

JORDAN

UNHCR OPERATIONAL UPDATE

March 2016¹

KEY FIGURES

75

Percentage of Syrians who are highly or severely shelter vulnerable

80

Percentage of Syrians using crisis or emergency coping mechanisms

90

Percentage of Syrians living outside of camps in poverty

45,000

Refugees receiving life-essential cash assistance this winter

115,000

Syrian school-aged children out of school

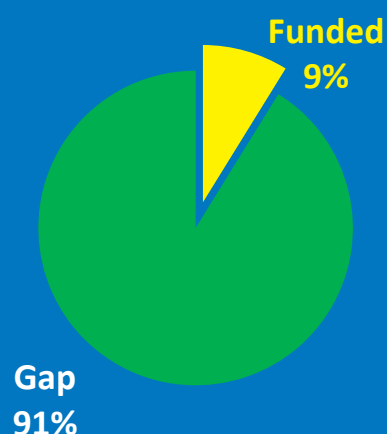
US \$ 15 million

Provided in cash assistance this winter to refugees

FUNDING

US\$ 320 million

requested for the operation in 2016



HIGHLIGHTS

- **UNHCR is coordinating the provision of international humanitarian assistance to thousands of Syrians living in life-threatening conditions on the northeastern borders.** Since December 2015, UNHCR has registered 23,000 Syrians at the border but estimates indicate the actual number - that includes many extremely vulnerable individuals - may be as high as 35,000. The figures have risen sharply in recent months following the intensification of conflict in Syria and ahead of a planned “cessation of hostilities” on 27 February.
- **The Government of Jordan announced a series of important initiatives at the London Syria Donors Conference on 4 February to benefit Syrian refugees and the host community alike.** The conference raised a record US\$ 6 billion in support for Syrian refugees inside Syria and across the region in 2016, with another US\$ 5 billion pledged in support of humanitarian needs by 2020. UNHCR is urging the swift implementation of the pledges to support pressing protection and livelihood needs in Jordan.
- **Staff from UNHCR’s Resettlement Unit worked against the clock throughout the month of February to ensure that the U.S. target of identifying 9,000 Syrian refugees for resettlement by the end of March is comfortably met.** By the end of February over 5,000 Syrian individuals had been submitted to the U.S. authorities. The fast pace of the referral process undertaken by UNHCR has encouraged the U.S. authorities to express an interest in accepting additional submissions later in the year.



Two Syrian refugee children draw a picture of their house in Syria after being asked by UNHCR field staff to express their dreams on paper. Sweileh, Amman. ©UNHCR/M. Hawari

¹ Covering the period 1 – 29 February.

UPDATE ON ACHIEVEMENTS

Operational Context

The Government of Jordan announced a series of economic and development initiatives at the Syria Donors Conference in February that if successfully implemented would promote a range of opportunities that would stand to benefit refugees and their host community. The programme, outlined through the Jordan Compact, and subject to international funding, is designed to unlock the economic potential of refugees by setting their course towards self-reliance, whilst at the same time strengthening the resilience of host communities most impacted by the influx of refugees in recent years.

For Syrian refugees these objectives would include allowing them to apply for work permits; formalizing their existing businesses and establishing new tax generating businesses; removing restrictions on small economic activities within camps hosting Syrian refugees; specially designated development zones providing jobs for Syrians, as well as Jordanians, and formalising access to work in sectors where there is low Jordanian participation and a high proportion of foreign workers.

Meanwhile, the numbers fleeing Syria and located at Jordan's northeastern border continued to rise sharply in February. The latest estimates suggest that some 35,000 Syrians are stranded at two unofficial border crossings – Hadalat and Rukban, located north of the town of al-Ruweished – behind a sand mound, or "berm", at Jordan's border. The numbers represent an almost nine-fold increase on estimates at the end of 2015.

Those seeking asylum at each location include pregnant women and female heads of household, individuals with serious medical conditions, persons living with severe disabilities, unaccompanied and separated children, and other extremely vulnerable individuals. The number being granted access to Jordanian territory throughout the month was approximately 70 individuals per day, far outweighed by the pace of arrivals.

UNHCR is the lead agency mandated to coordinate the humanitarian response and is working alongside the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), International Organization for Migration (IOM), World Food Programme (WFP) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) in providing lifesaving support including protection, registration, health, nutrition, logistics, shelter, non-food items and water & sanitation, whilst advocating for access to Jordanian territory for refugees located at the berm, as afforded to them under international law.

Achievements



Achievements and Impact

- Higher numbers of refugees visit the UNHCR registration centre in Amman:** Some 6,913 refugees passed through the UNHCR registration centre in Amman in February, a 20% increase on numbers the previous month. The rise is attributed to the interest of third countries in resettlement and humanitarian admission programmes, enquiries regarding winter cash assistance and the recent launch of UNHCR's EyeCloud© system. The system, launched in January, allows cash machines to "talk" directly to UNHCR's biometric registration database allowing UNHCR to instantly and securely increase the number of beneficiaries without banks needing to enroll and re-verify refugees.



UNHCR staff counselling refugees at the Anmar Hmoud Registration Centre at UNHCR's Khalda offices in Amman in February. ©UNHCR/M. Hawari

- **New Government shelter for survivors of SGBV in Irbid:** A new shelter for abused women and their children established jointly with the Ministry of Social Development, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNFPA, and funded by the Kingdom of Norway, was opened on 23 February in Irbid Governorate. UNHCR is supporting the shelter through capacity-building and ensuring the proper implementation of referral pathways.
- **Visits to refugees living Informal Tented Settlements (ITS) across Jordan:** UNHCR field staff in Amman and Irbid visited refugees living in ITS at various locations through the Kingdom in February. Field Office Amman visited settlements in Sahab, east Amman, and Ghregba, Aqaba to monitor access to services, identify protection risks and to respond to documentation, registration and winterization needs. Field Office Irbid visited 11 other settlements during the same period in Ramtha, Huwara, and Jordan Valley in coordination with colleagues from the Jordan Health Aid Society (JHAS). A number of issues identified by field staff were the lack of awareness in the provision of routine vaccination services available to children and the identification of a number of cases of untreated leishmaniasis, a skin disease



One of the informal tented settlements visited by UNHCR field staff in February. ©UNHCR/Rema'a Alawi

spread by the bite of sandflies. UNHCR is following up with the Ministry of Health regarding the provision of mobile vaccination services and treatment for the disease.

- **Visit of the UN Special Rapporteur on Trafficking:** The United Nations Special Rapporteur on Trafficking, Maria Grazia Giammarinaro, concluded her eight-day fact finding visit to Jordan on 4 February by welcoming Jordan's efforts in fighting the trafficking in persons, but also urging the Government to further strengthen its legal framework and adopt prevention measures. Areas covered during her visit included the exploitation of Syrian refugees and risk factors leading to the trafficking of refugees and asylum seekers living outside of camps. Throughout the mission UNHCR Protection staff briefed the Special Rapporteur on the agency's work in respect to countering trafficking in Jordan, particularly in the areas of resettlement, refugee status determination, sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) and child protection (CP) procedures including child recruitment countermeasures. Other briefings focused on the verification of identities using biometrics, Best Interest Determination, protection referrals to multi-sectoral services, including legal aid, health, psycho-social, safe shelters, efforts to integrate Syrian refugees into the labour market and access to documentation. The Special Rapporteur also visited Azraq where she was briefed on protection concerns and interventions in the camp and where she met with newly arrived refugee women and children. The Special Rapporteur is following up with UNHCR on the finalization of her mission report for presentation to the UN Human Rights Council in June 2016 and is expected to conduct a follow-up mission in coordination with UNHCR.
- **National Dialogue on UNSCR 1325²: "Women, Peace and Security in Jordan: A Resolution in Action":** In late 2015, the Jordanian National Commission for Women (JNCW), in partnership with the National Coalition for the Implementation of UNSCR 1325, of which UNHCR is a part, renewed its efforts to implement 1325. As part of these efforts, consultations took place with a wide variety of stakeholders throughout the month nationwide to promote a countrywide dialogue on the resolution with the aim of defining priorities for Jordan's Women, Peace and Security agenda. Seven consultations were held with residents of Amman, Zarqa, Mafraq, Ajloun, Jerash, Karak, Ma'an, Tafilah and Irbid, in addition to separate consultations with refugees in Mafraq. UNHCR was present at all field consultations. Participants were invited to provide their recommendations for areas that could be developed into a Jordanian National Action Plan (NAP) to be used towards the implementation of 1325. The recommendations included facilitating family reunification, financial support to counter recourse to child labour, work on lowering work permit fees, further advocacy on *non-refoulement*, increased university opportunities, increased legal awareness on early marriage and an increase in family counselling activities. Priorities identified during the refugee session in Mafraq included economic challenges, high rent, child labour, family separation and the fear of deportation.
- **Committing to countering sexual exploitation by humanitarian aid workers:** The inter-agency Network on Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) engaged a consultant in February, through UNHCR, to assist in the design of a rigorous community-based complaint referral mechanism, designed in close coordination with refugees, to ensure that the mechanisms through which they report SEA fully meet their requirements and expectations. The complaint referral mechanism is due to be rolled out in mid-2016. The network was established within the Refugee Coordination Structure in Jordan to enhance prevention and response to incidents of SEA by humanitarian aid workers and is coordinated by UNHCR with six PSEA focal points at country and field level. The Network serves as the primary body for awareness, prevention, coordination and oversight on the protection from sexual, exploitation and abuse by international and national personnel providing humanitarian services to refugees.
- **UNHCR provides refugee law legal training to staff from the Civil Status Department:** As part of its regular training of government officials in Jordan, UNHCR conducted legal training for Civil Status Department (CSD) staff based in Aqaba

² The Security Council adopted resolution (S/RES/1325) on women and peace and security on 31 October 2000. The resolution reaffirms the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts, peace negotiations, peace-building, peacekeeping, humanitarian response and in post-conflict reconstruction and stresses the importance of their equal participation and full involvement in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security. Resolution 1325 urges all actors to increase the participation of women and incorporate gender perspectives in all United Nations peace and security efforts. It also calls on all parties to conflict to take special measures to protect women and girls from gender-based violence, particularly rape and other forms of sexual abuse, in situations of armed conflict. The resolution provides a number of important operational mandates, with implications for Member States and the entities of the United Nations system.

whose area of responsibility is the south. Subjects covered included UNHCR's mandate, international refugee law, the national legal framework for asylum in Jordan, legal challenges in Jordan for refugees, and referral procedures relating to SGBV and CP.

Education

Achievements and Impact

- **UNHCR secures more higher education discounts for Syrian students:** As the result of UNHCR's advocacy efforts, two more higher education institutions offered discounts for Syrian students in February, bringing the total of higher education institutions offering discounted courses to Syrian refugees in Jordan to five. The UNHCR Representative, accompanied by the U.S. ambassador, met with the President of Al Bayt University to agree on the reduction of tuition fees for Syrian refugees to the Jordanian rate and for UNHCR to pay the fees for an initial 100 students as part of its efforts to further assist Syrian refugees in accessing tertiary education. Later in February, UNHCR met with Amman Arab University (AAU) to discuss their offer of reducing tuition fees for Syrian refugees as part of their corporate and social responsibility commitments. In 2015, 32 Syrian refugees at undergraduate level were offered a 75% discount on credit hour fees at the university, a proposal that the university agreed at the meeting to extend to a further 100 Syrian refugees in 2016, whilst offering 200 Syrian refugees a 50% discount on credit hours. Other universities providing discounts resulting from UNHCR advocacy efforts include the Hashemite University in Zarqa, providing a 20% reduction on international fees; Jadara University in Irbid, providing a 50% discount for refugees on national fees; and Zarqa University providing a 60% discount for refugees on national fees.

Health

Achievements and Impact

- **More refugees accessing the Cash for Health project:** The number of Syrian refugees enrolled in UNHCR's Cash Assistance to Access Essential Health Services (CAEHS) project rose to 311 at the end of February from an initial figure of 34 enrolled at the beginning of the pilot in November. Out of a random telephone sampling of 145 refugees who had used the cash by the end of February, the vast majority of the sampling, 141 individuals, were found to have used the cash for pregnancy-related care and health emergencies. The pilot had initially focused on antenatal, delivery and postnatal care given the relative cost predictability and stability of reproductive health care that allows for the more accurate planning of levels of cash disbursement. The project will continue to expand to possibly include non-communicable diseases and discussions are now underway to incorporate the project into the common cash facility which will allow UNHCR to expand its cash platform thereby enabling partners to use the same biometrics-based system at the same low overhead costs.
- **UNHCR funds healthcare transport for refugees from King Abdullah Park camp:** JHAS has purchased an 18-seater minibus with UNHCR funding to transport refugee patients from KAP camp daily to their appointments at Ministry of Health (MoH) facilities in Ramtha and Amman.
- **Cases of leishmaniasis in refugees arriving from the borders and jaundice at Azraq:** Some 90 out of 156 refugees admitted into Jordan from the northeastern borders and transported to Azraq with cutaneous leishmaniasis received treatment from the International Medical Corps (IMC) clinic in February. The World Health Organization is assisting the MoH and UNHCR in importing 200 vials - one vial treats on average 20 cases – due to a shortage in the country. The Ministry of Health currently only stocks six vials. Some 13 cases of acute jaundice syndrome were also reported to the camp's medical facilities in February with nine cases testing positive for Hepatitis A. Health officials from the MoH and UNHCR are investigating all reported cases including the date of onset, date of arrival to the camp, food and water source, and areas frequented at the camp. UNHCR and the MoH are on standby to activate the camp's Outbreak Control Team should further cases be presented.

- **Increasing pressure on health care services at Azraq camp:** Health services in Azraq camps are being stretched by a continued increase in new arrivals in poor health. The total number consultations at IMC primary health care centres in February was 9,389 compared to 7,834 in January whilst the number of referrals to hospitals outside of the camp increased to 362, compared to 298 in January.



The UNHCR/UNFPA hospital in Azraq experienced higher demand than usual in February due to an increase in new arrivals to the camp. ©UNHCR/A. Bino

- **Exceptional Care Committee (ECC):** UNHCR’s ECC met on 24 February to review 213 non-emergency cases out of which 180 cases were approved (155 Syrians, 18 Iraqis, 4 Sudanese, 2 Somali, and 1 Yemeni). Treatment for costly tertiary care requires pre-approval from the ECC that meets on a monthly basis to review all submitted cases. Applications to ECC must be submitted through one of the JHAS clinics. The ECC decisions can either be approved, pending or denied. The main determining factor in the decision-making is the prognosis of the disease and whether there is a good chance of the patient’s condition improving or stabilizing.

Food Security and Nutrition

Achievements and Impact

- **Launch of the WFP EyePay system at the King Abdullah Park camp:** On 16 and 17 February, the UN World Food Programme (WFP) launched its EyePay system at the King Abdullah Park camp in Irbid Governorate using UNHCR’s biometric registration data to verify the identity of the refugees. EyePay allows refugees to purchase food from local shops using only a scan of their eye.



A Syrian refugee purchasing food using only her iris at KAP camp in Irbid. ©WFP/M.Batah

Shelter and NFIs

Achievements and Impact

- **U.S and UNHCR distribute winter blankets to Syrian refugees in Mafraq:** On 2 February, the U.S. Ambassador and the UNHCR Representative visited the Princess Basma Centre in Mafraq to distribute some of the 40,000 thick winter blankets donated by the U.S. to assist the most vulnerable refugees and Jordanians during the cold months. 500 blankets were distributed to 100 Syrian refugee families, the second such distribution in Mafraq this winter. In December 2015, 4,500 blankets were distributed to 921 vulnerable families in three locations across Mafraq Governorate, 30% of which were donated to Jordanians. The U.S. remains the largest donor to UNHCR’s Jordan operation contributing in 2015 alone over US\$ 70 million in lifesaving assistance.



The U.S Ambassador, Alice G. Wells, and the UNHCR Representative, Andrew Harper, distributing thermal blankets to refugees in Mafraq during a cold snap in early February. ©UNHCR/M.Hawari

Camp Coordination and Camp Management

Achievements and Impact

- **Sharia court established in Azraq:** A Sharia court to facilitate the registration of marriages and births began operating once a week in the camp on 9 February. The frequency of the court's operation could increase with demand.

Access to Energy

Achievements and Impact

- **Start of the Azraq electricity project:** An electricity project to supply electricity to refugees living in Azraq camp was initiated in February. The project aims to supply each shelter with one kilowatt-hour of electricity per day so that each household will have enough power to operate basic household items such as fans and lights. The project began with the installation of low voltage poles in February and is expected to culminate with the installation of a solar plant which will meet the energy needs of the camp, whilst sharing some of its output with the host community. The project is expected to last six months, depending on funding levels, and to employ approximately 50 skilled refugees. In the interim, UNHCR has installed 472 solar street lights and distributed an average of four solar lanterns per household to ensure that refugees can move around the camp safely and securely.



Workers installing low voltage poles as part of the first phase of an electricity project at Azraq. Improving access to a clean and sustainable source of energy can enhance self-reliance, ensure education under harsh conditions and provide safety, health and protection of refugees.
©UNHCR/A.Bino

STORIES FROM THE FIELD

“Two kilometres there and two back”

With UNHCR’s monthly financial assistance, a family pays for school transport for their children, and finds peace and comfort amidst the challenges.

For more than one year, Mustafa walked eight kilometres a day to accompany his young children to school - two kilometres there and two kilometres back, in the morning and the afternoon. This was no easy feat, but the family didn’t have money for other options.

The family had succeeded in registering their children for school in the first autumn after reaching safety in Jordan. But the challenges were not over. The bus for transport to school costs 15 Jordanian Dinars (JD), approximately US\$ 21, per month, per child – or a prohibitive 60 JD (US\$ 85) in total for the four of them. Undeterred, Mustafa and his children walked back and forth from school.

Trekking such distances in the heat, cold, and rain couldn't have been easy for Mustafa, who is 70 years old and braves a heart condition. Yet he is defiant about the physical toll that these twice-daily walks took. "Listen - my brother and I are both farm boys! There's not a day that the sun came up, when we didn't get out of bed and go to work."

In November 2014, the family began receiving monthly financial assistance, and Mustafa was able to rest again at home. UNHCR had provided shelter to the family through partnership with the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), which covered the family’s rent in a recently completed housing unit.

Though their rent was covered, they could apply for monthly financial assistance to meet their other basic needs, including public transport for the children. The family still counts every cent and worry what they will do now that the value of food vouchers has decreased to 15 from 20 JD per person, per month.

But they continue to place the foremost importance on school attendance, now made easier by UNHCR’s monthly financial assistance.

By Katherine Dunn, Associate Field Officer, with Nadia Algharibeh, Senior Field Assistant.
UNHCR Field Office Irbid.



*UNHCR’s cash assistance programme has eased the burden of exile on Mustafa and his family but significant economic challenges remain for the more than 639,000 Syrians registered with UNHCR, the majority of whom cannot access legal employment.
©UNHCR/K.Dunn*

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

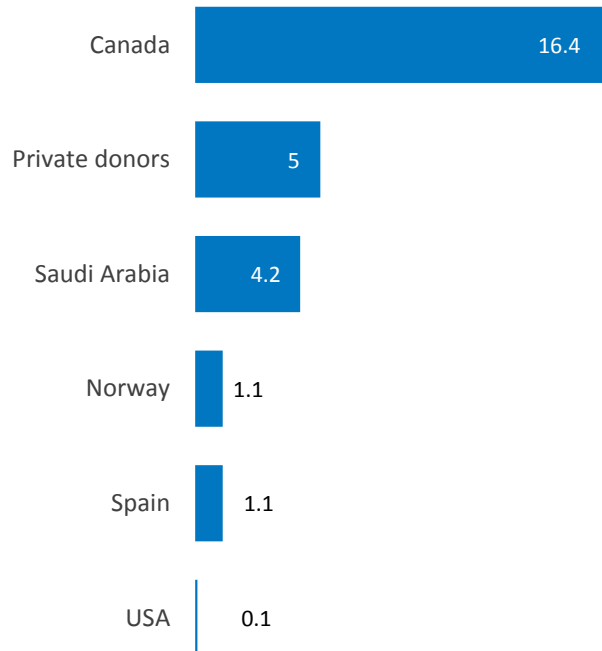
Total recorded contributions for the operation amount to some **US\$ 28.2 million**, including for the

Syria situation. Currently no funding has been received for the **Iraq situation** at the country level.

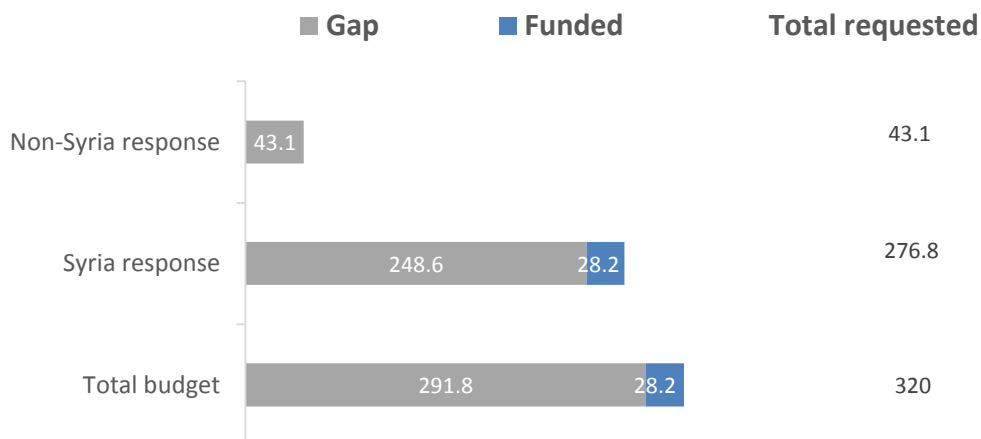
UNHCR is grateful for the critical support provided by donors who have contributed to this operation as well as those who have contributed to UNHCR programmes with unearmarked and broadly earmarked funds.

Major donors of unrestricted and regional funds in 2016 (in million US\$): Sweden (78 M) | Netherlands (46 M) | Norway (40 M) | Australia (31 M) | Denmark (24 M) | Switzerland (15 M) | Germany (13 M)

Funding received for the Jordan operation in 2016 (in million US\$)



Funding levels of the Jordan operation in 2016 (in million US\$)



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