

Strengthening resilience of Syrian women and girls and host communities in Iraq, Jordan and Turkey



FACTSHEET: JORDAN

COUNTRY FACTS

POPULATION: Jordan's population is **9.5 million** according to the 2015 census. **53 percent** of the population are men and **47 percent** are women. It is worth noting that **34 percent** of the population is aged 14 or younger.¹

REFUGEES: There are **1.4 million** Syrian refugees in Jordan², of whom approximately **668,123** are registered with UNHCR.³ More than **70 percent** of the registered refugees are in the poorest areas of Jordan, with approximately **15 percent** living in formal camp settings.⁴

EMPLOYMENT: Female labour force participation stands at **14 percent** compared to **64 percent** of men.⁵ Women represent **69.3 percent** of economically inactive people in Jordan. Jordan has amongst the lowest levels of female participation in early-stage entrepreneurial activity, **3.3 percent** for women. For men, it is **12.8 percent**.⁶ Cumulatively, **105,004** work permits have been issued/renewed for Syrian refugees in Jordan since 2016, of which only **4 percent** are held by women.⁷

KEY ISSUES

Structural gender inequalities persisted in Jordanian society prior to the onset of the Syria crisis. In 2006, Jordan ranked 93rd out of 115 countries in the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Index. In 2016, Jordan ranked 134th of 144 countries. The nation ranked 105th for economic participation and opportunities in 2006, and today ranks 138th out of 144 countries.⁸



Photo by UN Women/Christopher Herwig

Maryam Khalaf, 39-year-old Syrian refugee, attends tailoring classes at 'Oasis for Women and Girls' in Azraq Refugee Camp, Jordan. The center provides livelihood opportunities and protection to vulnerable Syrian and host community women and girls.

Syrian refugee and Jordanian women living in host communities have limited opportunities for employment as an entry point for economic participation and protection. Jordanian women's participation in the formal economy only reaches **14 percent**. Young women are particularly affected, with an unemployment rate of **41.8 percent**. Women comprise only **4.3 percent** of Jordanian entrepreneurs. These low rates are explained by a range of factors, including gender-based wage discrimination, the high prevalence of occupational segregation, and limited participation in the private sector.

As for Syrian refugees, nearly **40 percent** of Syrian refugee households in Jordan are female-headed.

¹ Government of Jordan, Department of Statistics. Available at: http://www.dos.gov.jo/dos_home_a/main/population/census2015/Persons/Persons_3.1.pdf and the Jordan Times. Available at: <http://www.jordantimes.com/news/local/population-stands-around-95-million-including-29-million-guests>.

² UN Sustainable Development Framework (2018-2022). Available at: <http://jo.one.un.org/en/publications/un-sustainable-development-framework-2018-2022/88>.

³ Syria Regional Refugee Response Portal. Available at: <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/syria>.

⁴ Government of Jordan. 2015. "Jordan response plan for the impact of the Syria crisis, 2016-18"

⁵ UNDP Human Development report and Department of Statistics.

⁶ Global Entrepreneurship Monitor, 2017.

⁷ Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation, June 2018.

⁸ World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Index.

Approximately **48 percent** of these are reliant on aid to meet their food security needs. Male refugees continue to benefit disproportionately from employment opportunities, with only **4 percent** of work permits issued to date going to Syrian female refugees.

The majority (**57 percent**) of women in Jordan who are not currently in employment would like to work if they had the opportunity. This suggests a gap between aspiration – the desire to work – and reality, the ability of access employment due to external obstacles which are contributing to widening gender gap in the Jordanian labour market ⁹.

Violence against women is widely accepted and prevalent. A 2012 Department of Statistics report indicated that **79 percent** of young women between the ages of 15 and 24 years think that a husband is justified in hitting his wife, while **32 percent** of married women have experienced emotional, physical and/or sexual violence from their spouse. In addition, women are reporting increased violence in the home as a result of pressures from the Syria crisis.¹⁰

MADAD PROGRAMME

Largely funded by the [European Union Regional Trust Fund to the Syria Crisis \(EU Madad Fund\)](#), the UN Women's integrated two-year refugee response programme (2018-2019) in Iraq, Jordan and Turkey, Strengthening the Resilience of Syrian Women, Girls and Host Communities aims to strengthen the resilience of Syrian and host community women through protection, economic empowerment, and increased access to multi-sectoral services.

In Jordan, the overall objective of the programme is to strengthen the resilience and empowerment of women and girls affected by the Syrian crisis, reaching approximately 5,000 direct beneficiaries and 17,000 indirect beneficiaries by 2020.

1 (80% of the project is funded by the EU, and the rest by the Government of Japan as well as by UN Women's core resources)

In addition, there is a gender gap in aid assistance exacerbated by a lack of data disaggregated by sex, which is critical for the design and delivery of a gender-responsive resilience-based programming.

UN Women Jordan's resilience and empowerment model features three interlocking building blocks:

- i. Economic empowerment using a dual approach – temporary cash for work opportunities for vulnerable women designed as a pathway to asset replenishment and an entry into more sustainable employment, as well as accredited vocational training and business development paired with job placement, apprentices and grants for sustainable opportunities.
- ii. Protection based interventions to raise awareness of, and prevent, gender-based violence.
- iii. Support to individual and community resilience through leadership skills for women and initiatives to engage men on gender equality.

In addition, UN Women seeks to provide the needed gender-focused technical assistance and capacity development to national coordination mechanisms and different governmental and non-governmental partners.

PROPOSED INTERVENTIONS

- I. UN Women will facilitate short term engagement in the economy and engage men to support women's engagement in the labour market. UN Women will support **1,050** Syrian refugee and Jordanian women with cash for work opportunities linked to local economic needs and in particular, social work and sanitation labour. This will be paired with civic engagement, participation and leadership training for vulnerable women, while engaging men and boys to increase gender equality concepts and support for their partners engaged in public life.
- II. UN Women will also seek to link women who have benefited from UN Women's short-term

⁹ UN Women/REACH 2017, Women working: Jordanian and Syrian refugee women's labour force. <http://jordan.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2017/3/jordanian-and-syrian-refugee-womens-labour-force-participation-and-attitudes-towards-employment>

¹⁰ 2012 Department of Statistics report.

employment assistance, to longer term employment through job placement and entrepreneurship. Training, skills development and mentoring will be based on a market and loan products assessment which considers the private sector's demand and potential opportunities in non-traditional economic sectors. In particular, data and analysis will be used to build a business case of the impact of investments on childcare and transport for business net gain.

- III. Recognizing the importance of accountability to the labour law and the application of decent work standards, UN Women will promote dialogue and negotiation around decent work standards in partnership with the Ministry of Labour and a dedicated national coalition, providing trend data and analysis on the working conditions of female refugees and host community nationals across Jordan to inform their work and engagement.
- IV. UN Women will provide comprehensive and non-stigmatized services for those in need, at risk of or surviving gender-based violence. This will be done through national service providers, to build national service delivery mechanisms and ensure sustainability. Women benefiting from the centres will have access to: legal aid, medical service (including dental), emergency shelter, vocational and life skills training (computer and literacy), awareness raising classes (with a focus on information sharing on opportunities available) and 'soft' psychosocial support (community groups and action).
- V. UN Women will also address the prevention elements of gender-based violence by promoting accountability for crimes of this nature and strengthen access to justice mechanisms. This will include building the capacity of justice professionals on how to adjudicate cases using Jordan's legislation, and peer to peer support to mentor prosecutors and judges through the adjudication of a case.



Hilah Mohammed, 35-years-old Syrian refugee, attends tailoring classes at 'Oasis for Women and Girls' in Zaatari Refugee Camp, Jordan. The center provides livelihood opportunities and protection to vulnerable Syrian and host community women and girls.