

# JORDAN INGO FORUM NEWSLETTER



*Blumont Mask House in Za'atari*

## February Update

### JIF SECRETARIAT

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As the world continues to combat the spread of COVID-19, communities throughout the Kingdom have shown amazing resilience in adapting to the challenges of the current health context. Vulnerable communities in Jordan, ranging from Syrian and non-Syrian refugees to host communities, have altered the way that they learn, work, and receive assistance after months of measures implemented to combat the coronavirus.

In addition, NGOs have adapted the way that they operate in order to ensure continued service delivery to those most in need. This issue of the Jordan INGO Forum (JIF) newsletter demonstrates how our members have worked tirelessly to adapt how services are being provided, ranging from remote learning, to improving health infrastructure, to finding new opportunities for livelihoods. Some of our contributions in this issue also include ongoing stories of the resilience of vulnerable children and adults and how they continue to exhibit strength in facing all obstacles.

These contributions are a testament to the valuable work that JIF members do everyday and how they have collaborated with vulnerable communities to evolve in a new way of working throughout the pandemic and reach those most in need.

# ACTIONAID

*The Story of the School's Painter*

*Malak Hassan Ali Dweek, 23 years old, student*

Malak is one of the dreamers of the ActionAid Arab Region's Mafrq feminist schools.

When Malak attended the monthly reflection sessions of the feminist schools, in which the discussion was about rights and more specifically women's rights and rights violations, she was very satisfied with the sessions.

When asked what she liked most, Malak said, "Knowing our rights! They told us about our rights in the law and how to protect ourselves. We don't have to always stay silent, if it is about sexual harassment or asking for our rights. [In these sessions we learned] how to stand for our rights in a good way and in a way that does not impact our parents' trust!"



Malak faces some family pressures when it comes to her studies or her passion about art. "My parents thinks I am wasting my time with painting, but when they saw what I painted, they bought me a desk to practice my passion. Also, because I failed in high school many times, they were against me sitting for the exams again in the last year... so I started to depend on myself financially and morally. So, [because of the feminist schools] I became more confident and I am happy to be here".

"I dream to be on top with my paintings, to be able to have my own brand and to have a big name between artists. And I dream to be a judge in the future".



*"I dream to be on top with my paintings, to be able to have my own brand..."*



# AMERICAN FRIENDS SERVICE COMMITTEE

## *Al-Shabab Program*

AFSC launched a new project called “Al-Shabab Program” in collaboration with the Protestant Agency for Diakonie and Development and Bread for the World.

This youth program aims to improve the active participation of Jordanian and Syrian youth (ages 18-24) in the cities of Amman and Zarqa through their participation in a learning journey that leads them to improve their skills in decision making in their communities.

### **The project consists of two components:**

Component I: Working with students (ages 14-16) within Ministry of Education schools.

Component II: Working with youth (ages 18-24) who will be engaged in community-led, community-based initiatives.

The program efforts concentrate on increasing the knowledge of the youth about the forms of civic engagement, such as advocacy and education, community research, social responsibility, and association involvement.

Due to COVID-19 restrictions from the government and the Ministry of Education and schools' closures, Component I was suspended until the beginning with 2021.

The AFSC team is now implementing Component II of the project. 120 shortlisted youth, equally distributed through Zarqa, Russaifeh, Khalda and Sahab, had a one-on-one interview led by AFSC staff.

60 participants were as a result selected to participate in the AFSC project, while the other half is considered in case of any dropouts.

The project that works with youth with component II in this year includes 6 stages:

1. Exploring individual and community issues
2. Needs analysis
3. Problem identification and research
4. Initiatives design
5. Initiatives implementation
6. Reflection and feedback

*"Civic engagement is identifying an issue and coming up with a solution."*

*Rahaf*



# BLUMONT

## *Masking Up to Keep COVID-19 Down*

Throughout the pandemic, the Blumont team at Za'atari Camp worked with UNHCR and residents to leverage skills and resources to keep everyone safe. As activities were adapted in line with local guidance, a creative approach was developed to engage the community in protecting the camp's 78,000 residents from coronavirus. Starting with an idea from the camp's Women's Committee, the Za'atari Mask House came together to produce protective face masks. The entire process—from mask design to production and distribution—involved the community.

Camp residents, including those working at the camp's UNHCR-funded Innovation Lab, developed face mask prototypes to ensure that masks met protection standards. After rounds of trial and revision, the team's design received approval from the Ministry of Health and the Royal Scientific Society—the first such effort to receive approval in Jordan.

With a pattern in place, a community gathering space was transformed into a socially-distant production center. Sewing machines used in vocational training were moved in and an

assembly line was established to institute a safe and efficient three-part process for tailors—cutting fabric, ensuring masks meet the standards, and sewing the edges.

More than 80 women living in the camp were hired to create the masks. Most had honed their skills through Blumont-run vocational courses. "It is the best project in the world," Ena'am said. "I learned to make masks and I have been able to earn money to pay off debts."

A daycare was opened to support the tailors working in the mask house. As mothers sewed, children played and learned safe hygiene practices, including lessons on handwashing.

Before masks leave the Mask House for distribution, they are sanitized in another invention created at the Innovation Lab. Using bicycle wheels, water pipes, a nylon tarp, and other materials found at the camp, the team built a machine to efficiently steam and sterilize masks for packaging.

"As refugees, we tried to prove that we had our own ideas and are able to help ourselves and the outside community," Mohammad said.

*"We as refugees want to leave our fingerprint on the community and help protect from coronavirus," said Rania. "I can do that by making masks."*





# COLLATERAL REPAIR PROJECT

When you see a picture of 30-year-old former army-officer-in-training Rob Hamilton, arms crossed with feet planted firmly on his one-man rowing boat, the Atlantic Titan, staring unflinchingly down the camera barrel with the ocean stretching out behind him, it's easy to forget how dangerous the task he's undertaking is. He looks competent and unafraid.

But make no mistake, rowing the Atlantic Ocean, a task Rob began in December 2020 and is currently in the grueling midst of, is no picnic. His website boasts a section discussing the perils of ocean rowing that reads like a shopping list from Hades: sleep deprivation, salt sores, dehydration, 30ft waves, and sharks(!) are just a few of the perils Rob is likely to face on his 3,000-mile journey, which begins in the Canary Islands and ends at Antigua & Barbuda.

The notoriously difficult ocean crossing is so severe that more people have climbed Mt. Everest than have attempted it. Yet every year, a handful of humanity's most extreme grab a bag, hop in a specialized ocean craft and set off. For most, the impetus behind the crossing likely rings true to George Mallory's infamous statement about his reasons for scaling Everest, 'because it's there'. But beyond the call of adventure and human curiosity, Rob is braving the elements for another reason.

Through his journey, Rob aims to bring attention and support to two charities dear to him, one of which is our Amman-based NGO Collateral Repair Project (CRP).

Here at CRP, we run two community support centers and material livelihood provisional networks that foster resilience and community among the growing refugee population of Amman



a city that domiciles a huge number of displaced persons from Syria, Iraq, Sudan, and Yemen among others.

Rob, a former volunteer with CRP, has witnessed firsthand the value of holistic support in the lives of refugees in a world increasingly struggling with forced migration. As those who have worked with displaced communities know, most refugees aren't resettled in the west, as Anglo-centric conceptions might have it, but re-locate to border nations. Hence, the value of creating safe, collaborative, and enriching communities in these areas for the ecologically or politically displaced is essential. It's this goal that CRP works towards, providing educational and livelihood programs and trauma relief to refugees in Amman along with basic-needs assistance.

Though there might seem to be a dissonance between Rob's voyage and the plight of refugees, the narrative of the Atlantic Titan and the journey of many refugees resemble each other. Jumping in a boat making dangerous journeys is for Rob a choice, but for many displaced persons, an unavoidable reality. And, whilst the Atlantic Titan will almost certainly reach its destination, for fleeing individuals there is no such guarantee.

It's this reality Rob faced during his time at CRP, and for this reason he's chosen to use his incredible determination and monumental physical strength to spotlight our mission in Jordan.

# LA CHAÎNE DE L'ESPOIR

*Samer: A Story of Hope*

The hero of our story is named Samer. He was born on October 10, 2017, in Jordan, and he is a refugee. His parents discovered that he had symbrachydactyly on four fingers on his right hand. However, the family did not give up despite the obstacles they faced, namely the high costs and the lack of surgeons in Jordan specializing in children's upper limbs.

When Samer was referred to La Chaîne de l'Espoir, the pediatric upper limbs orthopedic surgeons examined him on November 4, 2018 and decided to perform the first surgery to separate the first two fingers on November 6, 2018, which helped him use his hand better.

After 5 months, the same pediatric orthopedic surgeons returned to perform the second surgery to separate the remaining fingers on April 16, 2019. After this second surgery, Samer's fingers returned almost to normal, and he could move much better.



By February 2020, a third surgery was performed on Samer's hand, but this time to make the thumb movement more agile and to use the full functions of his hand.

Now Samer can play freely without any help. He will not need to hide his hand in his pocket when he grows up, and when he enters school he will hold his pencil and learn easily.

*"He will not need to hide his hand in his pocket when he grows up, and when he enters school he will hold his pencil and learn easily."*





# DIGNITY

“Life has no meaning to me. Nobody feels my pain.” Those words came out of a fifteen-year-old trauma survivor who lived through the Dead Sea flash flood that killed 21 people, mostly schoolchildren who were on a school trip, on October 25th, 2018. On that day, the flood washed away the life in Hashem’s eyes, deeply weathered and eroded his peace of mind and roughly carved scars on the layers of his soul.

After the incident, Hashem was diagnosed with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. He suffered from insomnia, frequent nightmares, weight and appetite loss, loneliness and social isolation. The thoughts he expressed were negative and irrational, and his behavior was at times aggressive. The effects of the incident spread to his family too. His caring mother turned overprotective, and she kept blaming herself for her child’s suffering.

When Hashem started the psychological clinical treatment at the Institute for Family Health (IFH), he was hesitant to share the experience that he repeatedly relived in his mind. Nonetheless, the psychologist at IFH Dr. Hussain Al-Salem, who was trained on the modified Narrative Exposure Therapy for kids (NET Kids) by DIGNITY, was able to build a strong trusting relationship with the survivor. Dr. Al-Salem proficiently evaluated Hashem’s psychological condition, taught him to narrate the incident, educated him and his mother on psychological treatments, and practiced relaxation and proper breathing techniques. After sixteen sessions, Hashem’s post-treatment assessments showed significant improvements. Furthermore, on October 25th, 2020, on the exact date two years after the incident, Hashem headed to the site wearing the same clothes he was wearing the day of the flood and proved that he overcame his fears. In addition, according to Dr. Al-Salem, his pessimistic outlook on life has gradually become more



optimistic. When asked about his dreams, he said that he wants to become a pilot in the Royal Jordanian Air Force and to always live in inner peace.

Like the Dead Sea trauma survivors, refugees and violence victims in Jordan are subject to highly traumatic events, causing physical and emotional suffering that interfere with basic daily life functions. Traumatic experiences can impact the whole family and even affect how community members interact with each other. Through the Rehabilitation Programme, DIGNITY modified the existing NET to treat and rehabilitate traumatized children and adolescents. Furthermore, in collaboration with its implementing partner IFH, DIGNITY strengthened the capacity of over 30 health professionals within the field of psychology, physiotherapy and monitoring and evaluation.

DIGNITY also supervised treatment sessions in order to provide comprehensive and effective rehabilitation services to victims of torture, trauma and other related issues. The Rehabilitation Programme aims to restore the survivors’ functions and roles in their family, work and community life.

*Funded by the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs under the Danish-Arab Partnership Programme and implemented within the framework of the bilateral agreement between Jordan and Denmark, DIGNITY works towards preventing the use of torture and inhumane treatment in places of detention and on securing professional rehabilitation to torture victims and traumatized populations.*

# DANISH REFUGEE COUNCIL

As he left the center, Luay was laughing, interacting with his friends and was making plans to return very soon. A shy Jordanian boy, not much of a talker, and not too comfortable around his peers - that was Luay before enrolling in the storytelling sessions that were conducted under the "Recreational and Cultural Activities for Exposed Children and Youth" project, implemented by the Danish Refugee Council (DRC) and funded by Kong Frederik d. VII's Stiftelse, which consisted of telling a story and through paintings and acting.

The project offered Syrian and Jordanian children the chance to participate in various activities that helped them learn new skills and better express themselves. During the COVID-19 outbreak, children have lacked access to schools and social activities, and many families have resorted to keeping their children at home to ensure they are protected from the pandemic. After the lockdowns were eased, DRC's Sanad Community Centre in Nuzha re-opened and was able to support children with a safe space, where they have been able to express themselves through theatrical activities, exploring and overcoming negative feelings and stress caused COVID-19.

Children participating in these sessions wrote stories of their experiences of the outbreak, exploring how they adapted to the situation and dealt with negative thoughts during lockdowns. During those activities, DRC staff also raised the children's awareness on how to protect themselves during COVID-19.

Luay was introduced to the project through "Asloha Thabet", an association in Jabal Al-Taj in Amman, last August. At the beginning, Luay was timid and did not want to talk or participate and preferred being an observer. However, as the first session kicked off and participants were asked to choose characters and start acting, Luay was interacting and became increasingly involved in the sessions. When it was Luay's turn, he dazzled others with his energy and willingness to speak openly. As a result, his friends nominated him to be the best in class.

The change in Luay's character is evidence of the importance of having a platform for children to express themselves and share their opinions and dreams. It is vital children are given a safe space to learn and play. DRC has 6 centers across Jordan that give vulnerable Syrian and Jordanian children new experiences and the chance to meet new people.



*"It is vital that children are given a safe space to learn and play."*



# HUMANITY AND INCLUSION

## *International Day of Persons with Disabilities*

On the International Day of Persons with Disabilities (IDPD), and with the support of DFAT, Oxfam, Caritas and UNICEF, HI held a virtual workshop on “Improving Disability Inclusion through Good Practices in Jordan” drawing on the lessons learned of a disability inclusion project implemented by HI with support from DFAT.

With the presence of H.E. Mr. Miles Armitage, Australian Ambassador to Jordan, H.E Ms. Bridget Brind OBE, The British Ambassador to Jordan, UN agencies, international organizations, the Higher Council for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, community-based organizations, organizations of persons with disabilities and private companies, all have stood together to highlight the importance of including persons with disabilities in their communities and to not leave them behind in the planning process of aid projects in Jordan.

Persons and children with disabilities shared their stories after they became empowered by the supported organizations. One of the children shared, “What it changed in my life is

the confidence, and how to feel towards persons with disabilities”.

To ensure that projects are inclusive of disabilities, HI recommended to donors to ensure inclusion in all stages of project cycle management; preparedness, assessment, program design and MEAL, including criteria and policies related to disability inclusion in calls, proposals and contract agreements, as well as the importance of establishing disability inclusion focal points within organizations and ensuring the meaningful participation of persons with disabilities and their representatives.

Throughout the lifespan of the disability inclusion project funded by DFAT, HI has successfully managed to support Oxfam and Caritas to improve the impact of disability inclusion at an organizational level and the impact of capacity building on trained staff as it was followed by a short video on impact of empowerment of persons with disabilities.



*“Today we celebrate the International Day of Persons with Disabilities. We send you our love and regards from our hearts to all persons with disabilities and we stand behind you to know your rights.”*

# ICMC

On 1 September 2020, the International Catholic Migration Commission (ICMC) in Jordan, and the US Department of State's Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (BPRM) renewed their partnership for its eighth year. Throughout this partnership, ICMC has been able to provide vital humanitarian assistance for vulnerable and at-risk individuals from crisis-affected refugee and host communities in the country.

During its new programmatic year 2020/2021, ICMC will provide focused humanitarian protection, and livelihoods assistance for around 14,505 individuals regardless of their gender, nationality, ability, or religion in the governorates of Mafraq, Zarqa, Irbid, Ajlun, and Jarash.

With its goals to strengthen the resilience of crisis-affected communities and reduce their reliance on negative coping mechanisms and enhance their protection, ICMC has modified its ongoing program activities, as well as those that are newly developed to enhance its response to these areas of concern. Ensuring its communities are empowered and well-equipped to respond to and identify key protection concerns and violations, such as GBV, ICMC has launched four new activities in its protection centers: Youth Empowerment Peer Groups, Intergenerational Groups, Positive Parenting courses, and Local Community Groups. Through these activities, ICMC is targeting 3,500 individuals, 70% of whom from refugee communities and 65% women.



Furthermore, ICMC will continue the provision of its regular activities, such as Psychosocial and Mental Health Support services, and Arabic and English Literacy classes, as well as Men and Boys courses through protection centers in Irbid and Mafraq. ICMC will also continue the provisioning of its Cash for Rent Assistance, in addition to its newly launched Multipurpose Cash Assistance.

Responding to the challenges brought by COVID-19, and to ensure continuous service delivery, ICMC adapted its methods to limit the gathering of people, and to eliminate the spread of the virus between its participants. All courses and activities are conducted remotely, either through Whatsapp, Zoom, face to face, etc. depending on the beneficiaries.

Speaking about her experience attending the Intergenerational Courses remotely, Salam, said: "The fact that the course activities were conducted remotely due to the COVID-19 restrictions was an advantage for me in light of my health condition. As for the course itself, it helped me a lot in managing my relationship with my children after sharing my experiences with my experienced elders."

Prior to attending the courses, because of her family's financial situation, Salam used to have issues with her children. "My children were extremely demanding. They would push for things I cannot afford," said Salam. This consistent pushing has made Salam very angry, and caused her to shout at her children. After sharing her experience with the attendees, Salam was advised to be more patient with her children and more understanding of her needs. Seeing the impact of the course, Salam said: "Following the positive change in my relationships, I started to gather my children to attend the course with me. I also encouraged my children to participate in the course. This made them more confident in themselves, and more appreciative of what we have."



# INTERNATIONAL MEDICAL CORPS

## *Irbid Maternity and Newborn Hospital*

The Irbid Project for Maternity Care and Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) was established on September 1, 2018 for Syrian refugees, vulnerable Jordanians, and other nationalities staying in the kingdom. From that time, more than 7,300 deliveries have been carried out at the facility and more than 700 babies have benefited from the NICU.

The facility is made up of:

- A maternity ward and a labor ward for normal vaginal delivery using high standard methods by a professional team, as well as caesarean sections when indicated, in which every newborn baby is examined by a pediatrician
- Outpatient clinics (OPCs), covering antenatal care (ANC), postnatal care (PNC) and family planning under the supervision of highly skilled midwives and other specialists with all prescribed medicine free, as well as family planning, pregnancy counseling, and mother and baby nutritional support
- NICU and neonatal OPCs overseen by highly skilled pediatricians and nurses



### **Success Story from Irbid Hospital: Nisreen**

Nisreen is a 22-year-old Syrian refugee and mother of three living in Irbid. She's originally from Daraa, Syria but was forced to leave her country in 2012 due to the war. In August, 2020, Nisreen delivered twins at the International Medical Corps hospital in Irbid.

Despite one of the babies being breech positioned, both babies were delivered smoothly and with a healthy weight. The mother was also in excellent health and they could all be discharged the same day.

They weren't able to afford obstetric and newborn services and International Medical Corps has provided them free of charge, making their lives easier. Nisreen learned about IMC Maternity and Newborn services through her neighbors.

Nisreen thought that the maternity ward was in excellent condition. She also said "thank you to International Medical Corps, the staff did a good job, I wish the organization the best".

Her newborn sons are named Yasser and Tayseer.

# IM SWEDEN

*'From Marginalized Girls to Empowered Women'*

'From Marginalized Girls to Empowered Women' is a five-year project by the Information and Research Center - King Hussein Foundation (IRCKHF) and IM Swedish Development Partner (IM). The project aims to enhance the social protection of some of the most marginalized girls in Jordan by carrying out research and advocacy in cooperation with the community-based organizations (CBOs) and civil society organizations (CSOs) that support them.

## Impact on education and schooling

As education transitioned to the online modality during and after the lockdown, the government launched the online educational platform 'Darsak,' which provided educational content for students from grades 1-12 between 7 am and 4 pm. Besides Darsak, two TV channels - Darsak 1 and 2 - were also dedicated to broadcasting lessons for all grades.

The research showed that many students, especially those from vulnerable groups, were

unable to access the platform because they did not have access to the internet, or because they did not have enough internet data, or due to lack of guidance by teachers. Some families were only able to access televised lessons.

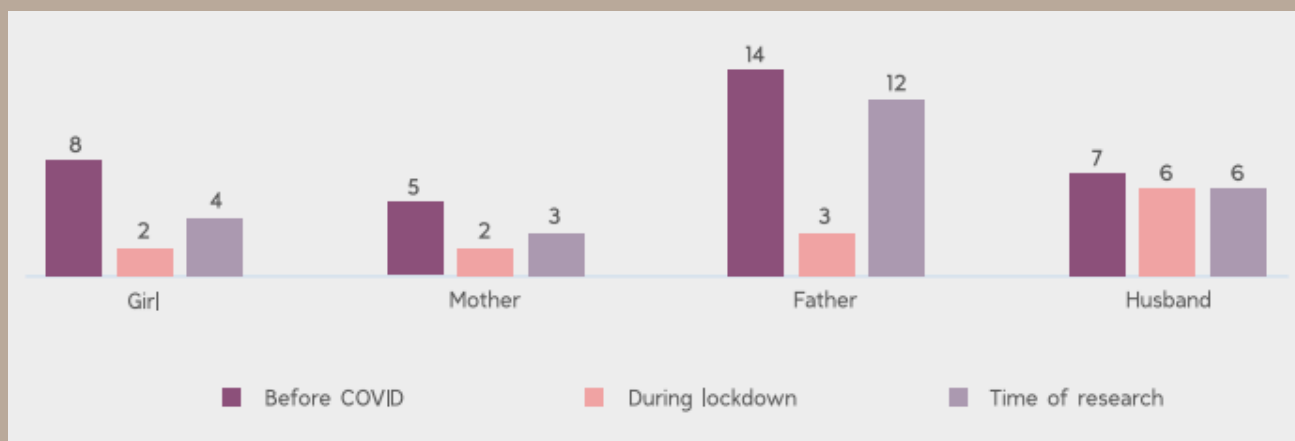
## Impact on household responsibilities

20 out of 45 girls stated that their household responsibilities increased during the lockdown. The girls were asked about the chores that they carried out 'most of the time'. In general, more than half of the girls were responsible for cleaning the house during lockdown and 16 girls took care of their children or siblings most of the time. Some girls stated that there was no change to their household responsibilities or daily routine because they were responsible for carrying out most chores even before the lockdown.

The full assessment can be accessed through the link below:

<http://haqqi.info/en/haqqi/research/marginalized-girls-jordan-rapid-assessment-impact-covid-19>

## Data taken from the Rapid Assessment





Manhal, 43, describes in his own words the challenges refugees are facing during the pandemic, how the IRC is helping his family and others, and what he wishes the world knew about people forced to flee their homes:

We come from Daraa Governorate in Syria and now we live in Zaatari camp in Jordan. There are seven people in my family: three boys, two girls, and me and my wife. Daraa was beautiful before the conflict started. Our livelihood was improving and the economy was slowly growing. I had a grocery store, we owned our own home. Life was good. Things changed when the war began; we were no longer safe. People started to feel afraid for their families. Our house was close to a checkpoint and there was a shooting there.

When my wife and I decided to leave Syria for Jordan, we were thinking more about our children than ourselves. Little kids can't handle the roar of shelling and of conflict. We left together as a family. Many things have changed since—our family is bigger now. Life is hard in the camp. There are electricity blackouts and not enough job opportunities. But there are things I like in the camp, namely the social life. People know each other and we have relatives here as well. The services are good and you can take your child to the hospital without a

problem. There are schools for my children, something very important to me.

I always had a dream that my children would go to school and I paid close attention to their performance. Today, the kids' schooling is pretty much nonexistent. This is a common problem: classes are remote and a typical family owns maybe one mobile phone that is usually used by the father. Some families simply can't afford to pay for the data. And even if you do have a phone and can afford to pay for it, the cellular network is not very strong.

Unemployment has been the biggest difficulty for us since COVID-19. Previously people used to work at the farms nearby and were able to provide for their families. But now that has stopped and we are coming up to one of the most difficult times—winter. We need warm clothing and other things, including heat. People get sick more in winter, especially kids with colds. My son, Muhammad has asthma and it's gotten worse in the camp.

Luckily, we are able to go to the IRC clinic, which provides excellent services. They take into consideration how people feel and what they are going through. When Muhammad gets an asthma attack, he has his inhaler and pills. My wife also receives treatment in the women's clinic. The clinic's services have made a huge difference to us as a family. I wish the world cared more about refugees, both those in camps or outside them.

*My biggest worry is the future. We can't know when there will be safety or stability in our country. My baby is still not registered in Jordan and unregistered babies are at risk of statelessness. If they lack proof of age, they could be denied child-specific rights and protections."*



# JESUIT RELIEF SERVICES

## Beneficiaries Needs Assessment: Survey Results

The survey was designed to measure the most urgent needs among refugees and vulnerable Jordanians accessing JRS services in Amman. The survey covers issues of protection (legal and non-legal), education, health, mental health and livelihoods.

Survey participants include those accessing JRS's adult education, mental health, and career counseling services. Caregivers of children accessing JRS's education programming were also targeted. A total of 346 adults completed the surveys. A total of eight nationalities are represented in the survey through smartphones: Syrian (32%); Yemeni (20%); Sudanese (18%); Iraqis (16%); Jordanian (11%); Somali (1%); Palestinian (1%), and; Chadian (1%). Among survey respondents, 61% were female and 39% were male, while 89% were refugees.

Among the most pressing needs for families, over a quarter of respondents report cash for rent (26%), followed by cash assistance (17%), health services (15%), and education (13%). These needs reflect the basic needs families report spending the most money on. Nearly half of respondents surveyed report spending the most on rent (48%), food (23%) and health (18%).

In order to meet their basic needs, respondents were able to do one or more of the following: 44% borrowed money, 29% received some form of aid, 26% sold their possessions, while 18% report at least one family member works.

Generally, respondents reported poor health with 58% responding that they, or a family member, has a chronic disease while nearly 75% report that they, or a family member, suffer from psychological problems, including stress. An overwhelming majority (90%) report being unable to cover medical needs.

With relation to legal and protection issues, 91% of respondents are registered with UNHCR. More than three quarters of respondents report that a family member had experienced harassment in Jordan and 53% were unsure of where to get help when facing security threats. 46% of respondents report being threatened with eviction due to difficulty paying rent.

Just over half of respondents have school age children. Among these respondents, only 38% are able to participate in remote learning through formal Ministry of Education platforms and only 16% have children enrolled in in non-formal education. The main reason for children not enrolling in distance learning is due to their lack of devices or internet (Wi-Fi) access.

Respondents were asked what services, if any, are lacking in Amman that they would like to access. Many responses mentioned basic needs such as cash assistance, rent, food, health care, education, winter heating, opportunities and work permits to live with dignity. It is nevertheless clear that the assistance with basic needs that JRS have been able to provide still leaves the majority of people without sufficient help.



# LUTHERAN WORLD FEDERATION

*Improving the Food and Nutrition Security of  
Syrian Refugees and Host Communities*

Over the past year, LWF Jordan implemented a project funded by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) under the title of "Improving the Food and Nutrition Security of Syrian Refugees and Host Communities in Irbid Governorate." The project aimed to improve food diversity in households through innovative home-based vegetable production systems, livestock and fruit processing, and provide families with an additional source of income.

The home-based vegetable production project targeted vulnerable households with negative coping mechanisms, of which 60% are female-headed households (70% Syrian) who no longer received assistance from the World Food Program. One hundred fifty women in Al Ramtha and Al Mazar districts received training on best agriculture practices for innovative vegetable production, post-harvest handling, and marketing surplus vegetable produce. They also received the needed agriculture tools and vegetable seedlings with a manual of farming instructions.

***"This resulted in the  
establishment of strong  
relationships within and  
between communities."***

Throughout the national lockdown due to the COVID-19 pandemic during March and the lockdown in Al Ramtha in June and August, LWF staff maintained contact with the participants in the project to provide the needed support and tips on vegetable production and post-harvest handling.

Due to their vegetable gardens, our beneficiaries had access to micronutrient-rich fresh produce. On the other hand, the families participating in the project also had the opportunity to sell some surplus vegetables. These results encouraged the participants to continue planting and maintaining their vegetable gardens even after the project.

The project also contributed to the social cohesion between Jordanian and Syrian women. For example, some Syrian beneficiaries did not have enough space to plant all their seedlings. Therefore, they partnered with Jordanians, who shared some of their land with their Syrian peers.

This resulted in the establishment of strong relationships within and between communities. After harvesting, these beneficiaries also shared the crops amongst each other. Some of the Syrian beneficiaries already had knowledge and experience in having home gardens, so they provided advice to their Jordanian peers. Finally, as home gardening often resulted in a family activity, Jordanian and Syrian families formed strong friendships.



# MERCY CORPS

Globally, health systems have been challenged by the overwhelming demands of the COVID-19 pandemic. Resources and staff are being redirected to test and provide treatment for confirmed and potential cases. The Jordanian Ministry of Health has been working to ensure hospitals are ready to welcome COVID-19 cases.

Across the globe, the fight against the Coronavirus has overstretched health systems and is damaging economies. In Jordan, the Ministry of Health announced to turn the majority of its budget allocations to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. While necessary, it also risks diverting funding away from other priorities such as providing sustainable health services, improving their quality, and supplying health facilities with their needs of medical and non-medical devices, supplies and furniture.

In 2013, Mercy Corps launched the Leadership and Community Development program funded by the United Kingdom (UKaid) where Mercy Corps worked to improve the infrastructure of the local communities. Since the beginning of the pandemic, this program has supported the government in responding to the COVID-19 crisis and its direct or indirect long-term effects.

Mercy Corps, in close coordination with Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office the Ministry of Health and other actors in the health sector, worked to identify the priorities that can be supported. Consequently, approximately 1.5 million JD of the program budget was allocated to rehabilitation of health infrastructure, providing medical equipment and providing furniture and supplies to health centers.

The support provided by Mercy Corps will help improve the capacity of the Ministry to respond to a diversity of medical needs, including those affected by COVID-19 and will help in enhancing



[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f\\_zEQtjo\\_I&feature=emb\\_logo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f_zEQtjo_I&feature=emb_logo)

the quality of services in the targeted health centers and hospitals. Health sector priorities that will be supported by Mercy Corps can be summarized in three key aspects:

**Aspect 1- Rehabilitation and maintenance projects:** As the improvement and enhancement of the infrastructure is considered a basis to support the continuation and sustainability of health services, maintenance in two health centers will be implemented to enhance the quality of services and contribute to durability and continuity.

**Aspect 2- Providing medical equipment to health centers and hospitals:** Due to the reallocation of the 2020 budget, the ministry faced challenges in financing the equipping of health centers and hospitals that face shortages. Therefore, supplying medical equipment was recognized as one of the top priorities, and Mercy Corps started the procurement of different equipment such as hemodialysis units, digital X-Ray, dental units, etc. These will be distributed to 25 health centers and hospitals across the country before the end of March 2021.

**Aspect 3- Providing medical and non-medical furniture and supplies to different locations:** The Ministry emphasized the need to adequately furnish health centers to enable medical staff to provide quality services. Mercy Corps started procuring medical and non-medical supplies to be distributed to 20 health centers before the end of March 2021.

# PLAN INTERNATIONAL

## *Remote Learning*

"Children could not make it to Kindergarten classes, so we went to them", says Manal.

Manal, a teacher in the Zarqa governorate, took part in Plan International's School Readiness Program. From 9 am till 2 pm she managed to reach her 25 KG pupils by utilizing our online tools.

"The interaction from the students and parents was great, it was better than I expected. Despite the connectivity issues some faced, I felt that the parents were keen on providing their children with the support they need," she added.

Teachers and parents used online tools to deliver literacy and numeracy lessons to pupils who are about to enroll in school. The School Readiness Program reached around 1,800 children to provide them with the necessary knowledge and education they need to start their academic journey.

Sana'a and daughter Yasmin took part in the program and found it to be a great bonding experience with each other. "I am not going to lie, it was a lot of work, especially because I run a beauty salon from my home, so sometimes I would ask Yasmin's older sister to help her with the activities or lessons. I would say that it worked out just fine," said Sana'a.

Layla is a mother from Irbid who took part in the program with her daughter Rose. Layla feels that parents and caregivers must receive some sort of training on how parents can teach their children effectively. "I needed some support to learn how best to reach out to my daughter. I think some parents might have faced the same issue. Luckily the teachers were there for me. They guided and helped me to properly deliver the content they were sending us so that my daughter would make the best use of these lessons", said Layla.

"My daughter started to wake me up early in the morning to help her attend the online classes together. She gets excited every morning to learn and play".



***"6 days until I start going to school. I am excited," said the girl after reciting the alphabet and counting to ten.***

# RELIEF INTERNATIONAL

## *The Story of Akram*

Akram Mansour Alnizami, 19 years old from Dara'a Syria, is a middle son among 6 brothers and two sisters. He is smart, well spoken, presentable and filled with dreams. Yet, his life is nothing but ordinary; when Akram was 11 years old, he left his hometown in Syria to a journey of twisted turns, narrow roads and sharp valleys to reach the security of the Jordanian land. He and his family fled their country to settle, carrying only a tent, mouths to feed, and hope for a better future.

At that time, the desert of Za'atari camp was barely making ends meet, with only one school available for a boy of his age, and he had to wait for 6 months to continue with his education. Akram and his brother used to wake up at 3am in the morning to get some bread from the only bakery in the area before it ran out, and going back home empty handed most of the days.

Despite all this, Akram had the passion of learning and the spark of intelligence in his eyes. Once he started attending formal schools, he became the shining star in his class. With the support of the staff and due to his excellent language skills, he became student representative with the European Delegation.

His determination to learn led him to join the remedial program run by Relief International (RI) when he was in the sixth grade. Still battling between putting bread on the table and studying hard for a better future, he used to work some days in the fields collecting tomatoes. The teachers saw the intelligent, hard-working boy and effortlessly continued to plant seeds of knowledge in his life.

From there, Akram joined the French language program in Za'atari camp supported by the French Embassy. He studied restlessly with only one motive in mind: 'to speak fluent French'. By the end of the project, he was recognized as an ambitious man building a strong record of academic achievements. He competed and won the scholarship offered by the French Embassy that will allow him to study French language in Jordan and then move to France to study for his Bachelor and Master degrees. Akram choose Journalism as his desired field of study.

"This scholarship will radically impact my life. My wellbeing will be better, and now I can see the path towards my goals. The impact is not only tangible as the scholarship brought a sense of joy and hope to my family and friends, for them to see one of their own, in France! My mother is melancholic about my departure, but still she sees how this opportunity will change my life, all of our lives".

*"All of my success is attributed to Relief. My formal school had no class structure... I went to Relief to organize my knowledge and there I found the most wonderful environment for my education. Relief organized my thoughts and properly grew my love for knowledge".*





# WAR CHILD

## *Early Childhood Development*

The influx of refugees, particularly from neighboring Syria, have increased social and economic pressures inside the Kingdom. The country is struggling to accommodate the increased demands on its education, health and protection infrastructures. These social and economic pressures have been exacerbated by the continuing COVID-19 pandemic - with a significant negative impact on the wellbeing and prospects of these vulnerable communities.

Additionally, schools and education institutions have been closed since March 2020 and many children and their families have been affected by this closure both psychologically and academically. Therefore, the War Child team has adapted its programs to be delivered remotely, using different tools such as videos, voice messages and homework support to engage students and parents in the learning process.

A crucial component in this process has been supporting facilitators to adjust their role through the use of technological tools such as a WhatsApp platform and sending and receiving lessons links, videos, voice messages and images. The role of parents and caregivers has always been crucial in learning activities, but it became more important

during the online remote learning. So, regular phone calls were made by facilitators to ensure the progress of the children besides the regular assessments after each curriculum's unit, as well as pre and post assessments. The War Child's ECCD online program is carried out in both Emirati Jordanian Camp (EJC) and Zaatari Camp.

Abdulrahman and Malak are looking forward to going to school. Lamia, a mother of two and resident of Zaatari Camp since 2016, has shared with the team how difficult it was to follow up on the learning process of her four-year-old son Abdulrahman. she says: "No doubt it would have been much more beneficial for my son and for my sanity -with giggles- for him to be able to study and play among other children in a classroom. However, I do my best day and night to support him, download videos, and communicate with his teachers." When the team asked Abdulrahman if he can talk about a lesson he liked, he started talking all about the seasons, the rainy winter and the sunny summer.

In EJC, we spoke to Hasiba, a mother of five school-aged children. For her, the high demand on smart devices and internet credit was a challenge. She also said, "Especially in the limited spaces we have in the camp's caravans, children need to go to school". Her daughter Malak participated in the remote ECCD cycle and she sang to the team.

*"Especially in the limited spaces we have in the camp's caravans, children need to go to school".*



# WORLD VISION

## *Early Childhood Development*

COVID-19 has had a profound effect on the wellbeing of children living in refugee camps. The first official confirmed case was reported in Jordan on the 2nd of March 2020. Shortly after and as a precautionary measure, the Jordanian Government announced the suspension of schools, kindergartens and educational activities.

Like many cases across the world, children in Azraq Refugee Camp have had their daily routine disrupted. No longer can they go to school, play with their friends or even leave their homes. In some cases, children are sharing rooms with up to six family members, with little means of entertainment and electricity supply, which is limited to certain hours per day.

Parents are constantly asked by their children when this would end. Uncertainty has remained a constant factor in the lives of these Syrian refugee families. "When I grow up, I hope that this virus disappears so I can go see the white snow in Syria; the country that my parents always talk about," said five-year-old Qutaibah.

Qutaibah was born in Azraq Refugee Camp and his family is from Homs. He used to attend one of the early childhood education centres in the camp

run by World Vision's Early Childhood Development program. His favorite activity in class is drawing and painting. "I have many friends at the center that I love," he added.

The early childhood education center supports a holistic development of children's emotional, social, cognitive and physical aspects through classes in different subjects, such as Arabic, English, art and music. However, due to the pandemic, the center had to close in March and adapt remotely.

"When the government announced the suspension of educational activities, I was concerned about the academic and social impact this would have on my children, yet the help of staff from World Vision has given our children the opportunity to continue their educational progress without interruptions," said Manal, Qutaibah's mother.

Fatima is one of the teaching assistants working at the center. She said: "I share the activities with children every day at the same time. On one day due to an electricity outage, I was not able to send the children their homework at the usual timing. One of the children who lived close by walked to my home, knocked on the door and asked me why I hadn't sent them their daily assignment. Seeing how excited children were to participate and continue their educational journey, I was proud to be part of the remote learning program."

*"Seeing how excited children were to participate and continue their educational journey, I was proud to be part of the remote learning program."*

