

## JORDAN

### UNHCR OPERATIONAL UPDATE

December 2016

#### KEY FIGURES

**655,314**

Syrians registered with UNHCR in Jordan, accounting for 7 per cent of the national population

**60,647**

Iraqis registered with UNHCR in Jordan, over a third of whom are children.

**2**

Jordan hosts the second highest number (87) of refugees per 1,000 inhabitants in the world

**6**

Jordan represents the sixth highest refugee-hosting country in the world

**93**

Percentage of Syrians living outside of camps and below the poverty line in Jordan

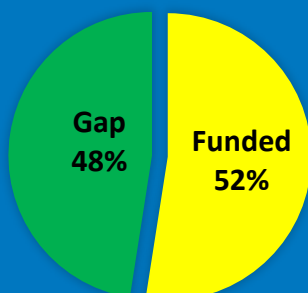
**US \$ 214 million**

Provided since 2012 in cash assistance by UNHCR to Jordan's most vulnerable refugees

#### FUNDING

**US \$ 318 million**

requested for the Jordan Operation in 2016



#### HIGHLIGHTS

- On 22 November several UN agencies, including UNHCR, resumed the provision of life-saving humanitarian aid to an estimated 85,000 Syrians stranded on the Jordan-Syria border. Humanitarian assistance was last delivered to the population in a one-month supply of rations in early August after a deadly attack in Jordan's north-east district in June.
- UNHCR in Jordan's largest winter response yet began in November expecting to reach 323,000 of the most vulnerable refugees across the Kingdom, or 40 per cent of the total refugee population. The last few winters in Jordan have seen snow storms sweep the country with high winds, freezing rain and blizzards forcing the closure of schools and roads.
- A major advance in how UNHCR Jordan identifies persons living with disabilities was achieved in November, which is expected to allow a more effective response to the specific needs of refugees with disabilities. For the first time the "Washington Group" set of questions are being incorporated into refugee registration interviews countrywide and vulnerability assessments conducted on refugee home visits.



A young Syrian in Zaatari refugee camp with a message to the world as part of UNHCR Jordan's [#refugeesigns](#) social media campaign which aims to provide a voice behind the numbers to some of the Kingdom's 726,000 registered refugees. ©UNHCR/Waed Shwamreh

*\*This operational update covers activities for the month of November.*

# UPDATE ON ACHIEVEMENTS

## Operational Context

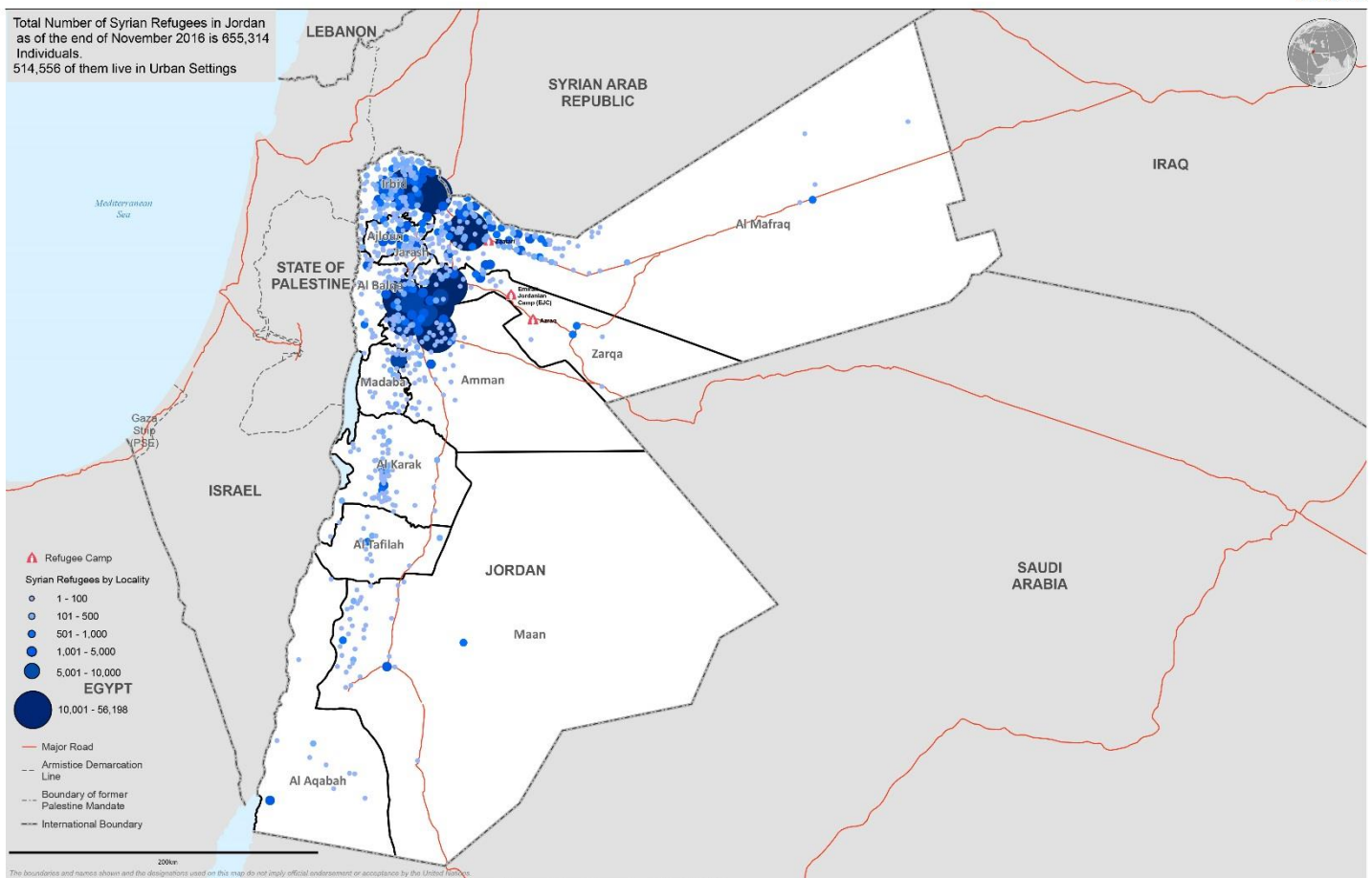
The month of November marks the beginning of UNHCR’s yearly four-month response to protect refugees from the cold weather in Jordan, where the approaching winter looks to be the bleakest yet for the Kingdom’s 726,000 registered refugees, as well as for those living on its borders.

Meanwhile, UNHCR continues its search for durable solutions for displaced people in Jordan to help them rebuild their lives in dignity and peace. UNHCR Jordan is now the largest resettlement operation in the world with 24,000 vulnerable refugees submitted for resettlement by UNHCR in Jordan in 2015, and a further 30,000 in 2016 by the end of November.

The operation is also continuing the search for livelihood opportunities for people who are awaiting durable solutions in order to decrease dependency and increase self-reliance for people of concern and host communities. This includes facilitating refugees’ access to employment. Since November 2015, 33,800 Syrians have obtained valid work permits as the result of the Government of Jordan granting them free of charge to registered refugees as a result of advocacy by UNHCR and some of its key partners.

### Syrian Refugees in Jordan - by Locality

Syrian Refugees in Jordan (Urban Only) as of 30 November 2016



## Achievements

### Shelter and NFIs

#### Achievements and Impact

- UNHCR helps with the first delivery of aid in months to thousands of Syrians on the border



*UNHCR field staff working near Rukban on the construction of a new service facility to support the provision of assistance to the area.  
©UNHCR/Mohammad Hawari*

On 22 November, UNHCR, International Organization for Migration (IOM), UNICEF and the World Food Programme (WFP) resumed, after months of negotiation and preparation, life-saving humanitarian assistance to an estimated 85,000 stranded Syrians at the Jordan - Syria border.

The development came at the start of the coldest period of the year, when temperatures in this isolated and remote desert environment can drop dangerously low and threaten the survival of the population.

The Jordanian authorities, for their part, are providing invaluable support in helping to ensure that aid can reach those most desperately in need in a challenging security environment.

A number of crowd management issues have impacted deliveries on some days and humanitarian agencies are working closely with the Jordanian authorities to ensure that assistance is provided as quickly as possible. So far (figures at 6 December), 6,451 individuals have been assisted with 42 per cent of that number children.

Life-saving support being delivered to the area includes food rations, bread, hygiene kits, winter clothes, high-thermal blankets and plastic sheets to help families cope with the approaching winter.

The delivery of food and relief items at Rukban is being channeled through a newly constructed distribution point. A new service facility is also being constructed that includes a health clinic, water tanks and pumping station, along with facilities for meetings with community members and representatives.

The clinic, which is due to open in December, will provide primary healthcare, maternal and newborn services. Community representatives and health volunteers are central to the organization of distribution and identification of medical cases.

Humanitarian agencies had previously only been able to distribute assistance to the stranded Syrians between 2 and 4 August, aside from the regular delivery of water, since an attack on 21 June resulted in the area being sealed off by the Jordanian authorities.

■ UNHCR mounts its largest ever winter response in Jordan



*A young Syrian at Azraq camp where more refugees than ever will be provided with protection from the winter cold this year. ©UNHCR/Olga Sarrado*

UNHCR’s winter support to refugees this year is the largest ever mounted in Jordan with cold weather protection being provided to 40 per cent of the registered refugee population, or 323,000 refugees. This 40 per cent increase on numbers compared to last year was made possible thanks to a 35 per cent increase in donor support on the previous winter. The winterization budget available to UNHCR this year totals US\$ 25 million, up from US\$ 18.5 million last winter.

Winter support is especially critical this year with most Syrians in Jordan ground down after years in exile, with their savings long gone, challenged by reductions to free key services, and an absence of hope to an end to the conflict in Syria. The vast majority live in poverty, with 93% of registered Syrians living on less than US\$ 96 per month. “Non-Syrians” are facing similar pressures, having fled some of the world’s worst trouble spots.

An estimated 118,000 refugees will benefit in the Azraq and Zaatari camps from the provision of gas stoves, heaters, cold weather blankets, shelter repair and maintenance support. Outside of the camps, where 80 per cent of registered refugees reside, 205,000 refugees will be provided with additional one-off cash assistance to help purchase heating, blankets, clothing, shoes and essential household needs.

Special attention is paid to female-headed households, the elderly, people living with disabilities, children at risk, people with a medical condition and protection needs. UNHCR is also distributing 50,000 high-thermal blankets to urban refugees and most vulnerable Jordanians through its Community Service Centres.

- Record cash support to refugees in Jordan as UNHCR plans to double cash interventions worldwide



*A Sudanese family in Amman withdrawing their monthly UNHCR cash assistance using an iris-scan enabled cash machine. ©UNHCR/Mohammad Hawari.*

One in five refugees registered with UNHCR in Jordan, 144,341 individuals, including Syrians, Iraqis, Sudanese, Somalis and Yemenis, benefited from UNHCR’s monthly cash assistance programme in November. Cash assistance is one of the Jordan operation’s most important protection tools, helping hundreds of thousands refugees make ends meet, and pay for rent, electricity and water, clothing and other essential household items. Since 2012, UNHCR Jordan has distributed over US\$ 214 million directly to refugees of all nationalities through the programme, which is the first of its kind using biometrics to dispense refugee cash assistance.

UNHCR also provides cash assistance in other circumstances, such as emergency support (one-off assistance provided on an exceptional basis when a household faces an emergency such as eviction or urgent medical care), winterization (provided to help protect refugees from the challenges presented by the colder weather), and Cash for Health (allowing refugees to pay for health care themselves which is more cost-effective than through a referral system). These and regular cash interventions in Jordan have proved highly effective at preventing recourse to desperate survival measures including withdrawal from school, child labour and borrowing money, and has been shown to effectively reduce poverty.

In late October, UNHCR Headquarters announced the doubling of funds for cash-based assistance to refugees globally by 2020 in the context of growing urbanization and search for alternatives to camps. UNHCR is currently providing cash-based interventions in 60 countries and next year, as part of the drive to reach the 2020 target, UNHCR will introduce and expand cash-based assistance to vulnerable refugees and people in need of help in 15 additional countries, including Afghanistan, Congo, DRC, Ethiopia, Iran, Kenya, Niger, Rwanda, Somalia, Sudan and Uganda. The new “Policy on Cash-Based Interventions”, which details how the UN refugee agency will expand its cash-based assistance over the next four years, is available here: <http://www.unhcr.org/581363414>.

## Achievements and Impact

### 16 Days of Activism 2016: “Healthy Relationships at Home, in Schools, and in the Community”

The 25 November marks the start of the annual 16 Days of Activism against Sexual and Gender-based Violence (SGBV) campaign, which will run until the 10 December. This year, UNHCR has adopted the theme, “Healthy Relationships at Home, in Schools, and in the Community”, focusing especially on young people. As part of the 16 Days of Activism, UNHCR offices around the world are encouraged to solicit young people’s ideas on what positive and healthy relationships mean to them.

UNHCR, with members of the SGBV Sub-Working Group, and in coordination with the UN Country Team and the Jordan National Commission for Women, is coordinating activities in Amman, camps and across governorates. The messaging focuses on women’s empowerment, healthy relationships, prevention of and response to honour crimes, and engaging women and girls in SGBV prevention through all humanitarian actors, as well as Jordanian organizations and institutions working to combat SGBV in Jordan.



Key messages on gender-based violence identified by refugees at a 16 Days activity at Zaatari camp in late November. ©UNHCR/Waed Shwamreh

In coordination with partners, a broad variety of activities are taking place addressing issues related to gender-based violence. These range from interactive theatre, discussions on early marriage, girls’ rights to education, engaging fathers and their sons, self-defence classes for refugee women, shelter painting in the camps with GBV themes, talent competitions, football tournaments and a mini-marathon.

### More government officials trained by UNHCR in International Refugee Law

So far in 2016, UNHCR Jordan has organized and conducted 62 training sessions for 1,365 staff members from governmental institutions, NGOs and UNHCR in aspects relating to refugee protection and support. Key among the courses provided by UNHCR are intensive International Refugee Law courses taught in Arabic in cooperation with the International Institute of Humanitarian Law (IIHL) based in San Remo, Italy.

Between November 6 and 9, UNHCR and IIHL ran the latest course at the Dead Sea attended by 17 officials from the Jordanian Government who regularly deal with refugee issues, thereby increasing their expertise in providing protection for refugees and asylum seekers in Jordan. The course covered the main principles of International Refugee Law, The Right of Asylum in Islam, Forced Migration, Detention, and child protection, in addition to case studies on each theme.

### UNHCR assists the UK in accepting some of Jordan’s most vulnerable refugee children

By the end of November, UNHCR had assisted the UK in submitting 79 individuals, mainly from Iraq, Sudan and Somalia, to its Vulnerable Children Resettlement Scheme (VCRS) - a UK-initiated multi-year resettlement programme covering the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region.

The programme started during the second half of 2016 with UNHCR Jordan agreeing to submit a quarter of the regional quota of 400 individuals by the end of 2016. The remaining 21 individuals are currently being processed for submission by the end of the year.

The VCRS targets Unaccompanied Minors (UAMs) as well as other Children at Risk accompanied by family members. Through the identification of the most vulnerable across various protection sectors, UNHCR Jordan is focusing on children with disabilities and medical needs, as well as other children considered at risk.

The average period from the submission date to the initial acceptance by the UK has so far ranged between one and two months. Departures are expected to take place promptly, further to visa and accommodation arrangements which are initiated by the resettlement country.



*Children playing at the remote Azraq refugee camp in Jordan where they make up almost 60 per cent of the camp's population. ©UNHCR/Christopher Herwig*

#### ■ Major advance for UNHCR in Jordan in identifying persons living with disabilities

In November, UNHCR incorporated the [“Washington Group”](#) short set of questions (WGQ) for identifying disabilities into refugee registration interviews countrywide, and into the Vulnerability Assessment Framework (VAF) home visit questionnaire, used for assessing the measure of refugee vulnerability and for targeting humanitarian assistance to Syrian refugee households.

This change in approach to identifying refugees with disabilities addresses a significant gap in quality data on persons with disabilities in Jordan and is expected to assist UNHCR and other humanitarian agencies in better responding to the specific needs of refugees with disabilities.

A pilot of the WGQ in 98 refugee registration interviews identified 27 per cent of households with disabilities. The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that the incidence of people with disabilities within any population is 15 per cent, and around 20 per cent in a humanitarian context, such as Jordan's, with many war-wounded refugees.

According to UNHCR's refugee database only 2.36 per cent of persons of concern, asylum seekers and refugees, were flagged to be living with a disability. This may be explained by the fact that questionnaires frame disability as a health issue only, or identify disabilities visible only to the eye.

The WGQ therefore represents a major breakthrough in UNHCR's work on behalf of persons living with disabilities and a welcome advance in its capacity as co-chair, alongside Handicap International, of the inter-agency Disability Task Force.

- UNHCR distributes Skype vouchers to resettling refugees and others in need



*UNHCR staff distributing Skype vouchers to Syrians refugees shortly before their resettlement departure to the USA in August. ©UNHCR/Mohammad Hawari*

Since August, UNHCR has partnered with IOM, Princess Basma Centres, NetHope and community-based organizations in distributing 1,847 Skype vouchers, worth US\$ 20 per voucher per family, to refugees about to resettle to third countries, and to others including refugees with medical conditions, new arrivals, refugees not receiving monthly cash assistance, and to refugees living with disabilities.

The Skype voucher programme is an important part of a larger refugee connectivity initiative that UNHCR and its partners have been implementing in Jordan since 2015. Not only does it allow refugees to access vital information, access basic services and empower themselves, but perhaps crucially it allows refugees to communicate with loved ones – a vital part of the initiative.

Other projects undertaken through UNHCR's Global Programme for Connectivity for Refugees include installing mobile phone charging stations in Azraq, providing internet services for refugees in community centres, in partnership with Facebook and Zain, and securing competitive international call rates for refugees from mobile phone service providers.

A total of **726,585** people of concern were registered with UNHCR in Jordan in November 2016, including **655,314** Syrians, **60,647** Iraqis and **10,624** others including, **5,218** Yemenis, **3,259** Sudanese, and **774** Somalis.



## Community Empowerment and Self-Reliance

### Achievements and Impact

- UNHCR livelihoods training achieves positive results in Tafileh



*A UNHCR-supported sewing course underway in Tafileh to assist vulnerable members of the community in achieving a degree of self-sufficiency. ©JOHUD*

UNHCR's partner, The Jordanian Hashemite Fund for Human Development (JOHUD), conducted more livelihood skills training in November through UNHCR's Community Support Committees (CSCs), including business start-up courses for 40 women. The courses were held in Irbid, Mafraq, Sahab and Tafileh with participants divided equally between refugees and Jordanians. A further 20 women from each location were also provided with business grants of US\$ 705 (500 JD) to assist them in starting home-based businesses in catering and cheese making. Another 10 were trained in communication skills and participated in violence against women information sessions.

In a positive development, a Jordanian woman in the southern town of Tafileh, who attended an earlier skills training course this year, is now self-sufficient and enjoying a better quality of life thanks to skills acquired through one of UNHCR's CSCs. The 55-year-old widower lives alone with her son and recently started her own business selling homemade traditional Jordanian dress after completing a sewing class at the Tafileh CSC and using a loan to set-up her business. The woman has now paid off the loan and is entirely self-sufficient.

The overarching aim of CSCs is to contribute to the peaceful coexistence and social cohesion between refugee and host community, whilst also ensuring that refugees are provided with access to accurate information and vital protection services, particularly given that the overwhelming majority of refugees live outside of camps. A total of 23 CSCs are currently active throughout Jordan—15 for Syrians, six for Iraqis and one each for Sudanese and Somalis, comprising female and male community members from both the refugee and host community.

## PUBLIC INFORMATION AND FUNDRAISING



*Bin Baz, an Emirati social media influencer, dressed as Superman at the Zaatari refugee camp. ©UNHCR/Mohammad Hawari*

UNHCR Jordan hosted in November, for the first time, a group of [social media influencers](#) with a combined outreach of close to 20 million followers. The three-day mission had two key aims: to help raise awareness of the situation of refugees in Jordan and to support the [Lifeline Appeal](#) with the goal of reducing the numbers of families currently on the cash assistance waiting list.

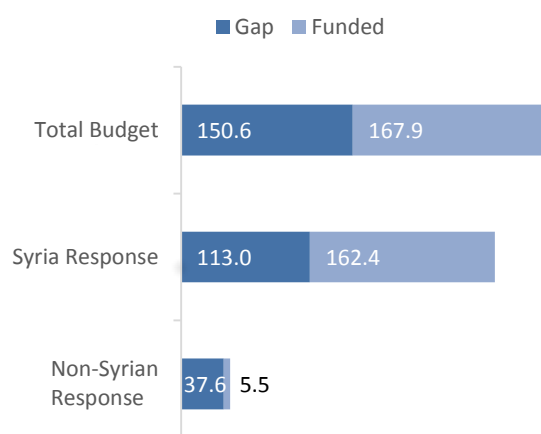
The group of nine included comedians, bloggers and high-profile media personalities based in the Gulf and were joined by AJ+, the online news and current events channel run by Al Jazeera Media Network. The mission to Jordan was supported by UNHCR colleagues from the Gulf Cooperation Council region.

The first day was spent in urban settings covering UNHCR's winter response efforts and the impact of cash assistance on urban refugees. The second day of the mission was spent in Azraq and Zaatari visiting refugee families in their homes and raising awareness of their situation through Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat and Twitter.

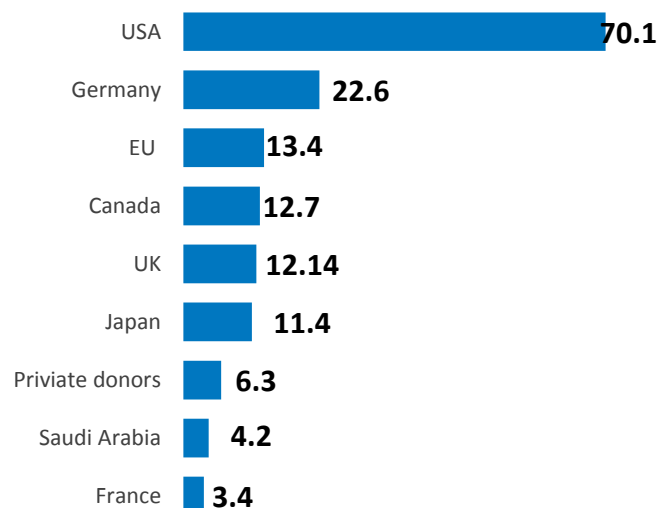
The impact of the mission was immediate with online donations ensuring that 189 families were taken off the cash assistance waiting list by the end of November. Online figures also show that the mission was successful in reaching new audiences and communicating the growing needs of refugees in Jordan more widely.

## FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Total recorded contributions for the operation amount to some **US\$ 167.9 million** including **US\$ 162.4 million** for the **Syria response** and **US\$ 5.5 million** for the **Iraq situation** at the country level.



### Funding received at the country level for the Jordan operation in 2016 (in \$ US million)



UNHCR is grateful for the critical support provided by donors who have contributed to this operation as well as those who have contributed to UNHCR programmes with unearmarked and broadly earmarked funds.

#### Major donors of unrestricted and regional funds in 2016:

United States of America (200 M) | Sweden (78 M) | Netherlands (46 M) | Private Donors Spain (45 M) | United Kingdom (45 M) | Norway (40 M) | Australia (31 M) | Japan (24 M) | Denmark (24 M) | Private Donors Republic of Korea (17 M) | Private Donors Italy (16 M) | Canada (16 M) | Switzerland (15 M) | France (14 M) | Private Donors Japan (13 M) | Private Donors Sweden (13 M) | Germany (13 M) | Private Donors USA (12 M) | Italy (10 M)

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#### Links:

[data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees](http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees) – [twitter.com/UNHCRJo](https://twitter.com/UNHCRJo) – [facebook.com/UNHCRJordan](https://facebook.com/UNHCRJordan)

