

**Field Office-Irbid**

**Monthly Situation Report**

**July 2015**

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| **Highlights:** |

* On 1 July, UNHCR’s Representative, Deputy Representative and the Head of Field Office Irbid (FOI) met with the Governor and Deputy Governor of Irbid to discuss the situation in the north of Jordan, the effects of the Syrian influx, and the security situation. The mission also met with the Deputy Governor of Ramtha and discussed the local situation, including the multitude of fighting groups in Daraa and the cessation of aid convoys since 17 June due to the security situation, with particular regards to the intense fighting that has been occurring over the border, with mortar and artillery shells that have been landing just over the border and threatening local communities. Finally, the mission met with the commander of the Ramtha police station, who noted the challenges that the police face due to Ramtha’s proximity to the border. The police commander also raised the issue of a secure pathway, treatment, and transfer of war-wounded individuals arriving through Tel Shahab to Ramtha governmental hospital and other private clinics.
* On 8 July, on the occasion of the holy month of Ramadan and as a show of appreciation for the close coordination and partnership with local officials in assisting refugees in Irbid AoR, the FOI hosted an Iftar meal for 19 guests from different governmental, security, and health offices.

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| **Challenges:** |

* ActivityInfo updates: FOI’s spot check has revealed that 80% of referral contact phone numbers were wrong or disconnected. UNHCR has been working with partners to address this problem and referred the issue to BO Amman to take it up at the national coordination level with heads of agencies.
* Urgent Cash Assistance: The distribution of Urgent Cash Assistance continues (using work-advance methodology) pending the implementation of a gift card scheme.
* War-wounded: FOI is working to enhance internal and external coordination for handling an increase in war-wounded cases arriving through Tel Shahab to different facilities in Jordan. The Director of Ramtha Hospital has requested for support particularly additional ICU beds and an adequate blood supply.
* MOI obstacle to enrolling in Iris Scan: Without new MOI card, Cairo-Amman Bank has been unable to enrol prospective beneficiaries in the iris-scan system. On the ground refugees have not been able to receive their requested documents, and during the last week of July more than 10 cases approached the help desk with this issue. UNHCR is working to strengthen coordination with MOI and CAB on this issue.
* Transport for KAP and CC Health Cases: JHAS has experienced challenges in providing transport for cases referred to Ramtha clinic and MOH appointments, particularly in the early morning hours. The bus is funded by and shared with UNRWA and is not available when they use it for other purposes. Patients with appointments scheduled at times when the bus is not available have been obliged to pay for private transport to access their appointments, which is expensive and not always possible. UNHCR is working with UNRWA to improve the modalities.

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| **Trends:** |

* ITS Movements and Outreach: FOI continues to follow the location of approximately 630 families living in Informal Tented Settlements (ITSs) in Irbid Governorate and Jordan Valley, in cooperation with Intersos. About 200 families moved to the cooler Al-Lobban area to escape the summer heat, with plans to return to Jordan Valley around November. The families report no incidents of eviction by the authorities; the only protection concerns cited included the delay in verification appointments given by police in Karaimeh, Jordan Valley. FOI has followed up on the registration status of these cases in order to make sure that they are undergoing the verification process.
* Financial Stress and Consequences: Many refugees approaching the help desks, as well as those renewing their Asylum Seeker Certificates state that if WFP food assistance is discontinued they will return to Syria despite the dangers there. This is consistent with the findings of the WFP phone survey. In addition, reductions in WFP vouchers and the protracted nature of the crisis are increasing financial stress on refugees.
* Camp Health Issue: JHAS reported an increase in the number of patients with skin rashes and flea bites in Cyber City camp. As a result, FOI liaised with the public health inspector in Ramtha and the municipality to remove all stray dogs from the camp and spray pesticides inside the building on 12 July. FOI is also planning on conducting a further investigation in order to address the underlying causes.
* Ramadan Numbers: Despite continuing need for financial assistance, numbers of consultations at the help desks were down due to fasting during Ramadan weeks and also because of hot weather conditions.

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| **Activities by Sector:** |

* See attached Monthly Statistical Report.
* See attached Annex for reporting of routine accomplishments by sector.

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| **Protection:** |

* In cooperation with the Community Support Committees, FOI Protection Unit conducted 2 of 12 planned Focus Group Discussions (discontinuation of health services/WFP food cuts and its impact on refugees) in order to gain a thorough understanding of the refugee current situation in urban areas to respond adequately to their needs and protection concerns. The first FGD targeted female youths in Shajra town, near Ramtha, and the second targeted adolescents in Aidoun, near Irbid.

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| **Community Services:** |

* FOI facilitated Clowns without Borders activities to provide entertainment for refugee children in Jerash and Ajloun on 27 July and in Idoun (Irbid) on 30 July
* FOI attended a Ramadan Iftar in Jerash on 6 July and in Irbid on 8 July, and many of the month’s CSC activities revolved around Ramadan themes.

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| **Field:** |

* On 12 July, FOI coordinated with Ramtha Municipality and the Ministry of Health to spray pesticides in the Cyber City building. Because this required the full-day evacuation of the building, UNHCR provided Iftar meal to all the refugees.
* Refugees receiving monthly financial assistance via iris scan expressed difficulty accessing Cairo-Amman bank ATMs over the Eid weekend, when banks were closed for an extended period. At many locations either the cash ran out and was not replenished, or refugees could not access ATMs located inside the branches outside of working hours. UNHCR is working with the banks to establish possible remedies to avoid a reoccurrence, such as installation of an iris-scan device to open the doors to the bank foyer, or advice in the text message of the banks’ working hours.

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| **Administration/Finance/HR/ICT/Site planning:** |

* The newly assigned UNHCR Protection Officer joined FOI team on 20 July. The position of UNHCR Field Associate in FOI was advertised internally and externally; HR Amman provided the manager with the list of applicants.
* FOI received the offers for fibre optic cabling (between main office and the Registration Centre) and it is now with the DIST for technical evaluation.

END OF MONTHLY REPORT