

Communication with Communities (CwC)

March 2020

Over **2,250,000** SMS sent to **more than 450,000** persons of concern, covering different topics.

85 posts made through social media with a combined reach of over **1,000,000** individuals, covering different topics.

164,944 phone calls handled by UNHCR Helpline (IVR), with financial assistance (53.3% of calls) being the top reason for calling.

18 messages sent through WhatsApp to CSCs and community members.

15 Mobile Helpdesks held countrywide, answering questions on protection, services and assistance.

Increase in followers by **4,439** on Facebook and **599** on Twitter.

Background

Communication with Communities (CwC) is a key element of UNHCR's protection and operational response. The priority of CwC activities is to ensure that refugees receive the right information in a timely manner, in order to preserve their protection, access to services, well-being, and to prevent fraud and protection risks.

UNHCR pays close attention to the occurrence of rumours by monitoring social media platforms, considering fraud and protection risks that they may generate, especially with the increase of resettlement opportunities. To prevent such risks, UNHCR shares information both proactively and reactively through various communication channels.

Using different communication tools is essential considering that the refugee population in Jordan is diverse in origin, backgrounds and locations and the fact that some messages concern either the entire refugee population or specific groups.



UNHCRJordan/Lilly Carlisle

Communication Channels

Social Media remains the most powerful communication channel in Jordan. It allows UNHCR to publish any sort of information at no cost* and is a key tool in communicating with refugees.

- **Facebook:** UNHCR Jordan's Facebook page currently has **114,865** followers, a significant majority of whom are refugees. In March, **35** posts were published on UNHCR Jordan's page related to CWC and other content, reaching a combined total of **756,141** individuals, and covering topics such as information and news for refugees, vacancy announcements, general news, donor highlights, among other. Our most successful social media post in March was a general anti-fraud message for POCs, which garnered over **85,000** views alone. In March, engagement increased by **46%** compared to the previous month – in terms of likes, shares and comments.

Link to page: <http://bit.ly/2HjRBn5>

Furthermore, UNHCR Jordan's Facebook page receives messages from its followers, requesting information on certain aspects of files for registered POCs. For reasons of capacity and protection concerns, UNHCR Jordan does not provide any tailored answer through its social media portals, especially because administrators cannot verify the identity of the sender. For that reason, an autoreply was enabled to the messenger tool; the script is available in **Annex I** (below).

Finally, comments on all published posts are being monitored to make sure none of them contain any details that could affect the protection status of persons of concern; comments containing file numbers, phone numbers, contact details, addresses, insults, or swear words are being removed on the spot. Simultaneously, comments that are considered harmful or containing hate speech or discriminatory/derogatory material that might seem offensive to followers or persons of concern are also being removed. Any comment that may be considered spam or an advertising attempt is also being removed and the user gets blocked; this is to avoid the possibility of exploitation or harassment of any of UNHCR's persons of concern.

In addition to UNHCR Jordan's official social media accounts, an agreement has been set in place with two independent pages ("Syrians gathered in Jordan" and "Syrian Diaries in Jordan"), with a combined number of followers exceeding **120,000** people, to take content from UNHCR Jordan's Facebook page and share it further through their pages. The support comes in a will to spread any announcement or piece of information that could of use to persons of concern in Jordan.

Links: <https://goo.gl/jBc49L> and <https://goo.gl/deKPxS>

- **Twitter:** UNHCR Jordan's account is followed by some **24,445** followers, but with the help of the "retweet" tool, certain Tweets reach a larger audience. In March, **50** Tweets were created to disseminate information of interest to refugees and general public, reaching a combined total of **269,830** individuals. Link to account: <https://twitter.com/UNHCRJordan>

Note: in case any person contacts UNHCR's Facebook page or Twitter account by any form (comment or message) to report a claimed fraud issue, exploitation attempt, or any type of misconduct, the message gets forwarded to the concerned unit, copying the Anti-Fraud Panel.

COVID-19 was the major highlight of mass communication during the month of March, with different messages and content disseminated through the varied channels. Content covered **Frequently Asked Questions**, which was first issued on 5 March, and updated on five different occasions to reflect the

changes in regulations, access to services, and other information relating to the situation in Jordan. Other content prepared for the response to COVID-19 included social media posts (27 posts on Facebook and Twitter), WhatsApp messages (15 messages), SMS, e-posters and country website articles (4 articles published and displayed on homepage).

Info-Sharing Group: in order to increase awareness of all actions taken in terms of communication among all units and offices of UNHCR Jordan, the Info-Sharing Group continued to be a key platform to disseminate information among staff ensuring that all front-line colleagues are on the same page when it comes to communication with communities and are aware of any recent announcements. This group was heavily relied on for colleagues to disseminate CwC material among counterparts, refugee groups and partners.

During the month of March, 18 announcements were shared through this group, echoing posts published on social media, in addition to many other pieces, mostly on COVID-19. Members of the group are engaging in a more active way to clarify certain matters when approached by POCs on selected topics, such as assistance and resettlement.

Bulk SMS Messaging facilitated by Zain Jordan has also been a powerful communication tool, allowing UNHCR Jordan to target audiences based off any set of criteria (nationality, location, education level, age, gender, marital status, etc.). During the month of March, about 2,250,000 messages were sent to more than 450,000 recipients to communicate information on different topics, related to livelihoods, education, assistance, resettlement, etc.

UNHCR Helpdesks are one of the face-to-face communication tools that UNHCR depends on to deliver services of counselling, protection or assistance related. During the month of March, 15 Helpdesks were held countrywide, covering all 12 governorates of Jordan and reaching out to persons of concern in distant areas (such as Ma'an, Aqaba and Tafilah). The decrease in activities this month is due to the interruption of working hours and suspension of certain services as of 15 March – in addition to the precautionary measures in place earlier in the month to limit movement and interactions *en masse*.

UNHCR Helpline (064008000) answered 164,944 phone calls from persons of concern through the Interactive Voice Response (IVR) system in March on all services provided by UNHCR (assistance, resettlement, protection, education, health). In response to the changes in working modalities due to COVID-19, pre-recorded messages were put in place to inform callers of the temporary changes, and the possibility to leave a message for particular enquiries; these messages are referred to the concerned unit for potential follow up purposes.

Bridges of Communication is a group that was established in April 2019 to enhance the operation's Communications with Communities (CwC) and Accountability to Affected Population (AAP). Comprising of 18 Syrian, Iraqi, Sudanese, Somali and Yemeni community leaders/representatives, the group meets on regular basis with UNHCR to discuss issues and challenges they face.

WhatsApp Tree: facilitated by UNHCR and the Bridges of Communities group, UNHCR has established a WhatsApp tree where information related to services available, recent announcements and addressing rumours among the community are shared alongside it acting as a two-way communication tool such as referral of vulnerable cases. In total the WhatsApp tree consists of around 85 groups comprising of 11,154 refugees.

Expected projects to be completed in the coming quarter

- Help.unhcr platform in Jordan (country site currently under construction)
- Chatbot on Facebook messenger application
- Possibility of establishing a 2-way SMS tool through Zain, with the support of DAG
- Engage one more independent Facebook group to take content from UNHCR Jordan's Facebook page and share it further (discussion currently ongoing)

Annex I

Message was temporarily changed to reflect the changes in working modalities in Jordan due to COVID-19.

Facebook autoreply in Arabic:

“مرحباً،
كي نتمكن من تطبيق أعلى معايير الحماية وسرية المعلومات والشفافية، يؤسفنا إعلامكم بأنه لا يمكننا الإجابة عن أسئلتكم عبر مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي.
نعذر عن عدم قدرتنا للاستجابة لأي اتصالات من خلال خط المساعدة التابع للمفوضية (064008000) في الوقت الحالي، حيث أن المجيب الآلي فقط هو المتاح في الظروف الحالية.
لطلب المساعدة بآلية مسائل قانونية أو بما يخص الاحتجاز، يرجى الاتصال بقسم الاحتجاز التابع للمفوضية (0796742200)، أو أرض – العون القانوني (0777387221) والمتاحين على مدار الساعة طيلة أيام الأسبوع.
إذا كان لديكم أسئلة حول فيروس كورونا أو الوصول إلى الخدمات المتعلقة بهذا الفيروس، يمكنكم الاتصال بالخط الساخن التابع لوزارة الصحة من خلال الرقم 111 والمتاح على مدار الساعة طيلة أيام الأسبوع.
إذا كانت لديكم أية حالة طوارئ صحية تهدد بالحياة وكنتم بحاجة إلى الحصول على خدمة أو رعاية طبية، يرجى الاتصال بخط الطوارئ الموحد 911 والمتاح على مدار الساعة طيلة أيام الأسبوع.
شاكرين تفهمكم،
المفوضية السامية للأمم المتحدة لشؤون اللاجئين في الأردن”.

Facebook autoreply in English:

“Dear Sender,
To maintain the highest standards of protection, confidentiality and anti-fraud measures we cannot answer your questions through our Facebook portal.
In the time being, the UNHCR Helpline (064008000) will only be operating through its interactive voice response system. We apologize for not being able to answer any calls.
For assistance in legal issues or detention, please call the UNHCR Detention Line (0796742200) or ARDD Legal Aid Emergency Line (0777387221). Both lines' working hours are 24/7.
If you have questions about corona virus or access to related services, you may get in touch with the Ministry of Health through the hotline number 111. Working hours are 24/7.
For emergency medical cases, you must call the Civil Defense through their unified emergency hotline number 911, who will provide the best advice.
Thank you.
UNHCR Jordan”

Contacts

Francesco Bert, Senior External Relations Officer, bert@unhcr.org
Hassan Mohammed, Protection Officer (Community-Based), mohammeh@unhcr.org
Lilly Carlisle, Associate External Relations Officer, carlisle@unhcr.org
Meshal El-Fayez, Senior Communications Associate, elfayez@unhcr.org