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JORDAN INGO FORUM NEWSLETTER

September Update

JIF SECRETARIAT

As new challenges arise in an unprecedented COVID-19 crisis affecting the entire world, we should remind ourselves of the core motivation of our engagement to serve the most vulnerable. The Jordan INGO Forum (JIF) wishes to stand with Jordan to ensure its continued efforts in combating the health and socioeconomic impacts of the coronavirus by continuing to pursue all necessary humanitarian and development response plans.

As you will discover in JIF members' testimonies and contributions, INGOs are working hard to maintain service delivery to the most vulnerable, developing and implementing programming despite the fact that international funding mechanisms are overstretched by this crisis. There have already been notable achievements in maintaining existing projects, adapting to COVID-19, and establishing new projects in response to the pandemic. Furthermore, JIF is committed to supporting the skills and expertise of its members, as well as prioritizing the integration of the international community's efforts with national response plans in Jordan. There is great potential and we now, more than ever, should engage in collective dialogue to develop nationally-integrated, cross-sectoral, and gender-sensitive programming within the humanitarian and development fields.

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Danish Refugee Council

THE STORY OF A SYRIAN REFUGEE WOMAN WHO IS WORKING HARD TO PROVIDE A BETTER LIFE FOR HERSELF AND HER FAMILY

Mariam fled rural Damascus to Jordan with seven members of her family in 2013 due to the conflict in Syria. Ever since her arrival to Jordan, the 53-year-old woman has been calling Madaba, a Jordanian governorate in the southwest of the country, her home.

The Syrian conflict has displaced millions of the country's population, sending more than 5.4 million into refuge. Jordan currently hosts more than 650,000 Syrian refugees, making it the second highest refugee hosting country per capita. Mariam is just one of them.

When her family first arrived in Jordan, they struggled with finding work opportunities. With only her son working in a nearby restaurant, Mariam decided to begin her search for a well-paid job and further assistance.

Through the Danish Refugee Council's (DRC) Malaih Community Centre, Mariam learned about our Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)-funded cash-for-work programme. She immediately enrolled and started working in a plant nursery. The income that she earned through her work there for 40 days helped her provide for her family and strengthen her relationship with the Jordanian community through meeting Jordanian women and creating new friendships. "The staff was very supportive and provided us with support. My colleagues, both Jordanians and Syrians, were so kind," said Mariam with a wide smile on her face.

After the project ended, our staff told Mariam and her colleagues about the home-based businesses grants. With the help of her son-in-law, Mariam applied for an egg incubator with no hesitation. "My love and experience with raising animals, and my son-in-law's knowledge about egg incubators and quail birds, encouraged me to take this step," she said.

Today, the egg incubator helps Mariam and her family by providing a sustainable source of income. Mariam is also working hard to market her business. She is an active and ambitious woman whose circumstances have never hindered her from keeping a smile on her face and a lot of faith in a better future.

"I am eager to do more work with DRC. I love working; it makes me feel alive," finished Mariam with great enthusiasm.

"I love working. It makes me feel alive."

MARIAM



DRC

- Protecting water reservoirs in Jordan through labor-intensive measures
- Funded by GIZ
- \$7.2m USD
- Reaches 2,300 individuals
- rasha.alzein@drc.ngo

Jesuit Relief Service

AMJAD'S STORY

Amjad is a 33-year-old Yemeni woman and a JRS student who overcame all challenges to receive an education. She knows it is her way to a better life and to secure a future for her children.

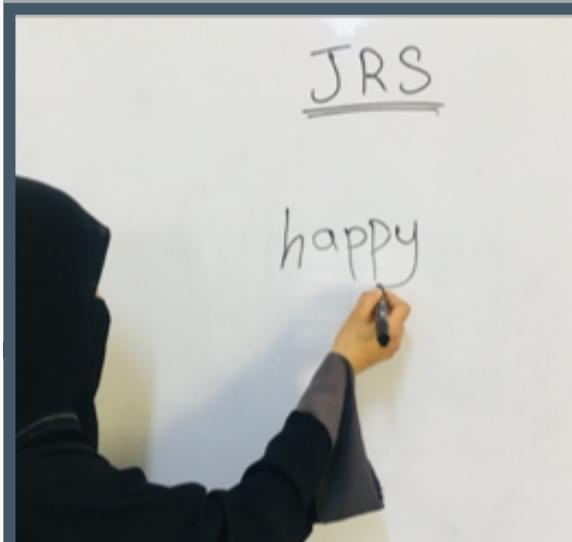
"Before I knew about JRS and its activities, the reason for my visit to Jordan was my treatment because I had thyroid cancer and there is no treatment in Yemen, so I left my family and came with a broken soul to Jordan. I could not have friendships or relationships with neighbors, and I was isolated and sad all the time. On the academic side, I had finished a bachelor in Mathematics and Physics, but I had difficulties with the English language throughout my university stage and I was afraid that it would reflect on my children."

Amjad stated, "When I joined JRS with English lessons, I learned about the rest of the courses. This experience constituted a qualitative shift in my life as I became more open to society and other cultures because I am Yemeni and veiled and I was afraid of being pushed aside, but these fears soon faded away. I felt we are one family uniting our humanity. We fear for each other, we rejoice for their joy, we grieve for their grief, and we always communicate with each other. In addition, I filled my free time and I no longer think about illness and sadness. I am an active person and the funny thing is that I no longer obsess for my results, but instead the hospital calls to remind me of my appointments."

"At the beginning of the pandemic, it was difficult to accept, especially since the complete closure was not expected. The first week was the hardest as some basic materials were not accessible. But after this, we started adapting. I was supported by the Civil Defense Directorate that brought me to the hospital when I was in pain. As for my children, there were challenges in providing education online as we only have one phone and a simple internet package, which was not enough for us, but the lessons that were broadcast on TV were very useful."

"During the lockdown, I participated in the Psychosocial Case Management course. Sometimes I missed sessions because my children needed the phone for school, but I made up what I missed at night. On-site courses are better in terms of interaction, but online courses give me more time with my children, especially without the commute. The course relieved stress and I gained skills like studying all options before making decisions and dealing with each age group according to its characteristics. It also helped me with my children."

"I felt we are one family uniting our humanity. We fear for each other, we rejoice for their joy, we grieve for their grief, and we always communicate with each other."



JRS

- Post-secondary and professional education
- Funded by JRS IO
- \$240,142 USD
- Reaches 1,000 individuals
- jor01.office@jrs.net

La Chaîne de l'Espoir

STORY OF ZAHRA

During the Syrian conflict in 2013, Zahra's family fled to Jordan because the scale of the conflict was immense with unpredictable consequences and living in their home city was unbearable due to the bombing and shooting.

Zahra, now 7-months old, was born to a lovely Syrian family consisting of six people who currently live in an apartment in an urban city in Jordan. As Zahra's father can't find a job in Jordan, her mother is working as a cleaner in order to help the family financially.

During her pregnancy, Zahra's mother benefited from the financial support of an NGO in order to deliver in a hospital. The pregnancy and delivery went smoothly; however, after Zahra's birth, the family noted that she was different from her siblings. She was always crying, not sleeping or gaining weight. But no one in the family considered truly that she might have a problem.

In April 2019, Zahra's family was called by an Early Detection Officer at La Chaîne de l'Espoir Jordan Office in order to participate in a campaign organized by CDE at Al Maqased Charity Hospital in Amman. Zahra had a consultation with an orthopedic doctor and a pediatrician to detect any orthopedic or cardiac anomalies. The pediatrician identified an anomaly in her heartbeat and diagnosed Zahra with congenital heart disease. She was referred to a local cardiologist and partner of La Chaîne de l'Espoir and was diagnosed with PDA (Patent Ductus Arteriosus) and in need of heart surgery.

Thanks to the pediatric cardiac surgery mission organized by La Chaîne de l'Espoir and funded by the European Union – Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid, Zahra was operated on by a Portuguese team led by Pr. Manuel Antunes on September 2019. After 3 days, she recovered very well and now is able to continue her life normally.

During Zahra's hospital stay, her parents benefited from the psychosocial support services, especially her mother as she was experienced high anxiety as a result of the surgery. The PSS officer from La Chaîne de l'Espoir conducted full assessment sessions and set clear goals with her mother in order to control anxiety and difficult feelings, and these goals have been achieved during three individual therapy sessions.

"Thank God that there are medical missions in Jordan in order to save our child," Zahra's mother said with tears in her eyes.

La Chaîne de l'Espoir Jordan can implement its Jordanian Programme thanks to the European Union – Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid .



La Chaîne de l'Espoir

- Access to life-saving medico-surgical care for vulnerable children and young adults (refugees and host populations) living with cardiac and orthopedic impairments
- Funded by ECHO
- \$1.9m USD
- Reaches 3,300 individuals
- cassist.jordan@chainedelespoir.org



“I believe encouraging women to be involved in the local community will help my daughters have a better future.”

ASHWAQ

MEDA

JORDAN VALLEY LINKS: MAKING A CAMP INTO A HOME

Hospitality runs in the family for Ashwaq. Generations of her family have hosted tourists visiting their home in New Feynan, providing chai and shisha as a welcome respite in the Jordanian desert. This model had been successful for years as they have welcomed new visitors for decades. However, Ashwaq saw the potential for their modest home to become much more. Feynan has sparse lodgings available with tourists having the choice of a few homestays with local hosts. For those with higher budgets, the Feynan Ecolodge provides accommodation, but there are limited low-budget options in the area. Understanding this need, Ashwaq proposed the transformation of her family's home into a camp that includes sleeping facilities for rent.

With the support of MEDA Jordan Valley Links project funded by Global Affairs Canada, a camp was established in Old Feynan with sleeping facilities. This unique market niche is now occupied by Ashwaq's family and has provided them with a source of income. Ashwaq said, “I have started making a decent amount of money every month to provide basic needs for my daughters and to support my family.” In a community where it is not accepted for women to work, Ashwaq has benefited being involved in income-generating activities and serves as a role model for other women.

Ashwaq received training on business development, financial management, and other skills crucial for daily operations for her business. Ashwaq also learned how to do marketing for the camp in a way that is appealing to tourists. She shares that the budgeting training not only helped her more effectively manage her family's business, but also shifted the way she manages finances at home.

The women in her community are remarkable, balancing economic activities with their own household responsibilities, which resonates with Ashwaq as she hopes her role will streamline women into more visible roles in the community. “I believe encouraging women to be involved in the local community will help my daughters have a better future.” She attributes her newfound confidence to the quality of training she received from JVL, sharing that, with these new skills, she hopes to be a role model to women in her community.

She also accredits her success to the huge support her father. “I hope that one day I will be able to extend my project to support women to be a part of daily work and to be able to engage more with my community.” She looks forward to growing her business to other parts of the region, providing guests with quality experiences to enjoy her camp in Old Feynan.

MEDA

- Jordan Valley Links project aims to increase the contribution of Jordanian women and youth to Jordan's economic growth through improving entrepreneurial and business acumen and by reducing barriers to entry
- Funded by Global Affairs Canada
- 19m CAD
- Reaches 25,000 women and youth entrepreneurs
- hahsanulhaque@meda.org

FAWAZ AND TURKIYA

Wiping tears that ran down his cheek, Fawaz starts to tell his story of fear, pain, and heartbreak of losing his children. He and his wife Turkiya had five daughters and four sons, a big happy family, but not for long. They lost two of their sons and two of their sons-in-law early in the Syrian crisis. Seeking refuge and safety for the remaining family, their family fled from place to place inside Syria.

After enduring so much, Fawaz and his wife set off to Jordan in 2013 as a last resort, leaving behind their daughters, the memories of their sons, and a house they could no longer call home.

Originally from Homs, Fawaz was a successful merchant. “I had a three-story house that I called home, three cars, and my beloved family by my side. I couldn’t ask for more.” Fawaz sighed and covered his face with his hand. “How can I not be sad after all we have been through? How can I go on after having had so much and losing it all in the blink of an eye?”

After coming to Jordan, Fawaz soon realized that many challenges still existed between rent, food, and medication. “Sometimes I wake up at night feeling restless. My mind jumps from one problem to the other hopelessly trying to find solutions. I eventually get dressed and walk the dark streets, finding salvation in the cold nights.”

Fawaz suffered four strokes and has diabetes and hypertension, while Turkiya was diagnosed with colon cancer this year and broke her thigh several months ago. She has to stay in bed and Fawaz must keep their home clean and do all of the cooking. Medair was able to assist Turkiya in covering the cost of surgery for her thigh with donations from EU Civil Protection & Humanitarian Aid. Medair also enrolled them in psychosocial support sessions and provides them with monthly cash assistance.

While Medair strives to help as many vulnerable Syrian refugees as possible, 80 percent residing outside of camps live below the poverty line.

While Medair strives to help as many vulnerable Syrian refugees as possible, 80 percent residing outside of camps live below the poverty line. Among them, elderly refugees are particularly vulnerable, often relying on their families to get by. If they are alone, older Syrian refugees rely largely on humanitarian assistance as their primary source of income, or they resort to other negative coping mechanisms, such as begging or borrowing money from others. Older people have been identified to be among the most at-risk categories of displaced people by UNHCR. Many need help to access health facilities and medication and to meet their basic needs.

Medair is committed to providing interventions that bring dignity and hope to the lives of at-risk groups, including elderly refugees, and urges donors and the international community to continue with their generous support.



Medair

- Provision of life-saving assistance to prevent unnecessary deaths and relieve suffering from crisis-affected populations
- Funded by ECHO
- 1m Euro
- Reaches 28,659 individuals
- margie.davis@medair.org

PLAN International

HALA, SUNDOS, AND HAJAR

Hala

"I took part in almost every type of session; life skills, Robotics, ICDL, Champions of Change, and Youth Committees. Because of that, I spend a lot of time in the Plan centre, and it makes me happy because I see myself developing new skills."

14 -year old Hala has lived in Azraq Refugee Camp for four years and she has been one of our most eager students. Even though she has a passion for football, her true love is the English language. She takes part in classes so that she can become an English teacher. "I want to help girls learn-- help them develop and become better at whatever they do."

Hala is an integral member of the PLAN family in Jordan and she took part in a risk mapping exercise and interviewed 70 people in the camp before the curfew to see challenges they face and how to overcome them. According to the findings, education, health and safe spaces were the top concerns of residents.

"Most people mentioned the issue of harassment, and this is worrying, but we always try and talk to parents to try and convince them to send their daughters back to school. Unlike what most people from outside the camp think, parents are usually keen on getting their daughters a good education, but understandably for them, the safety of their daughters always comes first".

The Himayati project funded by ECHO focuses on mitigating the effects of living conditions in the Azraq refugee camp to include young girls and boys along with parents and in capacity building and life skills sessions. Furthermore, the project aims to integrate individuals and active members of society in efforts to tackle most pressing issues within the community through formulating and activating youth committees.

PLAN International

- **Himayati Project aims to mitigate the effects of living conditions in the Azraq Refugee Camp to include youth and their parents in capacity building and life skills sessions**
- **Funded by ECHO**
- **800,000 Euro**
- **Reaches 7,800 individuals**
- **Hiba.Alhejazi@plan-international.org**



Sundos and Hajar

"When we hear about a girl who has stopped going to school, we go and talk to the parents. We find out that the father is scared his daughter will be harassed on her way to school. So our solution is to invite her to join our group so we can walk to school together. This simple act helps put the parents' minds at ease."

14-year-old Sundos and 15-year-old Hajar are friends who have been living in the Azraq Refugee Camp for over a year. They are key members of the Champions of Change program and they work on day-to-day issues facing their community. Sundos stated, "I also face harassment, but I try my best to ignore it. I won't allow this to affect my education, and I am working to combat this phenomenon in the camp because it's affecting many girls' access to education."

Sundos' passion for education is reflected in her grades as a straight-A student who aspires to be a doctor. Her friend Hajar has creative ambitions and is training to be a singer. The success of our Champions of Change program comes down to the hard work, passion, and creative thinking of girls like Sundos and Hajar who shed light on challenges and barriers affecting the community.

The Champions of Change program's youth committees hold meetings regularly where views and ideas are discussed and efforts are supported by Plan's staff in the camp who help guide and support the youth to achieve their goals through their initiatives.

Relief International

MY RIGHT TO LEARN: HUDA'S STORY

Huda is from Damascus, Syria. She is the eldest of five children, and she is now 17 years old. She comes from a background where female education is not that important, and Huda has had to overcome incredible obstacles in order to continue her formal education, having to face family responsibilities at the expense of her own future.

Like most refugees residing in Azraq Camp, it took Huda and her family a long trip of seven days to reach Jordan in order to escape the conflict in their hometown in Syria. Huda remembers what people around her were discussing about life in Azraq: there are many organizations and some of them provide education and recreational activities," said Huda.

After arriving at the camp, Huda's parents started working in one of the organizations. Working made both her parents very busy and they couldn't take care of her youngest sister, Sham. Huda, being the eldest daughter, had to miss school upon her parent's insistence to take care of Sham and to do the house chores. Her mother told her, "You are the eldest daughter, you must stay home and take care of your sister."

It took a lot of time and effort to be able to take care of her sister and the house responsibilities. This caused her to start missing more lessons in school and in her remedial classes at the RI center in Village 6. "My teachers kept alerting me about my studying performance and how being absent often will affect my scores in the long run. They were really worried." Unfortunately, Huda could not keep up with all of her responsibilities and eventually completely stopped attending any educational services.

For a 17-year-old at home, she felt that she was about to lose all her friends and classmates, and she did not know what to do. "One day, I heard from my friends that a new

EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

When implementing RI's drop out program in 2018, staff noticed that many young girls were not able to keep regular attendance in classes. After investigating the causes of a lack of retention of female students, RI discovered that childcare duties were a barrier.

From this basis, RI initiated its Early Childhood Development program to provide childcare services to young women who would otherwise not be able to participate in the program. The program aims to play a key role in early cognitive skills development in children and ensure that the barriers to young women are lifted for their equal right to an education. This program targets young children (age 0-5) and their parents, and it prioritizes children of mothers attending secondary remedial classes or the dropout program, and female Syrian volunteers.

Early Childhood Development Center (ECD) will open at RI to support students and volunteers who could not attend school or work because they have children. Quickly, I ran to my parents and told them about this, and they didn't mind the idea of registering Sham in the ECD while I attend my classes!"

Huda is now in 11th grade and has caught up on everything she missed through RI support. Her knowledge of academic subjects has improved greatly and she says, "Even Sham's behavior improved from RI's ECD center. I'm very happy and satisfied with my current state. Thank you RI for giving me back my right to learn!"



Relief International

- Early Childhood Development Program
- Funded by SDC, UNICEF, AGFE, and OCHA
- \$133,200 USD
- Reaches 450 individuals
- Wasef.abdulahadi@ri.org

Marwan, a Syrian refugee living in Za'atari Camp since 2013, earned a degree in Economy & Commerce and had great ambitions. Plans changed as the conflict forced him from his home, but over the years, he has sought ways to share his knowledge with other young refugees.

When the UNHCR-funded Innovation Lab opened in 2019, Marwan found an opportunity. The lab, filled with high-tech machinery and robotics, offers youth a place to build technical and entrepreneurial skills. As the Innovation Lab Coordinator, Marwan teaches courses on digital production, coding and programming, robotics, and science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM).

"We do our best to create a safe space for each student to feel valued and appreciated. Students feel so proud after completing a prototype, graduating a course, or training other students," Marwan said. "This sense of accomplishment helps them adapt to life away from their home countries, be productive, and pay knowledge forward."

Marwan works with a team of young trainers who lead classes at the Lab. Sameh, a 21-year-old Za'atari resident, volunteers while pursuing a degree in Renewable Energy Engineering.

"The fact that I help shape students' minds and expand their knowledge makes volunteering worth the effort," Sameh said. "We discover new things every day, which also benefit me in my studies and encourage me to continue doing what I'm doing."

- Blumont**
- **Za'atari Community Based Protection Services**
 - **Funded by UNHCR**
 - **\$3.2m USD**
 - **Reaches 77,000 camp residents**
 - **communications@blumont.org**



Blumont

When schools and in-person activities at Za'atari Camp stopped due to COVID-19, Learning Hubs—colorful, UNHCR-funded places where people could access free electronic educational materials—were amongst the spaces that closed down. As camp residents and staff adjusted to changes, Blumont's team sought new ways to ensure that young people could still access critical learning resources.

The Learning Hubs utilize Kolibri, an open-source platform developed by Learning Equality, to provide a range of educational tools and materials, categorized by topic and target age. Information is hosted on a network in the Learning Hubs, allowing students to connect even without an Internet connection.

With the Learning Hubs closed, Blumont worked to make Kolibri lessons available to students at home. Instructional videos on how to access programming and guidance

on transitioning to online learning were created and distributed via WhatsApp. The Learning Hub's coaches also used WhatsApp to monitor learner experiences and adapt resources as needed.

After a pilot program offering English and Arabic courses, as well as lessons for the TIGER 2.0 empowerment project, the effort was expanded, and electronic devices and Internet credits were shared with families to enable and encourage continued learning. The program is helping students stay on track as they look toward the next school year.

"I have a great passion for learning, and that is why I always open the Kolibri platform in the morning," said Fatimah, a student at the camp. "There is no doubt that the platform positively contributed to my achievements." After completing this year's school exams, Fatimah is using the lessons to prepare for the upcoming year and the eighth-grade curriculum.

Collateral Repair Project

LOVE LIFE, LOVE LEARNING

“We spend hours reminiscing about good old days in Syria,” said Essam, describing his family’s day-to-day routine during COVID-19. Fueled by hopes of returning home and staying safe, our community members are standing strong against the novel virus. The extraordinary events refugees have experienced have taught them how to create a life that is balanced between their origins and their current circumstances. As a grassroots organization, Collateral Repair Project (CRP) attempts to empower refugee communities to build upon these experiences to help them cope with the strict lockdown in Amman through online communication such as WhatsApp or other different live broadcasting services.



“

Family bonding moments like these are what helps us stay hopeful for a better tomorrow.

”

Essam is one of over 500 participants taking part in CRP’s online programs since the curfew has started. He chose Keystone sessions to “stimulate my mind and enhance my mobility and flexibility.” Though where is the fun in exercising alone? Essam frequently brings his grandchild to join the workout.

Little Ali then begins working on his homework, with some help from grandfather Essam, “I teach my adorable grandchild using a playful technique to avert boredom.” Afterwards Ali send his homework to the teacher via WhatsApp for feedback. Family bonding moments like these are what helps us stay hopeful for a better tomorrow. During this surreal time, Essam decided to embed the meaning of solidarity and love in his family. “I try to make sure that everyone is happy, especially my wife. We are like one soul in two bodies and if she is sad, I am sad and if she is happy, I am happy.” He advised everyone at the end to stay home and stay safe. I would add, as we always say at CRP, never stop the love!

CRP is keen to maintain collaboration between community members and staff, and it also provides online yoga programs for both youth and adults. Shatha, a 54 year-old Iraqi refugee, enjoys doing yoga with her husband. She stresses the importance of yoga and meditation, “I am asthmatic, and yoga is essential for my respiratory system. It allows me to contemplate and connect to nature.”

Uncertainty is all around us, never more so than today. Essam and Shatha agree online classes are effective in addressing anxiety. “We need something to get coronavirus out of our head, we need some sort of distraction.” Is there any better distraction than investing in ourselves?

CRP

- Emergency assistance and community programming to refugees in Amman, Jordan
- Funded by international and governmental grantors, foundations, and individual donors
- \$1.06m USD
- Reaches 500 families monthly with emergency assistance and 500 families weekly through programming
- sandra.karam@collateralrepairproject.org

Humanity and Inclusion

EFFORTS DURING THE NATIONAL LOCKDOWN IN JORDAN

During the COVID-19 lockdown, Humanity & Inclusion (HI) and the Physical, Medicine and Arthritis Rehabilitation Association of Jordan launched the initiative “Stay at Home, We Reach You” to provide teleconsultations by rehabilitation doctors and home-based interventions for persons with disabilities. This initiative is part of HI’s rehabilitation and ECD work in Jordan, which is funded through DFID and BPRM. Through this initiative, HI was able to identify urgent cases at risk of developing secondary complications despite the movement restrictions and provide these persons with direct rehabilitation services. In total, 28 phone consultations and 405 physiotherapy sessions were conducted, along with the donation of assistive devices and prosthesis & orthotics. In parallel, patients and caregivers were provided with recommendations on how to continue rehabilitation sessions at home.

REACHING OUT DURING THE COVID-19 LOCKDOWN

Layan, an 18-month-old refugee born in Jordan, is the youngest member of a Syrian family of five residing in Mafraq, Jordan. Layan was born with Cerebral Palsy and later identified with developmental delays. Her family is concerned about future constraints that might prevent her from living a normal childhood or the dependency she might endure as an adult in the future.

First, Layan was assessed and referred to Mafraq Hospital by an HI team in February 2020 and she received her first physiotherapy session just before the COVID-19 lockdown started in Jordan. Then, all services were suspended, which made her parents feel even more helpless as the date for the next appointment was unknown.

However, the team was able to return to Layan’s house in early May 2020. She had been crawling on her abdomen for a month but was still unable to hold a sitting position. Her mother mentioned that she hadn’t been active during the lockdown and that she slept most of the day and didn’t show any interest in playing with her siblings. HI’s examination revealed that Layan suffers from general muscle weakness, as well as basic developmental delays like standing or sitting. The goal was to guide and train her mother on various exercises that she can perform on Layan daily to improve her condition.

A month later, Layan’s mother was happy to inform HI at their second visit of her improvement and how she can remain in a sitting position and crawl on all fours. The plan now is to demonstrate a set of new exercises to her mother in order to help Layan reach the next goal.

The most important takeaway from HI during the lockdown was the importance of caregiver training and support, which allowed caregivers of children with disabilities to continue rehabilitation routines in order to avoid any secondary complications. Even during difficult times such as the lockdown, with the correct information in hand, caregivers can play a great role in the development of a child’s life. Therefore, HI teams have prepared and communicated awareness messages with beneficiaries by SMS and WhatsApp on medical topics and tips on how to stay positive and spend time usefully during the lockdown.

The most important takeaway from HI during the lockdown was the importance of caregiver training and support, which allowed caregivers of children with disabilities to continue rehabilitation routines.



HI

- Addressing comprehensive rehabilitation and education needs of girls, boys, women, and men affected by the Syrian crisis in targeted areas of Irbid, Mafraq, and Zarqa
- Funded by BPRM
- \$1.7m USD
- Reaches 2,622 individuals
- r.rosengren-klitgaard@hi.org

International Catholic Migration Commission

ADAPTING RESPONSE TACTICS AND DELIVERY IN THE TIMES OF COVID-19

The International Catholic Migration Commission (ICMC) maintained its commitment to uphold the regulations of the government during the lockdown. ICMC continued protecting the health and safety of staff and project participants and implemented a contingency plan to continue assistance to local and refugee populations remotely.

ICMC's Basic Needs team conducted 1,759 phone interviews with participants. Through its Protection Centers in Mafraq and Irbid, ICMC actively provided remote psychosocial support and counseling sessions to vulnerable communities. The highly trained team of counselors conducted 520 phone sessions and developed psychological first aid materials for all staff and volunteers to deal with stress, fear, and anxiety. The protection centers also conducted several other remote activities with more than 160 participants, which included awareness raising sessions over the phone for parents and caregivers, in addition to dialogue on protection issues such as gender-based violence, gender roles within the family, and positive coping strategies for self-care.



The protection centers continued literacy activities remotely and teachers for the Arabic and English language classes conducted their final examinations, where 52 participants graduated during this period. The livelihoods team also shifted to remote implementation of its activities, where financial literacy and employability courses covering budgeting and soft skills were still delivered.

ICMC Jordan continued its internal and external referral operations, where 445 families were referred for different services. ICMC has also intensified its presence on social media, posting vital information for refugees and host communities. ICMC Jordan extended the operational hours of its hotlines for beneficiaries who have any questions or feedback and the team has handled 1,402 calls via hotline, and the complaint and feedback line also was available to participants. Lastly, ICMC continued the distribution of its financial and non-financial assistance to vulnerable families.

ICMC

- Humanitarian protection and livelihoods assistance for refugees and host communities
- Funded by BPRM
- \$2.55m USD
- Reaches 27,670 individuals
- chase@icmc.net

International Rescue Committee

REACHING FAMILIES IN REMOTE AREAS IN JORDAN DURING THE COVID-19 LOCKDOWN



“
"My children always give me
hope," said Mithqal, the
children's father.
”

Shadia left Syria with her husband Mithqal, his second wife Rawaa, and their six young children in 2014. The family spent 12 difficult days on the road to the Jordanian border after escaping the fighting and being displaced several times from one village to another over a period of 2 years.

“We were farmers and I also had a barbershop, and then we lost everything,” Mithqal explained. “My brothers and sisters are now separated in three different countries.”

When the family arrived in Jordan they spent a night at the Za'atari refugee camp, after which they moved to an informal tented settlement in Sabha; a village around four kilometers from the Syrian border with limited access to services.

“Living here makes you feel isolated from people, although lately it's been an advantage during the COVID-19 pandemic,” says Shadia.

In Jordan, the IRC runs Ahlan Simsim, an early childhood development program that is part of a larger partnership with the Sesame Workshop, the non-profit organization behind Sesame Street. The program works with children recovering from trauma and helps them manage stress. Play is a huge part of the recovery process for Shadia and Rawaa's children.

Due to COVID-19, the IRC adopted a new approach to continue reaching children and their caregivers, using phone calls and WhatsApp messages (including photos, video and audio messages) sent by trained Syrian and Jordanian volunteers to provide parents with key skills to help them support the holistic development of their children. Awareness-raising messages focused on the importance of play for child development, stress and behavior management for children and caregivers, and how to make toys for children using resources easily accessible to the families.

“The phone calls are very useful, we were trained on how to deal with our children and take care of them. I made toys for them which made them very happy and the children also gave names to the toys,” said Shadia.

The children enjoy the activities their mother sets up for them, in addition to watching the Ahlan Simsim TV show, which brings happiness to their life. “We learned the letters and songs, I love Jad, Basma, and Ma'zooza,” said six-year old Haneen.

The children's participation in the program has also given them hope for the future. “I want to become a pediatrician to treat the children in the camp,” said 8-year old Nihal.



Mercy Corps

BUSINESSES ADJUST TO A NEW NORMAL

“I had been working in the humanitarian sector for nine years prior to launching Teenah. During my experience, I worked closely with beneficiaries who often shared the downside of short-term cash assistance and wanted sustainable sources of income — that’s what inspired me to start Teenah. It caters to this need while also producing eco-friendly products that have a high demand.” -- Raneem, co-founder of Teenah

Teenah is a women-owned textile company that employs Syrian refugee and Jordanian women in Irbid and sells products both locally and internationally. Like many small businesses, they were forced to close their doors on March 15th when the Government of Jordan instituted a national defense law that placed restrictions on the movement of people and activities throughout the Kingdom. After nearly two months of plummeting sales, Teenah resumed operations on May 11th with a renewed commitment to their social mission.

“A business with purpose” is how they describe themselves, producing eco-friendly products while providing jobs and skills to women who need them most. Teenah provides Syrian refugee and Jordanian women with opportunities to build skills and earn incomes, building hope and self-reliance.

While Jordan's quick and aggressive measures to stem the spread of COVID-19 has largely prevented severe health impacts, the imposed lockdown and, in many cases, the disruption to daily income has had profound negative impacts on the local economy. The long-term impact and ripple effects of this virus and the measures to control it will be seen for years to come and felt hardest by the most vulnerable — those with smaller support networks and financial safety nets to rely on in times of crisis, and those living day-to-day from their livelihoods and those that rely on humanitarian assistance.

Teenah is a grantee under Mercy Corps’ Access to Justice and Jobs (A2J) program funded by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs. With Mercy Corps’ help, Teenah has been able to purchase new sewing machines, provide technical support to improve sewing skills and develop a paid apprenticeship program for young Syrian and Jordanian women. The A2J team has been in constant communication with Teenah, as well as the other grantees, to better understand how they are being impacted, if and how they are adapting and what they need during and after the shutdown in order to recover.

For every mask purchased, two masks are made and one is donated to women and children in need through UNICEF. And with every tote bag purchased, a day worth of meals and hygiene items are donated to underserved families. While economic shocks can provide both opportunities and threats — affecting different businesses in different ways — Teenah is choosing to focus on the opportunities and Mercy Corps is prepared to support them and their purpose.

Mercy Corps

- Access to Justice and Jobs in Jordan (A2J)
- Funded by Government of the Netherlands- Addressing Root Causes (ARC) Fund
- 4.76m EURO
- Reaches 2,345 individuals
- tazar@mercy Corps.org



The non-formal education program is a significant solution for the youth that dropped out of formal education. They go through two years of learning in a unique participatory method and students who graduate from the Ministry of Education-accredited non-formal education center earn their tenth-grade equivalency certificate. This enables them to re-enroll in formal education or vocational training, which is one light of hope for a lot of youth who fell through the cracks of the formal education system.

Questscope

As distant learning started with the COVID-19 lockdown, the Questscope teachers that are referred to as facilitators had to come up with creative solutions to keep the youth engaged and overcome all kinds of technical problems.

"I feared the transition to distance education, but this experience has taught me not to make judgments before trying, but what is more important is to love what you do. I wondered, how will the enrollees react, how could I encourage them? Online methods do have some stumbling blocks like Internet bandwidth and smartphones... I felt a big burden," says Wafa Hamoury, our facilitator in Bit Ras- Irbid.

As our non-formal education program serves marginalized youth in rural places in Jordan, our facilitators always went above and beyond their teaching duty. One example is Ms. Ibtisam who noticed the absence of two girls on the WhatsApp group. It turned out their family was put in quarantine at the hospital as their father was in contact with a COVID-19-infected patient.

The girls were very shy and embarrassed to share their story with others, so Ibtisam began to teach them on WhatsApp privately as she didn't want them to miss any sessions and wanted to lift their spirits. Teaching the two sisters was quite challenging as there was no fixed time for their sessions and it depended on when they could use their father's phone. Later, the girls were no longer shy after testing negative for COVID-19 and rejoined the group to continue their educational journey.

Our facilitators turned obstacles into a space for creativity, which is also what Ms. Nowar did. Ms. Nowar specialized in Educational Technologies and she has worked hard in designing creative E-lessons using some educational games and quizzes to keep the girls active throughout her lessons.

With her help, the girls have been given the chance to take the lead in designing their lessons through an initiative she calls "the little teacher." The girls can create their lessons and explain it to others, which helps them learn even more. "This experience developed our girls' talents, as well as our own," says Nowar in describing distant learning.

Questscope

- Non-formal education program
- Funded by USAID and UNICEF
- \$6m USD
- Reaches 4,201 individuals
- maen@questscope.org

HelpAge International



“
You had a clear impact on us,
because you were the first
institution that gave us as
older people this kind of
special care.

“

The evidence is clear that people of older age are among those most at risk of complications from COVID-19. As we grow older, our lives do not become disposable. Older people are members of our families, our caregivers, our workers, and neighbors. This pandemic affects all of us, but it will have the greatest impact on those already experiencing poverty, poor health, and discrimination. We can only limit the spread of the virus and minimize its impact on our lives if we work together across communities, organizations, and countries.

For this reason, HelpAge International in Jordan has executed an emergency project funded by JHF-OCHA that targeted 2,900 older men and women in four governorates throughout Jordan with remote protection messaging, cash assistance, and distribution of hygiene kits through JHCO.

A rapid needs assessment was conducted demonstrating that 56% of older people reported facing difficulties in accessing health services; 44% of older people with disabilities have experienced changes in access to health; and 45% reported changes in their wellbeing as older people surveyed expressed feelings of worry or anxiety about the situation.

This project worked to overcome these challenges. One of our beneficiaries, Hadeh Al Kafalat, 65, said, “During the quarantine, you were the reason we felt safe. We, the older people, are the most vulnerable group of people. So, I was waiting for your advice and my heart was reassured. You had a clear impact on us, because you were the first institution that gave us as older people this kind of special care.”

Souad, Al-Debisi, 61, said, “I feel very happy when I see people who are concerned about our rights as older people, and you are reminding us that, yes, we have the right to health and to live safely free from violence and discrimination.”

HelpAge

- **Strengthening COVID-19 emergency response with distribution and protection/prevention services for older men and women, with and without disabilities**
- **Funded by OCHA**
- **\$138,709 USD**
- **Reaches 2,600 individuals**
- **stephanie.yousef@helpage.org**

Norwegian Refugee Council

Adapting Response Tactics and Delivery in the Times of COVID-19

Between 15-23 June 2020, NRC Jordan conducted a phone survey to capture the ongoing impacts of the COVID-19 crisis on vulnerable households and to find out whether and how well these same households had been able to recover following the easing of the curfew and the subsequent reopening of most businesses. Shedding further light on the plight of vulnerable populations NRC and the international community seek to assist, the survey was part of an ongoing effort to better tailor evidence-based interventions and policies in support of vulnerable populations in Jordan.

Respondents were drawn from NRC Jordan's database of People of Concern (PoC) comprising approximately 30,000 households who have been assessed for assistance through NRC programming over the past year. The sample included a similar number of Jordanians, Syrian refugees and respondents classified as "non-Syrian" refugees, made up of Iraqis, Sudanese, Somalis and Yemenis. The sample size was 364 households at 95% level of confidence and 5% margin of error. The survey was conducted through phone interviews based on a structured questionnaire designed to capture information relevant to the objectives and respondents were called after working hours. Intended to be representative of vulnerable populations that the international community seeks to assist, its findings cannot be extrapolated to the national level.

EMPLOYMENT STATUS:

Not surprisingly, the survey highlighted a significant increase in levels of unemployment between mid-March 2020, just before Jordan's nationwide curfew was imposed, and mid-June 2020 after movement restrictions had been eased and most businesses had reopened. While the percentage of respondents who reported being employed declined from 59% to 42% between mid-March and mid-June, the percentage of those unemployed and actively looking for work increased from 9% to 24% over the same period, meaning that one out of three respondents employed prior to the curfew had lost their job during COVID-19. The survey also found 12% of respondents who had lost their job during the crisis had found alternative work by mid-June.

CONDITIONS AT WORK:

Among respondents who kept the same job (67%) during the curfew, almost two thirds reported either a reduction in their salary (27%) or a reduction in their working hours (27%) in mid-June compared to mid-March. Among them, only 15% of employed respondents reported having a written contract with their employer, indicating a high level of informality, while only 7% reported having social security coverage.

COPING MECHANISMS:

The survey indicated widespread household food insecurity. On at least one of the seven days leading up to the day they were interviewed, 86% of respondents had relied on less preferred and less expensive food; 79% had reduced the number of meals eaten in a day; 75% had limited portions sizes at mealtimes; 62% had restricted consumption by adults in order for small children to eat.

THREAT OF EVICTIONS:

The survey recorded a modest rise in threats of eviction as of mid-June (19%) compared to mid-March (14%). However, it sheds light on several factors that will likely result in an increase in evictions over the coming months. 81% of respondents who were renting reported not being able to pay their rent in mid-June. This includes 84% of Syrian refugees, 79% of non-Syrian refugees, and 76% of Jordanians. Among them, 65% owed more than 3 months' rent to their landlord. While the median monthly rent was 120 JOD, the median level of debt owed to landlords among non-Syrian refugees was 320 JOD, among Jordanians 350 JOD, and among Syrian refugees 360 JOD.

OTHER EFFECTS:

69% cited psychological distress due to uncertainty over their future prospects, and 47% cited increased family tensions due to longer periods at home. Both are considered contributing factors to SGBV.

LIVELIHOODS:

Between mid-March and mid-June, average per capita monthly income fell by 28%, and per capita monthly expenditure by 19%. Non-Syrian refugees recorded the largest drop in income and the lowest per capita figures, followed by Syrian refugees. To compensate for loss of income, households have had little choice but to take on more debt to cover the cost of basic essentials, while simultaneously resorting to negative coping mechanisms in an effort to cut spending. Between mid-March and mid-June, per capita debt has risen by 25% to eight times average per capita income levels.