

***The Plight of the Labour Market in the Zaatari
and Azraq Refugee Camps in Jordan***

**An Assessment of the Labour Market for Syrian Refugees Based in the
Zaatari and Azraq Refugee Camps and Surrounding Areas in Jordan**

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SUSTAINABLE **R**ESearch & **D**EVELOPMENT
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Acronyms

CfW	Cash for Work
FCA	Finn Church Aid
FGDs	Focus Group Discussions
GoJ	Government of Jordan
HIE	Al-Hassan Industrial Estate
ICT	Information and Communication Technologies
ILO	International Labour Organization
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organization
JD	Jordanian Dinar
KHBTDA	King Hussein Bin Talal Development Area
LL2E	Linking Learning to Earning
LMA	Labour Market Assessment
MIE	Al Mafraq Industrial Estate
NRC	Norwegian Refugee Council
QIZ	Qualifying Industrial Zones
SME	Small and Micro Enterprise
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
SRD	Sustainable Research and Development Center
TVET	Technical and Vocation Education and Training
UN	United Nations
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
VTC	Vocation Training Center

Executive Summary

Within the framework of the Jordan Response Plan to the Syria Crisis 2018-2020 and FCA's Jordan Country Strategy, FCA works on multiple levels to respond to the specific needs of Syrian refugees and communities. FCA's projects in the Zaatari and Azraq camps contribute to improving the resilience and well-being of Syrian refugees. Therefore, this study has been conducted to investigate market opportunities, to identify concrete ways for refugees to start new micro-businesses or integrate into the labour market, and for FCA to support their development taking into account specific situations, challenges, and opportunities faced by female and male refugees.

A mixed **methodology** and participatory approach was adopted to collect data, including qualitative and quantitative methods of analysis. The study was conducted from October to February 2019, were used. Secondary data were compiled and processed while primary data were collected through Focus Group Discussions (FGDs).

The study's key **findings** show that since the Syrian refugees have arrived in Jordan, they have received a variety of skills and qualifications that they didn't hold before coming to Jordan. However, the majority of interviewed households in the Zaatari and Azraq camps are economically inactive, and the refugees do not have a plan to return to their homeland. The results demonstrate that most Syrian refugees have skills and experience which can benefit both the camp and surrounding communities. Increased awareness of this could help to change public perceptions and foster community cohesion.

Further, the study showed a rate of unemployment of 54% and partial unemployment of 43% among the interviewed households*. Expansion of the current FCA programming needs to be directed towards vocational training projects, with an increased focus on business skills and self-employment. It also shows that the current labour market inside the camps, as the main employer, is an inflated sector that cannot expand further. There are potential opportunities to involve the private sector in expanding the labour market in the surrounding areas of the camps. Therefore, until private companies and other private employers are in a position to recruit more extensively, FCA could promote skills that lend themselves to self-employment.

As a **conclusion**, without enabling Syrian refugees to be economically active and integrating them into the labour market, they will continue to rely on international assistance. It is a very artificial environment with INGOs supporting and funding Syrians just to live. To date, much of the international livelihood support has been in the form of food and cash assistance to most Syrian refugees. The combination of the current aid system and legal constraints is contributing to a sense of dependency among the Syrians and represents a waste of valuable human resources and potential due to the dependency on humanitarian aid. Young people growing up in this

* Partial unemployment indicates 3 months of employment or less per a year.

environment miss the opportunity to acquire professional accredited knowledge and skills which are critical for their protection, development, and reconstruction of themselves and their communities.

Finally, this study identifies the practical **recommendations** specific to the refugee populations of the Zaatari and Azraq camps. FCA, in cooperation and coordination with the GoJ, donors, UN agencies, and international and national non-governmental organizations, needs to

- Facilitate the role of the private sector in generating new employment opportunities in the areas surrounding the camps,
- Work to enact a legal tool to protect the refugees' financial rights to enable them to legally claim their wages,
- Increase the vocational training opportunities for those older than 32,
- Expand outreach to connect Syrian refugees with the labour market, including the establishment of employment service centers and develop mobile applications, and
- Provide an enabling environment for small and micro enterprise development inside the camps and legal environment for marketing the products outside the camp.

LABOUR MARKET ASSESSMENT IN ZATARI AND AZRAQ CAMPS AND THE SURROUNDING AREAS IN JORDAN[†]

Introduction

After more than seven years since the start of the war in Syria, Jordan is now transitioning to a longer-term, protracted refugee situation. It appears that a significant number of Syrian refugees will remain in Jordan for the foreseeable future. As in many similar protracted contexts, the international attention and support waning while the need for assistance remains. Therefore, there is a significant need to develop and implement economic projects and programs that enable Syrian refugees to acquire best-fit skills to be economically active and earn a safe livelihood.

There has been relatively little wide-scale information available on the skills and qualifications and labour market needs of Syrian refugees in the Zaatari and Azraq camps in Jordan.

According to the UNHCR Refugee Skills Mapping in Zaatari Camp Jordan (November, 2017), the majority of men and women are willing to work in agriculture, while there is a need to assess the skills available in Zaatari and Azraq Camps, and the Syrian refugees' willingness to take over employment opportunities in the surrounding areas. In order to address this information gap, Finn Church Aid (FCA) commissioned Sustainable Research and Development Center (SRD) to conduct an assessment of the skills and labour market opportunities for Syrian refugees in the Zaatari and Azraq camps.

The principal objective of the study was to assess the labour market for Syrian refugees within and in the surroundings of the Zaatari and Azraq camps in order to empower vulnerable Syrian women and men through increased access to employment and self-reliance opportunities and meaningful engagement in community life, mainly through developing the capabilities for initiating micro-businesses.

Background

The crisis in Syria has forced Syrian families to flee their country. Most Syrian refugees in Jordan reside in cities and towns while the rest live in three refugee camps in northern Jordan. Residents rely heavily on donors for a monthly cash assistance per person to purchase food, but in the long term these sources will disappear. Therefore, there is a great need for work in the camp. Finding meaningful opportunities that draw upon the skills that refugees possess is crucial at this point in order to generate income and avoid the dulling of existing skills. The developed market in the camp is anticipated to provide the camp population with numerous opportunities for income, as

[†] *This document was produced as part of a contract between the Finn Church Aid (FCA) and SRD Center. The views expressed herein should not be taken, in any way, to reflect the official opinion of FCA, and FCA is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information it contains.*

well as improving their quality of life by making available products and services needed. For the purpose of supporting the Syrian refugees in the Zaatari and Azraq camps by giving them jobs or livelihood activities, it is a vital pre-condition to understand the basic demands and the available skills of the refugees.

Zaatari Refugee Camp was opened in 2012. The camp is home to 78,804 refugees. Zaatari Camp, close to Jordan's northern border with Syria has become emblematic of the displacement of Syrians across the Middle East. The Camp's informal market, reflecting the vibrant trade relationship between the peoples of northern Jordan and southern Syria, comprises of approximately 3,000 informal shops and businesses[‡]. Azraq refugee camp was opened in April 2014. Azraq camp currently host 40,901 Syrian refugees. The camp has the potential to be expanded to accommodate 120,000 - 130,000 refugees at maximum capacity[§]. Both camps are managed and coordinated by Syrian Refugee Affairs Directorate (SRAD) and UNHCR.

Finn Church Aid (FCA) in Jordan

Finn Church Aid (FCA) is the largest Finnish development cooperation organization and the second largest provider of humanitarian assistance. FCA operates in 12 countries, where the needs are most dire. FCA works with the poorest people, regardless of their religious beliefs, ethnic background or political convictions. FCA's work is based on rights, which means that FCA's operations are guided by equality, non-discrimination, and responsibility. In other words, FCA's programmatic goals are based on the right to quality education and livelihood. In the livelihood context, FCA promotes the right to develop, secure, and sustain livelihoods through employment, entrepreneurship, and strengthened resilience. FCA focuses on creating job opportunities for youth in vulnerable life situations.

Within the framework of the Jordan Response Plan to the Syria Crisis 2018-2020 and FCA's Jordan Country Strategy, FCA works on multiple levels to respond to the specific needs of Syrian refugees and communities. FCA's projects in the Zaatari and Azraq camps contribute to improving the resilience and well-being of Syrian refugees. The overall goal of the program is to empower vulnerable Syrian refugees through increased access to self-reliance opportunities and meaningful engagement in community life to put in place the foundational cornerstones for increased self-reliance and durable solutions for the 'day after' in Syria. FCA's current and future programming for Syrian refugees revolves around education and livelihoods, with an increasing consideration to help refugees to integrate in the labour market and/or be better prepared for a possible return.

Since 2012, FCA has provided informal (non-certified) education programs to enhance the overall well-being of the beneficiaries and to promote the fulfillment of their right to quality education. This program has included educational activities (basic learning, technical skills, post basic

[‡] UNHCR Jordan Zaatari Refugee Camp Factsheet April 2018.

[§] UNHCR Azraq Refugee Camp: Fact Sheet, August 2018.

education, and income generation) for adolescent and youth aged 12-30. Furthermore, FCA has engaged in safe and stimulating recreational activities that are both culturally and age appropriate such as sports, play, and games. All the activities are aimed at restoring a sense of normalcy in the beneficiaries' lives, increasing safety, and promoting psychosocial wellbeing. This helps develop children and youth's life skills and coping mechanisms, as well as promote their participation in daily community life. Recently, FCA expanded its program to vocational and entrepreneurial training, thus striving to ensure direct productive links between education and gainful employment. These interventions have so far been implemented in refugee-hosting communities outside the camps, applying FCA's Linking Learning to Earning (LL2E) approach in the Jordanian context.

To improve the sustainability and long-term impacts of its interventions with refugees, FCA Jordan has undertaken to explore the opportunities for extending the LL2E approach to the Zaatari and Azraq camps. To this end, the Labour Market Assessment will inform FCA's programming to enhance Syrian refugee's access to gainful employment opportunities both within and in the surroundings of the Zaatari and Azraq camps, through increased access to longer term economic and livelihood opportunities. Therefore, this study has been conducted to investigate market opportunities and to identify concrete ways for refugees to start new micro-businesses or integrate with the labour market, and for FCA to support their development, taking into account the specific situations, challenges, and opportunities faced by female and male refugees.

The programme aims at empowering women and men in the Zaatari and Azraq camps through increased access to longer term economic recovery and livelihood opportunities. The rationale behind this study is based on the need to deliver sustainable employment opportunities to Syrian refugees inside the two camps. It seeks to find ways to facilitate Syrian women and men's entry into the labour market and provide them with lifelong skills, expertise, and experience.

Objectives of the Study

The Labour Market Assessment was to identify and provide practical recommendations specific to the refugee populations of the Zaatari and Azraq camps. The specific objectives of the study were:

1. What are refugees' existing skills and capacities for employment and possible gaps in relation to the identified job market requirements?
2. What are the skills in demand in the job market that are likely to lead to employment, potential employers/sectors, and their requirements regarding terms of employment and working conditions as perceived by the employers?
3. What are the skills that are likely to lead to low-investment, easy to access, and gainful self-employment or business as well as available services?
4. What are the over-saturated sectors and areas where intervention is least needed?

Methodology

The Labour Market Assessment was designed to assess the skills and market opportunities for residents in the Zaatari and Azraq Refugee Camps and provide recommendations for actions for skill development and livelihood programs in the camp. A mixed methodology and participatory approach was adopted to collect data, including qualitative and quantitative methods of analysis.

The study was conducted from October to November 2018, where primary and secondary, quantitative and qualitative research methods have been used. Secondary data were compiled and processed. Primary data were collected through Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with groups gathered 136 households in the camps through semi-structured questionnaires. A list of questions drafted to guide the focus group discussions. These focus group questions were purposefully open-ended to allow for guided discussion.

The study community (sources of information) consisted of three groups:

1. Heads of households
2. Business owners (traders and producers in the camps and surrounding areas)
3. Organizations involved in management and service provision in the camps

Three key data collection techniques were employed to gather the data needed to answer the questions the study was intended to answer. The following describes the techniques and tools used.

Focus Group Discussions

Focus group sessions followed the same design. Interview protocols were developed with a number of questions and additional probing questions to ensure all matters of interest to this study were covered.

1. Focus Group Discussion Protocol for Heads of Households in Camp
2. Focus Group Discussion Protocol - Consumer Needs
3. Interview Protocol for INGO
4. Producers Interview Protocol
5. Traders Interview Protocol
6. Training Institutions Survey

(See Annex 1)

Sixteen semi-structured focus group discussions in total were conducted during October and November 2018 with total of 136 head of households (55 from the Zaatari camp and 81 from the Azraq camp). All sessions were conducted in the FCA Camp Office in each of the two camps, lasting for one hour and thirty minutes to two hours in duration. All participants were organized

by the FCA mobilizers in the camp, which were provided with a schedule and participant characteristics for each of the focus group discussions. Table 1 presents some of the key descriptive information of each focus group discussion.

Table 1: Composition of Households Participating in the FGDs

	Female			Male			Grand Total
	Azraq	Zaatari	Total	Azraq	Zaatari	Total	
Involved in Work	16	7	23	19	21	40	63
Age: >32	3	2	5	6	2	8	13
18 - 22	5	3	8	1	1	2	10
23 - 27	5	1	6	7	5	12	18
28 - 32	3	1	4	5	13	18	22
Never Involved in Work	24	19	43	22	8	30	73
Age: >32	6	4	10	2	1	3	13
18 - 22	10	9	19	12	1	13	32
23 - 27		4	4	3	3	6	10
28 - 32	8	2	10	5	3	8	18
Grand Total	40	26	66	41	29	70	136

Two teams were formed, each consisting of two skilled researchers. Each team covered one camp. Due to the vulnerability of the participants, ethical considerations were put in place to avoid any harm or risk of subsequent vulnerability as a result of participating in the study. When needed, participants signed a document to give their approval to display their photos and certificates** in this report.

All qualitative feedback was summarized in analysis matrices in order to ease the identification of themes as well as between-group comparisons. Selected background information and feedback on skills history were analyzed and presented as quantified data.

Semi-Structured Interviews

Semi-structured interviews with business owners (traders and producers), INGOs staff, and training providers were planned to explore current and future skill demand and needs in the upcoming market. Questionnaires were developed to guide the collection of needed data (see Annex 2).

The researcher worked with FCA staff in the both camps to identify 11 business owners (5 in Zaatari and 6 in Azraq). Four other key persons in the surrounding area of the Zaatari camp were interviewed while none in the surrounding area of the Azraq camp because there is no population

** Please see image 1, page 16 in this report.

living there, except the Arab Company for Livestock Development (ACOLID)^{††}. The study team was able to interview two INGOs working in the camp, and two Vocational Training Centers (VTC) for potential partnership were visited.

Findings and Analysis

The results of the assessment show that since Syrian refugees have arrived in Jordan, they have received a variety of skills and qualifications that they didn't hold before coming to Jordan. However, the majority of households in the Zaatari and Azraq camps are economically inactive, and mostly they do not have a plan to return to their homeland. The results demonstrate that most Syrian refugees have skills and experience which can benefit both the camp and the surrounding communities. Increased awareness of this could help to change public perceptions and foster community cohesion. It is hoped that the following findings and recommendations will also be a useful tool for guiding humanitarian aid and practitioners who are involved with helping Syrian refugees into sustainable economic opportunities and integration into the labour market.

1. Composition of Households

Ages in the households participating in the Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) in both camps ranged from 18 to 50 years. The average age of women was 27 years. Furthermore, 31% of the participants fell within the range of 18 to 22 and 29% within the range of 28 to 32, but there was no significant difference between the age groups, as shown in Table 2. It is worth noting that 19% of the participants are above 32 years old and provided feedback on capacity building programs implemented in the camps that excluded this age range.

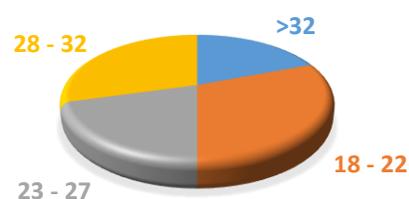


Table 2: Households According to Age

Age Range	Azraq Camp	Zaatari Camp	Total	
			n	%
18 - 22	28	14	42	31%
23 - 27	15	13	28	21%
28 - 32	21	19	40	29%
> 32	17	9	26	19%
Total	81	55	136	100%

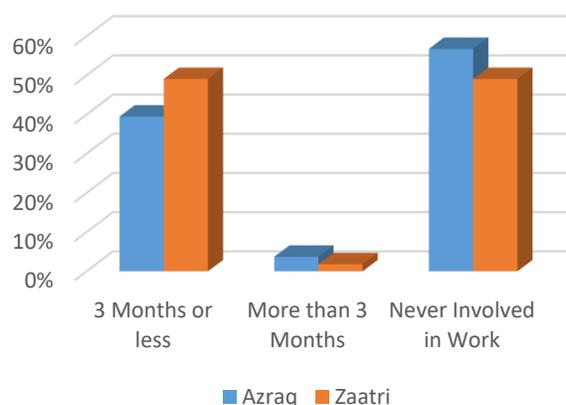
^{††} The objective of ACOLID is to develop and promote livestock resources and the industries associated with them. The declared capital of ACOLID is \$214,104,000, which managed to establish 38 projects, one of them located at 10 Kilometers to the east of Azraq Camp.

With regards to the employment status, 53% of the participants have never been involved in work^{##}. However, this percentage does not imply that the rest (46%) who indicated they are involved in work are employed in regular or stable jobs. Among those who are involved in work, only 4% of the participants indicated that they are involved in more than three months of work. In total, the study shows a rate of unemployment of 54% and partial unemployment of 43% of the total men and women interviewed in this study.

Composition of Households According to Camp and Employment

Table 3 presents data collected from the participants on the status of employment. An average of 3% of the participants have been involved in work more than 3 months, 43% involved in work for 3 months or less while the remaining 54% have never been involved in work. This significant result reflects clearly to what extent the labour market is in distress and lacking economic activities.

Table 3: Households According to Camp and Employment



Involvement in Work	Azraq	Zaatari	Total
Three Months or Less	32	27	59
	39.5%	49.1%	43.4%
More Than 3 Months	3	1	4
	3.7%	1.8%	2.9%
Never Involved in Work	46	27	73
	56.8%	49.1%	53.7%
Grand Total	81	55	136

^{##} Based on the International Labour Organization (ILO) definition of unemployment, a person is considered unemployed if they are out of work, looking for work, and available to work within four weeks. By this definition, only those persons who stated that their main activity was "unemployed and looking for work" have been classified as unemployed, but "Not Involved in work" and all other non-working persons were classified as economically inactive in order to focus in this study on skills and education.

Economic Activity before Coming to Jordan

Approximately 87% of men were employed (either in employment or self-employed) and 20% of women were employed before they came to Jordan. This result shows that women were economically less active than men before coming to Jordan. On the other hand, the findings clearly illustrate that those respondents who were economically active prior to coming to Jordan were self-employed, such as painter; general home maintenance; construction; farming; bakery and sweet shop; supermarket owner; mechanic; and tailor.

Table 4: Households According to Economic Activity before Coming to Jordan

Economic Activity before Coming to Jordan	Unemployed		Employed		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Female Households	53	80%	13	20%	66	49%
Male Households	9	13%	61	87%	70	51%
Grand Total	62	46%	74	54%	136	100%

This might reflect higher levels of self-employment overall in Syria. It also suggests that the Syrian population in Jordan is an enterprising one and that promoting self-employment might be one way to engage them in the labour market.

Composition of Households According to Marital Status and Status of Employment

Of the participants in FGDs, 73% were married and 27% were single. Of the sub-sample, 79% involved in work were married. It is worth mentioning here that the married group includes married, divorced, and widowed. Most of the participants who were divorced or widowed did not prefer to state their marital status.

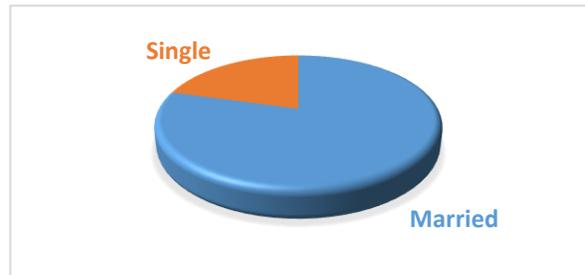


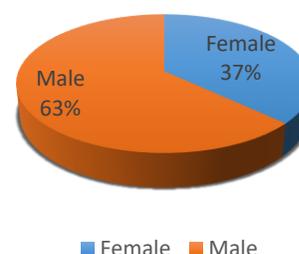
Table 5: Households According to Marital Status and Status of Employment

Marital Status	Involved in Work		Never Involved in Work		Grand Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Married	50	79%	49	67%	99	73%
Single	13	21%	24	33%	37	27%
Grand Total	63	100%	73	100%	136	100%

Composition of Households According to Gender and Status of Employment

Of the participants who were involved in work, 37% were female, 51% out of them are married. It is clear that the majority of those involved in work are male, but this does not relate to the skills or qualifications. Instead, it is mainly related to the cultural circumstances where priority is given to males. However, with fewer jobs available in camps, both skilled males and females feel they are more disadvantaged as these skills are not invested in a job.

Table 6: Households According to Gender and Status of Employment



Camp	Involved in Work	%	Never Involved in Work	%	Grand Total
Azraq	35	43%	46	57%	81
Female	16	40%	24	60%	40
Male	19	46%	22	54%	41
Zaatari	28	51%	27	49%	55
Female	7	27%	19	73%	26
Male	21	72%	8	28%	29
Total (Both Camps)					
Female	23	37%	43	59%	66
Male	40	63%	30	41%	70
Total	63	100%	73	100%	136

2. Livelihoods and Skills

Demand for work among women and men in Zaatari and Azraq refugee camps is very high. At the time of conducting the study, the camp residents had no access to livelihood options in the camp other than cash assistance and cash for work (CfW) opportunities that are offered by INGOs and UN agencies operating in the camp, as well as small businesses such as shops inside the camps or day workers outside the camps. In fact, CfW is considered mostly as a protection rather than a livelihood intervention, while working outside the camp is not an attractive choice by most of the respondents even they have work permits due to the usual unpaid wages and difficulties in transportation, especially for women.

Most Popular Training Programs Delivered in the Camps

The following list shows the most popular training programs delivered in the camps, and the majority of participants indicated that they are oversaturated skills:

1: Tailoring and Sewing (92%)

2: Food Production (83%)

3: Beautician and Hairdressing (72%)

The vast majority of participants in the FGDs received a variety of trainings. The number of training programs received by participants were from 1 to 25 training programs. The average number of training programs per participant was 4. The subjects of the training programs varied from social skills, vocational, technical education and training, business skills, and other trainings for certain purposes.

- Tailoring, Embroidery, and Sewing
- Beautician and Hairdressing
- Food Production
- Teaching Skills
- Air Conditioning and Refrigeration
- Business Administration
- Baking in Restaurants
- Farming
- First Aid
- General Maintenance
- Electricity (Electricity Maintenance and Installation)
- ICDL
- Integration of PWDs in the Community
- Leadership and Teamwork
- Life Skills
- Interview Techniques
- Mechanic Training
- Micro-business Management
- Office Management
- Painting
- Photographing
- Positive Parenting
- Project Management
- Recycling
- Communication Skills
- English Course

The list shows that agencies operating in the camps put exaggerated emphasis on training programs related to “soft skills”, such as life skills, interview techniques, and communication skills. In general, training and education in the camps does not lead to employment, but they widen employment options and thereby increase employability.

The GoJ has recently allowed vocational training programs for Syrian refugees in preparation for return or resettlement. Most of the training has focused on skills that can be practiced at home and don’t require an official certificate to practice, such as tailoring and sewing, food production, beautician and hairdressing, catering, child toys, and mobile phone repair. The main emphasis

has been on the training of women. Most home-based businesses are not particularly lucrative and money earned somehow contribute to self-sufficiency.

Ms. Abeer received 22 different trainings. “I knocked on every door. I applied for every single job opportunity in the camp, but no success, I hope one day I will find something.” She said.



Image 1: 22 Certificates for one trainee (Ms. Abeer, Zaatari Refugee Camp)

One of the key factors that encourage participants to attend the training programs is the transportation fees or stipends, which raise a question about the effectiveness and appropriateness of these programs, especially when we know that some agencies are under pressure to get a certain number of beneficiaries into their programs. They usually offer these incentives or enticements that are not sustainable or may undermine the efforts of longer-term development agencies. It was shared, however, that many of the participants would be unable to attend the training programs if they had to pay for the inside the camp transportation themselves, especially in Zaatari Camp. While respondents from Azraq Camp (Village 3 and 5) shared that transportation is expensive and not enough to meet the demand of the camp’s population.

Potential Sectors for Technical and Vocation Education and Training (TVET)

One of the key findings for both camps is that vocational training can only result in lasting employment if it is accompanied by the needed tools to start the business, such as machines, workplace, and finances. Thus, this assessment identified vocational market opportunities for

Syrian refugees in the Zaatari and Azraq camps. The participants in FGDs shared their feedback about the potential sectors/industries that they would like to be trained in. The majority of participants selected the following vocational skills:

Zaatari Refugee Camp

A. Top recommended sectors (most participants declared these sectors as important to learn):

Based on the data collected from Zaatari Refugee Camp indicated that the following sectors have been identified as important to learn.

Sector	Market Opportunity
1. Caravan maintenance	Most of the caravans need maintenance in winter. Some organizations provide maintenance of one caravan per family while the remaining caravans remain without maintenance.
2. Heater maintenance (kerosene and gas heater)	In each district there is a need to establish a workstation specialized in heater maintenance.
3. Electricity (electricity maintenance and installation for houses)	Needed in labor market outside the camp and well paid.
4. Information technology (soft skills and hardware maintenance)	The lack of ICT skills is one of the main constraints to getting a job, especially jobs with the NGOs.
5. Auto maintenance (engine and mechanics)	Needed in labor market outside the camp and well paid. Some participants claim they have skills but should be updated.
6. Carpentry and decoration (woodcraft)	Some participants possess brilliant skills in carpentry and decoration, but they look for certification to have their own small business.
7. Soap production	Soap products includes soap and deodorant. Well needed in the camp and can be produced, but they need training to produce different types of soap from a low-cost material and with a substitute for sodium hydroxide (NaOH) because it is banned from the camp. Selling soap products in the shops inside the camp and at the woman & girl Centers, while selling outside the camp could be profitable but looks difficult in the short-term.
8. Auto maintenance (electricity, including hybrid engine)	Needed in labor market outside the camp, well paid. Some participants claim they have skills but should be updated.

B. Less recommended sectors (fewer participants declared these sectors as important to learn):

Sector	Market Opportunity
1. AutoCAD	For some households who have qualifications and skills related to technician jobs, AutoCAD will enable better opportunity, such as in manufacturing, making precast concrete, construction, architecture, electrical engineering, and drafting.

Sector	Market Opportunity
2. Bakery production	There is one bakery and sweet production unit in the camp, and its products are distributed outside the camp. There is a common complain about the quality of the bread they buy every day. Some people from the camp and surrounding area travel to Mafraq to buy good quality bread every day. Some Jordanian people in the surrounding area are willing to establish a bakery and sweet shop but they lack the know-how.
3. Dairy industry	The Zaatari Camp is located within Um Al-Jmal Municipality which has a well written proposal for a dairy plant project. There is no single dairy plant licensed in the District of Um A-Jmal. When this proposal gets financed, the mayor expects that about 100 people from Zaatari camp will be hired ⁸ .
4. Food production (such as juices, sweets, spaghetti, canned food, and Jam industry)	Due to the excess of fruit production in the farms surrounding the camp, people in the camp look for certified programs to enable them to establish their own food production business. The Zaatari Camp is located within Um Al-Jmal Municipality which has a well written proposal for a jam plant project. There is no single jam plant licensed in the district of Um A-Jmal. When this proposal gets financed, the mayor expects that about 120 people from the Zaatari camp will be hired ⁹ .
5. Nursing	The people in the camp look for certified programs to enable them work in health facilities inside or outside the camp, such as elderly health care workers and medical Office administrators.

Some individual respondents pointed to specific jobs that they are welcoming training on skills related to these jobs that mostly will enable job seekers find better jobs inside or outside the camp, such as:

1. Accounting
2. Mobile phone repair
3. Nurseries and flower green houses
4. Ranching and poultry farming
5. Renewable energy (to generate electricity during the daytime)
6. Welding, plumbing, and metal workstation

Azraq Refugee Camp

A. Top recommended sectors (most participants declared these sectors as important to learn):

Based on the data collected from Village 3 and 5, the following sectors have been identified as important to learn in both villages. While most participants from Village 5 shared that unlike other villages in the camp, the work opportunities are very limited due to the limited number of INGOs operating in Village 5. It is recommended to encourage people to start their

⁸ Interview with Mr. Omar Al-Sroor, the Head of Development Unit at *Um Al-Jmal Municipality*.

⁹ Interview with Mr. Omar Al-Sroor, the Head of Development Unit at *Um Al-Jmal Municipality*.

own small businesses such as shops and home-based businesses inside the Village 5. In general, people in Village 5 are facing several challenges, such as:

- Very limited job opportunities.
- Lack of fund to start up their own business.
- Constrains in moving and communicating with other villages in the camp and outside the camp.
- Women contribution in economic activities is very limited, except some limited cases in which women are working from home, mainly in sewing.
- Due to the tough security situation in village 5 people usually feel unsafe.

Sector	Market Opportunity
1. Information technology (soft skills and hardware maintenance)	The lack of ICT skills is one of the main constraints to getting a job, especially jobs with the NGOs.
2. Business skills (how to start a small business)	Shared by participants who have skills or entrepreneurship activity.
3. Electricity (electricity maintenance and installation for houses)	Needed in labor market inside the camp ¹⁰ .
4. Literacy and adult teaching skills	Spread of illiteracy is high. Some participants consider teaching adults as a job opportunity, especially for women.

B. Less recommended sectors (fewer participants declared these sectors as important to learn):
(Highlighted by respondents as less needed professions)

1. Carpentry and Decoration (Woodcraft)
2. Glass and mirror production
3. Hairdressing and barber
4. Handicrafts (accessories, embroidery, sewing, cosmetics)
5. Mobile phone repair
6. Welding and metal workstation

Based on the determined potential market demands for products and services which participants indicated that they can make or supply, the best starting point is the development of small and micro enterprises (SMEs).

3. Market Needs

Participants reported that their daily, weekly, and occasional needs are sufficiently met. “Everything is available in the camp,” said a 38-year-old woman in Zaatari Camp. However, they

¹⁰ Most of the participants from Azraq camp are not interested to work outside the camp. Also there is no market surrounding the Azraq camp.

complained of the high prices and low quality of basic needs such as fruits, vegetables, and bread. Further, the refugees' needs cannot be met without external aid, which means there is a critical risk of dependency on humanitarian aid to avoid creating illegal activities or economies. Cash for work (CfW) in the camps is the main source of income but most of the participants indicated that there are too few jobs in relation to the number of job seekers.

On the other hand, based on conversations with participants in FGDs, it is unlikely that people will return to Syria until the security situation significantly improves. While many Syrians are anxious to return home, some shared with the researchers that they will never be able to go back to Syria. In the case of forced return, the majority of participants have safety and livelihood concerns.

“If I am sent back to Syria, I will need tens of years to rebuild my life and house. I will not find a job, and I will feel unsafe.” Abu Shadi said - 42-year-old Syrian man,.

Market Needs Inside and Outside the Camps

The survey showed that the following list of sectors and the related specific jobs are employment prospects that have been identified as potential sectors for future demand inside the camps and in the surrounding areas. The market needs outside the Zaatari Camp includes Um Al-Jmal Municipality and Al-Mafraq city, while for Azraq Camp includes Azraq and Zarqa cities. Additionally, there are some refugees who possess skills to work in these sectors, but they need to refresh and update their knowledge and skills in these sectors:

Sector	Zaatari Camp	Azraq Camp
Furniture making and repair (carpentry, cupboards, chairs, tables, etc.; upholstery; curtains; rattan furniture)	Inside the camp	Inside the camp
Horticulture (house plants; garden plants; flower planting; bouquet making)	Not identified as potential sector	Outside the camp
Building (brick makers; plumbers; blocks making; masons; electricians; painters; door/window)	Outside the camp	Outside the camp
Electronic repairs (mobile, screen; computers)	Inside and outside the camp	Inside and outside the camp
Pastry (cakes; doughnuts; breads)	Outside the camp	Outside the camp
Water and Sanitation (digging of wells; installation of water pumps; repair of water pumps)	Outside the camp	Outside the camp
Blacksmithing (hoes; knives; cutlasses; grinding)	Inside the camp	Inside the camp

Sector	Zaatari Camp	Azraq Camp
Refrigeration	Outside the camp	Outside the camp
Home/body care products (soaps; detergents; grease; body cream; perm)	Inside the camp	Inside the camp
Fruits and vegetable preservation (drying; jams; cordials)	Inside and outside the camp	Not identified as potential sector
Motor repair (small generators; chain saws; motors; tuk tuk).	Inside the camp	Inside the camp
Metal work (blacksmiths; welders)	Outside the camp	Outside the camp
Automobile (drivers (demand for drivers/mechanics combined; Auto-electricians, panel beaters; tire repair, motorbike repair, and battery repair; car mechanics)	Outside the camp	Outside the camp
Road building and maintenance (scaling and compacting; side brushing; gutters)	Outside the camp	Outside the camp

The results from FGD organized in the ILO Office in Zaatari Camp¹¹ showed that the majority of Syrian refugee women works in Al-Hassan Industrial Estate (HIE) in Irbid¹² followed by the Al Mafraq Industrial Estate (MIE).¹³ Most of these women work in textile factories. The manager of the Century Group in HIE illustrated that about 50 workers everyday are being leaving the factory and new workers are being hired due to the low passion to work among Jordanian youth as they feel they don't need such handcraft jobs with long working hours.

On the other hand, most of Syrian refugee men from Zaatari Camp usually work in the agriculture sector in Mafraq. In fact, the agriculture sector is most preferred labour sector by Syrian refugees because the work is usually per day and they receive the cash wages immediately after completion of the work. Sometimes instead of cash money they receive the wages as part of the crops which they consume at home or sell them in the camp market.

Why many of Syrian Refugees do not work?

¹¹ The focus group discussion has been held on 6 March 2019 with Mr. Mohammed Azam, Mr. Kahled Sarhan, and Mr. Sauod AlZou'bi (Mobile: 0798175813).

¹² *Al-Hassan Industrial Estate (HIE)* is located in Irbid Governorate, 47 Km from Zaatari Camp, established in 1991, and in 1998 was designated as the first Qualifying Industrial Zones (QIZ) in the world. HIE accommodates more than 154 industries creating 37,000 Job opportunities.

¹³ *Al Mafraq Industrial Estate (MIE)* established in 2016, (MIE) is located within the King Hussein Bin Talal Development Area (KHBTD) in Mafraq, 22 km from Zaatari Camp at the nexus of a modern highway network connecting Jordan, Syria, Iraq and Saudi Arabia.

There are many constraints that prevent some Syrian Refugees from getting a job, while other Syrian refugees are unwilling to work.

- Some companies put an age limit (mostly should be less than 35 years old).
- Some jobs require specific experience that they do not have.
- Lack of skills even if they received trainings because many of the trainees attend training programs only for receiving a fund in terms of covering their transportation cost, meals, and to buy work tools and equipment. Usually they sell these tools and equipment immediately after completion of the program. Some of Syrian refugees are really unwilling to work because they receive all basic needs (such as food, pocket money, clothes, and shelter) from the UNHCR and other INGOs.
- Employers cannot hire more Syrians because they cannot exceed the quota which should be maximum 30% of the total employees. This rule is under revision by the GoJ in order to increase this percentage.
- Transportation from the camp to the companies outside the camp is one of the main obstacles that prevent Syrian refugees from work, especially women. Most of the Syrian refugee workers request that the company must offer free transportation from and to the camp while most of the companies do not comply with this requirement.
- Working hours are sometimes challenging for the Syrian refugee workers especially for evening jobs. Syrian workers do not welcome the work during the night at Al-Jazeera slaughter Company despite the company's commitment to offer transportation.

4. Potential Opportunities in Private Sector

Structured interviews with small and medium business managers/owners operating inside and outside the camps were planned to explore the current and future skill demand, skill development schemes, and intentions to support livelihoods in the upcoming market. The researchers were able to interview 9 business owners (6 supermarket and 3 restaurant owners) working in the camp, and only 4 business managers/owners outside Zaatari camp. In general, most of business owners see recruiting Syrian refugees as a way to bring fresh perspectives to business and pay lower wages.

The case of surrounding of Azraq camp is different due to the fact that there is nothing surrounding Azraq camp, some Syrians, mostly men are working in Amman and Zarqa. While, any employment opportunity in Zarqa and Amman that includes "sleeping over" is highly welcomed by Syrian men. Whereas for Syrian women to work outside the camp is highly challenging as they have to leave their children and families from early morning to the evening hours as well as they face usual daily challenges in the transportations.

Private Sector Willing to Give More Work Opportunities

The key companies that cooperate and encourage the employment of Syrian refugees in the surrounding of Zaatari Camp are mainly:

1. Bonyan Aluminum Factory
2. Hamouda Dairy Factory
3. Straight Line Factory, Al Hassan Industrial City, Irbid
4. Century Group, Al Hassan Industrial City, Irbid
5. Traditional Fashion Factory
6. Al-Jazeera slaughterhouse.

Through exploring the area surrounding Zaatari Camp, the study identified a list of companies that are recommended for further investigation about promising employment opportunities for Syrian Refugees (see Annex 3). During exploring the opportunities in the surrounding areas of Zaatari Camp, it has been noted that there are few Syrian refugees who are qualified to fill in the following list of job opportunities:

1. Poultry farming
2. Welding
3. Livestock production
4. Shawarma Maker
5. Quality assurance in textile factories

Exploring the area surrounding Azraq Camp lead to identify a list of companies for further investigation about promising employment opportunities for Syrian Refugees (see Annex 4).

On the other hand, the study identified some companies who are willing and qualified to establish projects in the surrounding areas of the camps. For example, the *Awtad Company* for Multiple Investment (the company capital 10 Million JoD)¹⁴ and *Al-Ahliah Enterprises* (the company capital 37 Million JoD)¹⁵, who own huge pieces of land surrounding the Zaatari camp, has a business proposal and feasibility studies to establish factory plants and an industrial city which could provide hundreds of job opportunities to Syrian refugees.

“Opposite to Zaatari Camp we have a huge piece of land. We can do our part and plan. We can recruit thousands of qualified candidates from the Syrian refugees, but there is a lack of funds to prepare the infrastructure to establish an industrial city,” said the chief executive of Awtad for Multiple Investment Company.

During the FGDs and interviews with the traders and producers in the surrounding areas, the following proposed projects have been identified as potential opportunities for investment in the area:

¹⁴ *Awtad Company for Multiple Investment* is public shareholders company (Interview with the General Director, Mr. Kasim Dahamshih, Tel: +962 6 5000 360).

¹⁵ *Al-Ahliah Enterprises Company* is public shareholders company (Interview with the General Director, Mr. Mutasim Al-Faori, Tel: +962 77775777).

1. An Industrial City

The proposed industrial city may include the following proposed projects:

A. Workstations, such as:

- Welding and metal workstation
- Carpentry and decoration (woodcraft)
- Auto maintenance (electricity and mechanic)
- Electricity (electricity maintenance and installation)

B. Factory plant projects, such as:

- Jam factory plant project, which would produce fruit jams (plum, apricot, peach, grape, orange, and apple jams).
- Dairy factory plant project, which would manufacture dairy derivatives (Jamid, butter, ghee, dewatered dairy, and local cheese).

2. Bakery and Sweet Shop

Participants felt that the Zaatari Camp has everything available, but there was a common complaint regarding the low quality of the bread they buy every day. Moreover, there is no bakery shop in the surrounding area to serve the surrounding communities and the camp residents. While in Azraq Camp such complaint regarding the quality of the bread has not been highlighted.

5. Legal Considerations

Jordan is not a signatory to the 1951 refugee convention or the 1967 protocol on the status of refugees. As such, the government does not recognize Syrians as refugees but as temporary “guests”. As “guests”, Syrians do not have any legal protection provided under the refugee convention and face real and perceived risks and constraints, including the inability to return to Jordan if they would like to visit Syria in order to evaluate their possibility to return to their native country¹⁶.

After more than seven years since the start of the war in Syria, Jordan has now transitioned to a longer-term, protracted refugee situation with the expectation of decreased international support. It appears that a significant number of Syrians will remain in Jordan for the foreseeable future. Therefore, the GoJ began a temporary protection status for refugees and easing restrictions on Syrians’ right to work, starting with available jobs that are least desirable among the Jordanians and most difficult to fill. The international community needs to work with the GoJ to develop and implement economic programs that will benefit both Syrians and Jordanians.

¹⁶ [Access to work for Syrian refugees in Jordan: a discussion paper on labour and refugee laws and policies](#) / ILO Regional Office for Arab States - Beirut: ILO, 2015.

Allowing Syrians to earn a safe livelihood and young people to acquire skills is in the economic and security interest of Jordan as well as for the future of Syria.

For instance, agricultural lands in Mafraq produce huge quantities of vegetables and fruits, beside livestock farms. “The agricultural production is being sold with very low prices due to the unavailability of a central vegetable market,” said Mr. Osama Hamasha in Um Al-Jumal Municipality.

The Jordanian population in the surrounding areas of the camps are usually not interested in manual labor. If Syrian refugees are successfully absorbed into the labour market in the surrounding areas, they could increase the development of the surrounding areas and growth prospects.

However, there is still a negative attitude towards Syrian refugees, which controls the legislation and public decisions. The perceived competition between the Jordanian population and refugees makes refugees look like they are a burden on the surrounding communities. This attitude could change if refugees were actually involved in the market place in the surrounding areas. They could bring needed entrepreneurial skills and dynamism to benefit the economy. Further support is needed from INGOs to advocate on Syrian economic empowerment through creating an enabling environment to protect their labour rights and challenge the stereotypes related to the competition between Syrians and Jordanians.

6. Challenges

The analysis of the data from the FGDs reveals a number of insights into the challenges Syrian refugees in the Zaatari and Azraq camps face in the labour market, the job search strategies they employ, their attitudes and opinions on various employment related topics, and their perceptions of INGOs and the role they play. There are some challenges that are common among most participants, such as the lack of job opportunities and access to the labour market inside and outside the camp, the lack of access to start-up capital, and the lack of opportunity to practice skills learned such as through internships or volunteering. Participants shared that they have faced the following challenges during the last two years, which include:

1. It is not the lack of jobs, but the lack of trust

It is not the quantity of jobs that is lacking in the labour market outside the camps. Instead, it is the lack of trust because many employers do not pay salaries or fees. Moreover, the camp residents have no means to legally claim their payments. Despite the experiences and qualifications held before coming to Jordan and despite most participants having legal work permits from the GoJ, which enable them to work outside the camp, refugees still have issues regarding trust. Most of the available opportunities are framing or clothing manufacturing. Furthermore, the vast majority dislike to go outside the camp to seek work due to several reasons:

1. Most of the participants indicated that they are employed in low-skill, low-paying jobs, without any legal protection or recourse if they are exploited or abused. Some participants shared that they do not trust the employers outside the camp, and they spoke about many fraud cases of non-payment, in which the Syrian workers did not receive their wages from the employers. Additionally, they could not legally claim their wages due to the lack of official monitoring and supervision of refugees who are seeking work outside the camp.
2. Some of the available employment opportunities are far from the camp, such as in Irbid, Jerash, and Amman. For men they can live outside the camp and stay away from their family for about a week if necessary. For women it is difficult to leave their homes for a whole day and they feel unsafe during transportation.

2. Transportation: a challenge and a job opportunity

Transportation inside the camps is still a challenge for most residents in both camps. All participants shared that the lack of transportation options in the camp is one of the major obstacles to finding a market opportunity, especially when it comes to work in another district in the camp. Men can ride bicycles, which provide a good means of getting around the camp while women are not allowed or willing to ride bicycles as it is considered culturally inappropriate. They have to rely on their male relatives to transport them and their children on the back seat of their bicycles.

The other options of transportation in the camp include the free of charge UNHCR buses and private transportation in pick-up cars usually operated privately by Jordanians from the surrounding areas outside the camp. While the buses cover the entire area of the camp, all the respondents have reported that they “*are not frequent*” enough. Also, private transportation is beyond the financial means of many residents in the camp (one ride is 3 JD). Therefore, it is clear that this is not a viable means of transportation on a daily basis. However, this barrier could be tackled by other options such as mini-buses or the so called *Tuk Tuk* (three-wheeled bicycle). Some modifications can turn the *Tuk Tuk* to a public transportation option that can carry about 5 persons.

The market needs for such internal transportation means is important. Residents need transportation to visit the hospital, the market, the mall, workplaces, and so on.



Image 2: Tuk Tuk in the Zaatari Refugee Camp

3. New jobs go to people who are already in jobs

Participants in FGDs agreed that nepotism (*wasta*, in Arabic) is a factor affecting the hiring in most INGOs in the camps. Some mentioned being interviewed for a job and asked to report to work on the following day only to find out that that another person was offered the job before the interview. In their words, job interviews are just to show managers that they are following the hiring procedure.

The majority of participants in FGDs complain that the INGOs used to revolve some employees from one position to another. INGOs prefer to hire people with recent work experience. Therefore, new jobs go to people who are already in jobs. Moreover, there are widespread cases where the new jobs go to the relatives of the people who are currently working for INGOs.

This means that even if the people possess a lot of certified skills and a lot of experience, seeking employment through INGOs is about who you know, not what you know. It is clear that the problem is not a lack of skills but a combination of problems that cumulatively keep the door almost shut.

“We, men and women, are willing to work in any job. There is nothing to prevent us (men and women) to work even in recycling and garbage collection.” Abeer¹, 33 years old Syrian woman – Zaatari camp.

Such frustrations are common. The constant rejections could destroy their self-confidence. Therefore, the pressing question is how to create new job opportunities to make the most of their skills.

With an unemployment rate in Jordan of more than 18.7% (3rd Quarter, 2018), the current jobs available in the surrounding areas of the camps are mostly low-skilled and low-wage. Meanwhile, the Jordanian population in the communities surrounding the camps is unwilling to accept the jobs that are available out of “embarrassment and shame.”

“I prefer employment – better to give me a permanent job even if I will be paid less.” Salma¹⁷, 28-year-old Syrian woman – Azraq Camp.

4. Age limit for attending training programs

The majority of participants whose age is above 32 years old, indicated that they cannot attend training programs because INGOs put an age limit (mostly 32 years old) which does not allow them to attend. Most of the participants from this age group are house heads with an average family size of 5 persons.

Conclusion

After more than seven years since the start of the current war in Syria, the presence of refugees in Jordan has transitioned from an emergency to a long-term, protracted situation. As in many protracted contexts, the international attention and support are waning while the need for assistance remains. Without the possibility of enabling Syrian refugees to be economically active and integrate them with the labour market, they will continue to rely on international assistance. It is a very artificial environment where INGOs are supporting and funding Syrians just to live.

The study shows a rate of unemployment of 54% and partial unemployment of 43%. Expansion of the current FCA programming needs to be directed towards vocational training projects, with an increased focus on business skills and self-employment. There are potential opportunities to involve the private sector in expanding the labour market in the surrounding areas of the camps. However, until private companies and other private employers are in a position to recruit more extensively, FCA could promote skills that lend themselves to self-employment.

To date, much of the international support has been in the form of food and cash assistance to most Syrian refugees. The combination of the current aid system and legal constraints is contributing to a sense of dependency among the Syrians and represents a waste of valuable human resources and potential due to the dependency on humanitarian aid. Young people

¹⁷ Name changed

growing up in this environment miss the opportunity to acquire professional accredited knowledge and skills which are critical for their protection, development, and reconstruction of themselves and their communities.

Recommendations

FCA, in cooperation and coordination with the GoJ, donors, UN agencies, and international and national non-governmental organizations, should:

1. Facilitate the role of the private sector in generating new employment opportunities in the areas surrounding the camps

Since Syrian refugees living in Jordan have been granted some temporary status and restrictions have eased on their right to work, resources currently available should be channelled to promote greater economic opportunities for both Syrian refugees and the surrounding communities through a partnership with the private sector to establish medium size projects. The study identified some companies who are especially willing and qualified to establish a project in the surrounding areas of the camps, such as, *Awtad Company* for Multiple Investment¹⁸ and *Al-Ahliah Enterprises*¹⁹ own a huge pieces of land surrounding the Zaatari camp. During the FGDs of this study, the following proposed projects have been identified:

1. Establish an industrial city, which could include workstations, a jam factory, and a dairy factory.
2. Establish a bakery and sweet shop. Participants felt that the Zaatari camp has everything available, but there is a common complaint regarding the low quality of the bread they buy every day. Moreover, there is no bakery shop in the surrounding area to serve the surrounding communities and the camp residents.

2. The need for legal tools to protect the refugees' financial rights

One of the key reasons skilled Syrian refugees fail to get jobs outside the camp is that they do not have legal tools to protect their rights in receiving their wages. The recruitment process of Syrians outside the camps should be supervised by a career counselors to ensure that the duties and responsibilities of both parties are respected.

¹⁸ *Awtad Company for Multiple Investment* is public shareholders company (Interview with the General Director, Mr. Kasim Dahamshih, Tel: +962 6 5000 360).

¹⁹ *Al-Ahliah Enterprises Company* is public shareholders company (Interview with the General Director, Mr. Mutasim Al-Faori, Tel: +962 777775777).

3. Increase capacity building opportunities for those older than 32 years old

Among the INGOs operating in the camps, there is an age limit for training programs which is not to exceed 32 years old in order to give youth the priority in building their capacities. It is recommended that INGOs review and modify the target groups of the training programs to accept those above 32 years old, especially for women, as their life situation changes when they find themselves alone in charge of the family after years as a housewife and mother with no work experience or qualifications. Such categories could be targeted by specific customized training programs. Many of those above 32 years old have missed out attending training programs. Non-formal education programs, including vocational training, should be expanded to reach all ages. Moreover, these programs should include official certificates that are recognized by the Jordanian government.

4. Reinforce decent day-work for refugees

Coordinate with the GoJ in order to enact the Jordan *Standardized Regulation for Day Workers*²⁰. Even this type of temporary work is a non-standardized form of employment, according to the ILO²¹, the activation of these regulation and creating a mechanism to implement them for domestic workers and refugees will contribute in achieving the following objectives, especially for Syrian refugees:

1. Provide equal access to temporary employment opportunities in public or private projects and businesses.
2. Protect the financial rights of workers.
3. Encourage new initiatives and activities that help connecting vulnerable people/unemployed/unskilled people/refugees with the labour market under the umbrella of *Standardized Regulation for Day Workers*.
4. Force the employers to fulfil their commitment to provide transportation to the workers from and to their homes.

On the other hand, there is a need for further investigation about the “*Shaweesh*” issue where one person is controlling the day-work organization in order to find a best fit solution for it.

4. Expand outreach to connect Syrian refugees with labour market

As many refugees were not aware of existing services, policies that affect them, or the market opportunities inside and outside the camps, it is critical that FCA collaborate with UNHCR to expand the outreach to the Syrian community. This will require creative thinking in close

²⁰ [Standardized Regulation for Day Workers](#) (available in Arabic), Civil Service Bureau, Amman – Jordan.

²¹ [Informality and non-standard forms of employment](#), ILO, 2018.

consultation with Syrian refugees in order to determine the best methods and locations for information dissemination. It may likely require virtual forums, such as online message boards, as many Syrian youth access the internet on a regular basis.

It is recommended that FCA coordinate with the employment service center²² in each camp in order to contribute in providing job matching services to Syrian refugees to facilitate their integration into the labour market in the camps and in the surrounding areas. Further study is needed to learn lessons from regional initiative, such as the ILO and UNRWA initiative in Lebanon which aims to improve access of Palestinian refugees to decent work opportunities.

In order to convey information about vacancies to job seekers and information about job seekers to potential employers through job matching criteria in the camps and in the surrounding areas, one of the key proposed activities is to develop a mobile application for employment. The proposed mobile application should be the key tool to cover job matching services, guidance and counseling services, labour market information, programmes, and services.

The proposed mobile application should enable the camp residents to communicate with the employers (inside and outside the camp) and share their information in a formal and documented context. It is expected that this tool will support the refugees to work in safe environments where they can legally claim their wages in case of non-payment.

5. Jobs in health sector do not need prequalification

There are some professions who do not need prequalification in health sector such as Health administrative coordinator, medical Office administrators, and elderly healthcare workers. Intensive training on these professions especially for unemployed women and female youth will increase their skills to meet market needs as the health sector is the second sector recruiting women. So, it is recommended to build linkages between the training providers and the private sector to find suitable opportunities in the health sector. To develop a best fit training program, there is a need to identify the current gaps based on a feedback from the health care providers who can prioritize the topics that are needed for the trainees. These topics may include, but not limited to, practice as caregiver, general office skills, medical office skills, clinical procedures, personal care skills, health and healing, medical terminologies, and professional communication skills.

²² The employment centre in Zaatari Refugee Camp established in August 2017 and in Azraq Refugee Camp in Feb 2018 by International Labour Organisation (ILO) and UNHCR, mainly to facilitate access to work permits for refugees, as well as to provide refugees with counselling services, information on labour rights, training opportunities, and job matching services.

6. Lessons learned from other livelihood programs

It is encouraging that livelihood programs are now available for some Syrian refugees in Jordan. However, these programs build on existing knowledge and it isn't clear, for example, whether programs are being designed based on market assessments conducted in refugee camps and surroundings. Also, program objectives are not always clear and vary between psycho-social, protection, education, and economic objectives. It is critical that any livelihood program takes into account and builds on the existing skills of the Syrians, rather than concentrating on teaching highly skilled individuals new skills. Adequate support and follow-up must be built into the programs including advocacy on securing Syrian access to micro-finance institutions in order to assist graduates in practicing their skills. Additionally, rigorous evaluations of the effectiveness of training interventions are needed. Both will require longer funding cycles and additional donor support.

7. Potential jobs to consider for Syrian refugees in Jordan

Many people in Jordan spoke about the disconnection between the relevancy of the educational background and the labour market. In order to enable Syrian refugees to be economically active and self-dependent, while filling the gap, initiatives need to target the following jobs:

1. *Low-skilled jobs*, such as construction sector, domestic work, and the service industry, which are usually occupied by migrant workers from Egypt and other countries. These jobs usually include such as cleaning services, equipment repair, hospitality and retail systems, and agriculture and food production, especially for women who cannot get easy access to construction sector. Since approximately 53% of the new jobs in Jordan are going to foreign workers, it is reasonable to enable Syrian refugees to have a portion of these available opportunities which means that priority should be given to Syrian refugees when the jobs cannot be filled locally. At the same time, and due to the fact that Syrian refugees are usually innovative and extremely dynamic people, labour market policies should emphasize not only on work-opportunities approach, but also on a learn process through skill upgrading of Syrian refugees with low and poor skills and qualifications.
2. *Enabling environment*. GoJ is in charge of ensuring that every employer follows the labour law, the findings showed that private sector employers usually do not respect labour law with Syrian refugees who work without contracts. It is important to encourage the GoJ to enable Syrian refugees to obtain residency to engage in permanent work to ensure economic stability, security, and protect labour rights of Syrian refugees.
3. *Vocational jobs*. The study identified a list of potential areas to consider for training Syrian refugees in the Zaatari and Azraq camps (see section 2. *Livelihoods and Skills*).

8. Small and micro enterprise development

Even though job posts are rare in the camps, participants indicate that there is no medium production enterprise in the camp or in the surrounding areas in which they can find a permanent job. With a high number of Syrian refugees in the camps looking for sustained employment and income, many will need to venture into becoming micro-entrepreneurs themselves instead of being offered work as an employee. Many of these new entrepreneurs are likely to fail, especially considering the particular difficulties in marketing, financing, and lack of business skills. These entrepreneurs start their own businesses with personal savings and loans. These funding sources are limited, thereby reducing the size of the new business and its growth potential. However, as a result, micro and small entrepreneurs tend to act more carefully than when they simply receive donor funds. Therefore, it is highly recommended to establish a financing component to cater to the specific financing needs of SMEs.

SMEs are crucial for the job creation in both camps, while some of the respondents are entrepreneurs but they have limited access to financing which is required to implement their business ideas. Most of the surveyed micro and small business owners stated that they had borrowed money from relatives or from personal savings and loans. According to estimations received from respondents, starting up a business in Zaatari Camp needs an average fund of 3000\$ in, while starting a business in Azraq Camp needs an average fund around 4000\$. This difference may relate to the differences between the nearest markets to each camp, where the expenses are less in the case of Zaatari Camp (the nearest markets are Um-Al-Jmal and al-Mafraq, than the case of Azraq Camp (the nearest markets are Zarqa, Azraq, and Amman).

It may also be noted that some of the infrastructure required for rapid SMEs development is not in place. For example, power supplies are non-existent during the daytime, roads in the camps are poor, and there are legal and administrative constraints that do not allow marketing products outside the camps. It must therefore be assumed that this infrastructure will be put in place or upgraded at the same time as specific SME interventions are taking place. Even public infrastructure and services are the main obstacles for most SMEs, usually the development of the camp infrastructure is beyond the mission of a single INGO and it would imply several political implications. But it is essential to assist the Syrian entrepreneurs in understanding target market, devising marketing strategies, defining production/service plan, and other enterprise management issues. Experience accrued through the interviews showed that Syrian entrepreneurs' refugees need specialized support from the counselors. General skill development programs don't meet the needs as the Syrian entrepreneurs need specific support, especially in preparation of detailed marketing plan and business promotion. This lesson learned led to the design of specialized trainings in the new business promotion in camps to increase the capacities of counselors in providing specialized advice and more refined inputs.

While the INGOs and UN agencies provide technical support, monitoring, supervision, and coordination, along with coordinating with the camps' administration and local authorities in the

surrounding areas to put in place the appropriate regulatory framework, it is recommended to revisit the role of private sector in the development of the SMEs in the camps. Therefore, there is a need for a cooperation mechanism to facilitate contacts between Jordan private sector actors, and to support Syrian entrepreneurs in identifying suitable machinery suppliers to start up, upgrade, and improve new business and production capacities. To this end, awareness channels and initiatives are needed to allow private companies to participate and interact with Syrian entrepreneurs. Such initiative should provide the private sector with opportunities to link the Syrian entrepreneurs to access new markets, new technology, and financial resources, as well as understanding of the basic principles of doing business in order contribute to overall economic development of the camp.