

Jordan: Azraq Refugee Camp

December 2021

Azraq is home to **39,060** 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:** Syrian Refugee Affairs Directorate (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 Response

- The COVID-19 response coordination plan, established in collaboration with MoH at the beginning of the response, has been guiding the response in Azraq camp. Refugees are included in the national response and vaccination plans, while MoH has designated specific health facilities in the camp to deal with COVID-19-related developments, including a quarantine area and a 50-bed-capacity treatment centre, as well as an in-camp vaccination centre. Business continuity plans for health partners ensure the continuation of critical (non-COVID-19) functions, such as primary health care.
- Risk communication, including awareness and hygiene promotion messages, are regularly shared with the refugee community through multiple communication channels. Community health workers have also been trained to strengthen the community-based response.
- Front line workers and healthcare staff from several partners and organizations have been trained on infection prevention and control, as well as PCR testing.
- Surveillance and monitoring systems of Upper Respiratory Tract Infection (URTI) and Influenzas Like Illnesses (ILI) alerts are in place, while random PCR testing is happening on a daily basis. Thermal screening is applied at the camp's entrance.
- 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.

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. All 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 IRC, 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. The protection unit is advocating with authorities' entities to facilitate the movement for the resettlement cases, enhance the referral pathway, and expedite the response to the cases with protection concerns, especially after the Family Protection Department and Juvenile Protection Department were merged in one department. The protection unit focuses on the capacity building for UNHCR and protection partners staff through facilitating trainings.

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. Once per quarter, refugees also receive cash assistance to replenish essential consumables, namely cooking gas (~USD 32-42 per family), baby diapers (~USD 32 per child under two years old) and sanitary pads (~USD 5 per female 12-50 years old).
- This winter, UNHCR distributed a total of USD 3.1 million to some 7,100 families (approximately 38,200 individuals). This amount included one-off cash assistance, as well as cash for gas refills for heating.
- 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. Furthermore, UNHCR provides baby diapers as in-kind assistance for children under 2 years who are in self-isolation at their shelters when deemed necessary.

Food security & Nutrition

- WFP provides refugees living in camps with JOD 23 (approximately USD 32) per person every month through cash-based 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 COVID-19 response, WFP sanitises shopping areas, including trollies, and selling points, daily, provides hand sanitisers to refugees at entry and exit points, and ensures social distancing and crowd control measures are practiced. 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. Additionally, WFP provides dry rations, canned food and bread to refugees quarantining in the public area for the duration of their quarantine.
- 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 during the second semester of the current academic year.

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. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, the ACE was closed for several months, and resumed operation in February 2021.
- As of 31 December, 4,178 work permits are registered in the work permit database including 1,183 for 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 December, there were a total of 1,887 refugees, 43% female, engaging in the IBV scheme in Azraq camp.
- Azraq camp hosts a total of 375 formal shops owned by refugees and host community members. 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. A total of 12,029 children from KG2 to Grade 12 (49% female) are enrolled in formal education, according to the MOE EMIS 2020-2021, and 349 children (48% female) are enrolled in MOE-accredited non-formal education (Catch-up and Drop-out programmes) according to NFE monthly figures, updated in October 2021.
- In June 2021, UNICEF supported students in Grades 2 to 11 (a daily average of 87 students in Azraq camp) to take their final term exams online, by opening Makani and community centres to ensure students' access to computers and internet. Syrian Assistant Teachers (SATs) supported students with any technical difficulties that arose. Additionally, UNICEF provided transportation services to 235 students (45% female) to support them in taking their Tawjihi exams (from 24 June to 15 July 2021).
- UNICEF supports the inclusion of children with disabilities through supporting their inclusion in formal education, providing transportation, rehabilitation, and assistive devices, delivering extra-curricular activities and through investments in inclusive teaching and supervision. Currently, with UNICEF Jordan's support, 525 children with disabilities (49% female) are enrolled in MOE schools in Azraq.

- A total of 1,048 children (51% female) are enrolled in Kindergarten in Azraq camp. UNICEF is advocating with MOE to ensure recruitment of additional KG2 teachers. Throughout May and June 2021, UNICEF supported outreach and registration of children eligible to enter KG2 in the 2021/2022 academic year, with 928 children (51% female) in Azraq camp registered.
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- In May and June 2021, UNICEF led trainings on school leadership and development of school improvement plans for 38 principals and supervisors (37% female). School improvement plans were finalised in November 2021 and UNICEF continues to support principals in their implementation.
- In October and November 2021, UNICEF supported 172 students (47% female; 5% with disabilities) to register for Tawjihi complementary exams to take place starting 30 December 2021.
- In partnership with UNICEF, the Queen Rania Teacher Academy (QRTA) completed Early Grade Literacy Training for 126 SATs (71% female) in Azraq camp in November 2021. SATs will help teachers in all camp schools to support children in KG2 to Grade 2 to progress in their reading.

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 5,391 consultations in the five camp facilities, 77 referrals to secondary and tertiary emergency life-saving cases to facilities outside the camp and an average of 25 live births per week.
- A COVID-19 response plan is in place, while a treatment centre with a capacity of 50 beds, established in X 2020, is 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 (Zaatari, Azraq and King Abdullah Park) with an uninterrupted supply of clean water. Water operation and wastewater management is going smoothly in all camps.
- In November, UNICEF in Azraq camp supplied a total of 120,000 m3 of drinking water, or about 4,000 m3 per day. Lowering temperatures have meant a steady decrease in demand for water.
- UNICEF also continues to manage wastewater in Azraq camp, with 14 desludging trucks assuring 24,000 m3 of safely dislodged wastewater during the month of November. UNICEF addressed all 18 complaints on desludging services that were received.
- As part of UNICEF Jordan's COVID-19 response in November 2021, 106 cleaning kits, 69 hygiene kits, 88 hand sanitizers and 124 jerry cans were distributed mainly to self-isolated families and the transit area.
- UNICEF is regularly disseminating WASH and COVID-19 related messages to the camps population, using different social networks. As part of its community mobilization programme, 1588 WASH representatives (763 Lead Mothers, 713 WASH Community Representatives and plot representatives, 112 WASH Community Youth Representatives) were reached through direct messaging which in total reached 4,764 beneficiaries (including 48% females) through further message dissemination and forwarding. Also, UNICEF continues to operate a hotline in Azraq camp to respond to complaints and receive feedback regarding water supply and wastewater management.

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 32m². 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 CO₂ 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, formal and informal businesses, offices, and utilities, providing year-round electricity in the camp. 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.
- With remote learning happening through TV and internet due to COVID-19 measures over the past year, UNHCR Azraq enhanced electricity provision to 12 hours/day to be in line with the hours of classes.

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