

This situation report on the Syrian refugees is meant to convey the latest developments on the crisis that triggered many to leave their country seeking a safe haven in Jordan, as well as to cast a light on Caritas activities pertaining to this issue.

1. Recent Developments:

- The situation on the Syrian – Jordanian border is still unclear, with conflicting reports coming from the Syrian side of the border, stating that some Syrian bordering towns are totally vacated such as Dael and Khirbet Ghazaleh as a result of the on-going violence. After one week of almost zero influx of Syrian refugees to Jordan, which has made the number of Syrians returning to their homeland outpace new arrivals, Syrians have started to gradually cross into Jordan in relatively big numbers again (around 500 per day), including Palestinians coming from Syria, whose numbers are now 1662 families or 6800 individuals as 196 households are staying at Cyber City Camp.
- Amid misleading information that Jordan has ended its open-door policy towards Syrian refugees, Syrians continued movement to Jordan refuting allegations that Jordan has closed its borders to prevent refugees from entering the country.

According to Jordan authorities and UNHCR, the decreased Syrian numbers pouring into Jordan is blamed to recurrence of violence across the borders after a short lull period that has preceded the storm. This recurrence has been attributed to regime’s gains, killing and banishing opposition fighters and retaking several border towns and villages trying to block all routes and causing thousands of refugees stranded by border violence. According to rebel forces, the regime has withdrawn from the border region after occupying Qusayr to refocus efforts on ongoing battles in Homs, Aleppo and Damascus countryside.
- The Zaatari Camp administration, in cooperation with ministry of public works, has built a sand barrier around the camp in an attempt to reduce commodities smuggling and smugglers from entering the overcrowded site that is home to more than 150,000 Syrians, from which 60% are women and children. This barrier construction comes after some aid assistance and tents which have been provided to the camp’s residents and are sold to smugglers in Al Mafraq markets and are clearly seen in other governorates. Moreover, the administration has decided to deploy security personnel patrols inside

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the camp to enforce security and safety of the refugees as the camp is witnessing many security breaches and acts of violence and sabotages.

The camp administration intends to stop receiving visitors for a while in order to carry out an official census, using iris scanning technique, to determine the real number of refugees inside the camp that is having some 10,000 caravans and a plan in place to replace all tents to trailers.

- The second refugees' camp (Mreijeb Al Fohoud) has been officially opened. The camp daily receives 100 refugees and is currently hosting around 3000 refugees, who are registered, receiving medical care and supplies. The camp has 770 caravans, playgrounds, markets and a medical center. 52 cameras have been installed inside the camp to monitor security breaches and follow up any problem that might happen, in cooperation with the Jordanian government.

- Director of Public Health at the Ministry of Health in Al Mafraq governorate has warned that the food establishments at the Zaatari Camp are in a very bad condition despite daily monitoring visits made by governmental and international agencies. The overcrowded camp as well as the merchants' non-compliance with healthy and hygienic standards, have contributed to the deteriorating health conditions inside the camp. Ministry of Health has also warned of Cholera reappearance and outbreak with the arrival of summer season. More fears of medicines and vaccines shortages to appear if the influx of refugees is still on the rise. Many pharmacy owners in Al Mafraq have alerted that a considerable number of children's medicines and infant formulas as well as chronic diseases medications are running out in their places. As a result, Jordanians travel to other governorates to get the medicines that no longer exist in Al Mafraq's pharmacies. More diseases like TB, measles, scabies and diarrhea have been detected inside the camp; some of these contagious diseases have been brought by refugees from Syria as the health system in the war-torn country has been destroyed more than one year ago. Such spreading diseases are likely to be transferred to Jordanians outside the camp through agencies' workers and smuggled refugees.

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- A total of 1.5 million Syrians have been driven from their homeland since the onset of the crisis in March 2011 as UNHCR has recently revealed that it has registered more than 387,000 refugees since the outbreak of the two-year conflict in Jordan, Lebanon is currently home to more than 426,000 registered refugees, followed by Turkey 344,741 Iraq 154,932 and Egypt 56,060. The UN refugee agency, which signed a partnership agreement with the Ministry of Interior tackling mutual registration of new arrivals along with capacity building for ministry's staff, is set to launch a fresh Syrian refugee aid appeal in June in light of rising violence threatening to displace another 1.5 million Syrians before the end of the year. The appeal is expected to reach 3 million USD by the end of 2013 to meet the basic needs of a refugee community amid chronic funding shortfalls, having received some 60% of its earlier appeal. Meanwhile, the Jordanian government, that is hosting more than 560,000 Syrian refugees and is expected to host more, with expectations that they will make up 40% of total population in 2014, brought this issue to the attention of the UN Security Council requesting an urgent visit by a UN delegation to witness the Syrian refugee camps in Jordan and thus extend assistance. Unfortunately, there was no unanimous approval to carry out this visit. Funding shortages are likely to stall the plans to expand the Zaatari Camp; making this small "Syrian city" the second largest refugee camp in the world after the some 400,000 Dadaab camp in Kenya.
- UNICEF has also voiced a similar plea, warning that the services provided to Syrian refugees are likely to witness severe shortages unless funding is received through June 2013. The children agency has established a third school inside the camp but still waiting for funding to start receiving students as UNICEF is currently receiving 10,000 students in the camp; in addition to providing educational assistance to 35,000 Syrian refugees in the north of Jordan, and some 35 liters of purified water to each refugee in the camp on a daily basis with the assistance of its partners from Kuwait, ECHO, CIDA, Japan, Korea, BPRM and Germany.

An additional 5,000 Syrian children can now attend classes at the new EU-UNICEF school inaugurated at the Zaatari Camp. This second school provides nearly 100 segregated classes for boys and girls, employing 280 Jordanian teachers and 73

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Syrian teaching assistants, according to UNICEF. Out of the 25,000 refugee children of school age, only 10,000 are currently in school.

- The schools in the governorate are now serving in two shifts as a result of having some 6,000 Syrian students. The overcrowded public medical centers can't easily deal with thousands of Syrians and Jordanians. Massive Syrian infiltration to labour markets and the return of some repatriated Syrians so called (Bahhara) to Jordan through four illegal crossing points, increased garbage quantities, fear of lack of water supplies, power cuts in summer, unprecedented rents hikes as well as high costs of living, urged Jordan to seek assistance from the international community in a bid to defuse angry protests that are staged by poor Jordanians against the government's continuous open-door policy at a time where Jordan is facing an economic crisis.
- The presence of Syrian refugees in Jordan in big numbers as well as the battles that are raged near its borders, has left negative ramification on the Jordanian civilians when it comes to security and services. Residents of the bordering cities of Ramtha and Al Mafraq have voiced their anxiety and fear over rockets and mortar shells frequently fired from Syria that fall into their cities. They can see them and hear the explosions that are shaking their houses and breaking glass, hearing sounds of heavy gunfire and missiles barrage and setting fire to wheat fields are transforming their lives into a nightmare. People living in those areas have been sleepless and terrified because of the rise in regime air strikes on border areas that are carried out by Syrians' regime jet fighters flying at low altitudes over Daraa and striking the opposition's military positions. Some Jordanian families and animal breeders have left their houses and farms and moved to safer areas towards Al Mafraq city, which is already saturated with Syrian refugees, hosting more than 100,000 individuals and placing negative impacts on many sectors.
- As the Syrian crisis enters its third year, many Syrians are fleeing their country not only for security reasons, but also in search of assistance in the absence of basic services, and shortage of provisions there, which includes bread, gasoline, medicines, health

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care, formal and non-formal education. In this regard, local and international NGOs in Jordan are placing substantial emphasis on the non-formal education for Syrian students who have lost their learning opportunities due to the schools’ mass destruction in their home country and the inability to catch up with formal system in Jordan. The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the Arab Women Organization (AWO) are two aid organizations that have embraced the psycho-social support services for Syrian refugee women, as displacement has increased their vulnerability to Gender-Based Violence (GBV). This basic assistance provides opportunities for Syrian refugee women to mix, speak about concerns and skills they share as women, as well as to help them feel better integrated. The circumstances in which people live might actually affect them and GBV might get more problematic, especially when men don’t go to work, mainly because of physical impairments or lack of work opportunities, domestic violence tends to increase.

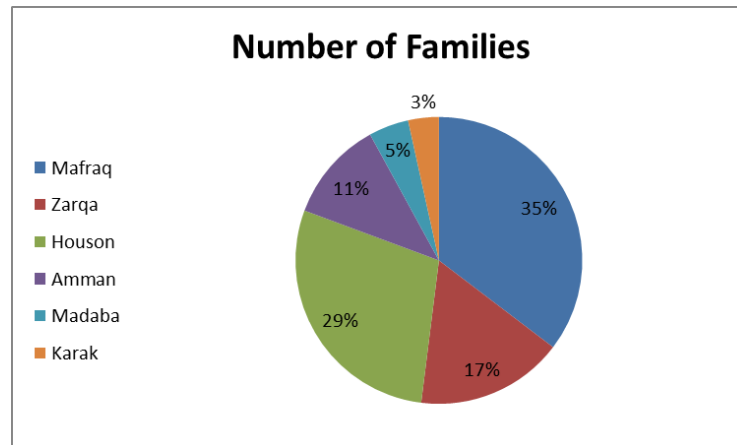
2. Caritas Response:

The following table and chart clarify Caritas Registration process until April 2013.

Total number of registered individuals with Caritas Jordan came to **113.418** making up **21.227** households:

Date	Caritas Centers						
	Mafraq	Zarqa	Houson	Amman	Madaba	Karak	Total
Until 30.04.2013							
Number of Families	7502	3531	6087	2417	956	734	21.227
Number of Individuals	37510	18517	32626	16415	4526	3824	113.418
Average Family Size	5.00	5.24	5.36	6.79	4.73	5.21	
Average Daily Registration/Family	30	70	55	40	15	10	220

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Caritas Jordan - Emergency Response Plan (ERP):

Caritas Jordan has launched the *Emergency Response Plan 2013* for the Syrian urban refugees along with (30%) vulnerable Jordanians in the hosting communities; in Irbid, Mafrq, Zarqa, Amman, Balqa in addition to Madaba and Karak offices. Caritas has finished implementing some projects, is currently performing the other activities, whereas other projects are slated to emerge soon.

Caritas Jordan continues to respond to the requirements of UNHCR Regional Response Plan (RRP5), deeply engaged in covering the most needed services and sectors, projects that worth a minimum of 6.5,000,000 tackling **Medical, Education, Emergency Humanitarian Assistance and Tailored Assistance**, in line with the following plan:

<p>* UNHCR SYRIA REGIONAL RESPONSE PLAN HIGHLIGHTS (RRP5):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There has been a massive escalation of arrivals and needs in 2013 - close to 1 million refugees from Syria have been registered since the start of the year. Refugees are facing huge issues of basic survival and the vast majority is dependent on aid. • The revised Syria Regional Response Plan (RRP5) is appealing for some US\$ 2.9 billion on behalf of 126 humanitarian organizations, including 84 appealing partners, to assist an anticipated 3.45 million Syrian refugees, 100,000 Palestine refugees from Syria and 1.75
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million beneficiaries in host communities in Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey.
• Protecting Syrian refugees, including targeted programs for children, women, the elderly and new arrivals, assisting the most vulnerable, emergency preparedness and supporting host governments and communities are key regional priorities.
• The influx of Syrian refugees to Lebanon and Jordan in particular has had a significant impact on socio-economic and political stability. The RRP5 includes for the first time appeals made by the Government of Lebanon (US\$ 449 million) and the Government of Jordan (US\$ 851 million including prioritized projects amounting to US\$ 380 million).

*for more information please see: <http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/syria.php>

Caritas member of a “National Task Force”

Recently, Caritas Jordan has been chosen to be a member of a national body led by Jordan Hashemite Charity Organization (JHCO) that is responding to the immediate needs of Syrian refugees in Jordan, along with) the Jordanian Hashemite Fund for Human Development (JOHUD), Save the Children- Jordan (STC), Jordan River Foundation (JRF), Noor Al Hussein Foundation (NHF) and Jordan Health Aid Society (JHAS). This consortium is operating under the name of “National Emergency Response Plan”. The aim of establishing this entity is:

1. Put national contingency plans to respond to emergency situations.
2. Submit expected scenarios and intervention plans to the government.
3. Exchange information and expertise among stakeholders.

Emergency Appeal (EA) Revision:

The EA has been revised under the framework of RRP5 in light of the following reasons:

- Lack of functional medical projects and activities in non-camp areas.
- Limited monthly food assistance delivered by WFP to non-camp Syrian residents.

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- WFP assistance does not include infant formula, baby food or kits.
- The unprecedented number of medical cases that have been treated through the project, namely inpatients that needed to undergo major surgeries.
- Lack of projects that handle reproductive health care services.

The new revised EA is expected to cover the increasing medical needs that include: primary health care, secondary health care, medical humanitarian assistance (medical supplies and tools) and reproductive health and child care. Moreover, the project needs to cover nutrition insecurity among destitute refugees and poor Jordanians through providing food items on a monthly basis. Protection will also occupy an integral part of the project's assistance as more number of traumatized persons cross the border fleeing war atrocities and bloody violence prevailing in Syria. Finally, the EA seeks to secure safe environments and wellness of mother and child. The revised project is intended to reach to 7700 individuals, with a €1034, 430 budget.

Under this recent plan, target of beneficiaries are to be increased based on the fact that the medical cases are seeing tremendous needs in light of the on-going violence and the deteriorating health care system in their homeland, in particular inpatients and persons suffering from injuries and displacement diseases. Meanwhile, those who have witnessed war scars and atrocities are in a bad need to receive healing procedures and counseling services. Food rations are also highly needed to curb malnutrition and combat frail health conditions.

Caritas conducts PTSD Training:

In April 2013, Caritas Jordan in agreement with WHO arranged 3 day training on Stress Management, psycho-social support, identification of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), along with and social building trust. The training that took place in the outskirts of Amman brought together a number of Caritas social workers and field workers who are in direct contact with beneficiaries. The training comes as part of Caritas preparedness to be indulged

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in more specialized landmark protection activities in response to RRP5 requirements in line of a sweeping violence prevailing in Syria, bringing more victims of war atrocities. This training was funded by Caritas Switzerland.

Caritas touches Reproductive Health Care services (RHC):

In an aim to meet particular needs of highly vulnerable Syrian refugees- women and children- Caritas will address the top urgent needs of those categories of people and respond to their essentials: The work plan is expected to bring about the following results:

- 1) Raise awareness of Syrian refugees' pregnant women who have left their country due to a man-made disaster that caused their displacement and vulnerability, and acquaint them with tips on family planning: child spacing, nutrient and healthy food, mother and baby reproductive health care knowledge.
- 2) Conduct pregnant women early screening to determine needs and provide them with specialized pre-natal health care, as well as offer similar care to newly born babies and mothers.
- 3) Support highly vulnerable Syrian mothers and new-born babies and offer those nutrient meals and hygienic nappies that help them enjoy healthy and clean living circumstances.

Education Projects:

Caritas Jordan, in cooperation with CRS, Caritas Germany, CRS and Misereor, is currently implementing three educational projects. The project come in line with the unprecedented number of drop-outs and Syrian children who are not attending formal education. some extra-curricular activities as well pre-school learning are taken in Caritas areas of intervention Amman, Mafraq, Irbid, Karak, Madaba and Zarqa in a bid to hone their coping mechanism.

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Syrian Refugee Children at the non-formal education school, play time session, held by Caritas Jordan at Caritas Center/ Mafraq area... photo by CJ 2013



Syrian Volunteer receiving a Syrian refugee at caritas Center/Zarqa area...photo by CJ2013

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3. Additional Comments/ Remarks:

- ❖ The Jordan Hashemite Charity Organization (JHCO) has received the third batch of humanitarian aid donated by Russia to Syrian refugees in Jordan. The shipment includes kitchen utensils, electricity generators, in addition to food items.
- ❖ China will continue to support Jordan amid the continuing influx of Syrian refugees. The aid includes financial and in-kind assistance to the Syrian refugees in Jordan in June.
- ❖ Ministry of Education and Japanese “Children without Borders” organization have signed an agreement that aims to support the educational needs for children at the Zaatari Camp. Arts, music, drama, story-writing and sports lessons will be taught at the Bahraini Educational Centre in the camp.
- ❖ “Doctors without Borders” organization has opened a second medical center at the Zaatari Camp. The new center will provide comprehensive primary health care services, coincided with psycho-social support as well as mother and child health care.
- ❖ Qatar has recently sent an aid convoy laden with 4 thousands mattresses, 3 thousands food parcels, and 6,500 infant formula packets targeting 25,000 Syrians in Irbid, Ramtha, Jerash, Mafraq, Zarqa, Karak and Amman.
- ❖ UNICEF, in cooperation with Jordan Commission for Movies, has started to showcase a number of documentaries, cartoons and movies to the refugees’ children at the Zaatari Camp in an attempt to ease their suffering and hardships, which they witnessed while crossing to Jordan.
- ❖ Syrian refugees at the Zaatari Camp have launched a radio station in an aim to learn more about the latest developments in Syria, as refugees in the camp don’t have satellite dishes or TV sets. The radio station will broadcast 4 hours a day and has been funded through the refugees’ donations.

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- ❖ Water consumption portions in the Zaatari Camp have risen to 3.5 million liters. The quantities are transported to the camp by 140 water tanks. The camp water is tested by ministries of health and water works labs before being used. It is brought from nearby water wells.
- ❖ UNICEF has received a German grant from THW organization that is monitoring water quality and quantities in the camp. THW (Technisches HilfsWerk) is a Governmental disaster relief organization of the Federal Republic of Germany. Its statutory tasks include the provision of technical assistance at home and humanitarian aid abroad.
- ❖ Jordan and the US government signed an additional grant worth \$200 million to support the kingdom's state budget to reduce the burden of hosting hundreds of thousands of Syrian refugees. The funds will be directed to projects in the fields of education, health and water. The grant will raise this year's US financial assistance to Jordan to \$560 million.
- ❖ A specially equipped German military aircraft picked up more than 30 severely injured refugees from Amman to fly them to Germany for treatment. The wounded Syrians will receive care at four army hospitals and the operations will be financed by the German government.
- ❖ The European Commission has allocated €50 million in additional assistance for Jordan to help address the burdens brought about by hosting hundreds of thousands of Syrian refugees.
- ❖ Kuwait has recently provided a financial support of \$300 million to agencies working for Syrian refugees in the region. Jordan's share is still undetermined.
- ❖ Kazakhstan has donated 90 caravans to Syrian refugees at the Zaatari Camp. Last year, Kazakhstan supported Jordan with \$200,000 to host thousands of Syrian refugees.

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4. Restored Hope

Refugee helping refugee: inspiring stories from the Syrian crisis

By Patrick Nicholson/CI



Rahaf Al Jaber is a Syrian refugee. She volunteers for Caritas Jordan in Zarqa. All photos by Patrick Nicholson/Caritas

Tahani and Rahaf are both Syrian refugees who volunteer for Caritas Jordan to help their compatriots.

“We had a normal life,” said Rahaf Al Jaber, a 20-year-old woman from the Syrian capital Damascus. “We went to university. We had

friends. We were even a little spoiled by our parents. And then suddenly we had nothing. We were cold, hungry and alone.”

Rahaf fled with her family to Jordan after her father was threatened. “My father received a phone call saying he should leave or he will be

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killed. We left the house straight away, without time to pack. We learned that our house was burned down later. We fled along back roads and through fields to avoid checkpoints. We walked across the border.”

They went to Zaatri refugee camp once they were in Jordan. “It’s in a desert. Life is very difficult,” she said. “We slept in tents with others families. There was nothing to do there. We were there 29 days. I counted every day.” Then the family moved to Zarqa, a small town about an hour from the capital Amman. There

they rent an apartment. “We were foreigners. We knew nobody here. We managed to make friend with our neighbours and they told me about Caritas.”

Her family came to the Caritas centre, which provides humanitarian aid to Syrian refugees like blankets and heaters, vouchers for food, personal hygiene kits, medical care, help with rent , counseling and informal education for children.



Caritas Jordan volunteers provide classes for Syrian children such as Maths, English and Arabic. They also provide a place for games and other activities.

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“Here in Caritas, I felt the spirit of love. I felt their mission and it was close to my heart,” said Rahaf. She began volunteering at the Caritas centre in Zarqa and has been there for three months. Each volunteer at the centre has a role, some work in the kitchen, some work on data entry, some teach extra classes to Syrian children.

Much of the work of Caritas Jordan is carried out by its 1000 volunteers, who are both Jordanian and Syrian. Christian or Muslim like Rahaf. “For me working in a Christian organization is not strange,” she said. “I had many Christian friends back home. I just want to help Syrians, especially the children.”



Tahani Injal (grey coat) talks with Caritas supervisor Laith Bsharat at a peace building meeting in Zarqa

Tahani Injal is another Syrian refugee who volunteers for Caritas in Zarqa. She is part of a peacekeeping committee that helps Syrian families settle in the town and improves relations with their Jordanian hosts. The training includes both Syrian and Jordanian volunteers. “First we had different sessions on how to deal with people,” she said. “We learned how not to judge people. We learned about conflict resolution. It showed us how to deal with different situations. Many have suffered a lot, so need understanding.”

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Tahani herself has direct experience of the 2 year old conflict in Syria. Her husband was seized by the military. She says he was kept in solitary confinement in a tiny room for 36 days. She says he was badly beaten, but thankfully released. "I remember the day he came home," she said. "I didn't even recognize him. He looked so bad. The children didn't know who he was and were scared of him."

Now she visits Syrian refugees in their homes and works with the wider Jordanian community. Jordanians have shown huge generosity in welcoming close over 380,000 refugees from Syrian. But tensions can arise. For example, sometimes the Syrian refugees struggle to pay rent and that can unsettle their landlords. The peace building volunteers help the communities know each other better.

"The peace building work helps a lot," she said. "The relationship between Syrians and Jordanians is good."

www.caritasjordan.org.jo