

# Jordan: Azraq Refugee Camp

January 2021

Azraq is home to **37,717** Syrian refugees

## UNHCR PRESENCE

**46** National and **3** International staff



## Working with Partners

- The camp management is co-coordinated by Syrian Refugee Affairs Directorate (SRAD) and UNHCR. The camp has the potential to be expanded to accommodate 120,000 - 130,000 refugees at maximum capacity. The village-based approach aims to foster a greater sense of ownership and community among residents. The camp has a coordination mechanism composed of different agencies, which include camp coordination, inter-agency community representatives' meetings, sectors and Task Force meetings including information sessions.
- **Governmental partners:** SRAD, Ministry of Labour (MoL), Ministry of Public Works and Housing (MPWH), Ministry of Water and Irrigation (MWI), Ministry of Health (MoH), Ministry of Education (MoE), Ministry of Justice (MoJ), and Ministry of Social Development (MoSD), Sharia'a Court, Civil Registry Department and Family Protection Department
- **UN agencies:** International Labour Organization (ILO), International Organization for Migration (IOM), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), UN Women, World Food Programme (WFP)
- **International NGOs:** Action Against Hunger (AAH), Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development (ACTED), CARE, Danish Refugee Council (DRC), Finn Church Aid (FCA), International Committee of the Red Crescent (ICRC), International Medical Corps (IMC), International Orthodox Christian Charities (IOCC), International Rescue Committee (IRC), Mercy Corps, Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), Plan International, Questscope, Relief International, War Child, and World Vision (WV)
- **National NGOs:** Al Hussein Society (AHS), Arab Medical Relief (AMR), Arab Renaissance for Democracy and Development (ARDD), Business Development Centre (BDC), Holy Land Institute for Deaf (HLID), Noor Al Hussein Foundation (NHF)

## Main Activities

### COVID-19 Preparedness and Response measures

- Since the confirmation of the first COVID-19 case in the camp in September 2020, UNHCR has reactivated the quarantine area where refugees testing positive for COVID-19 can quarantine, while suspected cases isolate at home. Medical staff and UNHCR essential staff are working 24/7 in the quarantine site to ensure that refugees receive the healthcare they need at any time. Additionally, a treatment centre with a 50-bed capacity has been established and is equipped to treat cases with moderate symptoms.
- The MoH together with UNHCR are undertaking random PCR tests in the camp on a daily basis.
- Risk communication and community engagement, including awareness and hygiene promotion messages, are being delivered to the refugee community daily through multiple communication channels.
- Front line workers and healthcare staff from several partners and organizations were trained on infection prevention and control and on PCR testing. Business continuity plan for health partners ensures support for the continuation of critical functions during the COVID-19 response, such as primary healthcare.
- Community-based response is enhanced through training of community health workers.
- Contingency planning for the camp is finalized, in particular the Health sector has finalized preparedness for case management of mild cases of COVID-19 at primary healthcare level, which includes medication and medical consumables in cooperation with the MoH.
- Surveillance and monitorization systems of Upper Respiratory Tract Infection (URTI) and Influenzas Like Illnesses (ILI) alerts are in place.
- Case definition and referral pathways of suspected cases continue to be shared with health partners. In response to the situation, all health facilities have applied infection control measures and installed a separated triage area as a transit for suspected cases to be transferred to Zarqa hospital.
- Thermal screening is applied on the camp's gate through health partner with support from SRAD, and SOPs were developed and shared with all involved parties.

### Protection

- UNHCR is the lead protection agency in the camp, co-chairing the Protection Working Group with DRC and the Child Protection (CP)/Sexual Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) Sub Working Group with IRC. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, one protection staff is staying overnight in the camp during the lockdown. Moreover, protection staff are commuting to the camp daily to address urgent protection and CP-SGBV cases, and registration for newborn babies. Protection staff continue to receive multiple phone calls through the hotline and provide refugees with counselling services when applicable, while also working closely with partners, especially IMC and IRS, to conduct case management. The protection unit is coordinating with the Civil Registry to facilitate the issuance of birth/death certificates and to deliver them to refugees.

### Basic Needs

- Upon their arrival/return to the camp, UNHCR provides refugees with a cash assistance package to meet their essential household needs and buy items such as gas stoves and gas cylinders, mattresses, blankets, kitchen utensils, jerry cans, buckets and consumables, such as diapers, sanitary pads and hygiene kits, from the local markets in Azraq camp. Refugees receive a complete "new arrival" package when arriving to the camp and are regularly (every three months) provided with the needed cash amount to replenish essential consumables, namely cooking gas (JOD 22.5-30 per family), baby diapers (JOD 22 per baby under two years old) and sanitary pads (JOD 3.5 per female 12-50 years old).
- For refugees who are required to self-isolate in the quarantine area for 14 days, UNHCR provides them with in-kind essential household items such as mattresses, blankets, hygiene kit, plastic sheeting, jerry can, bucket and kitchen set. In preparation for winter, UNHCR is also addressing heating needs in the quarantine area for refugees who are quarantining; this assistance includes gas heaters and gas refills in addition to two high thermal blankets per person. Furthermore, UNHCR provides baby diapers as in-kind assistance for babies (0-2 years old) who are in self-isolation at their shelters when deemed necessary.

- For the first quarter of 2021, UNHCR, through NRC, has distributed cash to families comprising of 33,139 individuals to cover the need for gas cooking, baby diapers and sanitary pads.

### **Food security & Nutrition**

- WFP provides refugees living in camps with JOD 23 (USD 32) per person every month through cash transfers, which can be used to buy food from a large variety of items in two WFP-contracted supermarkets and four bread shops in the camp.
- A card-less EyePay system that uses blockchain and iris scanning technology is used to facilitate payments while cross-checking with UNHCR's biometric database to confirm refugees' identity. The system helps to enhance the efficiency and accountability of food assistance, while also making shopping easier and more secure for refugees. WFP also provides ready-to-eat meals to refugees upon arrival to the camp.
- As part of the measures against COVID-19, WFP sanitises shopping areas, including trolleys and selling points, daily, provides hand sanitisers to refugees at entrances and exits at supermarkets and bread shops, and ensures social distancing and crowd control measures are practiced in and out of both areas. WFP also provides welcome meals and bread to refugees arriving from communities to the camp and who stay in a separate area from other camp residents for quarantine.
- WFP is also providing dry rations and bread to refugees undergoing self-isolation as a result of being suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19. For those who are quarantining in the Public Area, WFP is providing dry rations, canned food and bread for the duration of their stay in the public area.
- WFP runs a school feeding programme for students attending the formal schools in the camp. Fortified Date Bars are provided for children attending schools on a daily basis during the school semester. This activity is anticipated to resume once schools are running again, in light of COVID-19 restrictions.

### **Livelihoods**

- The Azraq Camp Employment Office (ACE) was established in February 2018 to facilitate access to formal work opportunities across Jordan for refugees living in the camp. ACE is operating in collaboration with UNHCR, ILO and MoL and is funded by the Dutch Government. ACE facilitates the issuance of work permits, provides refugees with work-related counselling services, information on labour rights, training opportunities and job matching services.
- As of 31 January, 3,956 work permits are registered in the work permit database including 2,472 males and 1,493 females. The figure recorded by MoL is higher since they started issuing work permits in 2017 prior to the inauguration of ACE.
- The Incentive Based Volunteering (IBV) scheme aims at providing refugees living in Azraq camp with basic opportunities to enhance their resilience and self-reliance. IBV plays an active role in allowing refugees to earn some extra income to support their livelihood. As of 31 January, there are a total of 1,559 refugees, including 43% female, engaging in the IBV scheme in Azraq camp.
- Currently there are total of 375 formal shops owned by refugees and host community. Refugees are able to enhance their livelihood and self-reliance through the markets and provide the camp residents with the necessary items including food, accessories, bikes and many other items.

### **Education**

- UNICEF supports the MoE to guarantee access to education for all children in the six school complexes (15 schools) in Azraq camp. In Azraq camp, 12,029 children from KG2 to Grade 12 (49% female) are enrolled in formal education, according to the MoE EMIS 2020-2021, and 274 children (58% female) are enrolled in MoE-recognized non-formal education (Catch-up and Drop-out programmes) according to NFE monthly figures, updated in December 2020.
- UNICEF provided transportation services to 133 students (45% female) from Azraq camp to support them in taking their complementary Tawjihi exams (from 31 December 2020 until 16 January 2021).
- UNICEF coordinated the electrification project in Azraq camp with MoE and other partners, which was completed in January 2021. With the completion of this project, it is expected that the learning environment of more than

12,000 students in Azraq camp will be enhanced, through the provision of better lighting conditions in classrooms, improved heating during the winter season and the utilization of computer labs in the schools.

- Between December 2020 and January 2021, UNICEF distributed learning materials to children in Azraq camp to ensure continuity of learning during school closures, while 138 families received family activity kits.
- UNICEF continues to provide children with support in distance learning to prevent learning loss by distributing the Learning Bridges material while schools are closed, providing internet data bundles to ensure online access to students and sending informative messages to students during the semester to remind them of exam schedules and share updates from the MOE. In December 2020 and January 2021, UNICEF distributed 4,445 Learning Bridges activity packs to children in Grades 4 to 9.
- UNICEF supports the inclusion of children with disabilities through supporting their integration in formal education, providing transportation, rehabilitation and assistive devices, delivering extra-curricular activities and through investments in teaching and supervision. Currently, with UNICEF Jordan's support, 426 children with disabilities (52% female) are enrolled in MOE schools in Azraq.
- A total of 911 children (49% female) are enrolled in Kindergarten in Azraq camp this academic year, but due to school closures, KG2 children could not attend throughout the reporting period. UNICEF is preparing infrastructure for universalization of KG2 and advocating with MOE to ensure recruitment of additional KG2 teachers and address their need for transportation. For the second semester, a new 6-classroom KG2 centre is being finalized in Azraq.
- Currently, a total of 18 students from Azraq camp have been granted the Albert Einstein German Academic Refugee Initiative (known as DAFI) scholarships to support their bachelor degrees in Jordanian Universities, with UNHCR's facilitation. There are an additional six self-sponsored students studying towards their bachelor's degrees in Zarqa University.
- Currently, a total of 53 students from Azraq camp have been granted scholarships to support their bachelor degrees in Jordanian Universities, with UNHCR's facilitation. UNHCR keeps in contact with tertiary education students to extend support and advocate for better and more opportunities for them, especially given increased restrictions due to COVID-19. UNHCR is also in continuous communication with universities about challenges faced by Azraq camp students, to facilitate solutions where their education is not interrupted.

### Health

- UNHCR and partners continue to support refugees with access to quality primary health services in the camp including acute and chronic health consultations, reproductive health, vaccination, mental health, dental health, nutrition and paediatric services. Advanced services are also available in the hospital which includes laboratory tests, X-ray imaging, an emergency department, and delivery and paediatric admissions, in addition to general surgeries.
- Four primary healthcare centres (PHCC) operate in Azraq camp, while healthcare services are offered through two comprehensive clinics, two basic clinics and one hospital with a weekly average of 5,151 consultations in the five camp facilities, 62 referrals to secondary and tertiary emergency life-saving cases to facilities outside the camp and an average of 23 births per week.
- A response plan for COVID-19 is in place, while a treatment centre with a 50-bed capacity has been established and is prepared and equipped to treat cases with moderate symptoms.
- A large number of health cases require specialty healthcare services (such as cardiologists, orthopaedics, etc) which are not available in the camp, therefore the referral of solely life-saving emergency cases remains a challenge.

### WASH

- UNICEF continues providing all 112,855 refugees in three camps (Za'atari, Azraq and King Abdullah Park) with an uninterrupted supply of clean water. Water operation and wastewater management is going smoothly in all camps.
- A new partnership agreement for the 2021 WASH community mobilization programme in Azraq camp was finalized with ACF. The programme aims to increase awareness on water conservation, encourage community network ownership and promote hygiene practices at a household level.

- As part of their COVID-19 response, UNICEF installed 2 WASH prefabs, 11 water tanks with stands, 4 holding tanks with manholes and 11 handwashing points at the IMC hospital in Azraq camp. UNICEF also constructed 101 latrines and installed 202 water taps, 32 water tanks and 29 holding tanks in the isolation shelters.
- UNICEF is regularly disseminating WASH and COVID-19 related messages to the camps population, using different social networks and WhatsApp groups. UNICEF's hotline in Azraq camp continues to receive feedback and respond to complaints regarding water supply, wastewater management, the winterization program and water conservation.

### Shelter

- UNHCR allocates shelters to refugees, conducts regular monitoring to assess the current shelter situation and updates the shelter allocation system accordingly to ensure accurate and easy shelter allocation process. In coordination with NRC, a Quick Fix Team has been established to ensure timely maintenance of damaged shelters. All the shelters in Azraq have been upgraded with a kitchen extension which increases the shelter space to 32m<sup>2</sup>. All allocated shelters in the camp are connected to electricity and regular electricity maintenance is provided through a private contractor.

### Access to Energy

- The IKEA Foundation has funded the solar power plant in Azraq camp, making it the first renewable energy powered refugee camp in the world. A grid-connected solar plant, split into three phases with a total capacity of 5 MWp, saves up to USD 2.75m per year in electricity consumption costs and reduces CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 6300 tons per year. A grid-connected electricity network with both low and medium-voltage power, funded by the Saudi Fund for Development, connects the IKEA Foundation funded solar plant to almost 10,000 refugee shelters, 234 formal and informal businesses, offices and utilities, providing year-round electricity in the camp up to 16 hours daily. On average, each shelter consumes around 2.7 - 3.5 kWh/day depending on the season; enough energy to operate lights, a refrigerator, television, a fan and charge phones. The total 5 MWp covers up to 85% of the electricity needs in the camp.
- Modified Electricity Provision Hours: With the closure of schools and beginning of remote learning through TV and internet due to COVID-19 measures, UNHCR Azraq enhanced electricity provision to 14 hours/day to be in line with the hours of classes.

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