

Supporting refugees in Jordan: what we achieved in 2023

UNHCR Jordan, January 2024

2023 saw the needs of refugees in Jordan increase, while humanitarian support for the refugee response decreased against the background of the protracted nature of the Syrian refugee situation and multiple conflicts in the region and globally which have diverted international attention. Despite these challenges, UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, partners and authorities, donors, and other UN agencies strived to safeguard the human rights of some 730,000 refugees in Jordan while providing critical humanitarian assistance. **Here are ten key achievements from 2023.**



*Abu Saddam and his wife Om Saddam, both 60-years old, who fled from Syria to Jordan with their 11 children. Amidst difficult times, refugees remain strong and resilient with UNHCR supporting them in rebuilding their lives.
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1 | REGISTRATION & DOCUMENTATION

With protection as its core mandate, UNHCR ensured all refugees and asylum-seekers in Jordan had valid documentation, preventing statelessness and enabling them to access key social services and humanitarian assistance. Over 471,000 refugees of all nationalities renewed their UNHCR-issued documentation in 2023. UNHCR also supported Jordan's Civil Status Department with the birth registration of around 20,000 children.

2 | LEGAL SUPPORT & PROTECTION

To protect the basic human rights of refugees, UNHCR and its legal partner provided legal assistance to nearly 60,000 refugees of all nationalities in 2023. UNHCR also provided counselling and assistance to more than 2,300 refugees who experienced gender-based violence or had child protection concerns.

3 | COMMUNICATION WITH COMMUNITIES

UNHCR strengthened its communication with refugees to ensure their voices are heard. This is a critical element of UNHCR's operational response to ensure that refugees receive the correct information to preserve their protection, access to services, and well-being and prevent fraud and protection risks. In 2023, UNHCR travelled to remote areas and met refugees in their localities, reaching more than 11,000. On top of this, UNHCR continued online engagement, reaching refugees 1.5 million times in 2023, through its digital channels including Helpsite, Facebook page, and the newly launched WhatsApp Chatbot.

4 | CASH ASSISTANCE

To help refugees better address their basic needs and other urgent needs (e.g. health, education, protection), UNHCR provided cash assistance to over 317,000 vulnerable refugee women, men and children, channelling some \$70 million across the country. In 2023, UNHCR, along with the World Food Programme, also reviewed

and updated its targeting criteria for assistance to enhance the efficiency of its programme. As a result, with the revised criteria focusing on larger families, more refugees received assistance.

5 | LIVELIHOODS & ECONOMIC INCLUSION

UNHCR strengthened its engagement with the private sector, promoting the employment of refugees in Jordan. In 2023, over 90,000 work permits were issued for Syrian refugees in 2023, the highest figure since 2016. Given the decreasing humanitarian funding, expanding livelihood opportunities for refugees is critical.

6 | HEALTH

UNHCR continued to advocate for the effective inclusion of refugees in the national health system, working to raise awareness on both ends – health service providers and refugees. Thanks to these efforts, refugees using public healthcare facilities (instead of private facilities or pharmacies) increased, and the cases of public facilities refusing to treat refugees decreased significantly. Amidst the downscaling of health partners' activities in camps due to reduced funding, UNHCR supported five primary and secondary healthcare facilities, providing an average of over 4,000 consultations a week.

7 | EDUCATION

UNHCR strengthened its advocacy efforts for refugee students to continue their education. Thanks to these efforts, four universities in Jordan decided to lower fees for refugee students. Refugee students, regardless of their nationality, can now study any subject in these universities at the same fees Jordanian students pay.

8 | ENERGY

UNHCR signed a multistakeholder agreement, the green deal for Jordan, allowing for the transfer of green energy from a solar plant in South Amman to Zaatari and Azraq refugee camps. This renewable energy complements two existing solar plants in the camps. Thanks to the new deal, camps ran almost exclusively on sustainable energy at the end of 2023, significantly reducing carbon emissions and the environmental footprint of the refugee response in Jordan, which aligns with the UNHCR's global commitments.

9 | SOLUTIONS

In 2023, more than 10,700 refugees left Jordan on to be resettled in third countries, a significant increase from the previous year. UNHCR also supported the first-ever Global Refugee Labour Mobility Summit, which took place in Amman, bringing together international actors working to expand labour mobility opportunities for skilled refugees.

10 | REFUGEE RESPONSE COORDINATION

As refugee coordinator, UNHCR worked closely with the Government of Jordan in developing the Jordan Response Plan (JRP) 2024-2026. JRP, spanning over ten key areas such as protection, basic needs, education and health, aims to mitigate the vulnerabilities of the Syrian refugees and the host communities and will serve as the key framework for the refugee response in Jordan.

Global Refugee Forum (GRF) 2023: Held every four years, GRF is an important platform to advance on the objectives of the Global Compact on Refugees – to ease pressure on host countries, enhance refugee self-reliance, increase access to third-country solutions and improve conditions in countries of origin. Jordan was one of the co-convenors of GRF 2023 with his Majesty King Abdullah II participating and highlighting Jordan's efforts in hosting refugees and the need for continued international support.

OUTLOOK The funding gap is expected to widen in 2024, increasing challenges for the refugee response and pushing many partners to downscale and reduce their assistance. Continued international support is critical to avoid the situation is sliding back into a humanitarian crisis.

Thanks to the donors of earmarked, softly earmarked, and unearmarked contributions in 2023

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