

Economic Recovery & Development

The IRC in Jordan

BUILDING HOUSEHOLD RESILIENCE

Syrian displacement in Jordan is well into its fifth year and many families report having sold all their assets, relying 100% on humanitarian assistance to feed their families and secure a roof over their heads. Access to services in urban areas continues to be a major challenge, with significant reductions in access to health services and food aid in particular over the past year. The ongoing Urban Verification Process launched by the Government in early 2015 has a cost attached, which most families are unable to afford. Unable to meet their households' basic needs, many families express a desire to return to Syria rather than live an undignified life in Jordan, and others are seeking routes to Europe and beyond.

Domestic violence is the primary form of reported gender-based violence (GBV) and refugees of both genders attribute its increase to financial distress. As economic recovery activities for refugees are restricted, IRC has found that the provision of unconditional cash assistance coupled with case management, health services, psychosocial support, and outreach is a valuable means of reducing this distress.

Since August 2015, the IRC has collected information on coping strategies of our current beneficiaries using the Coping Strategies Index (a tool that measures how households manage to cope with a shortfall in food for consumption). The data collected from 806 households (including 52 Jordanian households) across Mafrq, Irbid, and Ramtha shows that 90% did not have sufficient money or food in the last seven days to meet the basic needs of all household members.

FACTS & FIGURES

Inception: May, 2013

Reach: More than 4,123 female beneficiaries to date; 90% are female heads of household

Nationality: 93% Syrian, 7% Jordanian

Individuals Supported: approximately 17,000

Total Distributions: 3,700,000 USD

Greatest Change Reported from Cash Assistance: Decrease in household tension



Photo: Timea Fauszt/IRC

The primary coping strategies they are adopting are:

- ▶ Reducing food expenditure (46%)
- ▶ Buying food on credit (26%)
- ▶ Selling household assets (18%)
- ▶ Reducing non-food expenditure such as healthcare and education (4%)
- ▶ Involving school aged children in income generation (1.5%)

Post Distribution Monitoring Survey Statistics

(February 2015) Sample size: 1300 households

97% of beneficiaries reported that the financial assistance did not create any risk to their safety.

74% reported that the financial assistance helped improve their living conditions. The most common examples were:

- ▶ Reducing tension and problems among households members
- ▶ Living in better/safer accommodation
- ▶ Better health conditions
- ▶ Eating better quality food
- ▶ Enrolling children in school
- ▶ Having less debt

8% of households reported having children under 18 working before receiving cash assistance; **36%** of these reported that their children were able to stop working after receiving cash assistance.



FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR URBAN REFUGEES & VULNERABLE JORDANIANS

With limited or no access to income generating opportunities, many urban refugee families are exposed to high rates of domestic violence and harmful coping mechanisms, which also affect vulnerable Jordanian families living in the crisis affected northern governorates.

There are limited livelihood options for refugees in Jordan and they can face negative repercussions if they are caught working without necessary permits. Recognizing the direct benefits many vulnerable families will receive from financial assistance, the IRC started its cash assistance program in May 2013, and has since reached over 4,100 vulnerable Syrian and Jordanian families in Mafraq and Irbid Governorates.

IRC provides three types of cash assistance: 6 months of unconditional cash assistance, winterization cash supplements to support urgent winter-related costs, and emergency cash assistance aimed at supporting women's protection. Assistance is provided through pre-paid ATM cards and through "hawala" distributions (a method of transferring money without any actual movement). Unconditional cash assistance is provided in six monthly installments ranging from 120-180 Jordanian Dinars (\$170-254 USD) each month.

UPCOMING PROJECT

IRC Jordan is currently piloting a small scale project with vulnerable households in Mafraq, Irbid, and Ramtha to build vertical and rooftop gardens where households can grow vegetables and communities can come together. IRC is also piloting sessions for recipients of unconditional cash to refine skills on how to maximize their cash assistance to meet their basic needs.

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Humanitarian Aid
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