

VAF story: A brief chronology

December 2014

The beginning

The Vulnerability Assessment Framework project in Jordan began in January 2014 as the Syrian refugee crisis entered its third year. An early document discussing the project's rationale said: "There is increasing recognition that improved targeting of assistance is needed to use aid resources more effectively and equitably."

While most humanitarian groups already direct assistance to the neediest beneficiaries, what has been lacking is a full system that includes gathering more and deeper household information, organizations collaborating to create a common set of vulnerability criteria within each sector, and a data analysis tool to identify the most vulnerable people in a crisis. While many vulnerability assessments look at hazards and risks within households, there has been little or no consideration of household capacity for taking care of itself. The VAF looks at challenges and strengths within households to provide the most comprehensive picture possible.

The Middle

In the last months of 2014, The VAF team and the World Bank have tested and re-tested the computer model. Adjustments are being made and household information added to the database. Representatives of INGOs and NGOs are meeting by sector to set criteria that will define different levels of vulnerability.

Not the End

The appeals process is already getting a workout as part of the WFP food assistance prioritization that occurred in October. The VAF team expects the full process – broader use of the questionnaire, the computer analysis and the appeals process – to begin getting phased in as a soft rollout in January. While this early stage of the project will end, the expectation is that the VAF will evolve and grow as more household data is added, more relief organizations utilize it, and more adjustments are made. If it works in Jordan, the hope is that this process will be used around the globe to make a difference in the delivery of humanitarian assistance.

The Team



(Left to right): Kate Washington, VAF lead coordinator; Harry Brown, technical developer; Marco Santacroce, econometrist; Yara Maasri, project specialist.