

# Jordan – Community Support Committees

## December 2019

More than **211 refugees and Jordanians** work and volunteer in **25** Community Support Committees (CSCs) across the Kingdom.

**2,143** awareness trainings, educational, recreational, cultural and sports activities held between the period of January to December 2019.

From January to December 2019, CSCs have reached over **74,389** individuals, **65%** of which were women and **35%** men. **31%** of those reached were members of the host communities and **69%** refugees.

## INTRODUCTION

621,902 refugees, or 83.5% of the total registered population live in urban settings. Refugees in Jordan come from 57 different nationalities.

The Community Support Committee (CSC) initiative has been operational in Jordan since 2013, with the aim of achieving multiple protection outcomes through community engagement.

Conceptually, the CSC initiative has been developed to promote refugee protection beyond humanitarian needs:

- a) to contribute to peaceful co-existence and social cohesion between refugee and host communities;
- b) to create space for community to have structured dialogue on issues that are concerned to them;
- c) to plan and implement community-based activities targeting divergent groups.

CSCs, as the support groups, are formed at the governorate level where both refugee and hosting communities work together to promote social cohesion and enhance access to protection for refugees. Over 200 community members, representing both refugee and hosting communities, including local Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) and local authorities, are working in 25 CSCs in various sub/governorates in Jordan.



*Training activity: Maintenance of washing machines, Sweileh CSC. ©UNHCR*

**Strong technical backing enhances the capacity and confidence of the community-based mechanism to support protection response process.**

UNHCR has provided extensive training and technical support to CSCs on a regular basis, which enhances the knowledge and capacities of the CSC members on protection themes. These efforts have enabled the members to discharge their responsibilities sensitively. They are able to identify the protection concerns and are able to refer appropriately.

**CSC involvement of diverse and vulnerable groups in its community-based activities fosters social inclusion at the community level.**

CSCs raises the awareness of protection concerns and inclusion. When planning and implementing the community-based activities, CSCs systematically target specific groups of people, mainly the elderly, children, persons with disabilities, and women, etc. These activities enhance the psychosocial well-being of specific groups, as well as their access to protection services. Clubs for the elderly and for children, as well as home visits to persons with disabilities are other initiatives to provide specific support to these groups.

**The engagement process itself, which involves diverse groups and strengthens networks, is crucial to the success of the CSC initiative.**

Firstly, the CSC structure builds refugees' confidence and sense of belonging in their new setting, by including all key community entities in one structure to work together and build relationships for refugees' protection. Secondly, CSCs promote refugees' access to key protection services by involving a wide network of various community entities, including traditional/religious leaders, elders, and local service providers.



*Awareness activity: an awareness session for Persons with Disabilities (PWD) and members of their families. ©UNHCR*

These networks help to provide a timely response in a critical time as well. For instance, the CSCs' networks are the most reliable and effective mechanism to identify the affected families in winter-time emergencies. Finally, the independence that is given to CSCs in the engagement process makes them more responsive and innovative, as they are able to plan and implement the activities more independently and equally, in consideration of the communities' needs.

**Through facilitation of access to key protection services, as well as impartiality and transparency in their activities, CSCs have gained trust and appreciation of the communities.**

In Jordan, the CSCs' involvement in UNHCR's mobile registration process helped to gain refugees' trust in the engagement process. CSCs played a vital role in the process at the local level, for example by consolidating profiles of non-registered individuals. The communities trust them also because of their impartiality and neutrality in the planning and implementation of community-based activities. Furthermore, since CSCs plan and organize activities consultatively and openly for rational purpose, the local authorities also trust them because of their transparency in the process. The support provision that is made available to desperate hosting families avoids unequal treatment in one hand and supports to build the trust of hosting communities on the other.

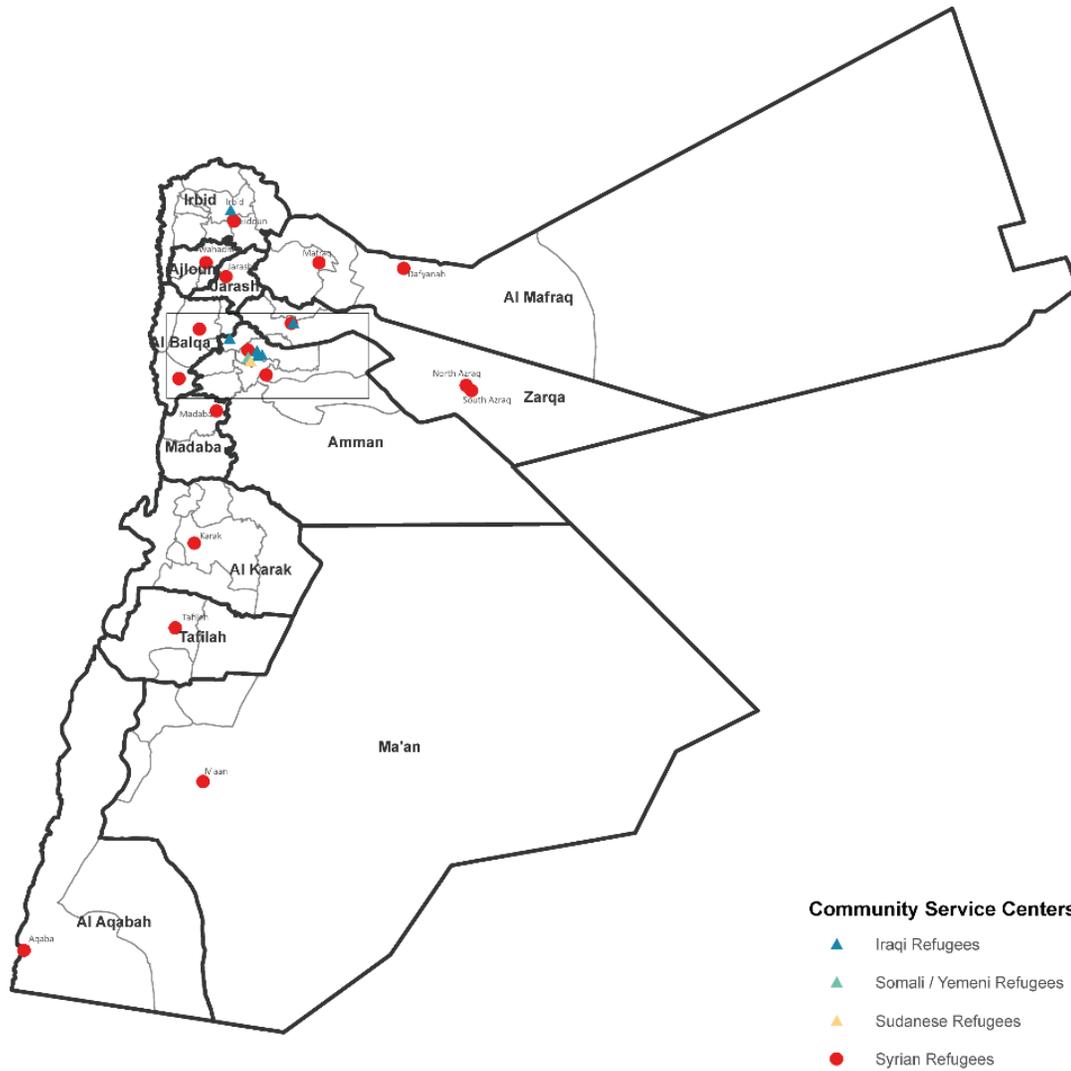


*Cultural activity: "Hakawati" Storytelling, Tafilah CSC. ©UNHCR*

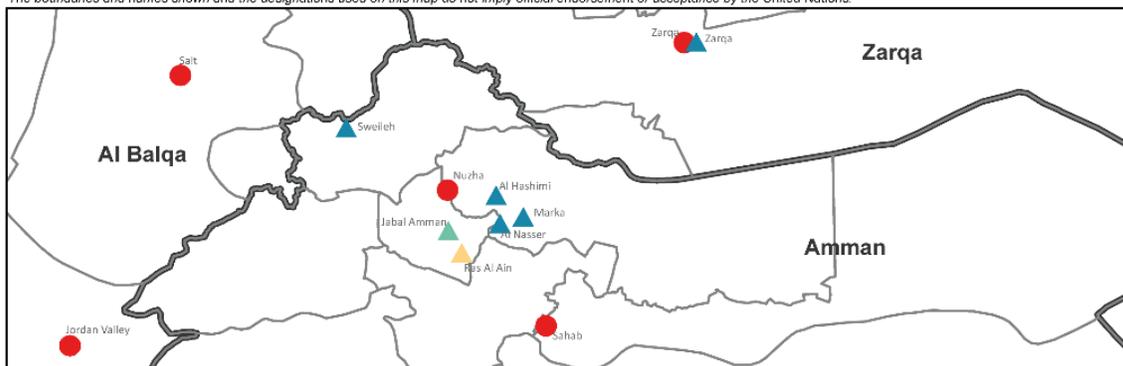
## GOOD PRACTICES

The joint involvement of both refugee and host community members, a unique engagement model, promotes social harmony:

- Since these committees are established with representation from both refugee and hosting communities including key local entities, the structure itself allows different local-level entities to engage in structured dialogue and work together to promote refugees' access to protection.
- Over the period, with the CSCs' efforts, a positive change is observed in hosting communities' perceptions towards refugees. CSCs have contributed significantly to building relationships between the two communities and increasingly played a greater role in inter-community mediation. In case of problems, the two communities are able to interact, look for solutions, and support peaceful co-existence at the grassroots level. In many instances, their efforts have brought successful results by defusing tensions and misunderstandings between the communities.



*The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.*



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