The humanitarian context in Jordan has changed during the lifespan of the Syria crisis. What initially was a complex life-saving humanitarian operation, has transformed to a situation where assistance to refugees and hosting communities is increasingly considered equally important due to the over 80 percent of refugees who are living in host communities and relying on government basic social services, such as health, water, education, and municipal services.

Significant achievements have been made by the Government of Jordan (GoJ) and the international community in addressing the needs of Syrian refugees, and developing a nationally led framework to address the resilience of host communities. However, there is scope for further improving the coordination of humanitarian and development assistance in partnership with the GoJ.

WHERE WE WERE:

2. The Aid Architecture in Jordan:

The aid architecture for delivering humanitarian action and development assistance to Jordan had long been complex and fragmented, despite continued efforts and support from the international community to articulate a holistic aid architecture. The situation was further complicated with the onset of the Syria crisis. This resulted in multiple planning tools, coordination structures and financing frameworks which in turn gave rise to high transaction costs.


In July 2014, the Cabinet endorsed the 2014 – 2016 National Resilience Plan (NRP) requesting USD 4.4 billion to address the impact of the Syria crisis. The NRP was launched at a platform meeting on 1 September 2014. The NRP represented a shift in the leadership role of the GoJ and underlined the urgent need for further development investments to mitigate the impact of the Syria crisis. This set the scene for the subsequent launch of the Jordan Response Plan (JRP) in 2015, bringing together humanitarian and developmental responses related to the impact of the Syria crisis into a single national framework.
The merger of the RC/HC function under one umbrella was a critical step in transitioning to a coherent UN leadership structure for the coordination of humanitarian and development assistance to Jordan. The elevation of the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) to a strategic decision making forum was another step in this direction.

Following consultations with the GoJ, donors and the UN System in Jordan, the RC/HC led a vision\(^1\) to support the GoJ in establishing a nationally led coordination platform to bridge and enhance coordination of humanitarian and development assistance. The principles of resilience-based programming provide the glue for assistance under one coherent framework - one with inbuilt flexibility to ensure that humanitarian imperatives are met. The vision was endorsed by the GoJ in the spring of 2014.

**WHERE WE ARE:**

5. **The Jordan Response Platform for the Syria Crisis (JRPSC) and the Jordan Response Plan (JRP):**

In September 2014 the GoJ transformed the Host Community Support Platform at the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation (MoPIC) into the Jordan Response Platform for the Syrian Crisis (JRPSC) to coordinate all assistance related to the impact of the Syria crisis on Jordan.

The JRPSC supported the preparation of the JRP, which was developed under the leadership of 11 GoJ led Sector Task Forces, and in collaboration with the international community. The work of the Sector Task Forces is complemented by the Refugee Response coordination structure, led by UNHCR\(^2\).

The JRP was launched on 4 December 2014, marking a paradigm shift in the response to the impact of the Syria crisis in Jordan by bringing together humanitarian and development assistance through a resilience based approach. The plan requires USD 2.9 billion national framework to respond to refugee and host community needs across 11 sectors (USD 1.8 billion), plus an element of direct budget support (USD 1.1 billion).

Since the launch of the plan, the GoJ has secured more than USD 1 billion, or 35% of the requested amount, between pledged and committed funding.

Recognising the protracted nature of the Syria crisis, the GoJ has prepared a three-year rolling JRP covering 2016 to 2018, endorsed by the JRPSC on 19 October 2015. The introduction of a multi-year plan will allow donors to undertake multi-year budgeting and resource allocation, whilst facilitating greater funding predictability for operational partners.

The GoJ is in parallel preparing its next national Executive Development Program (EDP) covering 2016 to 2018, which will articulate the GoJ’s development priorities, and should complement the JRP.

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\(^1\) Read the RC/HC’s vision at [http://www.un.org.jo/resident-coordinator%E2%80%99s-vision](http://www.un.org.jo/resident-coordinator%E2%80%99s-vision)

6. Jordan Resilience Fund:

The JRP is supported by a joint GoJ and UN multi-partner trust fund – the Jordan Resilience Fund (JRF). The JRF memorandum of agreement was signed by the GoJ and the UN on 28 March 2015. It introduces an innovative aid instrument, which complements existing aid mechanisms. It will be a key tool to further strengthen coordination and transparency efforts of the JRP. Offering more flexible means of financial support, the JRF aims to mobilize 10 percent of the overall budget envelope of the JRP.

7. Regional Appeal Process:

The UN decided in 2014 to develop a Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan (3RP), replacing the Regional Response Plan (RRP) in 2015. The 3RP was launched in Berlin on 18 December 2014. The JRP is the Jordan chapter of the 3RP.

The 3RP constitutes the main UN regional platform in support of national plans – in the case of Jordan the JRP. The 3RP provides visibility and enables national governments, affected by the Syria crisis, to mobilise the financial resources to implement their national response plans bridging humanitarian action and development assistance.

As of October 2015, the Jordan section of the 3RP is 41% funded (USD 483 million mobilized against the USD 1.19 billion required).

A Resilience Development Forum (RDF) will be convened in Jordan in November 2015 to deepen the resilience agenda. The RDF will also serve to mobilise capacities, knowledge and financial resources for more resilience investment in the sub-region.

8. United Nations Coherence process in a rapidly changing context:

The United Nations Country Team (UNCT) in Jordan has made substantive progress in enhancing coherence and coordination between humanitarian and longer term development programming utilising a resilience-based approach. In early 2014 the UNCT realigned the 2013 – 2017 United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) to the NRP, ensuring that the UN addresses emerging national priorities as a result of the Syria crisis.

In 2015 the UNCT expanded the UNDAF to include a refugee component as a result area of a “United Nations Assistance Framework (UNAF)” covering the remainder of the UNDAF period (2015-2017). The UNAF is at a strategic outcome level, with an additional emphasis on resilience programming to reinforce GoJ institutions and services most affected by the crisis in line with recently emerging priorities.

A number of challenges are associated with the implementation of the UN Coherence efforts. These include the balance between the need for UN agencies to maintain their visibility and to deliver against mandated commitments against the call from Member States to implement the UNDG Standard Operating Procedures for countries adopting the Delivering as One approach.

In support of the GoJ’s coordination efforts, the UN is implementing a joint capacity development programme, which supports the MoPIC in fulfilling its responsibilities in coordination, aid information management, monitoring and evaluation, and advocacy and communication.
9. Support to implement UNSCR 2165 and 2191:

Context
Since the beginning of 2014, intense conflict has persisted in southern Syria, with opposition influence expanding in the western border region and the government maintaining influence in the north and east. As of September 2015, the population in areas accessible from Jordan is estimated at 690,950, including 288,850 IDPs (41.8%), many of whom fled barrel bombing.

For these communities, a confluence of factors, including inflated food prices, infrastructural damage, inadequate shelter, fuel and electricity shortages, disrupted access to clean water, and diminished health and education services, has exacerbated humanitarian needs.

In response, UNSCR 2165 (2014) and 2191 (2014) have facilitated humanitarian access in the south, with the number of locations designated as “hard-to-reach” decreasing more than 75%. However, UN agencies and their implementing partners still face operational constraints, including no direct access to target areas, rendering it challenging to move beyond short-term, lifesaving and life-sustaining measures towards meaningful steps to build local resilience and enhance access to protection, livelihoods, and essential services.

Coordination architecture
Since the UNSCRs 2165 and 2191 were adopted, actors undertaking relief activities inside Syria from Damascus, and those from across the Turkish and Jordanian borders have enhanced their coordination. Structures and bodies have been established at the “Whole of Syria” (WoS) level to ensure coherence across operational hubs, while a Cross-Border Task Force (CBTF) has been established in Jordan. Under the RC/HC’s leadership and comprising UN agencies and regional partners based in Jordan. The CBTF acts as a senior decision-making body and agrees on common policies and response strategies at the hub level. Under and in support of the CBTF, an Inter-Sector Working Group (ISWG) and eight working groups (WASH, Health and Nutrition, Food Security, Logistics, NFI/Shelter, Protection, Child Protection, and Education) have been established. OCHA Jordan acts as secretariat to the CBTF and coordinates the ISWG.

As of 30 September 2015, under UNSCR 2165/2191, the UN and its implementing partners, in cooperation with the Jordanian authorities, have organized 68 convoys from Jordan delivering food assistance to 815,000 people, NFI/shelter assistance to 621,738 persons, health assistance to 172,210 persons, WASH assistance to over 152,200 persons, and education supplies for 24,400 persons.

10. Mobilisation of resources for the Decentralized Emergency Response Fund (ERF) and the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF):

ERF:
In Jordan, the ERF (decentralized in July 2014) has a target of USD 10 million. The ERF’s overarching objective is to enable the effective delivery of humanitarian assistance by providing partners with rapid, timely, and flexible funding to initiate lifesaving activities in Jordan and to deliver assistance to southern Syria. In particular, the ERF focuses on responding to urgent humanitarian needs by bridging funding gaps and/or enabling a timely response to new or unforeseen emergency needs. As of September 2015, the Fund has received funds amounting to USD 4.07 million from the Governments of Belgium, Germany, India and Sweden. Funding has been allocated to 10 projects targeting humanitarian assistance to 149,866 Syrian refugees and vulnerable Jordanians. The ERF balance currently stands at USD 1.14 million.

CERF:
On behalf of the HCT and under the stewardship of the RC/HC, Jordan has initiated three requests for CERF Funding. Of two requests in 2013 from the CERF’s Rapid Response Window, one supported the establishment of Al Azraq Camp (USD 9 million), and one supported the prepositioning of relief items in anticipation of a major influx of refugees into Jordan. In January 2015, under the CERF’s Underfunded Emergencies Window, USD 9 million is facilitating provision of life-saving humanitarian assistance to the most vulnerable groups (Syrian refugees, Palestine Refugees from Syria, and Jordanians) in the most refugee impacted governorates (Amman, Irbid, Mafraq, and Zarqa), with specific attention to women and children.
The JRP offers an opportunity to improve aid effectiveness in Jordan by enhancing national leadership, increasing transparency and promoting greater coherence. However, it is an ambitious undertaking and, like any groundbreaking initiative, it will take time to be embedded in the JRP process and architecture. The RC/HC is working in close collaboration with MoPIC and the international community in support of operationalising the plan.

Key to the JRP’s success is streamlining the Project Approval Process (PAP). In this regard, MoPIC has established an online system for project submission (JORISS) based on prior approval from the appropriate line ministry, and allows project submission based on planned budgets, with a minimum of 25% confirmed funding, and with a target timeline for PAP completion.

In parallel with the PAP, it will be equally important to ensure the right JRP management architecture is in place. The JRPSC will provide a steering body for strategic planning and coordination under MoPIC leadership, but there is also a requirement for effective Sector Task Force engagement in conducting strategic M&E, including identifying gaps and priorities for donor funding each year.

In moving forward, there is a need to ensure that pre-existing and multi-year projects, bilateral assistance and budget support contributing to the JRP are efficiently captured and tracked. The transition to the three-year JRP will be a critical step towards enabling such multi-year planning.

The donor community has demonstrated extraordinary generosity over the past years and, in delivering the JRP, this continued support and financial contribution will be essential.

Donors and UN Agencies must also adapt business practice to ensure the JRP remains the single means of channelling assistance for the Syria crisis.
12. A New Assistance Architecture:

The JRP represents a strategic shift, laying the building blocks for a new assistance architecture. It will necessarily mean breaking down silos and require an adjustment to the way we do business. It will require further strengthening of partnerships with line ministries, and the pro-active support and engagement of the international community with the JRPSC.

Ensuring the continued success of the new assistance architecture will on the one hand require committed national leadership, and on the other hand strong financial and technical support from the donor community.

Additionally, a significant step in 2016 is the introduction of the JRP three-year time horizon which will be aligned to and compliment the Vision 2025 and the EDP. The vision of the GoJ is to enhance the synergies between national planning frameworks with the aim to respond to refugee and development priorities in a holistic manner. This is assessed as a critical step moving towards a coherent assistance architecture in Jordan.

The UN will continue to work in close partnership with MoPIC to further strengthen its capacity in aid management. One of several avenues for delivering this support will be the UN joint programme, which in 2016 is expected to be supported financially by the European Union. For the refugee response, UNHCR will continue to work with the GoJ to efficiently deliver assistance, while ensuring GoJ oversight and engagement.

13. RC/HC and the Wider Agenda:

The RC/HC will continue to work to strengthen the partnership between the UN System and the GoJ. The RC/HC will promote international best practices in the pursuance of implementation of key international and national reform agendas, such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), Jordan's 2025 Vision and the EDP.

The RC/HC will continue to implement the UN Coherence Agenda with the goal of graduating to Delivering as One during the 2018 to 2022 programme cycle. The RC/HC will take special account of the need to ensure sufficient space and leadership of UN Agencies within their specific mandates, roles and responsibilities, while at the same time achieving a UN that is “Fit For Purpose” to implement the new SDGs.

Finally, the RC/HC will continue to work through the HCT to advocate for the protection of humanitarian principles, space, and financing. Elements of this advocacy will in partnership with the UNHCR led Inter-Agency Task Force include seeking space for the economic accommodation of Syrian refugees in Jordan.

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