



Jordan Situation Report

August 19, 2024

Background

The background to water scarcity, refugee livelihoods, and food security in Jordan can be found in Anera's last [Situation Report \(July 2024\)](#).

Overview

Jordan is grappling with the challenges posed by hosting over one million Syrian refugees. The country is currently collaborating with international organizations to resettle some of these refugees in other nations. Jordanian Interior Minister Mazen Faraya recently announced that the government is considering reviewing its policies and strategies concerning Syrian refugees. Since the onset of the Syrian crisis in 2011, Jordan has been heavily impacted by the influx of Syrian refugees, facing economic, social, and security challenges as a result. The country continues to call for increased international support to help share responsibility and pool the resources required to provide essential services.¹

Jordan is also facing significant economic challenges due to the ongoing war on Gaza. **Tourism, a crucial sector contributing 15% of Jordan's GDP, has been hit particularly hard.** After a strong recovery in early 2023, the onset of the war led to a sharp decline in tourism, with hotel occupancy rates dropping by 50-75% and numerous booking cancellations. The instability has also disrupted trade routes, increasing shipping costs and decreasing trade activity. According to experts, the hostilities have disrupted import and export volumes, affected prices, and heightened risks associated with navigation in the Red Sea and Arabian Sea due to threats in Yemen. Investment has similarly seen a downturn, as rising costs and uncertainties have made the country less appealing to foreign investors. The contribution of the investment sector to GDP is expected to decline significantly, potentially falling from 25% to 17%. Energy and food security have also emerged as areas of critical concern.²

Refugees in Jordan

Jordan requires nearly \$2 billion to fund its 2024 Syrian crisis response plan. To date, only \$133 million has been pledged, addressing just 7% of the total funding needed.

¹ [Jordan Reviews Policy on Syrian Refugees. Calls for Political Solution to Crisis. August 2024 | The Levant News](#)

² [Economic aftershocks of war on Gaza felt across region — experts. August 2024 | The Jordan Times](#)

This is the lowest volume of funding since the plan began in 2015. In 2023, Jordan received \$634 million, covering 29% of the \$2.3 billion required. Past years have also seen significant shortfalls. For 2024, major donor contributions include \$30 million from multilateral funds, \$24 million from Germany, \$21 million from the U.S., and \$20 million from the EU.³

The 2024 UNHCR Vulnerability Assessment conducted with 9,314 refugees in camps and 25,141 refugees in host communities across 12 governorates reveals a worsening situation for refugees in Azraq and Zaatari camps and host communities. **Poverty rates have surged, especially in camps, rising from 45% to 67%.** Refugees are increasingly relying on borrowing, and food security is deteriorating. Incomes are down, and debt levels are rising. Shelter conditions are poor for 70% of Syrian and 69% of non-Syrian refugees in host communities, with slightly better conditions in camps (55% and 57%). Employment has decreased in camps but remains stable in host communities, where work is the primary income source, compared to the camps where work and WFP assistance are equally important.⁴

Food Security & Nutrition

According to UNICEF's 2024 Regional Nutrition Situation Analysis, 57% of Jordanian households were estimated to be food insecure or vulnerable to food insecurity in 2022, with women and children, especially girls, being particularly affected by the increased food prices and interruption of global food supply. As of 2023, and according to the Population and Family Health Survey, Jordan's prevalence of stunting and wasting in children stood at 8% and 2%, respectively, with a rising trend in overweight and obesity, with around 30% of both girls and boys affected. While maternal anemia stood at 32%.⁵

The Ministry of Agriculture and FAO launched a project to enhance food security and resilience for Jordan's host communities and Syrian refugees. The project aims to support local communities and strengthen agricultural production chains amid regional crises and climate challenges. Funded by the Italian government through the Italian Agency for Development and Cooperation, the initiative will improve agricultural value chains and benefit 200 Balqa, Jerash, and Ajloun families. The project aligns with the UN Sustainable Development Goals and Jordan's Economic Modernisation Vision 2033.⁶

Livelihoods

³ [Jordan needs \\$2 billion to fund its response plan to the Syrian crisis this year. August 2024 | Almamlaka TV](#)

⁴ [WFP Jordan Country Brief, June 2024, July 2024 | WFP](#)

⁵ [Regional Nutrition Situation Analysis in the Middle East and North Africa - 2024, July 2024 | UNICEF](#)

⁶ [Ministry of Agriculture, FAO launch food security project for Syrian refugees, July 2024 | Jordan Times](#)

Investor confidence in Jordan dropped by 16% in Q1 2024, marking the most significant decline since Q1 2020. Real GDP growth slowed to 2%.⁷

Royal Jordanian airlines Vice Chairman/CEO Samer Majali stated that the war on Gaza has posed significant challenges to air transportation and tourism, causing a 8% decline in tourist numbers and a drop in tourism income in the first half of 2024 compared to 2023. The war has decreased travel demand, especially from the Palestinian market, and led to reduced bookings and tourist groups. If the war continues, further declines in passenger numbers and financial performance are expected in the third quarter and the second half of the year.⁸

Correlation One, a global workforce development platform, has launched the Tech for Jobs program, a training-to-jobs initiative funded by USAID. This program aims to create economic opportunities for 4,000 Jordanians by offering education in data analytics and connecting them with global companies for remote employment. The program's goals are to empower women and youth with in-demand skills, attract employers to Jordan, and provide insightful analysis to inform future initiatives.⁹

Health and Education

In a study of 200 Syrian refugees in northern Jordan, high levels of mental health issues were found: 66% experienced depression, 64% anxiety, and 61% stress. Key predictors included problems with 'participation in society,' increasing depression and stress, and 'understanding and communicating' predicting all three conditions, and 'getting along with people' linked to higher depression and anxiety. Issues with 'independence-performance' and hypertension were significant predictors of anxiety. Perceived sleep problems were associated with increased anxiety and stress. The findings underscore the need for integrated mental health support in Jordan's health strategies, addressing the biopsychosocial impacts of forced migration on refugees.¹⁰

A recent study assessing the long-term health impact and evolving needs of the Zaatari refugee camp population examined 145 refugees who attended a chronic pain clinic. The study found that the most common complaints were back pain and knee pain. The participants were predominantly female (61%) with an average age of 50.¹¹

⁷ [Jordan Investor Confidence Index drops to four-year-low, July 2024 | Roya News](#)

⁸ [Royal Jordanian CEO says war on Gaza has 'posed major challenges', July 2024 | Times Aerospace](#)

⁹ [Correlation One Launches USAID-Funded "Tech for Jobs," the Largest Training-to-Jobs Program in Jordan, July 2024 | PR Newswire](#)

¹⁰ [Mental Health Symptoms Among Syrian Refugees in Jordan: A Study of Predictive Factors, August 2024 | American Occupational Therapy Association](#)

¹¹ [Assessing the Long-Term Health Impact and Evolving Needs of the Zaatari Refugee Camp Population, July 2024 | Medwin Publishers](#)

Refugees often carry traumatic memories with them long after they have fled their homelands, and continue to suffer from PTSD and other mental health issues. For instance, 52% of Syrian refugee children in an unpublished study exhibited PTSD symptoms, and Syrian women reported higher stress due to cultural pressures. The trauma of displacement and stigmatization by host communities often leads to isolation and adverse mental health outcomes, impacting not only individuals but also future generations. Refugee children frequently face mental health challenges, academic problems, and risky behaviors, potentially resulting in long-term health issues such as diabetes and heart disease.¹²

A recent study highlighted four key challenges facing Syrian refugees in their English as a Foreign Language learning: social, financial, educational, and institutional. Socially, refugees struggle with inadequate support for basic needs and mental health issues, which distract from their educational pursuits. Financially, instability and insufficient aid hinder their ability to afford educational materials and prioritize learning. Educationally, poor academic backgrounds complicate their learning process, exacerbated by crowded and noisy class environments. Institutional challenges include budget constraints and a lack of resources, such as teachers and volunteers, further impeding effective English language instruction.¹³

Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)

Jordan's water management relies heavily on transboundary cooperation. The country faces severe drought and desertification risks, with water withdrawals exceeding renewable resources, impacting environmental flows, and contributing to land degradation. Non-renewable groundwater is increasingly used, with rising salinity threatening its quality. **Irrigated agriculture consumes 49% of water despite less than one-tenth of agricultural land being irrigated**, while domestic use accounts for 48% and industry 3%. Environmental flows are just 3% of renewable water resources. Hydropower generation is minimal, with only one small plant and some unconventional solutions. By 2000, 53% of the population had access to safely managed drinking water, improving to surpass regional averages by 2015, and around 82% had access to safely managed sanitation by 2022. Domestic wastewater is generally safely treated, with 93% from sewers and 48% from septic tanks undergoing safe treatment.¹⁴

In July, the Green Climate Fund Board approved a \$61 million project in Jordan, supported by the UN Environment Programme and in collaboration with the

¹² [The burden of trauma in the life of a refugee, 2024 | Frontiers](#)

¹³ [Syrian Refugees' Challenges and Problems of Learning and Teaching English as a Foreign Language \(EFL\): Jordan as an Example. June 2019 | ResearchGate](#)

¹⁴ [SDG 6 Country Acceleration Case Study Jordan. July 2024 | UN Water](#)

International Union for Conservation of Nature. The Jordan Integrated Landscape Management Initiative will address climate change impacts, particularly water scarcity in the northern Jordan Valley. Funded by \$45 million from the Green Climate Fund, and \$16 million from Jordan and NGOs, the project aims to enhance water security and climate resilience for 750,000 people through improved water management, climate-resilient agriculture, and ecosystem restoration. It also includes a fund to promote sustainable land stewardship. The initiative seeks to increase Jordan's annual water supply by approximately 9 million cubic meters, potentially increasing to 163 million cubic meters over 25 years. The project will also introduce climate-resilient livelihoods and innovative solutions, such as a floating solar power system, to address water scarcity and improve resilience against climate change impacts.¹⁵

In July, the European Investment Bank approved its most significant water financing in Jordan with a €400 million, 30-year loan backed by a European Union guarantee. This financing is the most significant Bank water investment outside Europe. It introduces results-based financing, linking disbursements to policy and impact achievements. The loan will enhance water availability, security, and sustainability across Jordan, improving water supply and sanitation and reducing water losses.¹⁶

Anera's Response

Food Security & Livelihoods

Anera is set to expand its **rooftop gardens initiative** in East Amman and the northern governorate of Zarqa. This expansion will benefit additional families and communities by constructing 19 new modified rooftop gardens and offering technical training sessions through capacity-building initiatives. The project will also maintain 50 family gardens and one community garden from the previous year. Aimed at enhancing food security and nutrition, the project will empower families with the skills to sustain their gardens and create income opportunities, particularly for female-led households, by selling surplus produce or converting it into marketable goods. Beyond economic benefits, the initiative promotes mental well-being by increasing green spaces in urban areas. This year, Anera will introduce a new element by supporting young graduates. Ten youth will receive comprehensive agricultural training, equipping them with practical experience and potential employment opportunities in green sectors.

Through another initiative, Anera will establish rooftop gardens for at least 50 additional families in the Hitteen refugee camp in Marka, while continuing to support the 50 families already involved with additional training, compost, seedlings, and market access. The project will also engage 20 young graduates of agricultural studies

¹⁵ [Jordan paves way for US\\$60 million initiative to adapt to climate change. July 2024 | UNEP](#)

¹⁶ [€400 million European Investment Bank backing for water security and climate adaptation across Jordan. July 2024 | The European Sting](#)

from the community to assist with outreach, monitoring, and marketing efforts. These youth will gain valuable skills in agriculture, community assessments, digital tools, and product marketing, contributing to a broader community impact. The project, which aims to improve food security, nutrition, and livelihood opportunities for families and youth, is set to begin in August, pending government approval.

Health

Anera is implementing the Empowering Health: Enhancing Chronic Illness Care Among Syrian Refugees project in Jordan in partnership with The United Methodist Committee on Relief. By the end of July, Anera completed a \$10,000 procurement, securing and delivering six types of non-communicable disease medications, totaling 5,571 packs, to the Syrian American Medical Society's medical center at Zaatari Camp. These **medications support Syrian refugees with chronic conditions** such as gout, cardiac diseases (hypertension and heart failure), and hypothyroidism.

Additionally, Anera received an in-kind donation of two noncommunicable disease medications from International Health Partners—UK, including 2,029 packs of antihypertensive medications for cardiac disease management among Syrian refugees and Jordanian host community members. The SAMS Medical Mission targeted 1,345 patients outside Zaatari Camp in various Jordanian governorates, with laboratory tests conducted every three months to monitor treatment effectiveness, benefiting an estimated 1,200 patients.