

Jordan: Azraq Refugee Camp

November 2020

Azraq is home to **37,332 Syrian refugees**:

21% under five years old

61.71% children, 102

unaccompanied or separated

1,395 (3.74%) persons with disabilities

1 in 4 households headed by women

8,669 shelters currently in use in the camp, all connected to electricity

AZRAQ CAMP

Operating since 30 April 2014

Capacity: 50,000 (exp. to 100,000)

Size of the camp: 14.7km²

GEOGRAPHICAL SNAPSHOT:

Distance to national borders:

Syria: **90 km**

Iraq: **255 km**

Saudi Arabia: **75 km**

PLACE OF ORIGIN IN SYRIA

Aleppo	19%
Homs	19%
Dara'a	13%
Ar-raqqa	9%
Rural Damascus	7%
Other areas	33%

UNHCR PRESENCE

46 National Staff

03 International Staff



Working with Partners

- The camp management is co-coordinated by Syrian Refugee Affairs Directorate (SRAD) and UNHCR. The camp has the potential to be expanded to accommodate 120,000 - 130,000 refugees at maximum capacity. The village-based approach aims to foster a greater sense of ownership and community among residents. The camp has a coordination mechanism composed of different agencies, which include camp coordination, inter-agency community representatives' meetings, sectors and Task Force meetings including information sessions.
- UNHCR works with the following Governmental and humanitarian partners in Azraq Camp:
- Governmental partners: Syrian Refugee Affairs Directorate (SRAD), Ministry of Labour and Housing (MPWH), Ministry of Health (MoH), Ministry of Education (MoE), Ministry of Justice (MoJ), and Ministry of Social Development (MoSD), Sharia'a Court, Civil Registry Department and Family Protection Department
- UN agencies: International Organization for Migration (IOM), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), World Food Programme (WFP), UN Women
- International NGOs: Action Against Hunger (AAH), Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development (ACTED), CARE, Danish Refugee Council (DRC), Finn Church Aid, International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), International Medical Corps (IMC), International Orthodox Christian Charities (IOCC), International Rescue Committee (IRC), Mercy Corps, Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), Plan International, Questscope, Relief International, War Child and World Vision (WV)
- National NGOs: Al Hussein Society (AHS), Arab Medical Relief (AMR), Arab Renaissance for Democracy and Development (ARDD), Noor al Hussein Foundation (NHF), Holy Land Institute for Deaf (HLID), and Business Development Centre (BDC)

Main activities

COVID-19 Preparedness and Response measures

- Since the confirmation of the first COVID-19 case in the camp in September, UNHCR has reactivated the quarantine area where refugees testing positive for COVID-19 can quarantine, while suspected cases isolate at home. Medical staff and UNHCR essential staff are working 24/7 in the quarantine site to ensure that refugees receive the healthcare they need at any time. Additionally, a treatment centre with a 50-bed capacity has been established and is equipped to treat cases with moderate symptoms.
- The MoH together with UNHCR are undertaking random PCR tests in the camp on a daily basis.
- Risk communication and community engagement, including awareness and hygiene promotion messages, are being delivered to the refugee community daily through multiple communication channels.
- Front line workers and healthcare staff from several partners and organizations were trained on infection prevention and control and on PCR testing. Business continuity plan for health partners ensures support for the continuation of critical functions during the COVID-19 response, such as primary healthcare.
- Community-based response is enhanced through training of community health workers.
- Contingency planning for the camp is finalized, in particular the Health sector has finalized preparedness for case management of mild cases of COVID-19 at primary healthcare level, which includes medication and medical consumables in cooperation with the MoH.
- Surveillance and monitorization systems of Upper Respiratory Tract Infection (URTI) and Influenzas Like Illnesses (ILI) alerts are in place.
- Case definition and referral pathways of suspected cases continue to be shared with health partners. In response to the situation, all health facilities have applied infection control measures and installed a separated triage area as a transit for suspected cases to be transferred to Zarqa hospital.
- Thermal screening is applied on the camp's gate through health partner with support from SRAD, and SOPs were developed and shared with all involved parties.

Protection

- UNHCR is the lead protection agency in the camp, co-chairing the Protection Working Group with DRC and the Child Protection (CP)/Sexual Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) Sub Working Group with IRC. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, one protection staff is staying overnight in the camp during the lockdown. Moreover, protection staff are commuting to the camp daily to address urgent protection and CP-SGBV cases, and registration for newborn babies. Protection staff continue to receive multiple phone calls through the hotline and provide refugees with counselling services when applicable, while also working closely with partners, especially IMC and IRS, to conduct case management. The protection unit is coordinating with the Civil Registry to facilitate the issuance of birth/death certificates and to deliver them to refugees.

Basic Needs

- Upon their arrival/return to the camp, UNHCR provides refugees with a cash assistance package to meet their essential household needs and buy items such as gas stoves and gas cylinders, mattresses, blankets, kitchen utensils, jerry cans, buckets and consumables, such as diapers, sanitary pads and hygiene kits, from the local markets in Azraq camp. Refugees receive a complete “new arrival” package when arriving to the camp and are regularly (every three months) provided with the needed cash amount to replenish essential consumables, namely cooking gas (JOD 22.5-30 per family), baby diapers (JOD 22 per baby under two years old) and sanitary pads (JOD 3.5 per female 12-50 years old).
- For refugees who are required to self-isolate in the quarantine area for 14 days, UNHCR provides them with in-kind essential household items such as mattresses, blankets, hygiene kit, plastic sheeting, jerry can, bucket and kitchen set. In preparation for winter, UNHCR is also addressing heating needs in the quarantine area for refugees who are quarantining; this assistance includes gas heaters and gas refills in addition to two high thermal blankets per person. Furthermore, UNHCR provides baby diapers as in-kind assistance for babies (0-2 years old) who are in self-isolation at their shelters when deemed necessary.
- Quarter 4 cash distribution, UNHCR, through NRC, has distributed cash to families comprising of 33,139 individuals to cover the need for gas cooking, baby diapers and sanitary pads.

Food security & Nutrition

- WFP provides refugees living in camps with JOD 23 (USD 32) per person every month through cash transfers, which can be used to buy food from a large variety of items in two WFP-contracted supermarkets and four bread shops in the camp.
- A card-less EyePay system that uses blockchain and iris scanning technology is used to facilitate payments while cross-checking with UNHCR's biometric database to confirm refugees' identity. The system helps to enhance the efficiency and accountability of food assistance, while also making shopping easier and more secure for refugees. WFP also provides ready-to-eat meals to refugees upon arrival to the camp.
- As part of the measures against COVID-19, WFP sanitises shopping areas, including trollies and selling points, daily, provides hand sanitisers to refugees at entrances and exits at supermarkets and bread shops, and ensures social distancing and crowd control measures are practiced in and out of both areas. WFP also provides welcome meals and bread to refugees arriving from communities to the camp and who stay in a separate area from other camp residents for quarantine.
- WFP runs a school feeding programme for students attending the formal schools in the camp. Fresh baked snacks are provided for approximately 10,000 children on a daily basis during the school semester; the meal consists of a savoury pastry, a cucumber, and a piece of fruit. Around 150 workers prepare the meals in two healthy kitchens located inside the camp where half of those workers are women. Due to the impact of COVID-19, this activity is on hold as all schools are closed.

Shelter

- UNHCR allocates shelters to refugees, conducts regular monitoring to assess the current shelter situation and updates the shelter allocation system accordingly to ensure accurate and easy shelter allocation process. In coordination with NRC, a Quick Fix Team has been established to ensure timely maintenance of damaged shelters. All the shelters in Azraq have been upgraded with a kitchen extension which increases the shelter space to 32m². All allocated shelters in the camp are connected to electricity and regular electricity maintenance is provided through a private contractor.

WASH

- To efficiently and sustainably meet the needs of Azraq Camp's population, UNICEF established two internal boreholes with a combined daily capacity of 2,400m³. An average of 60L per person per day is distributed

through the water supply network to over 300 tap stands across the camp.

- Refugees living in Azraq camp have access to safe and dignified toilets and bathing cubicles, with one shared between every three shelters. Additionally, construction to provide private sanitation facilities for households with children and people with disabilities has been completed. On average, UNICEF's contractor (IMDAD) transports 800m3/day of wastewater to an external treatment plant in Ein Ghazal. UNICEF continues to operate a hotline to respond to complaints regarding water supply and wastewater treatment.
- UNICEF rapidly implemented a 'hand-washing campaign', focusing on hygiene and sanitation practices to prevent the spread of COVID-19. As of March, UNICEF, in coordination with various partners, has distributed cleaning kits, hygiene kits, as well as soap bars, reaching the entirety of the camp's population (50% female), and has reached 1,462 refugees (72% female) who are in isolation as suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19.
- As Jordan is one of the most water-scarce countries in the world, careful monitoring of water services is essential to ensure the long-term sustainability of the water supply. This is conducted via technical assessments and through feedback received from the community. To further build community knowledge and participation in conservation efforts, UNICEF also disseminates key messages on water conservation and other WASH issues through the 'Lead Mother' programme in Azraq.

Health

- UNHCR and partners continue to support refugees with access to quality primary health services in the camp including acute and chronic health consultations, reproductive health, vaccination, mental health, dental health, nutrition and paediatric services. Advanced services are also available in the hospital which includes laboratory tests, X-ray imaging, an emergency department, and delivery and paediatric admissions, in addition to general surgeries.
- Four primary healthcare centres (PHCC) operate in Azraq camp, while healthcare services are offered through two comprehensive clinics, two basic clinics and one hospital with a weekly average of 3,986 consultations in the five camp facilities, 66 referrals to secondary and tertiary emergency life-saving cases to facilities outside the camp and an average of 26 births per week.
- A response plan is in place to COVID-19, while a treatment centre has been established and has a capacity of 50 beds and is prepared and equipped to treat cases with moderate symptoms.
- UNFPA Reproductive Health clinics were functional in all villages, including AMR clinic in V2, during the month of October & November, and continued to provide the essential integrated sexual and reproductive health (SRH) services through IRC. A total of 3,528 SRH consultations were done which included 1,344 family planning services, 1,589 antenatal contacts, 278 postnatal contacts and 264 cases that were referred to the camp hospital for delivery and postnatal care.
- **Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps**
 - Enhanced capacity building is required to respond to a potential outbreak of COVID-19, in line with the national operational response plan.
 - A large number of health cases require specialty healthcare services (such as cardiologists, orthopaedics, etc) which are not available in the camp, therefore the referral of solely life-saving emergency cases remains a challenge.

Education

- UNICEF supports the MOE to guarantee access to education for all children in the six school complexes (15 schools) in Azraq Camp, while WFP provides healthy meals to all students. Currently, 80% of school-aged children in Azraq are enrolled in education (10,444 children are enrolled in formal schools and 645 children are enrolled in MOE-recognized non-formal education Catch-Up and Drop-Out programmes).
- In August, UNICEF supported MOE in launching Learning Bridges, a blended learning programme supporting children in Grades 4-9 to recover lost learning due to COVID-19. Given the steady rise of COVID-19 cases and MOE's decision to close schools indefinitely, UNICEF continues to provide children with support in distance learning to prevent learning loss.
- To further the quality of basic education and address barriers to enrollment and retention, UNICEF is supporting class formation planning, the development of inclusive physical infrastructure and investments in teaching and supervision. UNICEF supports the inclusion of children with disabilities through transportation and tailored physiotherapy and academic support in schools, as well as the two recently constructed inclusive playgrounds. Transportation to schools is provided for 420 KG2 students and 320 children with disabilities.
- A total of 924 children attend formal kindergarten and other early childhood facilities (such as day care

centers), helping children to start school with the necessary social and emotional skills. UNICEF's nine Makani centres in Azraq provide learning support services to approximately 4,845 boys and girls (ages 6-18). Furthermore, 1,819 youth (ages 13-18) have access to skills training opportunities in the camp. Since January 2020, 120 young people (53% female) aged 16–24 years registered in the social innovation programme to learn to develop viable business models that help resolve community issues. A total of 20 youth (55% female) completed paid internships, providing maintenance services for office desks and ramps.

- Currently, a total of 18 students from Azraq camp have been granted the Albert Einstein German Academic Refugee Initiative (known as DAFI) scholarships to support their bachelor degrees in Jordanian Universities, with UNHCR's facilitation. There are an additional six self-sponsored students studying towards their bachelor's degrees in Zarqa University.
- UNHCR keeps in contact with tertiary education students to extend support and advocate for better and more opportunities for them, especially given increased restrictions due to COVID-19. UNHCR is also in continuous communication with universities about challenges faced by Azraq camp students, to facilitate solutions where their education is not interrupted.

Livelihoods

- Work permits: The Azraq Camp Employment Office (ACE) was established in February 2018 to facilitate access to formal work opportunities across Jordan for refugees living in the camp. ACE is operating in collaboration with UNHCR, ILO and MoL and is funded by the Dutch Government. ACE facilitates the issuance of work permits, provides refugees with work-related counselling services, information on labour rights, training opportunities and job matching services. As of 30 November, 3,956 work permits are registered in the work permit database including 2,472 males and 1,493 females. The figure recorded by MoL is higher since they started issuing work permits in 2017 prior to the inauguration of ACE.
- Incentive Based Volunteering (IBV) scheme: The IBV scheme aims at providing refugees living in Azraq refugee camp with basic opportunities to enhance their resilience and self-reliance. IBV plays an active role in allowing refugees to earn some extra income to support their livelihood. As of 30 November, there are a total of 1,648 refugees, 56% male and 44% female, engaging in the IBV scheme in Azraq camp.
- Azraq camp formal markets: Currently there are total of 375 formal shops owned by refugees and host community. Refugees are able to enhance their livelihood and self-reliance through the markets and provide the camp residents with the necessary items including food, accessories, bikes and many other items.

Access to Energy

- The IKEA Foundation has funded the solar power plant in Azraq camp, making it the first renewable energy powered refugee camp in the world. A grid-connected solar plant, split into three phases with a total capacity of 5 MWp, saves up to USD 2.75m per year in electricity consumption costs and reduces CO2 emissions by 6300 tons per year. A grid-connected electricity network with both low and medium-voltage power, funded by the Saudi Fund for Development, connects the IKEA Foundation funded solar plant to almost 10,000 refugee shelters, 234 formal and informal businesses, offices and utilities, providing year-round electricity in the camp up to 16 hours daily. On average, each shelter consumes around 2.7 - 3.5 kWh/day depending on the season; enough energy to operate lights, a refrigerator, television, a fan and charge phones. The total 5 MWp covers up to 85% of the electricity needs in the camp.
- Modified Electricity Provision Hours: With the closure of schools and beginning of remote learning through TV and internet due to COVID-19 measures, UNHCR Azraq enhanced electricity provision to 14 hours/day to be in line with the hours of classes.

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