

# 2017 POPULATION SURVEY REPORT - VULNERABILITY ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK

The 2017 VAF Population Survey Report represents the Vulnerability Assessment Framework's (VAF) multi-dimensional approach to measuring vulnerability of refugees. The document presents a vulnerability review for each sector, showing the distribution of all vulnerability indicators, and disaggregating by sex, family size and location (an update to the 2015 Baseline Survey report). Secondly, it highlights the updates to the original indicators that were created in 2015 following the VAF sector vulnerability review workshop.

***The full report of the VAF is available in the UNHCR Data Portal: <https://goo.gl/YRLM4g>***

***An online tool to view the data is also available: <https://goo.gl/TR5f2E>***

## Background and Method of the VAF

After the onset of the Syria crisis, by the time the VAF project began in late 2013, considerable amounts of data on Syrian refugees were being recorded and used by many humanitarian partners. However, the tools used to analyse and collect this data varied significantly. The use of different vulnerability criteria meant that data was not fully comparable or able to be combined into a comprehensive picture. The VAF created a harmonized definition and measurement tool for vulnerability.

In 2014 the VAF Steering Committee defined vulnerability as: the risk of exposure of Syrian refugee households to harm, primarily in relation to protection threats, inability to meet basic needs, limited access basic services, and food insecurity, and the ability of the population to cope with the consequences of this harm. The VAF is a collaborative initiative developed with the engagement of donors, UN agencies and INGOs operating in Jordan. The development of a standardized data collection tool, criteria for vulnerability and the different thresholds allows for humanitarian actors to talk about relative vulnerabilities in equivalent terms, to track those vulnerabilities across the refugee population and both map and respond to the vulnerabilities identified.

By using the VAF questionnaire as the standard and agreed tool within broader assessments, data collected by different agencies for different purposes can become more comparable, contributing to a greater store of knowledge and analysis of the refugee population. Through sustainably pooling household assessments by different organizations, the VAF expands operational response and coverage in terms of reaching those that are the most vulnerable.

Using the VAF Home Visit data collection tool, the UNHCR office in Jordan continues to collect comprehensive data on Syrian refugees living outside of formal camp settings that allow for UNHCR and partners alike to better identify the needs and vulnerabilities of the population of concern and prioritize cases in need of urgent assistance.

The VAF puts in place an observation and reporting system that supports the humanitarian community to:

1. Establish a profile of vulnerability among Syrian refugee cases and enable monitoring of changes in vulnerability over time.
2. Target assistance in a more efficient and equitable manner, based on the application of common vulnerability criteria.
3. Strengthen the coordination and decision-making of the delivery of humanitarian assistance.

In 2017 UNHCR conducted over 60,000 assessments, and VAF data collection partners contributed nearly 10,000 more. Through the UNHCR Refugee Assistance Information System (RAIS), the VAF vulnerability indicators were made available.

## Key Updates in Each Sectors

The VAF aims to create a shared and consistent profile of vulnerability for Syrian refugee cases as follows, which enables monitoring of changes in vulnerability over time, in order to target assistance in a more efficient and equitable manner based on the common vulnerability criteria. In this report, vulnerability for each sector is described by a comprehensive definition for identifying vulnerability. The information below highlights changes between the 2015 Baseline Survey Report and the 2017 Population Survey Report by sector.

**Basic Needs:** The number of cases identified as vulnerable (96%) and not vulnerable remained fairly constant, although there was a large increase in vulnerability from the highly vulnerable category to the severe. Overall male and female headed-cases are equally vulnerable. All governorates have relatively equal distributions of vulnerability.

**Education:** In 2017, 78% of cases were identified as not vulnerable for Education, however the school attendance rating still identified 25% as vulnerable. Large family sizes are likely to be slightly more vulnerable, which is explained by the fact that large family sizes are more likely to have more children present.

**Food Security:** The numbers of people identified as vulnerable shifted considerably from 2015 to 2017; 54% were identified as vulnerable in 2015 compared to 39% in 2017. On the other hand, there was also an increase in the identification of severely vulnerable people from 18% in 2015 to 28% in 2017. Case size does not affect food security vulnerability. All regions are relatively equal in their vulnerability.

**Health:** 52% of people were identified as not vulnerable in 2015 compared with 44% in 2017. In 2017, 5% of cases were severely vulnerable and 50% highly vulnerable. Larger cases sizes are more likely to be vulnerable than smaller cases. All regions are relatively equal in their vulnerability.

**Shelter:** Given the changes to the shelter model in 2017, there was a significant change in the vulnerability identification; 59% of people now identified with moderate vulnerability compared to a previous 85% being identified as vulnerable in 2015. Case size does not affect shelter vulnerability. All regions are relatively equal in their vulnerability.

**WASH:** In 2015, 86% of cases were identified as vulnerable while in 2017 the majority of cases were identified as moderately vulnerable (70%). The largest shifts in vulnerability were recorded in the Sharing Latrine, Access to Safe Water, WASH Expenditure, Reliability of Waste Management and Vector Evidence indicators. 89% of people are low or moderate in their WASH vulnerability. WASH Expenditure and Sex of Principle Applicant did not affect cases' vulnerability. Larger case sizes are more likely to be vulnerable than smaller cases.

**Documentation Status:** In 2017, 96% are identified as low vulnerable compared to 86% in 2015. Larger cases sizes are more likely to be vulnerable than smaller cases.

**Coping Strategies:** Given the scale of difference to the 2015 observations and correlations with other sources of information, it is likely that those recorded in 2015 were an anomaly. 73% of people are identified as vulnerable. The sex of Principle Applicant did not affect the cases vulnerability. Case size does not affect coping strategy vulnerability. All regions are relatively equal in their vulnerability.

**Dependency Ratio:** Comparing the results from the population samples in 2015 and 2017, the distribution of Dependency Ratio ratings have shifted to increased vulnerability with a 9% increase in the severely vulnerable. The sex of Principle Applicant did not affect the cases vulnerability. Large case sizes are more likely to be vulnerable than smaller case sizes.