

UNHCR Jordan COVID-19 response

Increase in COVID-19 cases indicates potential third wave, while vaccinations continue

While the decrease in the number of daily cases continued during the first weeks of 2021, a slow increase has been recorded across the country since the end of January. The total case count currently stands at 352,219, with 4,491 deaths, but occupancy rates of isolation beds, ICUs, and ventilators remain low. Several restrictions have been lifted and various sectors have been gradually reopening in recent weeks, in light of the decreased case count in January, yet government officials are underscoring that the recent increase may indicate a potential third wave and have called on the public to strictly follow health measures and guidelines. Vaccinations across Jordan continue, while the government plans to inoculate up to three million people.

In refugee camps, COVID-19 cases currently stand at a total of 2,307 of which 2,220 (96%) have recovered, while 17 persons of concern (PoCs) have passed away because of COVID-19. The number of PoC cases remains below the national average, with 1.9% of the refugee camp population having tested positive, compared to 3.4% of the total Jordanian population. As of 17 February, UNHCR is aware of 243 refugees that have received at least the first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine. All vaccinations so far have taken place in local health centres in the respective governorates but are shifting to in-camp vaccination centres, with the [Zaatari vaccination centre](#) already receiving camp residents as of 15 February.

In focus: Distant learning or back to school

With a number of sectors reopening in January, schools also started gradually reopening in early February and students are returning to the classrooms after months of distant learning. Refugee students in Azraq and Zaatari camps are also going back to school, with the support of UNICEF and UNHCR, along with the Ministries of Health and Education.

Since the onset of the pandemic, UNHCR and partners have been supporting distant learning through various initiatives: online trainings, certified courses and homework support groups; virtual counseling for parents of children with disabilities; focus groups with youth on the impact of blended/online learning; training of teachers and professors on online learning; digital connected learning hubs, including the Kolibri digital platform; and establishing multi-purpose rooms in public schools with access to the Kolibri platform. The platform, which provides a variety of Arabic based courses, has now been fully recognised by the Ministry of Education (MoE) as an e-learning resource and has been fully incorporated in the MoE's national education platform.



Refugee students in Zaatari going back to school after in-person learning resumes in early February.

Education is one more aspect in which Jordan continues to lead the way, ensuring refugees can get an education. Included with the national education system, last year 134,000 out of a potential 233,000 school aged Syrian refugee children were enrolled in formal education. The impact of COVID-19 on education reinforces the need to ensure that everyone, vulnerable individuals alike, is included in the learning recovery plans for formal, non formal and in-formal schooling.

UNHCR response: stay, deliver, adapt

In parallel to supporting the COVID-19 vaccination of refugees, UNHCR continues to respond to limit the spread in **camp**s, working closely with the Ministry of Health and the Syrian Refugee Affairs Directorate to carry out surveillance and contact tracing exercises, while confirmed cases follow the established quarantine or isolation protocols. In **urban areas**, UNHCR community-based protection teams are following-up on individual cases through phone counselling, to better understand the impact of COVID-19 on urban refugee populations and assess the needs and existing gaps in assistance. In addition to a number of health preventative measures, UNHCR continues its key activities through remote modalities:

- remote [services](#), protection hotlines and newly launched [Help website](#) platform
- support refugee access to [e-learning](#) platforms
- [awareness raising](#) on the COVID-19 vaccination program
- regular [communications](#) via SMS text, social media and WhatsApp to refugee populations
- upgrade of [quarantine facilities](#) in camps
- health screening [procedures](#)
- PPE provision for frontline workers/refugees