

Jordan

March 2021

March marked the **ten years** from the start of the Syria crisis, as well as the **fifth Brussels Conference** which was hosted virtually, co-chaired by the EU and the UN. Donors pledged \$4.4bn for 2021 and multi-year pledges of close to \$2bn for Syria and the region.

The national COVID-19 vaccination program continues, with **over 3,000 refugees** in camps already vaccinated. UNHCR continues to monitor the COVID-19 situation and raise awareness among refugee communities about the vaccine.

The **Jordan Response Plan** for the Syrian crisis (2020-2022) was revised to incorporate the COVID-19 response, with a budget of \$2.4bn for 2021. The COVID-19 component of the plan addresses interventions to mitigate the vulnerabilities of Syrian and host communities.

KEY INDICATORS

754,528

Refugees in Jordan as of 15 April 2021

83%

Refugees living outside camps in **urban areas**

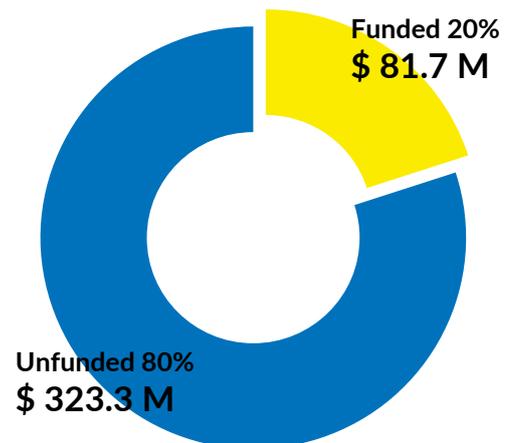
46.2%

Refugees are **children** under 17 years

2021 FUNDING (AS OF 6 APRIL 2021)

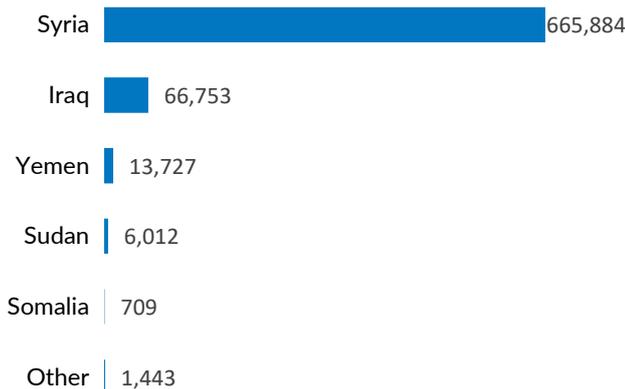
USD 405 M

UNHCR Jordan's financial requirements in 2021



POPULATION OF CONCERN

Countries of Origin



Products from over 30 refugee vendors from a range of nationalities were sold in UNHCR's #WithRefugees Mother's Day pop-up shop hosted in Galleria Mall from 20 March to 1 April, to support both refugee and Jordanian communities.

**PROTECTION**

- In March, registration and other legal and protection activities continued through remote modalities. UNHCR continued to share information on such modalities with persons of concern (PoCs) through different means, including the [Jordan Help site](#), the Helpline and social media pages. During this month, UNHCR and legal partners provided legal assistance – in the form of counselling, mediation, representation, and protection follow up and advocacy – to 4,696 cases. The number remained stable if compared to previous months.
- One of the areas that UNHCR and partners support with legal counselling are [eviction cases](#), increasingly so in the past year. Diminished income-generating opportunities for PoCs have led to an inability to meet rent obligations, with many eviction notices issued in recent months and during the month of March. Almost one fifth of the cases that required legal assistance from UNHCR and partners were eviction cases, due to conflict with landlords and outstanding amounts of rent. UNHCR and partners support with counselling, landlord mediation, and financial assistance in urgent cases.
- The distribution of remotely renewed Asylum Seeker Certificates (ASC) at UNHCR's registration centres in March reached a total of 8,437 families. As a result, over 30,000 refugees were able to renew their ASCs and collect them from the Amman, Irbid, Mafraq and Azraq registration centres. UNHCR registration teams across Jordan, having adapted to the ongoing COVID-19 situation, continue to renew ASCs and add newborn babies to existing cases through remote modalities, allowing refugees to continue having access to critical services.
- During March, UNHCR's child protection/SGBV teams counselled and supported some 277 individuals, who benefited from case management, legal, psychosocial services and mental health, resettlement and cash-based intervention services through UNHCR or implementing partners in the field.

**COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT AND SELF RELIANCE**

- Through March, UNHCR continued to engage with refugee communities, in line with the joint Communication with Communities strategy with UNICEF and WFP. Using a variety of channels, including social media, the Bridges of Communications refugee group, Community Support Committees (CSCs) and the online magazine “Working with refugees” among others, UNHCR disseminates information and awareness materials about COVID-19 and latest government guidelines to refugees in urban areas.
- UNHCR-supported CSCs continue to support refugee communities through various community engagement activities, information sharing, and food/non-food item distributions. CSCs across Jordan conducted 102 online and three in-person activities in March, including awareness-raising activities, distribution of school bags, sanitisers and masks for students, caregiving skills trainings, and more, reaching over 3,700 participants of different nationalities.
- In March, UNHCR provided Urgent Cash Assistance to 108 vulnerable refugee families. UNHCR community-based protection teams continue to follow up on individual cases who have tested positive for COVID-19 through phone counselling, to better understand the impact of the pandemic on urban refugee populations and assess the needs and existing gaps in assistance.
- To celebrate this year's Mother's Day on 21 March, UNHCR Jordan organised a [#WithRefugees Mother's Day “pop-up” shop](#), together with Galleria Mall. Some 30 refugees participated in the event, displaying their handmade items (home décor, paintings, clothes, accessories, and much more). The shop, which was originally open for a week and then extended for another week due to its success, was managed by the refugees themselves supported by UNHCR staff. With an overall income of over USD 4,000 that went directly to

refugees, this is an important livelihood opportunity for those who rely on the income from their creations to cover basic needs.

- On 10 March, UNHCR Jordan focused its [ninth episode](#) of the #AskUNHCR series to a discussion around livelihoods. UNHCR staff provided an overview of the work environment in Jordan for Syrian refugees and answered questions received live by refugees, on topics including but not limited to the different types of work permits, cost and procedures of issuance, medical examination requirements, risks of working without work permits. The live video reached over 30,000 people and received more than 1,300 comments. More #AskUNHCR sessions can be found [here](#).



CASH ASSISTANCE FOR BASIC NEEDS

- In March, UNHCR's regular cash assistance reached some 33,000 refugee families, including 3,000 non-Syrian families. UNHCR is working to gradually transition refugees receiving regular cash assistance for basic needs to the mobile wallet modality, to incorporate the financial inclusion opportunities as part of humanitarian payment modalities as well as expanding the cash out/withdrawal network which would decrease transportation cost for refugees.
- In addition to regular cash for basic needs, UNHCR also [supported](#) over 7,000 families, including over 1,200 non-Syrian families, with COVID-19 emergency cash assistance. This is the first round of COVID-19 emergency cash assistance for 2021. In 2020, UNHCR reached over 54,000 newly identified vulnerable families, who have been adversely affected by the economic impact of the pandemic.



HEALTH

- In Jordan, COVID-19 cases continued to rise through the month of March, reaching new records in the number of daily cases and deaths recorded. The occupancy rate in hospitals and ICUs also increased significantly, with some hospitals at full capacity. Additional restrictions were reimposed, including halting of in-person schooling and further extension of curfew hours starting at 7pm for the public and 6pm for businesses. A similar increase was recorded in camps, with the cumulative number of COVID-19 cases in refugee camps, as of 16 April, at 3,543, of which 331 were active, 3,171 had recovered (90%), and 41 refugees had passed away. In spite of the increase of cases, the case count in camps remains well below the national average, with 3% of the refugee population in camps having testing positive compared to 6.7% of the total Jordanian population. Among the key factors contributing to the lower positivity rates in refugee camps are the movement restrictions that have largely been in place in camps for the past months, together with the continued resilience shown by refugees.
- Jordan's COVID-19 vaccination program is ongoing, and as part of it, close to 3,500 refugees had received at least the first dose of the vaccine as of 16 April, while UNHCR mobilisation efforts seem to be working with over 10% of the camp population having already registered to receive the vaccine. It is worth noting that the in-camp vaccination centres have made it easier for refugees to get vaccinated, while the Ministry of Health (MoH) has also started a field vaccination campaign with teams visiting elderly refugees in the camps, as well as persons with disabilities, who can't go to the vaccination centres, to provide them with the vaccine at their shelters. UNHCR is supporting the MoH teams with transportation.
- Since January 2021, UNHCR Jordan has been strengthening its efforts to mobilise the refugee communities in Jordan around the COVID-19 vaccination programme, in order to promote registration among refugees in camps and urban areas. As such, the office has held a number of surveys, to better understand the reasons that motivate refugees to register for the vaccine or not and adapt its messaging strategy accordingly. Key activities of the campaign include:

- **Social media awareness messaging:** UNHCR has been regularly publishing information about the COVID-19 vaccine through social media, including explanatory [videos](#) about the registration process, [materials](#) on the vaccine itself, as well as [FAQs](#) on the UNHCR Jordan Help site.
- **Community outreach:** Through CSCs and Incentive-Based Volunteers, UNHCR and partners share information with refugee communities about the vaccination programme in Jordan, as well as information on the vaccine efficacy or the continued need for adherence to health measures.
- **Facebook live Q&A sessions:** As part of the #AskUNHCR series, UNHCR Jordan has held two sessions ([here](#) and [here](#)) to discuss the COVID-19 vaccination programme in Jordan, where UNHCR Health and External Relations staff have answered frequently asked questions that have come up often on social media, as well as questions received live by refugees, focusing on the registration process, including for persons with disabilities, as well as the benefits of the vaccine. Refugee who have been vaccinated were also featured in the sessions to share their own experience. The live videos have reached a combined total of over 30,000 people and received over 1,000 comments, with questions focusing on practical issues around the vaccine.
- In addition to supporting the Ministry of Health (MoH) with the rollout of the vaccination program for refugees, UNHCR continued to respond to COVID-19 in camps, working closely with MoH and the Syrian Refugee Affairs Directorate, to carry out surveillance and contact tracing exercises with the aim to continue minimising the spread.



EDUCATION

- While in-person schooling was suspended in early March for all grades until further notice, the Ministry of Education decided to resume in-person learning for students with disabilities (visual and hearing impairments) in schools and special centres that provide education services to students with intellectual disabilities.
- Close to 2,400 unique students accessed UNHCR's Kolibri online learning platform in March, of which 44% live in urban areas and 56% in refugee camps, including 46% male and 54% female learners, as well as 75% Syrian students, 20% Jordanian, and 5% students of other nationalities. Key subjects studied through Kolibri include Science, Maths, English, Life Skills, and Arabic.
- Despite the significant number of students accessing the Kolibri platform, the lack of adequate and sufficient devices and internet connectivity continues to be the biggest challenge for refugee students to engage in remote education. And while many students in the past have been able to access online education by visiting the UNHCR-supported Connected Learning Hubs (CLHs), those were temporarily closed in line with Government measures to combat the COVID-19 pandemic, impacting the access of some students who, without devices or internet connectivity at home, relied in the CLHs.



DURABLE SOLUTIONS

- Remote resettlement processing continues, with UNHCR Jordan conducting interviews, by video and telephone, with some 438 refugees during March, ensuring that integrity and identity verification safeguards are in place.
- A total of 362 individuals were submitted for [resettlement](#). For 2021, a total of 5,375 resettlement places for refugees in Jordan have so far been confirmed by Australia, Canada, France, Germany, Norway, Romania, Spain, Sweden and the US.
- In March, UNHCR published the [results](#) of its Sixth Regional Survey on Syrian Refugees' Perceptions & Intentions on Return to Syria, which was conducted in Egypt, Lebanon, Jordan and Iraq between February

and March 2021. Key findings show that while 70% of respondents want to return to Syria one day, less than 3% plan to return within the next year. In Jordan, the percentage of those not planning to return to Syria in the next year has increased from 78% in Nov 2018 to 94%, while the number of respondents that are unsure decreased by 11%, only slightly below that during 2018. UNHCR Jordan continues to provide information and counselling to refugees who wish to return to Syria, to inform their decision making.

High-Profile Visits and Events

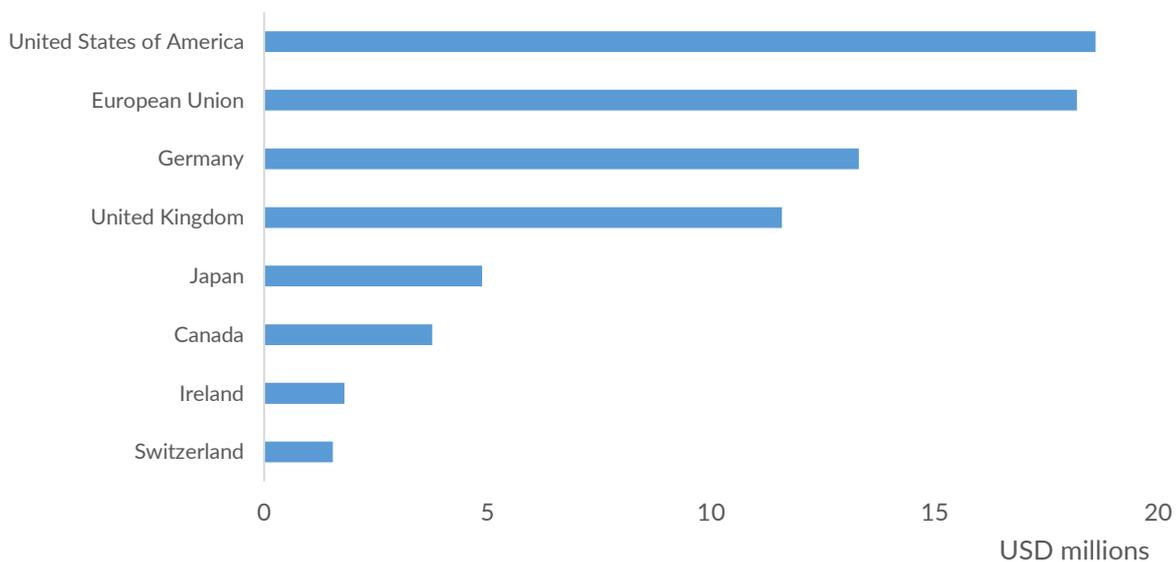
- Due to COVID-19 and under the government's guidance, UNHCR Jordan continues to discourage external field missions to the operation. Donor missions and high-profile visits will resume in full once the situation with the pandemic improves and no longer poses a risk of exposure to UNHCR's people of concern.
- On 1 March, a delegation from the Australian embassy, including Ambassador Bernard Lynch, attended a virtual visit to Zaatari camp. The 2-hour virtual mission consisted of an overview briefing by UNHCR Jordan colleagues and SRAD, and detailed briefings by UNHCR SGBV and Registration staff and Zaatari Employment Centre staff. The Australian delegation then engaged with a refugee family, first through a pre-recorded video of a "day in the life" of the family, and then through a Q&A session with them. The virtual visit was positively perceived and commended.
- UNHCR Jordan marked the tenth year of the Syria conflict through a number of activities. On 15 March, a virtual press conference titled "Ten years of conflict. Ten years of being a refugee" was held, with a panel consisting of the heads of UN agencies as well as UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator Anders Pedersen. UNHCR social media platforms were taken over by refugees for the day ([UNHCR Jordan Instagram account](#), [Dominik Bartsch twitter account](#), [Zaatari twitter account](#)), including some live Q&A sessions. Other content produced for the day included a [UN-wide press release](#) and a story with [ten Syrian refugee profiles](#). Finally, a [logo](#), created to mark the event, was shared on virtual platforms, as well as on the buildings of partner organisations and UN agencies in Amman.
- The Fifth Conference on "Supporting the Future of Syria and the Region" (*Brussels V*) took place on 29-30 March 2021 in virtual format. Brussels V was hosted by the EU and co-chaired with the UN. Participants at the Brussels V Conference announced their [pledges](#) for both Syria and the region: US\$4.4 billion (€3.6 billion) for 2021 and multi-year pledges of close to US\$2 billion (€1.7 billion) for 2022 and beyond. During the conference, Jordan's Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Mr. Ayman Safadi highlighted in his [remarks](#) the need for solutions for Syrian refugees: "emergency relief is no longer the top priority here: about 50 percent of Syrians in Jordan are under the age of 15. They need schools, they need proper medical care, and they need to be prepared to meet the demands of the job market." He called for support from the international community, noting that "refugees cannot become an occasional concern. They must remain a central and constant priority." The Foreign Minister's remarks come after the Government of Jordan circulated shortly before Brussels V the White Paper on the Jordan Response Plan 2021, a compilation of commitments by the GoJ regarding the refugee crisis for 2021 and beyond, as well as a progress report including achievements and challenges remaining and new ones arising. This document will form the basis for discussions to continue after Brussels V.

Financial Information

Total recorded contributions for the operation in 2021 amount to some **US\$ 81.7million**, covering 20% of overall needs for refugees in Jordan.

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.

Earmarked contributions to UNHCR Jordan in 2021 (over 1 million USD)



Special thanks to the major donors of softly earmarked contributions in 2021 (in USD)

Germany (23.7M) | Sweden (5.4M) | USA (4.2M) | Canada (2.9M)

Thanks to other donors of unrestricted and regional funds in 2021 (in USD)

Norway (80million) | Sweden (66.9M) | Netherlands (36.1M) | Denmark (34.6M) | Germany (22.1M) | Switzerland (16.4M) | Private donors Spain (13.3M) | Ireland (12.5M) | Belgium (11.9M)

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LINKS

Facebook, Twitter, Instagram: [@UNHCRJordan](#)
www.data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees