

JORDAN

UNHCR OPERATIONAL UPDATE

March 2015

KEY FIGURES

680,155

Refugees (all nationalities)
registered by UNHCR

627,287

Syrian refugees registered by
UNHCR

52,868

Refugees (Iraqi, Somali, Sudanese,
Yemeni) registered by UNHCR

83,515

Syrian Refugees in Zaatari Camp

17,192

Syrian Refugees in Azraq Camp

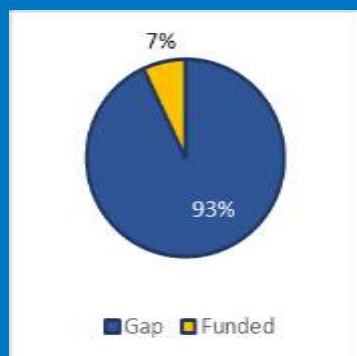
5,348

Syrian Refugees in Emirati-
Jordanian Camp

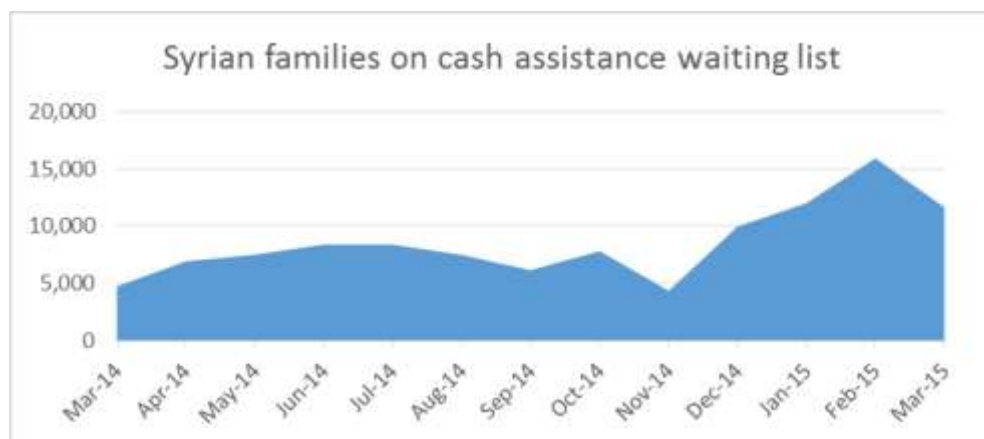
FUNDING

USD 289 million

Requested for UNHCR Jordan's
refugee response to the Syria crisis



CASH ASSISTANCE: WAITING NUMBERS SOAR



The number of Syrian refugees on the UNHCR cash assistance waiting list in February was the highest since the beginning of the Syria crisis. UNHCR was able to absorb some of the numbers in March but a further rise is anticipated. The total for this month (11,642) is well over double the number recorded this time last year (4,753) and provides a bleak illustration of the worsening hardships endured by refugees living outside of camps.

The rise in numbers is directly linked to other refugee response organizations being unable to provide support due to funding shortfalls.

UNHCR's cash assistance programme targets those individuals and families in the direst need and aims to prevent their recourse to destructive survival strategies that may include dropping out of school, spiraling debt, begging or unsafe work, or even returning to Syria.

A January 2015 UNHCR Home Visits report noted that some two-thirds of Syrian refugees living outside of camps are in poverty. <http://unhcr.org/jordan2014urbanreport/home-visit-report.pdf>

The allocation of cash assistance is based on home visits conducted by UNHCR and its partners using established vulnerability criteria.

KUWAIT III: GENEROUS PLEDGES SHADOWED BY DESPERATE NEEDS



UN Secretary-General, Ban Ki-Moon, and First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Kuwait, Sheikh Sabah Khalid Al Hamad Al Sabah, at the Kuwait III donor conference, March 2015.

On 31 March the international community pledged some US\$3.6 billion at the Kuwait III donor conference hosted by the State of Kuwait to address the increasingly desperate humanitarian fall-out from the Syria crisis. The pledges are under half of the \$8.4 billion identified by the United Nations and its humanitarian partners but do however mark an improvement on previous years with 43% of the pledged total on target, compared to 36% in 2014 and 34% in 2013. The largest pledges came from the European Union (US\$1 billion), the United States of America (US\$507 million) and Kuwait (US\$500 million).

In a written statement to the Third International Humanitarian Pledging Conference for Syria, António Guterres, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, singled out Jordan as a host country under enormous strain where the living conditions of refugees are deteriorating drastically with 40,000 refugee families in poverty. The High Commissioner further emphasized that the appeal for funding this year was different to previous years *“in that it recognizes both the immediate and the longer-term imperatives of responding to the crisis by combining a humanitarian and a resilience component.”*

The humanitarian response to the Syrian crisis is provided through two strategic plans, the 2015 Syria Response Plan and the Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan (3RP) 2015-2016, both aimed at responding to needs inside Syria, the needs of refugees and the impact on communities in neighbouring countries.

The UNHCR Jordan response to the Syria crisis is currently funded at 7 % (US\$ 20.6 million out of US\$ 289 million requested). The UNHCR Jordan response to the Syria crisis in 2014 was funded at 70% (US\$ 189 million out of US\$ 271 million).

FUNDING CRISIS: REFUGEES' FOOD ASSISTANCE FURTHER REDUCED

In mid-March long lines of refugees formed outside UNHCR offices in Khaldi, Amman, wishing to appeal the decrease of World Food Programme (WFP) Jordan food assistance. The announcement on 17 March further reduced food assistance for refugees living outside of camps and reflects deepening humanitarian funding shortfalls in Jordan.

The decision, effective from April, marks the second time this year that WFP Jordan has been forced to reduce food assistance. In January WFP Jordan announced, for the first time since its operations began in Jordan in 2012, a reduction from JOD 20 (US\$28.25) to JOD 13 (US\$18.4).



Refugees queueing to appeal cuts to food assistance outside UNHCR offices in Amman, March 2015. ©UNHCR/Mohammad Hawari

URBAN VERIFICATION: ROLL-OUT CONTINUES

The Ministry of the Interior (MOI) exercise to re-register the majority of Syrian nationals, including all refugees registered by UNHCR outside of camp, continued to be rolled out at police stations across the country. The exercise was initiated on 15 February in Amman and Irbid and throughout March was extended to other northern regions (Ramtha, Ajloun, Jerash and Mafraq), Central region (Zarqa, Rusayfeh, Balqa and Madaba) and Southern region (Tafilah, Ma'an). The roll-out concludes on 6 April in Aqaba when all 101 police stations across the country are expected to be functional and open for registration.

By 29 March, 22,133 MOI cards had been issued by the authorities and out of that total 20,853 issued to refugees, some 4% of the total Syrian urban refugee population registered with UNHCR. The low numbers were anticipated in the roll-out phase but are expected to rise as awareness of the exercise increases.

The exercise intends to ensure that Syrians residing outside of camps are issued with a new identity document in order to access their legal entitlement to services such as education. By end of March 2015 the number of registered Syrian refugees residing outside of camps stands at 521,232, or 83.1% of the total registered Syrian refugee population.

Mobile UNHCR support teams were present at all police stations to provide support to issuing officials and to provide procedural assistance to those registering.

AMNESTY FOR FOREIGN WORKERS: POSITIVE NEWS FOR REFUGEES

A Government of Jordan Cabinet decision on 25 February granting a time-bound exemption from visa overstay fines and unpaid work permit fees provides foreign workers with an opportunity to rectify their legal status in Jordan. UNHCR noted a subsequent increase throughout March from refugees seeking advice on how they may benefit from the decision.

The development is welcome news for refugees and asylum-seekers who should be able to benefit from the amnesty provided they are able to meet the following legal requirements for obtaining a work permit: that they obtain an employment contract, that their employer makes an application for a work permit, that the position is occupied by a refugee within a category of employment open to foreign workers, that they obtain a medical clearance certificate, and that they pay the fees for the work permit for the current year.

OUTREACH

Participatory Assessments: refugees inside and outside camps voice their concerns

The initial findings of the annual urban participatory assessment exercise for refugees living outside of camps, undertaken between 22 February and 5 March, reveal a snapshot of the wide-ranging challenges confronting urban Syrian, Iraqi, Somali and Sudanese refugee communities. The assessments are part of UNHCR's Age, Gender and Diversity Mainstreaming (AGDM) strategy aimed at identifying the needs and concerns of refugees and building more robust protection and assistance activities around them.

Undertaken across five urban governorates (Amman, Araq, Irbid, Mafraq and Maan), and involving some 2,000 refugees consulted in 157 focus groups, the results of the assessments highlight key topical concerns in areas of health, education and employment including:

- The hardship arising from the termination of free access to healthcare for Syrian refugees in late 2014;
- The impact of the World Food Programme (WFP) Jordan reduction in food assistance to some 12,000 Syrian refugee families living in urban areas, representing almost 40,000 refugees;
- The prevalence of child labour, often resulting in children withdrawing from school, and exploitative employment conditions;
- The challenge of accessing quality education for Syrian refugees;
- The prevalence of early marriage and sexual abuse among Syrian refugees under 18 years of age;
- The lack of knowledge on how to access services to address the needs for persons living with disabilities.

Inside camps, this time in Azraq (a similar exercise took place in Zaatari in December last year), a total of 612 refugees, including women, men, children and those living with disabilities, were consulted in 72 focus group and semi-structured discussions. The feedback centered on the demand for the greater provision of camp electricity; enhanced transport services within the camp, particularly in the case of medical emergencies at night; the provision of transport to school for girls and children living with disabilities; the restriction of movement for the elderly or persons living with disabilities due to the rough terrain in the camp; the long distances to water points and the call to open markets in the camp to promote self-sufficiency.



UNHCR staff facilitating a group discussion in Azraq Camp, March 2015. ©UNHCR/Mohammad Hawari

UNHCR and partners unveil new community projects

On 10 March, UNHCR celebrated the handover of a football field in Kofranjeh (Ajloun governorate). The land was donated by the local municipality and is situated on a hillside overlooking Ajloun castle. The project was implemented by UNHCR's partner ACTED at a cost of JOD 49,000 (US\$70,000) and is expected to benefit an estimated 12,000 youth (80% Jordanian, 20% Syrian). On 25 March, UNHCR handed over another football field to the municipality of Um-Al-Jamal in Mafraq Governorate. The project was implemented by Mercy Corps International at a cost of JOD 47,578 (US\$66,000). The projects aim to facilitate social contact through sport across community boundaries in an effort to promote mutual understanding among Syrian and Jordanian youth.



Head of UNHCR Field Office Irbid, Bashir Khan, standing sixth from left, with Jordanian and Syrian youth at the opening of a football field in Kofranjeh, March 2015. ©UNHCR/Katherine Gunn

Throughout March UNHCR handed over solid waste facilities to four communities in Soof and Sakeb (Jerash governorate) Hatem and Sahel Horan, near Ramtha (Irbid Governorate), in the north of Jordan. The much-needed solid waste compactors and bins, as well as street lighting, were donated in an effort to improve community hygiene and safety. The handover also included community awareness components and the training of sanitation workers to ensure the proper care and maintenance of the equipment. The projects were implemented by partner ACTED at a cost of 270,000 JD (US\$381,000).

All Community Service Projects (CSPs) carried out in 2014 across Jordan were funded with the generous support of the State of Kuwait.

PROTECTION

Gender-Based Violence: End of Year Report launched

The Gender-Based Violence Information Management System (GBVIMS) End of Year Report was published in March 2015 by the GBVIMS Task Force, co-chaired by UNHCR and UNFPA, and is available at: <http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/download.php?id=8326>.

The report covers sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) incidents reported to GBVIMS case management agencies between 1 May to 31 December 2014 in Amman Governorate, Irbid Governorate (including Cyber City and King Abdullah Park), Mafraq Governorate and the Azraq, Emirati Jordanian and Zaatari camps. The report provides specific non-identifiable information on survivors, types of violence, perpetrators, country and location of incidents, and service provision, and will inform SGBV programming.

Three key findings:

- The large majority of survivors are women and girls (90%).
- Forced marriage (33%), physical assault (25%) and psychological/emotional abuse (26%) constitute the largest categories of SGBV.
- The violence is overwhelmingly (90%) perpetrated by family members.

Child Protection and Sexual and Gender-Based Violence

UNHCR and UNICEF began the roll-out of the training to support the establishment of a formal public foster care system for children without parental care, and is expected to benefit an estimated 1,500 unaccompanied and separated Syrian refugee children. The introductory training included 27 participants from the Ministry of Social Development and humanitarian child protection case managers working in Amman, Zarqa, Azraq and the South. A training is planned for the North in early April.

In March 2015, UNHCR carried out a number of joint field missions and briefings with the Family Protection Department (FPD) of the Public Security Directorate. The aim of the visits to refugee camps is to strengthen cooperation between the FPD and humanitarian case workers working on child protection and SGBV. As part of that effort, UNHCR and UNICEF organized a one-day training for the Syrian Refugee Affairs Directorate (SRAD) in Azraq on the mandates of the Juvenile Police Department and the FPD, and the respective roles and responsibilities for different organizations dealing with child protection and SGBV risks.

UNHCR Training Programme on Refugee Law

UNHCR conducted eight training sessions throughout March on international refugee law for officials from the Ministry of Labour and Ministry of Interior, the Syrian Refugee Affairs Directorate in Azraq, and International Relief and Development volunteers involved in UNHCR's Home Visits programme.

The training of partners is part of UNHCR's outreach work and covers topics such as the organization's mandate code of conduct and anti-fraud measures, the principle of *non-refoulement* and challenges refugees face in Jordan.

Refugee Access to Legal Services and Documentation

UNHCR and its partners provided legal information, counselling and advice to over 5,000 asylum-seekers and refugees in March, compared to 29,000 for the entire year in 2014 – a rise linked to the urban verification exercise. Key areas of legal information and counselling included the procedures and documentary requirements for obtaining a new Ministry of Interior (or Mol) Service Card and issues surrounding work and residency permits, particularly in light of the Government of Jordan's recently announced amnesty for foreign workers.

With support from UNHCR, the Civil Status Department issued 2,367 birth certificates to refugee and asylum-seeker children during the month of March (Syrian, Iraqi, Somali, Sudanese) including 309 birth certificates delivered in the Azraq, Emirati Jordanian and Zaatari camps. The process of securing documentation, such as birth and marriage certificates, and following up on acquisition of nationality cases, is one of UNHCR's top priorities this year as part of the Global Campaign to End Statelessness.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Syria response:

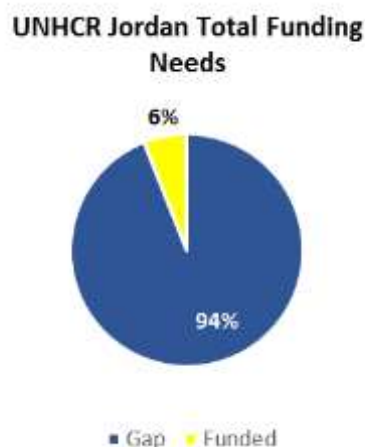
UNHCR Jordan's funding needs: **USD 289 million**

Total recorded contributions: **USD 20.6 million**

Iraq situation:

UNHCR Jordan's funding needs: **USD 40.2 million**

Total recorded contributions: **USD 50 thousand**



UNHCR PARTNERS

Arab Renaissance for Democracy and Development (ARDD-Legal Aid), Care International (CARE), International Medical Corps (IMC), International Organization for Migration (IOM), International Rescue Committee (IRC), International Relief and Development (IRD), Jordan Health Aid Society (JHAS), The Jordan Hashemite Fund for Human Development (JOHUD), Jordan River Foundation (JRF), Ministry of Interior (MOI), Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation (MOPIC), Noor Al Hussein Foundation (NHF), Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), Première Urgence - Aide Médicale Internationale (PU-AMI), Syrian Refugee Affairs Directorate (SRAD).

DONORS

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