

Jordan: Zaatari Refugee Camp

January 2023

Home to almost **82,000** Syrian refugees belonging to almost **19,500** families

With **32** schools, **8** health facilities, **58** community centers

UNHCR PRESENCE

94 National and **5** International staff



Zaatari Camp is under the joint administration of the Syrian Refugee Affairs Directorate (SRAD) and UNHCR. UNHCR is the lead on Protection, Health, Shelter and Site Planning, Security, Community Mobilization, Basic Needs, and Livelihoods. As the lead agency for refugees in Jordan, UNHCR is also covering Camp Coordination, which includes overall strategic and inter-camp operational coordination as well as within the sector working groups.

Close to Jordan's northern border with Syria, Zaatari has become emblematic of Syrians' displacement across the Middle East following its establishment in 2012. Since then, the camp's

evolution from a small collection of tents into an urban settlement reflects both the needs and aspirations of the camp's residents and a transition to a more predictable, cost-effective, and participatory platform for the delivery of assistance.

Working with Partners

Jordanian governmental partners: SRAD, Ministry of Public Works and Housing (MPWH), Ministry of Water and Irrigation (MWI), Ministry of Labour (MoL), Ministry of Health (MoH), Ministry of Education (MoE), Ministry of Justice (MoJ), Ministry of Social Development (MoSD), Sharia'a Court, Civil Registry Department, and Family Protection and Juvenile Department

Other governmental partners: Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), King Salman Humanitarian Aid & Relief Centre,

UN agencies and International Organizations: Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO), International Labour Organization (ILO), International Committee of the Red Crescent (ICRC), International Organization for Migration (IOM), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), UNOPS, UN Women, World Food Programme (WFP)

International NGO: Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development (ACTED), Blumont, International Medical Corps (IMC), International Rescue Committee (IRC), Kokyoo Naki Kodomotachi (Children without Borders - KNK), Korea Refugee Project (KRP), Lutheran World Federation (LWF), Mercy Corps, Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), OXFAM, Questscope, REACH, Relief International, Syrian American Medical Society Foundation (SAMS), War Child, and World Vision (WV)

National NGOs: Arab Renaissance for Democracy and Development (ARDD), Holy Land Institute for Deaf (HLID), Jordan Humanitarian Aid Society (JHAS), Noor Al Hussein Foundation (NHF), Save the Children Jordan

Main Activities

Protection

- UNHCR chairs the Zaatari Protection Working Group and coordinates protection support with the government and partners to the camp's residents. This includes strengthening targeted services and assistance for persons with specific needs, protecting children from all forms of harm, exploitation, violence, and abuse, reducing the risk of gender-based violence (GBV) and ensuring a survivor-centered approach, and increasing community resilience through engagement and ownership.
- Protection case management services, including legal, documentation, child protection, and GBV, are ongoing at easily accessible sites throughout the camp via phone and home visits. Humanitarian and governmental partners regularly coordinate on individual cases to extend comprehensive support to refugees facing protection risks. Partners additionally strive to ensure that case management services are known and accessible to all refugees following the age, gender, and diversity (AGD) approach. Partners operate several hotlines – many operational 24/7 – to ensure refugees' urgent protection concerns are addressed efficiently.

Registration

- Continuous registration and verification activities are ongoing, including updating and changing family size/composition, verifying and updating refugee data, renewing the refugees' Proof of Registration, and any UNHCR documentation management. SRAD also provides services by issuing all camp residents the Ministry of Interior (MOI) card.

Community Empowerment and Livelihoods

- The 58 community centers are safe disability-friendly spaces where refugees of diverse backgrounds can meet for social events, recreation, education and livelihood programs, information exchange, and more. They are established to empower refugees and provide them with a forum that promotes participation in decisions that affect their lives. Several activities and services are facilitated within the community centers, including accelerated learning programs, library, online courses, day-care/ kindergarten, recreation, sports, games, training, language courses, computers, feedback, and complaints mechanisms.
- The Age and Disability Task Force (ADTF) exists to ensure the non-discrimination, participation, and leadership of refugees, inclusive response, training for the non-rehabilitation service providers, community, and the Incentive Base volunteers (IBVs), and stronger coordination between ADTF members and other sectors. A particular focus has been put on elderly persons, persons with disabilities, and their caretakers to enhance community planning and increase inclusion in the camp's activities and projects.
- The 2022 Vulnerability Assessment Framework (VAF) population study included refugees from the camp to allow for a deeper understanding of camp demographics and to measure multi-sectoral vulnerability changes over time.
- The Zaatari Office of Employment (ZOE), in partnership with ILO and the MoL, provides job seeker services, facilitates the issuance of work permits for camp residents, and advertises job vacancies and training opportunities through job fairs, exhibits, and other means.
- The two Oasis centers aim to build women's resilience and empowerment by offering access to multi-sectoral services by securing livelihood opportunities, GBV prevention, protection, awareness-raising services, remedial education, leadership, and civic engagement initiatives for women.

Basic Needs

- UNHCR provides cash assistance to the refugee population to meet their basic needs and distributes diapers for persons with disabilities and serious medical conditions.
- Cash for cooking gas is regularly provided to the entire camp population throughout the year, and cash for heating gas is provided during winter. The amount of cash depends on family size.
- In line with UNHCR's efforts to gradually transition refugees receiving cash assistance for basic needs to the mobile wallet modality, since last July 2022, 95% of the camp population started receiving cash assistance

through mobile wallet. This transition aims to incorporate financial inclusion opportunities as part of humanitarian payment modalities and expand the cash out/withdrawal network, which would decrease the transaction cost for refugees.

Education

- 32 schools and 13 standalone KG centers (7 open and 6 expected to open in the 2022-2023 academic year) benefit from the Ministry of Education (MOE) and UNICEF collaboration to improve the quality of education through training and capacity building for teachers, School Supervisory Units, and 760 qualified Syrian Assistant Teachers (SAT). UNICEF also provides school materials for classrooms and oversees all construction and maintenance of education complexes. All schools provide Inclusive Education services, including rehabilitation sessions provision of assistive devices.
- Makani centers offer integrated learning support, child protection, and skills-building services, and implement a Reading Recovery program for students in Grades 5 and 6, students in non-formal education, and those attending Makani Centres who cannot read at Grade 3 level. 297 children (47% female) are enrolled in MOE-accredited non-formal education Drop-out program.
- UNICEF supports disability-inclusive education through enabling schools to provide learning support services. 488 children with disabilities (50% female) were enrolled in MOE schools in Zaatari and supported with rehabilitation sessions and assistive devices as needed.
- Tertiary education is also a priority for refugee students. In recent years, 118 refugees from the camp have earned DAFI scholarships to support their tertiary education, out of which 109 have graduated, while 11 are still studying in Jordanian Universities. In addition, 160 Zaatari camp students earned scholarships at Zarqa university funded by the Edu-Syria program. The scholarships have dwindled during the last years despite the increasing number of students who passed high school with good marks; for example, in 2017, 53 DAFI scholarships were granted to the camp students, while in 2022, only 2 DAFI scholarships were designated to the camp despite that this year 157 students have passed the high school exam (Tawjihi) and 259 applications were received.

Health

- The 8 medical facilities in the camp provide primary and selective secondary and tertiary healthcare services for refugees, including comprehensive reproductive health services, antenatal care, community health intervention, nutrition support activities, screening and treatment, health promotion, and mental health support. Some of the clinics also provide 24/7 emergency services, and integrated 24/7 reproductive health care and GBV services are provided in four camps' clinics by UNFPA.
- Decreasing funding and many health service providers leaving the camp added significant challenges to the NCD services and more dependency on referrals to off-camp hospitals for medical cases.

Food Assistance

- The use of blockchain technology for assistance delivery is one of many innovations in the Zaatari camp. All camp residents receive JOD 23 (USD 32) monthly through blockchain technology to cover their food needs. Based on UNHCR's biometric registration data, WFP's cardless EyePay iris scanning system enhances the efficiency and accountability of food assistance and makes shopping easier and more secure for refugees. The assistance can be redeemed in two WFP-contracted supermarkets (Tazweed and Safeway) and four dedicated bread selling points in the camp, allowing refugees to choose from various goods while bringing a sense of normalcy and dignity to their life.
- WFP runs a school feeding activity for the children enrolled in the formal schools in the camp. Aligned with the National School Feeding Programme, 80 grams of fortified date bars are provided daily to each student attending the school in order to ensure they receive a nutritious intake that supports their learning. This activity takes place during the whole scholastic year, from September to June.

WASH

- Social mobilization activities are ongoing in partnership with OXFAM, focusing on water conservation messaging, equitable water distribution, and network operation and maintenance. UNICEF supplies at least 50

liters of clean and safe water per person per day (4,500m³) during the summer season; the amounts are fulfilled from the 3 internal boreholes, bulk external trucking, and Zaatari village pipeline.

- Hygiene items are distributed regularly to camp residents, prioritizing vulnerable refugee families to ensure a clean and healthy environment.

Shelter

- UNHCR is responsible for coordinating shelter assistance and infrastructure improvements and works to ensure equitable and gender-appropriate access to adequate shelter and basic facilities and a sustainable energy supply. There are over 26,000 prefabricated shelters, each including a latrine and kitchen to ensure privacy. A household addressing system is in place and is updated regularly. In order to accommodate persons with disabilities, some shelters have been adapted to their needs and conditions.
- 95% of the camp prefabricated shelters exceeded the 6-year life span and required maintenance or even replacement; the available budget is to cover the maintenance of only 4% of the maintenance-need caravans, in addition to the dedicated efforts to improve the infrastructure in the camp for urgently needed road improvements across the camp.

Access to Energy

- Electricity is provided through the solar power plant in Zaatari to ease families' living conditions in the camp. Other facilities, such as hospitals, community centers, and offices of humanitarian organizations working in the camp, benefit from the plant's electricity.
- The solar plant was designed to provide almost 12 hours of clean energy to the camp population, but due to many operation and maintenance challenges faced, it provides only 30% of the built capacity of the plant. Many efforts are being made to overcome these challenges to return to the plant's full capacity.
- As part of the shift towards a more environmentally friendly camp, all streetlights in Zaatari camp have been replaced with LED low-energy consumption lights. Consumer cables are being replaced to upgrade the electrical network's current status in Zaatari to improve shelter power connections. The project also includes installing additional suspension poles based on the needs of each shelter. Smart meters were installed in the 12 transformers to better monitor energy consumption. Additionally, a separate electricity network for the market street was installed to reduce the pressure on the camp network that provides electricity to shelters.

CONTACTS:

Mario Echeverria, Head of Sub Office, echeverm@unhcr.org, Tel: +96279130 8074

Moh'd Al-Taher, Associate External Relations Officer, altaher@unhcr.org, Tel: +962797183901