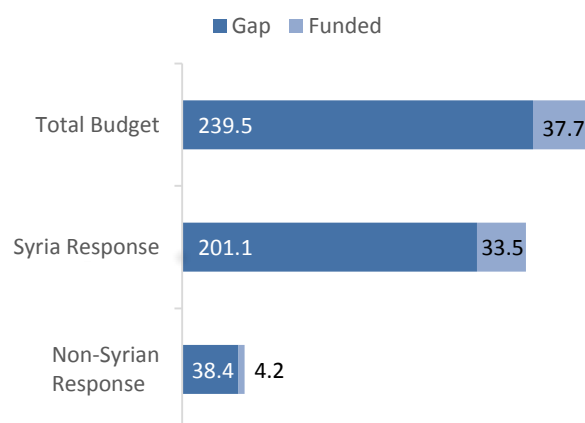
One of the 28 refugee homes highlighted for creative flair through the refugee-led #homeawayfromhome social media project.
©UNHCR/Waed Shawamreh



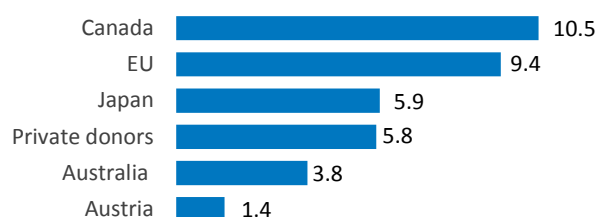
FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Total recorded contributions for the operation amount to some **US\$ 33.5 million** for the **Syria response** (at 7 March) and **US\$ 4.2 million** for the **Iraq situation** at the country level (at 28 February).

2017 funding levels (in US \$ million)



Funding received at the country level for the Jordan operation in 2017 (in \$ US million)



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.

Special thanks to major donors of unrestricted and regional funds (in US \$ million):

Sweden (76) | Netherlands (52) | Norway (41) | Denmark (23) | Australia (19) | Switzerland (15) | Germany (12) |



“These people are among the most vulnerable in the world today”: Award-winning CNN Chief International Correspondent Christiane Amanpour reporting from Zaatari in February on early marriage and other challenges facing youth at the camp where 57 per cent of residents are under 24-years-old. Amanpour was visiting Jordan with her son Darius to witness first-hand the situation of refugees in both camp and urban settings. [“What my son and I learned at a Syrian refugee camp”](#) was published online a few days after her visit. ©UNHCR/Olga Sarrado

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Links:

data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees – twitter.com/UNHCRJo – facebook.com/UNHCRJordan