



**Za'atari Camp's Youth:** 18% of Za'atari Camp's population is young men and women ages 15-24, the interagency definition of youth. Like their peers internationally, many of these youth were in the process of defining themselves and their futures before war forced them out of their homes: high school students planning for their graduation; mid-year university students studying for their finals; young professionals eager to use their talents and start their own adventures.

Youth in the camp are defined as two groups: **15-17 year olds**, who may access formal school within the camp and **18-24 year olds**, have limited formal higher education options. Camp services extend to these youth, as well as

targeted programming such as informal education, recreation, sport, psychosocial support, in addition to cash for work opportunities for the older group.

These youth face particular challenges within the camp, feeling their lives stunted and futures put on hold by war. With boundless energy and enthusiasm, many youth are active in their Za'atari community, working as volunteers, leading community projects, and helping rebuild their community. These are the youth who will be called upon to rebuild Syria — the next generation of teachers, doctors, engineers, and leaders — and they look for our support as they work towards a new future.

### YTF Achievements and Initiatives

- ❖ Bike Distribution for Youth Volunteers (with UNHCR, NRC and City of Amsterdam)
  - ❖ Field staff exchange initiative
  - ❖ UNFPA National Youth Meeting and consequent formulation of advocacy messages
  - ❖ Support for UNESCO *Jami3ti* Initiative
  - ❖ Distribution of Summer Youth activities list
- July Events**
- ❖ Lecture series by Arabic speaking professors from 25-31 July (tentative dates) supported by UNHCR. Contact IRD for details.
  - ❖ Iftar on Friday 10<sup>th</sup> July hosted by Syria Tomorrow
  - ❖ FPSC/IRD play by PWDs Ammoon Theatre in Weibde on 21<sup>st</sup> July.



*The Syrian Youth Committee, a youth group supported by IRD/UNHCR, organized and led a day of activities for over 250 Syrian and Jordanian children living in Za'atari Village.*

### Youth Task Force (YTF)

The YTF is a Za'atari based interagency action-oriented field-level forum created to promote advocacy on youth issues, coordinate relevant youth programs, as well as encourage mainstreaming of youth across other sectors. The YTF is co-chaired by UNFPA and NRC and reports to the Protection and Education Sector Chairs.

As a Task Force, the YTF is not responsible for approval of policy; projects; approval of assessments; setting of objectives, outputs, indicators and associated budgeting/setting of targets, which is the responsibility of sectors alone.

### Objectives:

- To coordinate and promote information and resource sharing among key youth actors.
- To advocate with donors, implementing agencies, camp and national authorities, and advocacy groups for the needs of youth in the camp.
- Coordinating the implementation of activities that respond to specific youth needs, and promote youth participation in program planning, setup, and implementation.

**For more information, contact YTF co-chairs:**

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22 year old Basel joined the Syrian Youth Committee two months ago, and has since taken a lead role in planning volunteer events including a Community Service Day in Za'atari Village and Children's Event at the King Hussein Cancer Foundation.

*"I joined this committee because I had time on my hands — and I wanted to spend it with a good community doing good things. I am passionate about helping children, and that's our main goal."*

### Advocacy

#### Education/Higher Education

- ❖ Develop, fund, and support targeted youth programming that is age appropriate and inclusive
- ❖ Provide international accredited certified training (vocational and academic) programs
- ❖ Higher education (HE) providers/funders should address protection concerns related to documentation, application, and travel procedures
- ❖ Prioritize HE alternatives as part of integrated programming such as preparatory programs (English/IT) as well as online/blended distance learning
- ❖ Invest financially in HE opportunities in Jordanian universities to provide more space for students as needed.

The following advocacy messages were developed during the UNFPA House warming event and then validated by Youth Task Force members on behalf of Za'atari youth.

#### Inclusion and Health issues for Youth

- ❖ Increase support of quality mental health and psychosocial activities, particularly for youth above 18.
- ❖ Prevent early pregnancy below age of 18 and raise awareness around health risks; increase access to youth friendly reproductive health services.
- ❖ Include youth with disabilities in programs, including education, training, and volunteering.

#### Priority Issue Highlight: Higher Education

Youth consistently identify the lack of access to higher educational opportunities as their major challenge in Za'atari Camp. Without higher education, youth feel their future is on hold, their time and skills are wasted in the camp, and their capacity to rebuild Syria is limited. Each year the number of youth interested in pursuing higher education increases, as students graduate through the secondary school system within Za'atari Camp.

However, presently, Za'atari Camp offers few opportunities for youth to continue their education; the available options include vocational training, language courses, and soft-skills trainings, which are largely unaccredited. Youth cite desires to study at a higher academic level, as many were university students or soon-to-be students in Syria. Za'atari refugee youth are largely unable to independently access higher education opportunities in Jordan due to the costs of study and transportation, need to work to support family, lack of mobility to easily leave the camp, and lack of necessary paperwork.

Addressing this issue requires a multifaceted approach from agencies, donors, and policy-makers:

Scholarships offer an opportunity for select students to access higher educational opportunities, whether within or outside Jordan. DAFI, DAAD, WUSC are entities that have offered scholarships in partnership with UNHCR, for example 50 Syrian youth benefited from the DAFI scholarship. Larger-scale provision of higher education opportunities is needed, with particular focus from scholarship providers and universities on making scholarships accessible to Syrian youth, such as through flexible language requirements/incorporation of language prep-time and flexible paperwork requirements or use of entrance exams for those without papers. Courses and application procedures should be adapted to the situation of Syrian refugee youth, including consideration of vulnerability factors, rather than just catering to the 'educational elite'.

Distance learning programs or extension of university courses offer opportunity to a larger group of students. These require a center, equipped with technology and regular electricity/internet, as well as dedicated support teachers to facilitate blended or distance learning for students. These facilities could also be used as a branch of a local university, in which a local university's professor offers accredited courses to students within the camp.

Increase in diverse, accredited education programming informs and supplements these recommendations as well as continued development of individual capacity. Students would benefit from an increase in accredited skills development programs, whether focused on specific skills that would benefit them in continued study (language, computer, topic-based) or semi-professional tracks (teacher training, project management, and nursing).