

ISWG Jordan Operation Coordination Framework



**Inter-Sector
Working Group**
Jordan

1. Purpose

This framework serves as a vital tool for coordinating the efforts of Jordan's humanitarian, development, and government partners, fostering synergies and complementarities. It ensures alignment with the regional and national objectives, acting as a guiding reference to enhance effective communication and cooperation. Furthermore, it emphasizes accountability within the coordination structure, prioritizing the centrality of the refugees in all plans and procedures.

2. Scope

Encompassing all facets of coordination related to humanitarian efforts in Jordan, this framework addresses the refugee crisis and the challenges faced by refugees. Compliance with the framework signifies an ethical and professional commitment.

3. Rationale

This framework is driven by the imperative to assure effective responses to the refugee crisis in Jordan, especially given the protracted nature of the situation. Effective coordination aims to elevate service quality, identify common challenges, and devise optimal solutions. Amidst unprecedented funding declines, the framework promotes complementary actions and enables regular reviews of operational priorities. It also facilitates access to accurate information, thereby enhancing evidence-based approaches for future interventions.

4. Vision

The aim is to foster robust coordination that enhances the joint efforts of humanitarian partners in Jordan. This includes supporting humanitarian and development initiatives, bolstering national capabilities, and advancing localization. The primary objective is to orchestrate a unified response that addresses the multifaceted needs of refugees and at-risk Jordanians, leading to enduring and meaningful interventions.

5. Guiding principles / the main objectives

The core principles that underpin the creation and execution of this framework are clearly reflected in the main goals of the different sectoral working groups. These principles highlight the significance of efficient teamwork and thoughtful planning, with attention to:

- Accountability.
- Institutionalization.
- Maintain complementary.
- Fit for purposes.
- Efficient communication and information sharing.
- Support advocacy and capacity building.
- Ensure sustainability.

These guiding principles cumulatively contribute to the overarching objective of creating a dynamic, responsive, and sustainable coordination framework that effectively addresses the multifaceted challenges at hand.

6. Background

Jordan is the second-highest refugee-hosting country per capita. Despite not being a signatory of the 1951 Refugee Convention, Jordan has a long history of hosting and protecting refugees. It upholds fundamental human rights through its national frameworks and has prioritized refugee inclusion in crucial areas such as education and healthcare. Currently, Jordan hosts 1.3 million refugees, among whom 714,088 are under the mandate of the UNHCR, including 639,552 Syrian refugees and 74,536 refugees from other nationalities. Over 82.1% of these refugees live in urban and peri-urban areas. Jordan has demonstrated exceptional hospitality in hosting Syrian refugees since 2016. Despite the strain on its own resources, the government has prioritized refugee inclu-

sion, offering access to primary and secondary healthcare through its national health system. The Ministry of Education (MoE) has similarly adopted an inclusive approach, granting refugees access to formal education at MoE schools. These efforts exemplify Jordan's commitment to upholding fundamental human rights for refugees. Thirteen years into the Syrian crisis, Jordan has transitioned beyond the initial humanitarian emergency. However, significant needs remain for Syrian refugees, including access to shelter, balanced diets, and safety. Population growth, compounded by sluggish economic conditions, regional instability, and trade disruptions, creates challenges in accommodating refugees within healthcare, education, and job market systems. To address these ongoing challenges, Jordan is working in close collaboration with 3RP partners to implement a solutions-oriented approach that aligns with broader development goals.

7. Inter-Sector Working Group (ISWG) Overview and Composition:

Since August 2013, Inter-Agency coordination for the humanitarian response to the Syria crisis in Jordan has been led by UNHCR, supporting an inter-sectoral structure implemented through seven sectors (Education, Food Security and Basic Needs, Health, Economic Empowerment, Shelter, Protection and WASH), as well as several sub-sectors and task forces including GBV, Child Protection, and Disability and Age sub-working groups and an Assessment, Analysis and Learning Hub-AAL. Thematic areas focal points (protection, gender, and resilience), alongside relevant counterparts like development actors and key humanitarian partners such as UNRWA, IOM, UN-Habitat, FAO, UN Women, and others may attend to represent their respective mandates.

Dialogue among all stakeholders involved in the response has been facilitated through additional interlinked platforms and ad hoc facilitation, fostering collaboration among Government officials, members of the donor community, representatives of refugees, development actors, humanitarian organizations, and civil societies. Over the past years, the Inter-Sector Working Group (ISWG) has forged robust connections with key forums such as the Jordan International Forum (JIF), which represents international non-governmental organizations (INGOs), and the Jordan National Agencies Forum (JONAF), representing national non-governmental organizations (NNGOs). The ISWG maintains flexibility in its approach, allowing for the inclusion of government officials, donors, NGO representatives, and other pertinent stakeholders in meetings, whether on an ad hoc or regular basis.

At the national level, the Inter-Sector Working Group (ISWG) was established to maintain national coherence in the multi-sectoral response, including to support coordination, advocacy, strategic and operational planning and programming, as well as to support inter-agency resource mobilization. Similar structures are functional at the Governorate levels and in the refugee camps (Azraq and Za'atari).

Over the years, the multi-sectoral response has contributed significantly to stabilizing the impact of the humanitarian crisis on vulnerable people, prioritizing a focus on ensuring refugees' access to protection and preventing a sharp decline in socio-economic vulnerability of refugees and vulnerable host communities.

The Inter-Sector Working Group (ISWG) plays a crucial role in coordinating the refugee response in Jordan. It proactively identifies challenges, analyzes trends, and fosters collaborative discussions to develop and implement solutions. The ISWG promotes integration between humanitarian and development efforts, bridging operational gaps, and ensuring a unified, coherent response across field locations and Amman. With a focus on efficiency and innovation, the ISWG prioritizes high-impact initiatives and develops long lasting solutions. The ISWG emphasizes data and information sharing to optimize decision-making, avoid duplication, and utilize evidence-based approaches. Furthermore, it focuses on strengthening the capacities of its diverse members – including UN agencies, INGOs, CSOs, government representatives, refugees, and development actors – by promoting the exchange of best practices and providing opportunities for learning and growth.

7.1. Meeting Schedule

- The ISWG convenes at least once a month on the first Wednesday of each month.
- Ad hoc meetings are scheduled as necessary.

7.2. Agenda

The agenda is prepared beforehand, and pertinent background documents are provided to attendees ahead of time, as necessary. Members are encouraged to propose topics for discussion, which may be accompanied by supporting information if needed. Proposed topics will be included in the agenda for either a standard or special meeting, following consultation with the Chairperson.

The minutes of the meeting, which include action points, are prepared and disseminated by the ISWG Secretariat within seven days following the meeting. This ensures transparency and accountability and facilitates the follow-up on the topics discussed and agreements reached.

8. ISWG Responsibilities

8.1. Coordination and Information Sharing

- **Cross-Sector Coordination:** The ISWG leads the cross sectoral coordination, establishing strategic directions to ensure effective collaboration and efficiency at both national and local levels.
- **Information Exchange:** The ISWG facilitates information sharing among partners, authorities, civil society, development actors, and the private sector to enhance transparency and cooperation.
- **Cross-Sectoral Synergies:** The ISWG encourages complementarity and integration within strategic priorities across various sectors.
- **Integration of Cross-Cutting Themes:** It embeds human rights, gender equality, and environmental sustainability into all sector activities.
- **Standardization of Frameworks:** The ISWG Guarantees that all working groups operate under updated Terms of Reference (ToRs), workplans, and strategies, supported by a unified ISWG work plan.
- **Inclusion and Localization:** It offers coordination frameworks in Arabic to enhance local engagement, refugee participation, and governmental collaboration.

8.2. Strategic Planning and Programming of the ISWG

- **Strategic Development:** Leads the development of a multi-year, country-level response strategy informed by over a decade of humanitarian experience, focusing on coherence between humanitarian and development efforts.
- **Centralizing Cross-Cutting Issues:** Positions protection, gender, and resilience at the core of strategic planning, engaging Senior Advisors in all aspects of ISWG activities.
- **Strategic Dialogues:** Facilitates discussions on operational challenges, future interventions, and the incorporation of sustainable solutions and cross-cutting themes.
- **Collaboration with Development Actors:** Builds strategic alliances with development entities to align humanitarian and development goals, addressing long-term challenges for sustainable outcomes.
- **Comprehensive Planning Framework:** Establishes detailed guidelines for planning, response, monitoring, evaluation, risk management, and reporting.
- **Annual Priorities:** Guides the identification of yearly priorities, endorsed by the Jordan Strategic Humanitarian (JoSH) Committee, shaping the annual work plan.
- **Emergency Preparedness and Transition:** Implements readiness strategies for new emergencies and develops exit or transition plans for sectoral groups as needed.

8.2. ISWG Coordination role

- Reinforce and maintain efficient and appropriate inter-sector coordination mechanisms, including working groups at the national and local level.
- Coordinate and share information with all ISWG partners and beyond, including field levels, relevant national and local authorities, local civil society, development actors, and the private sector.
- Strengthen cross-sectoral linkages and ensure the complementarity of activities implemented by different actors within the set strategic priorities.
- Ensure mainstreaming of cross-cutting issues (human rights, gender equality, environment and energy, disaster risk management, youth, and social stability, and others).
- Ensuring that each working group and sub-working group has updated ToRs, workplan and logframe.
- Ensure that each working group, sub-working group, and field coordination group has an updated ToR, workplan, strategy and logframe. For this purpose, and to maintain the coordination, the coordination framework will be accompanied by a work plan for ISWG.
- The ISWG will ensure having an Arabic version of the framework to align with its strategic vision on localization, refugee participation, and government involvement.

8.3. Government Participation

- **Government Collaboration:** Encourages active participation of government bodies in coordination efforts to align humanitarian actions with government plans.
- **Synergies between humanitarian and development actors:** Ensure collaborations and consistency between the plans of humanitarian partners and the government ones.

8.4. Refugees' engagement

- **Refugee Community Representation and Involvement:** Advocates for the consistent inclusion of refugee communities in all coordination activities, ensuring their voices are heard and represented within the ISWG.

8.5. Learning, Analysis, And Data Management

- **Evidence-Based Decision-Making:** Utilizes comprehensive analysis and consolidated assessments to inform strategic direction and bridge information gaps effectively.
- **Streamlined Data Collection:** Coordinates data gathering efforts from refugee populations, managing comprehensive data collection through JASER, and ensures efficiency and accuracy across all sectors and partners by streamlining data collection processes.

8.6. Monitoring and Evaluation

- **Effective Monitoring Mechanisms:** The ISWG implement robust mechanisms for monitoring, evaluation, and reporting to refine strategies and measure progress effectively.
- **Sectoral Support:** The ISWG provides sectors and partners with advanced tools and support for enhanced planning, implementation, monitoring, and financial tracking.
- **Logframes Consistency:** The ISWG ensures the consistency and purpose of logframes are well-defined for uniform monitoring and evaluation across sectors.

To ensure terminological accuracy and maintain the effectiveness of the monitoring and evaluation process, define the logframe and its main components as follows:

- **Logframe:** A coordination tool ensuring response interventions align with actual needs. Each sector and sub-sector possess a logframe containing one or more strategic objectives (outcomes), beneath which lie one or more projects (outputs). For each output, indicators are established to measure the achievements and progress of the activities.

- **Strategic Objective (Outcome):** A mid or long-term priority that the sector or sub-sector working group aims to achieve.
- **Project (Output):** Represents the current objective for the working group of a sector or sub-sector, which they work to achieve or maintain by carrying out a set of predetermined activities.
- **Activities:** Summarize the functions, tasks, or actions undertaken to achieve a certain output or contribute toward achieving it.
- **Indicators:** SMART reference points that measure progress towards a specific output. When reporting on any indicator, consider aspects such as gender and age disaggregation, targeted population (Jordanian, Syrian, Non-Syrian), location type (Urban, refugee camps, ITS), proper measurement unit, and calculation method (sum, average, max).

Sector co-chairs, with IACU support, review logframe content and ensure indicators are SMART. They are also responsible for ensuring that partners report on the appropriate interagency reporting platforms.

When designing the monitoring and evaluation tool, consider the above-mentioned structure.

8.7 *Coordinate the data collection processes.*

- The AAL Hub, in collaboration with ISWG and IACU, will support well-coordinated efforts related to data collection from the refugee population.
- In addition to other forms of support, IACU will oversee the maintenance of JASER (Jordan Assessment, Survey, and Evaluation Registry). This online coordination tool allows all partners planning or conducting data collection to provide specific information related to their activities.

8.8 *Advocacy and resource mobilization*

- **Stakeholder Relations:** The ISWG Maintains constructive engagements with governments, donors, and stakeholders for effective advocacy and resource mobilization.
- **Joint Advocacy Efforts:** The ISWG spearheads the development of unified advocacy messages, emphasizing the urgent actions required to address emerging needs faced by refugees and resource deficiencies. Simultaneously, it encourages sectoral partners to autonomously define sector specific advocacy messages and mobilize resources to support the collective response effort.

8.9 *Capacity Building*

- **Enhancing Partner Capacities:** The ISWG promotes and delivers capacity-building initiatives for staff, partners, national authorities, and civil society organizations to enhance overall response effectiveness.

9. UNHCR Interagency Coordination Unit (IACU) Structure, Role and Responsibilities

9.1 *IACU Structure*

The Inter-Agency Coordination Unit (IACU) is led by the Inter Agency Senior Coordination Officer. The Unit is responsible for enhancing strategic coordination of the refugee response in Jordan to optimize operational efficiency and bolster protection delivery. Foster cohesive collaboration among humanitarian partner agencies, government entities, UN agencies, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), and refugee representatives, ensuring a unified and coherent approach to addressing the needs of refugees while promoting effective and sustainable solutions.

9.2 IACU Role and Responsibilities

Technical Support to ISWG and Sectors

The IACU supports the ISWG across planning, monitoring, and reporting phases, ensuring timely submissions, facilitating information exchange with the government within the frameworks of the Jordan Response Plan (JRP) and 3RP, and promoting unified planning across both camp and urban contexts. Under the leadership of the IACU Head, the IM staff closely collaborate with sector members to enhance data analysis and presentation, incorporating insights from sector meetings and government JRP taskforces.

The goal is to assist the ISWG throughout the planning, monitoring, and reporting phases of the response cycle, ensuring compliance with reporting deadlines and requirements, facilitating information sharing with the government as part of the JRP and 3RP, and promoting alignment in planning and implementation between actors in both camp and urban settings through the ISWG sectors' response strategy.

Furthermore, under the direct supervision of the IACU Head of Unit (ISWG chair), the IM staff work closely with sector members, participating in their meetings and remaining open to suggestions for improving data analysis and presentation in line with the realities of the sectors and the priorities of government JRP taskforces.

9.3 IACU Information Management Processes and Deliverables

- **Tailored IM processes and templates:** The IM team, under the leadership of the IACU Head, oversees established processes, response templates, and a taxonomy of services tailored to the needs of refugees and host communities, making continuous adjustments to address regional and country-specific requirements effectively.
- **Collaboration and Standardization:** The team collaborates closely with regional and sector partners to integrate government recommendations, ensuring the adoption of standardized communication mediums and response templates.
- **Management of IACU Information Management Platforms:** ActivityInfo and JFT serve as vital tools for ISWG reporting. Additionally, the IM team maintains the Operational Dashboard (ODP) and handles all other Information Management-related tasks.
- **Oversight of Reporting Processes:** The IM team manages reporting processes for ActivityInfo and JFT. This involves creating databases based on the latest logframes, conducting training sessions, managing user access, offering guidance on reporting challenges and improvement methods, and ensuring the reporting guidance remains current. The reporting guidance outlines reporting frequency on each platform, required data types, data accessibility for partners, the importance of accuracy in reporting, and the commitment to data provision.
- **Regular Production of Information Management Products:** The IM team consistently generates information management products that offer a comprehensive overview of ISWG achievements and funding, facilitating informed planning and discussions.

9.4 IACU Information Management Platforms

The Jordan Information Online Platform stands as a vital resource, indispensable for stakeholders seeking comprehensive content in a user-friendly format.

- **Monitoring and Evaluation with Activity Info:** Connected to the 3RP management cycle, this tool facilitates monitoring and evaluation through sector-specific log frames, with IACU ensuring its database upkeep.
- **Jordan Financial Tracking (JFT):** Integrated within Activity Info, JFT meticulously tracks funding by partner, donor, and sector/sub-sector, aiding in informed funding allocation decisions.
- **Operational Data Portal (ODP) and Information Dissemination:** Managed by IACU, the ODP provides a comprehensive overview of the Syria crisis response in Jordan, catering to donors, partners, government, and refugees. Furthermore, IACU oversees mailing lists to ensure effective communication across sector working groups and sub-groups.

Through these pivotal roles, the IACU serves as the backbone of coordination, information management, and operational effectiveness within UNHCR's efforts in Jordan. It aligns closely with broader regional strategies while adeptly addressing the specific challenges and needs of the Jordan context.

9.5 IACU coordination staff supporting role and responsibilities to the sectors

- **Facilitating Sector Communication and Information Sharing:** This entails managing sector mailing lists, aiding in the production of dashboards detailing sector achievements and funding status, disseminating messages among sector partners, updating working group pages on the Operational Data Portal (ODP), and supporting JRP communication efforts.
- **Assisting ISWG Coordination:** In collaboration with the Head of IACU, ISWG, and working group co-chairs, this role involves implementing the coordination framework, ISWG workplan, and individual working group/sub-working group workplans. Additionally, it supports the implementation of sector strategies, assists in developing strategic documents, and identifies and promotes inter-sector linkages and thematic areas.
- **Maintaining and Nurturing Partnerships, 3RP, and JRP:** Active participation in developing the 3RP is accompanied by efforts to strengthen collaboration and foster partnerships with diverse stakeholders, including NGOs, INGOs, UN agencies, and government entities. Furthermore, this role entails conducting regular monitoring of sectoral 3RP implementation and facilitating and guiding sectoral reporting in accordance with ISWG requirements.

10. Guiding references:

The primary sources for implementing and updating this coordination framework are:

- 3RP - Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan
- JRP – Jordan Response Plan
- IASC – Interagency Standing Committee recommendations and instructions
- GCR – Global Compact on Refugee
- Grand bargain Convention
- SDGs - Sustainable Development Goals objective and indicators.

11. Annexes:

- ISWG workplan.
- ISWG Organigram.
- Arabic version of the framework.