

Jordan

Baseline information

Syria Needs Analysis Project

This paper outlines the social and economic situation in Jordan by explaining the causes of the significant underlying vulnerabilities and by exploring how these issues have been compounded by the crisis in Syria and the subsequent population influx. For more information on the current situation of the Syrian refugees in Jordan see the SNAP Regional Analysis Reports which are published on a monthly basis.

The Syria Needs Analysis Project welcomes all information that could complement this report. For additional information, comments or questions please email SNAP@ACAPS.org

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Overview

Causes of underlying vulnerabilities: Jordan is well-developed in terms of health, education, WASH and shelter indicators, with the Government of Jordan (GoJ) playing a major role in the provision of basic services. However, these services, particularly energy and flour subsidies come at a high cost to the GoJ's fiscal health. Despite Jordan's upper middle income status, there is chronically high unemployment particularly affecting youth and women, poverty has increased since the 2008 global recession and 15% of the population are considered poor. While Jordan has weathered the economic and political effects resulting from the Arab Spring and economic growth is expected to increase in the medium term, the influx of 590,000 refugees from Syria has overstretched public services and may have a long-term effect on Jordan's scarce water supplies.

With few natural resources, Jordan is highly dependent on remittances and external aid, and thus vulnerable to international and regional dynamics. While Jordan has been a bastion of stability in a turbulent region for much of its modern history, this has also made it a reluctant host to massive influxes of Palestinian, Iraqi and now Syrian refugees. The GoJ's hospitality to refugees has provided it with significant international support and financing over the years, however there is a danger that as donor fatigue sets in for the most expensive humanitarian response in history, the Government will be unwilling to absorb both the financial and political costs of hosting Syrians.

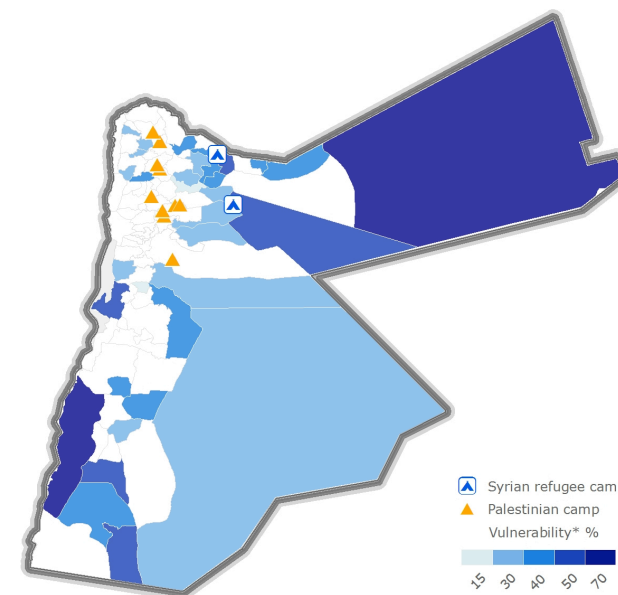
Impact of the Syrian crisis: Since 2011, Jordan has absorbed over 590,000 Syrians, with the vast majority living in host communities in the northern and central governorates. In these areas, basic services, including health, education, water supply and garbage collection have been severely overstretched. In addition, rental and food costs have increased and competition in the informal labour market has depressed wages, exacerbating tensions with local communities. To address these tensions, the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation (MoPIC) has required aid agencies to include Jordanian beneficiaries as 30% in all projects targeting Syrian refugees. Unlike those who fled Iraq, Syrian refugees lack the economic capital to invest in Jordan or access formal work and have depleted their savings, resulting in increasingly negative coping mechanisms.

On a macro level, there have been some benefits to Jordan as a result of the refugee influx. Jordan's economic growth has been helped by increased consumption by Syrians and more high-spending tourists who have been re-routed to Jordan due to other crises in the region. However, in recent years, economic growth has translated to uneven benefits, and if this trend continues, it could reignite political tensions; this time directed towards Syrian refugees instead of the ruling monarchy.

Most vulnerable groups and areas:

Refugees from Syria have settled in a number of impoverished areas of Jordan, particularly in rural areas of Mafraq and Irbid, which is host to a disproportionately large share of both Syrian refugees and poor Jordanians. The Syrian influx is likely to increase vulnerability among the poor and has already created significant tensions between refugee and host communities, manifesting in protests, discrimination, harassment and in some cases, violent confrontations.

Poverty pockets in Jordan



* Sub-districts where a significant proportion of the population lived below the poverty line in 2008

Key indicators 2010

Indicator	Jordan	Lebanon	Syria
Total population	6.4 million*	4.4 million**	24 million
Under 5 mortality rate (per 1,000 births)	21	10	15
Maternal mortality rate (per 100,000 live births)	63	25	70
Life expectancy at birth (male)	72	72	72
Adult literacy rate	96%	90%*	83%

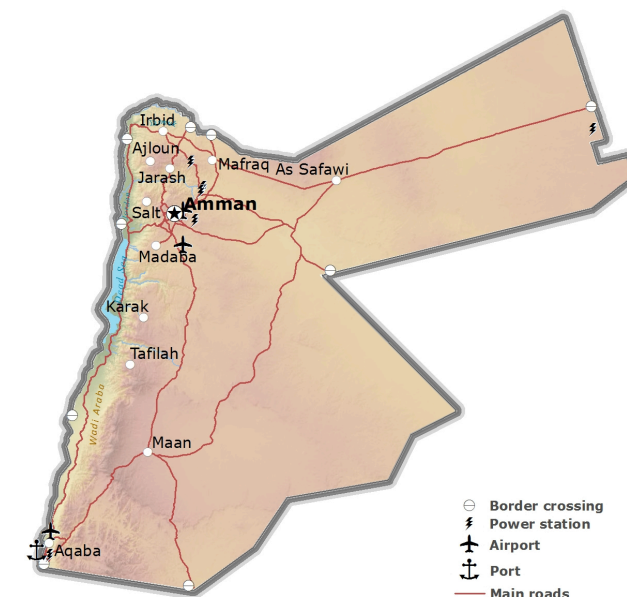
Sources: [Worldbank](#), [GeoHives](#), [Department of Statistics](#), *2012 estimate, **2012 estimate

- **Population profile:** Jordan's population was estimated at 6.4 million in 2012 according to the country's Department of Statistics (DoS). The population estimate is calculated using data from the last census undertaken in 2004 and the annual population growth rate of 2.2%. About 83% of Jordan's population lives in urban areas. ([DoS 2013](#))
- The average household size countrywide was 5.3 in 2010, with little sub-national variation. The lowest average household size is found in Amman governorate with 5 persons, compared to the highest average of 5.9 persons per household in Mafraq. Fertility rates have decreased drastically from 7.4 births per woman in 1976 to 3.7 in 2002 and have since plateaued. ([USAID 2012/06](#), [DoS 2010](#))
- **Socio-cultural characteristics:** Arabic is the official language and English is taught in schools as a second language.
- Sunni Muslims make up over 90% of Jordan's population. Religious minorities include Christians (Orthodox, Catholics and Protestant) and very small populations of Druze and Shi'a. 98% of the population is ethnically Arab with the remaining made up of Armenians, Circassians and Chechens. The majority of the population is made up of Arabs of Palestinian origins. The inhabitants of Jordan at the time of independence and their descendants are known as East Bankers. ([CIA Factbook 2013](#))

Access

- **Transport:** Jordan has a 7,200 km paved road network, generally of high quality. A 500 km stretch of railroad network exists but is in limited use.

Key Infrastructure



- Most of Jordan is landlocked except for a 26 km long coastline in Aqaba on the Red Sea, where Jordan maintains one port.
- During the winter months (November-March), rain and storms often lead to flash floods and some areas are evacuated. Snowfall can hinder movements significantly as the country is not well equipped for winter conditions.

Information sources and gaps

- An overview of the main reports on the situation in Jordan can be found in Annex A. Jordan's [Department of Statistics](#) regularly publishes statistics on the state of the population and economy.
- However, some information gaps remain, primarily related to:
 - Official information on the number of citizens of Palestinian origins. Estimates vary significantly and remain a sensitive political issue.
 - Recent information on national poverty incidence: the most recent poverty study was published in 2008 in response to the global food price crisis and was limited to 20 sub-districts out of a total of 73.

Political developments

- **Background:** Jordan is ruled by a constitutional monarchy headed by King Abdullah II, who holds significant executive and legislative powers. The Parliament consists of a monarchy-appointed 60-member upper house and an elected 150 member lower house. Only 27 seats of the lower house are elected on a basis of proportional representation, while the rest of the seats are determined by a single vote system in multi-seat districts, which allows for the manipulation of electoral boundaries in favour of the East Banker population. This system heavily favours populations residing in rural areas, at the cost of major urban areas, where Palestinian populations are concentrated. The Parliament can override the King's veto with a two-thirds vote and can

only initiate laws with both houses. 10% of parliament seats are reserved for women while 9 are reserved for Christians, 9 for Bedouins and a total of 3 seats for both Circassian and Chechen minorities. The King appoints the ministerial cabinet in consultation with the Prime Minister, who is also appointed by the monarch. ([State Department 2012](#), [European Forum for Democracy 2013](#), [ICG 2012/12](#), [Brandeis 2013/04](#), [Carnegie 2013/12](#))

- Jordan gained full independence in 1946 following more than 20 years under the British Mandate. Independence was followed by the 1948 Arab-Israeli wars, which sent an estimated 100,000 Palestinian refugees into Jordan, primarily to Amman, Irbid and Zarqa. Although it was not recognised by the international community, Jordan announced its annexation of the West Bank in 1950, thereby providing all West Bank residents with Jordanian nationality and effectively doubling its population. The Palestinian population in Jordan grew again due to the 1967 Arab-Israeli war, which saw 300,000 Palestinians flee to Jordan. In 1988, Jordan relinquished its legal and administrative claim to the West Bank, which de-nationalised 1.5 million Palestinians who remained in the West Bank. Palestinians who fled to Jordan after 1967 have no right to Jordanian citizenship, but are able to access basic services through UNRWA. ([ICG 2012/12](#), [CIA Factbook 2013](#))
- Palestinian nationalism increased throughout the 1960s and culminated in the events known as Black September in 1970. Palestinian militants attempted to assassinate then-King Hussein several times, carried out high-profile plane hijackings and regularly clashed with Jordan Armed Forces (JAF). The JAF mobilised to expel Palestinian political organisations and fighters, who were concentrated in Amman. Ensuing battles led to thousands of casualties and most of those expelled fled primarily to Lebanon, as well as some to Syria. The Black September events fulfilled East Bankers' fears of Palestinian dominance of the Kingdom and led to a purge of those of Palestinian origin from positions

in the public sector, including the security and intelligence forces.

- The multi-party system in Jordan remains nascent with most members of Parliament running independently and representing tribal interests. There are over two dozen registered political parties, but they are largely personality-centric, with weak political platforms based generally on pan-Arab, Islamist and conservative orientations. ([ICG 2012/12](#), [European Forum for Democracy 2013](#))
- The Islamic Action Front (IAF), which is tied to the Muslim Brotherhood, is the largest party and constitutes the main opposition in Jordan. Since 2010, the IAF has boycotted elections due to the lack of reform to the electoral system and therefore holds no seats in Parliament. ([ICG 2012/12](#), [European Forum for Democracy 2013](#))
- Jordan's military and intelligence bodies are recognised as the most professional in the region. The JAF has a navy, land and special operations forces under civilian command. The Public Security Directorate (PSD), Civil Defence Directorate (CDD) and gendarmerie report to the Ministry of Interior, while the General Intelligence Directorate (GID) reports directly to the King. All security and intelligence bodies are dominated by East Bankers. Some senior positions in the JAF are reserved for Christians. ([State Department 2012](#))
- **Recent developments:** The Arab Spring protests affected Jordan minimally compared to other countries in the region. Protests began in early 2011 calling for reforms to the electoral system and an end to corruption. The movement gained some traction across political parties, age groups and even the East Banker-Palestinian divide. Organised gangs began attacking protestors and the media, resulting in dozens of arrests, as well as injuries. The King took steps to make constitutional reforms to empower the Parliament and crack down on high-level corruption but implementation of the reforms has remained very limited. ([ICG 2012/12](#), [Brandeis 2013/04](#), [Carnegie 2013/12](#))

Timeline

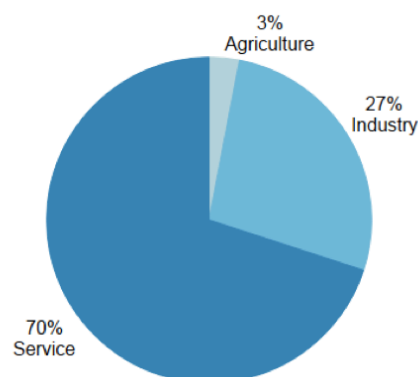
1970-1971	1988	1991	1999	2011-2012	2012-present
Tensions between Palestinian militants and the GoJ erupt, leading to the expulsion of Palestinian organisations and marginalisation of Palestinians from the public sector.	King Hussein relinquishes Jordan's claim to the West Bank, thereby de-nationalising 1.5 million Palestinians.	Kuwait expels Palestinians following the Iraqi invasion and occupation. 300,000 of these Palestinians hold Jordanian citizenship and are returned to Jordan, although many had never lived in the Kingdom. The mass expulsion increased Jordan's population by nearly 10%.	King Abdullah II assumes the throne and develops an ambitious economic reform agenda, which includes the privatisation of state enterprises and creation of special economic zones, leading to high economic growth between 2001-2008.	Peaceful protests begin in Jordan calling for economic, constitutional and electoral reforms. Protests continued throughout the year and were further fuelled by the Government's reduction of fuel subsidies in late 2012.	Refugees fleeing the conflict in Syria begin to enter Jordan and other neighbouring countries in large numbers. The vast majority of refugees settle in host communities due to unsatisfactory living and security conditions in Za'atari refugee camp.

- There have been 6 prime ministers appointed since 2011. The shuffling of prime ministers and cabinets has reportedly been a well-used tactic by the monarchy to deflect public discontent. ([Time 2012/04/26](#), [ICG 2012/12](#))
- **Corruption and accountability:** Corruption is perceived to be widespread in Jordan's private and public sectors. Despite recent anti-corruption protests and limited reform efforts, Jordan's ranking in Transparency International's '2013 Corruption Perception Index,' showed the Kingdom dropped in rank from 58 (in 2012) to 66 out of 177 countries surveyed. Corruption and nepotism were perceived as common obstacles to democracy among Jordanians. ([Transparency International 2013/12](#))
- A think tank found that the gap between Jordan's legal framework and actual implementation had grown between 2007 and 2009. The country's legal framework was ranked as 'very weak' in 2009. ([Global Integrity 2009](#))

Economy

- **Jordanian economy overview:** Jordan is classified by the World Bank as an upper middle income economy. Despite high external debt, a heavy reliance on foreign assistance and regional economic turmoil resulting from the Arab Spring, Jordan's economy continues to grow slowly but steadily. As a resource poor country, Jordan is heavily dependent on imports for its energy and food needs and thus highly vulnerable to fluctuations in international markets. Since 1999, Jordan has undertaken a number of economic reforms to liberalise its economy by privatising industries and reducing state fuel subsidies. Jordan's economy is service-based

GDP by sector (2010)



and one-quarter of jobs are found in the public sector. The Syrian crisis has had both positive and negative effects on Jordan's economy. Although weakly integrated with Syria's, Jordan's economy has suffered from disrupted transit routes to regional trade partners which has impacted some exports. In addition, the influx of Syrians has overstretched public services in the northern governorates and increased demand for the GoJ's fuel, electricity and flour subsidies contributing to its deepening public debt. On the other hand, domestic consumption and some residential construction, as well as tax revenue, have increased as a result of the influx and the humanitarian organisations have directly employed several thousand Jordanians. In addition, Jordan's stability has drawn higher spending Gulf and western tourists who were

typically visiting Lebanon, Syria and Egypt prior to the crisis. ([UNDP 12/08](#), [UN Comtrade 2012](#), [World Bank 2013/09](#), [World Bank 2013/03](#))

- **Service sector:** The service sector makes up 80% of total employment in Jordan and includes:
 - GoJ services
 - Transport, storage and communication services
 - Wholesale and retail trade, including hotel and restaurant services
 - Personal services, such as leisure and domestic care services
 - Financial, real estate and insurance services ([World Bank 2013](#), [DoS 2012](#))

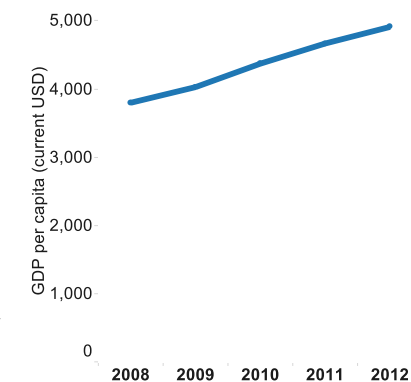
Agriculture: Agriculture provides around 3.6% of GDP and 2% of total employment, both of which have steadily declined since the country's independence. The Jordan River valley is the most fertile region, while the northern and central regions practice rainfed agriculture. The primary agricultural products are wheat, barley, vegetables, olives and fruits. ([DoS 2012](#))

- **Energy and water:** Approximately 96% of Jordan's energy consumption is met through the importation of oil and gas. Although the GoJ has steadily reduced fuel subsidies in recent years, these continue to be a significant drain on public expenditures. Dozens of attacks by unknown armed groups on a major gas pipeline from Egypt have resulted in heavy financial losses for the GoJ since the overthrow of President Hosni Mubarak in 2011. Jordan is the fourth most water scarce country in the world. Efforts to improve water access have focused on improving conveyance from aquifers to population centres, establishing desalination plants and regional water sharing deals. ([IMF 2013/10](#), [USAID 12/06](#), [FT 2013/12/09](#))

- **Informal economy:** The informal economy, the segment of the economy that is not measured by national or other official systems, was estimated to contribute 44% of total employment and 21% of GDP in 2010. ([UNDP 2012/08](#))

- **Macro-economics:** Jordan's economy faced a significant recession in the late 1980s due to limited remittances and foreign assistance from Gulf countries as a result of low oil prices. The economy recovered in the early 1990s, due in part to the mass return of 300,000 Palestinian Jordanians from Kuwait and their investments in local enterprises. Between 2004 until the global financial crisis in 2008, the economy grew at an average rate of 8%. However, there were few permanent, formal jobs created, while temporary and informal positions significantly increased. In 2010, economic

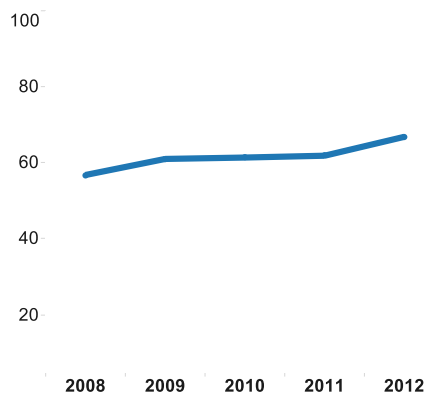
Annual GDP growth



growth slowed to 2.3% but is believed to be increasing to over 3% in 2013 and 2014, despite the Syrian crisis. (IMF 2013/10, World Bank 2013, Oxford 1995, YEA/FNF 2013/10)

- **GDP per capita:** In 2012, the GPD per capita was USD 4,900 compared to USD 4,370 in 2010. (World Bank 2013)
- **Trade deficit:** As a resource scarce country, Jordan maintains significant trade deficits, importing three times more than it exports. Main exports are mineral and chemical products, manufactured goods and food products, while imports are oil, grains, other food products and vehicles. Jordan's main trading partners are MENA and EU countries, the US and China. The large trade deficits are slightly offset by remittances, foreign direct investments and foreign assistance. (DoS 2012, World Bank 2013)
- **Exchange Rate:** The Jordanian dinar has been pegged to the US Dollar at approximately 1.41 JD to 1 USD since 1994. (YEA/FNF 2013/10)
- **Budget deficit and public debt:** GoJ expenditures are structurally higher than revenues, with public debt reaching 80% of GDP in 2012. As a result of spiralling debts, Jordan entered into a stand-by agreement with the IMF, which has resulted in a number of reductions to subsidised goods and services and increased prices of commodities. (World Bank 2013)
- **Inflation:** In 2012, the inflation rate based on Jordan's consumer price index (CPI) was estimated at 4.7% due to the removal of some fuel subsidies. Inflation was projected to decrease to 3% at the end of 2013. (IMF 2013/10)

Government debt as a % of GDP (2008 - 2012)



Impact of the Syrian crisis

Unemployment: The unemployment rate in Jordan grew to 14% in late 2013, from 13.1% in 2012. Given the bureaucratic obstacles and expenses involved to obtain a work permit, an estimated 160,000 Syrians are believed to be working in Jordan without legal authorisation. The vast majority of Syrians work in the informal sector, which has likely driven down wages and increased competition with Jordanians and other migrant workers, particularly Egyptians, who also depend on the informal sector. In 2010, the informal sector accounted for 44% of total employment in Jordan. (MoPIC 2013/10, UNDP 2012/08, IMF 2013/10/10, DoS 2013/10/09)

- **Tourism:** In 2011, the inflow of tourists to Jordan was adversely affected by regional turmoil, but the tourism industry rebounded in 2012 and contributed to

overall economic growth in 2013. Jordan benefited from tourists, particularly high-spending visitors from the Gulf, who would usually travel to Lebanon or Syria. (World Bank 2013/03)

- **Projections:** Various sources project the following economic dynamics:
 - GDP growth will grow to an annual average of 3.5% and CPI inflation will significantly decrease to 3.2% in 2014. (IMF 2013/10)
 - The GoJ will require USD 1.68 billion, not including the costs of running the refugee camps, to keep up with the increased demand for public services resulting from the influx of Syrian refugees. (MoPIC 2013/10)
- **Positive impact of the crisis:** There are also Jordanians who are benefiting economically from the influx - the arrival of aid agencies has injected money into the local economy and created job opportunities, particularly for university graduates, who traditionally face the highest unemployment rates in Jordan. Local businesses and the agriculture sector are benefiting from the availability of cheap labour, whilst landlords and landowners are making significant profits on renting out property, which had previously been vacant.

Hazards

- **Political instability and vulnerability:** Overall, Jordan is ethnically and religiously homogenous and tolerant of its minority groups. The most significant tensions in Jordan's modern history have been between Palestinians and the monarchy, the latter of which has traditionally been supported by East Bankers. While these tensions have not resulted in violence for decades, significant political tensions exist, with Palestinians often blamed for the perceived worsening socio-economic conditions of the East Banker population.
- **GoJ capacity:** The GoJ of Jordan, led by the Civil Defence Directorate (CDD), has good capacity to respond to emergencies, both in terms of assets (helicopters, ambulances, etc.) as well as skills. In 2013, the CDD achieved UN status of 'heavy strength' in urban search and rescue. In 2011, the CDD has responded to 180,000 emergencies, primarily with ambulance services. The Jordanian Red Crescent specialises in health services and is undergoing restructuring to respond to the influx of Syrian refugees. (PPRD South 2010/06/24, CDD 2012)
- **Hazards:** The main natural hazards identified by the GoJ are: earthquakes, flash floods, snowstorms, frost, drought and desertification. (Directorate of Civil Defence)
- **Earthquakes:** Jordan's population centres lie near the Dead Sea Fault Line, which created the Gulf of Aqaba and the Dead Sea. The last major earthquake registered a 5.3 on the Richter scale along the Dead Sea fault line in 2004 but caused minimal casualties and damage. It is estimated that there is a 50% chance of an earthquake with a magnitude greater than 6 striking the country every 80 years. (USGS 2012/08, Stanford 1988)

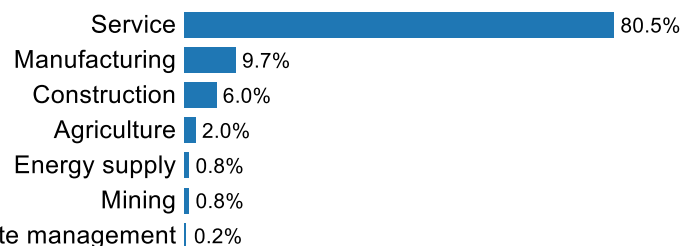
- **Floods:** Flash floods and flooding usually occur from November to February and while they contribute most to disaster-related deaths, they remain low at 52 deaths over a 29 year period. ([UNISDR 2012/05](#))

Livelihoods and Food Security

Livelihoods

- The main areas of employment are services, followed by manufacturing. The labour market is characterised by:
 - Chronic unemployment rates around 13.7% over the past decade, particularly among young university graduates and women. 29% of youths (age 15-24) and 20% of women are unemployed.
 - A high prevalence of informal employment (an estimated 44% of workers). ([World Bank 2013/03](#), [IMF 2013/10](#))
 - Very low rates of labour market participation among women at 14%. Some of the reasons behind women's low activity rates include child bearing, cultural practices and household responsibilities. ([World Bank 2013/03](#), [UNDP 2012/08](#))
- In 2012, the minimum wage was set at JD 190 (USD 268) per month, although it does not apply to foreigners and garment workers. The minimum wage for Jordanian garment workers is JD 170 (USD 240) and for foreign garment workers, JD 110 (USD 155). The poverty line was set at JD 366 (USD 517) for a family of 5. ([State Department 2012](#))

Employment per sector (2012)



Food security

- **Food imports:** Jordan is heavily dependent on imported food, with domestic food and feed production only covering 3% of consumption needs. The Black Sea region, including Ukraine and Russia, is the main grain source, with most brought in through Aqaba port. The GoJ maintains a 10-month strategic reserve of wheat to protect against price shocks. ([GIEWS 2013/10/01](#), [USDA 2012/11/28](#))

- **Food access:** Bread is subsidised and sold at JD 0.15 (USD 0.22) per kilo, which is sometimes as little as 25% of the cost of the wheat. In 2008, the average per capita food expenditures were JD 41 (USD 58) per month. On average, 37% of household expenditures are spent on food. ([WFP 2008/09](#), [DoS 2010](#), [USDA 2012/11/28](#))
- **Poverty profile:** According to the World Bank, 15% of households in Jordan are considered poor. Poverty rates were halved between 2002 and 2010, although they have increased slightly since the 2008 global food crisis and financial recession. The number of 'poverty pockets,' or areas in which more than 25% of the population lives below the poverty line, increased from 22 to 32 between 2006 and 2008. There is a higher poverty incidence rate in rural areas, however urban areas host the majority of the poor in Jordan. Mafrq governorate is host to more than one-third of the identified poverty pockets, while Ma'an, Karak and Irbid each host 13%. Most of the poor are living near the poverty line, with 2% living below the abject poverty line, which stands at JD 24 (USD 34) per capita per month. ([YEA/FNF 2013/10](#), [IRIN 2013/22/02](#), [WFP 2008/09](#), [World Bank 2013/03](#))
- **Impact of the Syrian crisis:** The influx of a large number of Syrians has increased supply of labour and demand for food items, leading to decreased salaries for low skilled labour in some parts of the country and an increase in prices for basic commodities. Mafrq and Irbid governorates have been identified as particularly vulnerable due to the high concentration of Syrian refugees and high levels of pre-existing poverty. As a result, tensions between Jordanians and Syrians have been high, resulting in violent protests in some cases and refugee reports of harassment. To address these tensions, the MoPIC has required aid agencies to include Jordanian beneficiaries as 30% of all projects targeting Syrian refugees. The conflict in neighbouring Syria has impacted the livelihoods of border towns, particularly Ramtha, which is reliant on trade with Syria. While Syria was not a major trade partner, Jordan utilised its transport routes to reach EU markets and has re-routed exports through Iraq or to markets in the Gulf. ([IRIN 2012/10/18](#), [MoPIC/UNDP 2013/11](#))

Health

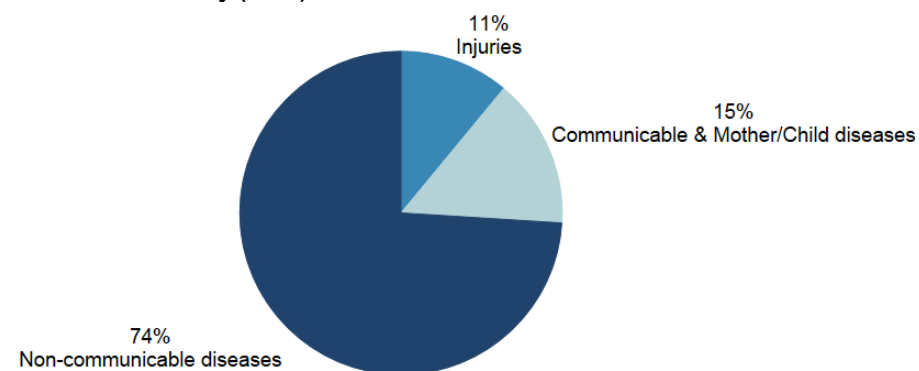
Infrastructure and coverage

- **Infrastructure:** Jordan has one of the most advanced health systems in the region. Health services are provided by both the public and private sectors in Jordan. Public health services are primarily provided and funded by the Ministry of Health (MoH) and the Royal Medical Services (RMS). Private health services include for-profit companies, university hospitals, UNRWA clinics and non-profit charities. There were 1.8 hospitals beds available per 1,000 people in 2010. In 2011, WHO reported that the primary challenges to Jordan's health system were identified as the lack of efficient referral systems, weak

coordination among health service providers, weak information management services and duplication of services. (MoPIC/UNDP 2013/11, WHO 2011/08)

- **Health expenditure:** In 2011, per capita health expenses were estimated at JD 278 (USD 392) including both private and public health or 8.4% of GDP. Health spending makes up about 18% of the GoJ's total spending. The GoJ funds 68% of all health expenses, with the private sector and international donors funding 29% of total health costs. The remaining 3% was funded by international donors, though this is likely to have increased since 2011 due to the Syrian refugee influx. GoJ spending on the health sector has gradually increased over the last decade. (WHO 2014/01)
- About 88% of the population is covered by health insurance. The MoH's National Health Insurance covers 42% of the population, including civil servants and their dependents, vulnerable groups (those certified as poor by the Ministry of Social Development (MoSD), children under 6, the disabled, etc.) and also acts as the provide of last resort by providing services at subsidised rates. RMS covers 27% of the population, including those in the military services while private insurers, UNRWA and university hospitals cover the remainder of the insured population. (MoPIC/UNDP 2013/11, WHO 2011/08)
- **Human resources:** In 2010, there were sufficient trained medical personnel in Jordan, with around 26.5 physicians, 38.5 nurses, 15 pharmacists and 9.3 dentists per 10,000 people. The ratio of health professionals to residents had been increasing prior to 2010. (WHO 2011/08)
- **Maternal health care:** Maternal healthcare is of a high standard, with 99% of all births taking place in a health facility and 95.5% of pregnant women receiving prenatal care. The maternal mortality ratio dropped from 104 deaths to 86.3 deaths per 100,000 live births between 1993 and 2004. The majority of women practicing family planning use traditional methods of contraception (65%), while 35% used modern methods. (DoS 2013/03)

Causes of Mortality (2008)



- **Medicines:** Jordan has a pharmaceutical industry which supplies 25% of its domestic consumption, with the vast majority produced for export. Medicines make up more than one-quarter of Jordan's health expenditures, a rate which has been growing in recent years due to increases in drug costs and consumption. The Jordan Food and Drug Administration (JFDA) is responsible for quality control, licensing and price controls. (MoPIC/UNDP 2013/11, WHO 2011/08)
- **Immunisation:** In 2012, 93% of children were fully immunised with all recommended vaccinations (measles, polio, TB and diphtheria, pertussis and tetanus, known as DPT). 98% of children were immunised against polio and DPT, while measles coverage was 94%. (DoS 2013/03)

Morbidity and mortality:

- **Child mortality:** Between 2008-2012, under-5 mortality rates averaged 21 per 1,000 births, with the vast majority of deaths occurring during the first year of life. Both child and infant mortality has decreased significantly in recent years. (DoS 2013/03)
- **Non-communicable diseases:** Cardiovascular conditions were the leading reported cause of death in 2010. In addition, neoplasms, diabetes, respiratory diseases and external injuries were major causes of morbidity. Increasing rates of non-communicable diseases are due to the increasing population of elderly, increasing food consumption, smoking and lack of exercise. (MoPIC/UNDP 2013/11, WHO 2011/08)
- **Communicable diseases:** Communicable diseases made up 15% of registered causes of death in 2008. Although mortality from diarrhoeal and respiratory diseases is very low, these diseases are the leading causes of morbidity among Jordanian children. Jordan was declared polio-free in 1988, although there was one foreign transmitted case confirmed in 1992. No cases of measles had been reported since 2009 until the recent arrival of Syrians. (MoPIC/UNDP 2013/11, WHO 2011/08, WHO)

- **HIV/AIDS:** Jordan has a very low prevalence of HIV/AIDS with 0.1% of the population. Around 600 cases of HIV/AIDS had been identified in 2007. (CIA Factbook 2013)
- **Mental health:** Jordan's National Center for Mental Health estimates that 20% of the population requires psychiatric care, although the vast majority do not seek treatment due to stigmatisation. Schizophrenia was the most common diagnosis among mental health facilities. (WHO 2011/01, The National 2008/11/16)
- **Nutrition:** Malnutrition is not a major concern in Jordan and the national diet is relatively diverse. Rates of overweight and obese children and women of child-bearing age are increasing due to changing lifestyles and diets. (FAO 2011)
- **Disability:** The 2004 census recorded about 63,000 cases of disability, making up 1.2% of the population. UNICEF estimates that the global prevalence of moderate to severe disabilities among a population is 5%. The 6 categories of disabilities used were: physical, mental, vision, hearing/speaking, cerebral palsy and multi-disability cases. (DoS 2004, MoPIC/UNDP 2013/11)
- **Impact of the Syrian crisis:** Since May 2012, health services are provided free to all Syrian refugees. The refugee influx has led to a significant increase in demand for healthcare in the northern governorates and Amman, where the majority of refugees reside, and has overstretched a number of health services. In Mafraq and Irbid governorates, Syrians make up about 10% of the patient caseload in MoH facilities; in some hospitals in these areas, the proportion of Syrian patients reaches 18%. The main diagnoses of Syrian patients at MoH facilities were upper respiratory infections, high blood pressure and urinary tract infections. There are increased rate of some communicable diseases such as TB, measles and leishmaniasis among Syrian populations compared to Jordanians, which could increase the national prevalence. The number of surgeries for Syrians, particularly for trauma and weapon-related wounds, increased from 105 to 622 between January and March 2013. (MoPIC/UNDP 2013/11, MoH/WHO 2013, The Lancet 2013/07/03)
- Between June 2012 and December 2013, the ratio of physicians, nurses and pharmacists per 100,000 population was projected to decrease by 15% to the increase in demand. In the northern governorates, there are shortages in specialised health workers, such as gynaecologists, paediatricians, psychiatrists and dermatologists. (MoPIC/UNDP 2013/11, The Lancet 2013/07/03)
- The MoH estimated that the cost of providing health services to Syrian refugees in 2013 was USD 168 million, while the cost of medicine and vaccines totals USD 58 million. The expansion of health infrastructure to accommodate Syrians is estimated at USD 84 million. (MoPIC 2013/10)
- Jordan's justice system has been influenced by Ottoman, French, British and Islamic laws. The Court of Cassation is the highest court in Jordan. The Chief Justice is appointed by the King, while other judges are nominated by the Higher Judicial Council and approved by the King.
- There are 3 types of courts:
 - Civil courts: The Magistrate's Court and Court of First Instance deal with minor crimes and small-scale civil suits. Major Felonies Court deal with serious, often violent crimes. The Court of Appeal reviews cases involving minor crimes or civil action, while the Court of Cassation reviews felony appeals and large civil action cases. There is also a special Land Settlement Court, which deals with issues of ownership, infringement and demarcation of land, as well as water sources. (DoS 2012)
 - Religious court: Religious courts have jurisdiction over all personal status issues, such as marriage, divorce, inheritance and adoptions, etc. Muslims must go to Shari'a courts on all such issues, while other recognised religious communities have legal councils to adjudicate. In the case of inheritance, all religious courts must implement shari'a law. There is no option for civil marriage or divorce in Jordan.
 - State Security Court: The state security court tries cases related to national security issues, including espionage and drug and weapons trafficking. However, civil society groups report that these courts have been used to try journalists and members of the political opposition. There is no appeal process for rulings and only the Prime Minister can alter or annul the sentence. (Human Rights Council 2013/11, UNESCO)
- There is concern with the vague jurisdiction of the State Security Court and reports of its increasing involvement in cases against peaceful protestors, the media and the political opposition. In addition, there is a lack of transparency and trials are not open to the public. There was no official information on the number or types of cases tried in these courts. (Human Rights Council 2013/11)
- **Impact of the Syrian crisis:** As at January 2014 no information is available on the total number of legal cases involving Syrians. The Family Protection Department reported that 71 Syrian cases involving sexual and gender-based violence were referred to courts between January and October 2013. (MoPIC/UNDP 2013/11)

Abuse, torture and detention conditions

- Although recent constitutional amendments prohibit torture and the use of confessions resulting from torture, civil society groups report that torture and physical and sexual abuse continue to be perpetrated, particularly by the General Intelligence Directorate (GID) and Criminal Investigation Directorate (CID). The National Center for Human Rights received 75 complaints of abuse and torture in police stations. Mechanisms to investigate torture allegations are

Protection

Justice system and laws

weak and no law enforcement officials have been prosecuted. ([Human Rights Council 2013/11](#), [State Department 2012](#))

- About 25,000 people are imprisoned in Jordan's 14 correctional facilities in 2012 of which 8 reportedly meet international standards while the remaining 6 facilities are in poor condition. There are 220 women and 2,400 juvenile inmates. Inmates report inadequate food, health care, drinking water and exposure to extreme temperatures. Detainees held on national security-related issues are usually held in solitary confinement. ([State Department 2012](#))
- The death sentence continues to be applied in Jordan although the last execution occurred in 2006. In 2013, there were 106 people on death row, including 9 women. ([DPW 2013/06/28](#), [NCHR 2010](#))

Women's rights

- Jordanian law discriminates against women by, among other things, denying them the right to pass their nationality to their children or spouses. This law particularly affects Jordanian women married to Palestinians without Jordanian citizenship. To access basic services, non-Jordanian dependents must obtain resident permits on an annual basis. ([Human Rights Council 2013/11](#))
- The law provides for circumstances in which perpetrators of 'honour killings' are exempted from punishment. In 2009, human rights groups estimated that an average of 25 women were murdered each year in 'honour killings.' ([HRW 2009/08/10](#))
- Marital rape is not considered a crime in Jordanian law. In addition, if a perpetrator marries the rape survivor, then criminal charges are dropped. Jordanian civil society groups reported that governors have the authority to detain women on the grounds of suspicion of 'dishonourable conduct.' 17 women were reportedly held in protective custody, in some cases for up to 10 years. ([Human Rights Council 2013/11](#))
- In the country's sharia courts, the testimony of two women is equal to that of one man. In addition, female inheritors receive less than their male counterparts. ([CIA Factbook 2013](#))

Child rights

- 99% of children born in Jordan receive a birth certificate. The GoJ has denied registration to children born out of wedlock or inter-faith marriages involving a Muslim mother or whose parents converted from Islam. The lack of registration affected children's access to basic services and to obtain other types of civil documentation. ([DoS 2013/03](#), [CIA Factbook 2013](#))
- In 2008, the GoJ estimated that 32,000 children between age 5 and 17 were working. Agriculture, electrical repair, mining and construction were common sectors and presented a number of hazards. Child labour is believed to be

concentrated in Amman, Irbid and Zarqa, as well as in Mafraq and Ma'an. ([CIA Factbook 2013](#), [DoL 2013](#))

- The minimum age of criminal responsibility is very low at age 7. ([Human Rights Council 2013/11](#))
- GoJ inspectors have documented cases of physical and verbal abuse of children in orphanages and juvenile centres by staff. ([State Department 2012](#))

Human Trafficking

- There are no estimates available on the number of trafficked persons in Jordan. People from the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Syrian, North Africa and Eastern European countries generally enter Jordan legally and are then subjected to various forms of forced labour, particularly in domestic work, construction, agricultural work and prostitution. Jordan has limited capacity to identify trafficked persons or those subject to forced labour and the legal framework is weak. In 2013, there were no prosecutions for trafficking offenses. ([Human Rights Council 2013/11](#), [State Department 2013](#))

Violence and criminality

- Violence and criminality in Jordan are quite low, however, crime rates increased by 39% between 2008 and 2012. In 2012, there were 33,000 general crimes reported or about 5 reports per 1,000 people. Aqaba and Amman report the highest per capita crime rate at 8 and 7 crimes per 1,000 people, respectively. Ajlun had the lowest rate with less than 2 crimes reported per 1,000 people. ([DoS 2012](#))
- **Impact of the Syrian Crisis:** There has been no measurable impact of an increased crime rate due to the influx of refugees from Syria. Some municipalities reported an increase in petty crime, however, this trend was attributed to the increase in unemployed Jordanian youth and their increased loitering in public spaces. There have been occasional shells landing in Jordanian territory, causing damage and injuries since the beginning of the Syrian conflict, but spill-over has been limited due to the heavy presence of the JAF along the border. ([MoPIC/UNDP 2013/11](#))
- Hundreds of Jordanians are reported to have joined opposition groups fighting in Syria, often those with ties to Al-Qaeda, such as Jabhat al-Nusra, and dozens have been killed. As of September 2013, the GoJ had arrested 68 Jordanians for ties to the conflict in Syria, the majority of which were referred to the State Security Court. There is concern that the Syrian conflict will further radicalise some Jordanians and lead to terrorist attacks within the country. In October 2012, the GoJ reported stopping a complex suicide attack targeting various upscale hotels and shopping malls in Amman. ([CTC Sentinel 2013/10/24](#), [NYT 2012/10/21](#))

Vulnerable groups:

- **Migrant workers:** Despite Jordan's high unemployment rates, there is a significant foreign migrant worker population, dominated by Egyptians but also including Filipino, Indonesian and Sri Lankan nationals. Migrant workers primarily occupy positions in agriculture, construction, domestic work and services. While Jordan has taken steps to improve legal rights for the estimated 70,000 migrant domestic workers in the country by covering them under some of its labour laws and instituting specific rights for domestic workers, enforcement is poor and minimum wage does not apply to domestic work. Domestic workers reported experiencing physical and sexual abuse, underpayment or delayed payment of salaries, excessive work hours and forced confinement. ([HRW 2014/01](#), [HRW 2011/08](#), [Human Rights Council 2013/11](#))
- **Refugees:** Jordan hosts the largest population for refugees in the world, both in terms of absolute numbers and in proportion to the indigenous population. Despite its long history of providing refuge, Jordan has not ratified the 1951 Refugee Convention relating to the Status of Refugees. UNHCR operates in Jordan based on a 1998 Memorandum of Understanding with the Ministry of Interior which gives UNHCR the responsibility for processing asylum claims and refugee status determination in the absence of national mechanisms. ([UNHCR, MIS 2010/08](#))
- As of January 2014, 590,000 Syrian refugees were registered with UNHCR. About 90% of the registered refugee population are living in the northern governorates of Mafraq, Amman, Irbid and Zarqa. Like other refugee populations in Jordan, Syrians struggle to survive with the increasing costs of living, the lack of work permits and poor living conditions in Za'atari camp. ([UNHCR 2013/01](#))
- There are 2 million registered Palestine refugees who fall under the mandate of the UN Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA). UNRWA provides education, health and other services for Palestinian refugees. The majority of Palestinians are concentrated in Amman, Irbid and Zarqa. In January 2013, the GoJ announced that it would not allow Palestinians refugees fleeing Syria (PRS) to enter the country. This policy has stemmed the flow of PRS into Jordan, but a few hundreds continue to arrive every month. About 11,000 PRS have been recorded by UNRWA and are able to access available UNRWA services. 98% of them live in host communities, mostly in Amman, Irbid and Zarqa. About 200 PRS are held in Cyber City, a closed facility near the border town of Ramtha. PRS are a highly marginalised group in Jordan, with the majority living in abject poverty and highly vulnerable to refoulement. The GoJ is reported to have forcibly returned dozens of PRS to Syria, including women and children. ([Amnesty 2013/10/30](#), [HRW 2012/07/04](#), [UNRWA 2013/01](#))
- 25,000 Iraqis were registered with UNHCR at the end of 2013 and thousands have been referred for third country resettlement. The Iraqi refugee population

in Jordan is generally highly-educated and relatively affluent compared to other refugee groups. ([UNHCR, MIS 2010/08](#))

- Over 2,000 refugees and asylum seekers from Sudan, Somalia and other countries are registered with UNHCR. These groups are perhaps the most vulnerable refugees as they are often impoverished, face increased discrimination and receive less aid compared to Syrian refugees. ([UNHCR, The Atlantic 2013/11/22](#))
- **Persons with disabilities:** Despite the GoJ's efforts to legislate the rights of the disabled, there has been a significant gap in implementing the laws on integration, inclusion and accessibility. GoJ inspectors have documented the use, by staff, of physical abuse and cages to punish people with disabilities who are accessing services in GoJ institutions. Forced sterilisation of women and girls with mental disabilities remains common. Stigmatisation of people with disabilities continues to be a barrier to integration into the school system. In 2012, the MoE refused to register children with mild and moderate disabilities. ([MoPIC/UNDP 2013/11](#), [State Department 2012](#), [Human Rights Council 2013/11](#))

Education

- Compulsory education is 10 years in Jordan, beginning with 6 years of primary school followed by 4 years of secondary school. Thereafter, upper secondary school lasts 2 years. ([UNESCO 2012](#))
- The adult literacy rate (percentage of persons aged 15 and over who can read and write) in Jordan was 96% in 2011 (98% for males and 94% for females). ([UNESCO 2011](#), [World Bank 2011](#))
- The rate of completion among students entering primary school is 98%. An estimated 2% of children are out of primary school, with a slightly a higher rate of 3% for females. ([UNESCO 2010](#), [UNESCO 2011](#))
- School fees for public schools are low with an annual fee of JD 3.7 (USD 5.22) for primary school, which includes uniforms, school fees and textbooks. Principals can exempt students in need from paying fees. For secondary school, the fee is JD 7 (USD 10). The GoJ reported that it spends USD 877 per primary school students and 1200 USD per secondary school student. ([USAID 2012](#), [MoPIC 2013/10](#))
- UNICEF reported that the majority of children with disabilities are outside the education system. In 2009, the GoJ reported that there are 144 centres to serve 26,000 people with disabilities. ([UN Human Rights Council 2013/07/31](#), [UN Human Rights Council 2009/02/09](#))
- **Impact of the Syrian crisis:** During the 2013/2014 school year, 78,500 Syrian children were enrolled in public schools, leaving an estimated one-third of Syrian refugee children aged 6 to 17 out of school. 47 public schools, primarily in the northern governorates, have been double-shifted; 13 of which are at

capacity. In September 2013, 1,400 children were reported to be on a waiting list. The GoJ estimates that 70,000 Syrian refugee children are out of school and that 120 schools must be built to accommodate this caseload at a cost of 135 million USD. The main obstacle to accessing primary education in 2013 was identified as the lack of absorption capacity of public schools, followed by the lack of safe transportation and reports of increasing child labour. (REACH 2013/11, UNHCR 2013/09/18, MoPIC 2013/10)

WASH

- **Water:** Jordan is one of the most water scarce countries in the world. The key surface water sources are the Jordan, Yarmouk and Zarqa rivers, with the former two being a source of tension with Jordan's neighbours. The Jordan and Yarmouk rivers are shared with Israel and Syria, respectively, while the Zarqa river is the only source within Jordan's borders, however it is heavily polluted. According to the World Bank, Jordan withdraws more water than it has available for sustainable use. Water management is further exacerbated by the illegal drilling of wells and lack of enforcement. 54% of its water supply comes from ground sources with 37% coming from surface water sources and the remaining from treated wastewater. About two-thirds of the water supply is used for irrigation, although agriculture made up only 3% of Jordan's GDP in 2007. (University of Oregon, UNICEF/WHO 2010, UNICEF 2013/04, World Bank 2011, GoJ 2009/02)
- The per capita water availability per year was 145 cubic meters in 2008, well below the water poverty line of 500 cubic meters. The public water supply provides about 85 litres per person per day, although many people also purchase water through the private sector. Between 1990 and 2011, there was a decrease in those relying on piped water sources and an increase in those accessing other sources, such as purchased water. 90% of the population in rural areas have access to safe water compared to 97% in urban areas. UN agencies have rated Jordan's compliance with WHO guidelines on bacterial and chemical contaminants very high at 98%, however a recent inter-agency assessment in the northern governorates found that only two-thirds of households had adequate levels chlorination and that no chlorine was detected in 10% of assessed households. The population generally relies on purchased bottled water. The availability of water is seasonally dependent, with many areas dependent on purchased water tankering between June and August. (UNICEF/WHO 2010, UNICEF/WHO 2013/04, World Bank 2011, Inter-agency assessment 2013/10)
- An inter-agency assessment of the northern governorates found that key informants reported that on average, water networks were 35 years old and require significant rehabilitation. There are major inefficiencies in the water network with an estimated 50% lost through leakages and illegal connections to the water network. (Inter-agency assessment 2013/10, MoPIC/UNDP 2013/11)

- **Sanitation:** Virtually all of Jordan's population has access to improved sanitation facilities with 100% in urban areas and 99% in rural areas. (UNICEF/WHO 2013/04, Inter-agency assessment 2013/10)
- **Impact of the Syrian crisis:** The influx of Syrian refugees has placed a major stress on Jordan's scarce water resources and municipal sanitation systems. The local population has complained that Syrians use more water as they are not used to dealing with water scarcity. The establishment of Za'atari camp as well as the unopened Azraq camp are situated near aquifers and there is concern of potential contamination due to the unregulated construction of WASH facilities in households. (IRIN 2013/07/19, Inter-agency assessment 2013/10)

Shelter

- In 2013, the Housing and Urban Development Corporation estimated that 18% of Jordan's housing stock was vacant prior to the Syrian crisis. Overall, the housing stock is well-constructed with virtually all homes linked to the public water and electricity networks. In 2010, it was estimated that 0.27% of the housing stock was made up sub-standard or impermanent material. (MoPIC/UNDP 2013/11)
- In 2010, the average monthly expenditure for housing costs were JD 306 (USD 431) but with significant variation between some governorates and socio-economic categories. For example, the average housing costs in Amman were JD 453 (USD 639) compared to JD 163 (USD 230) in Ajlun. Housing costs in urban areas were 45% higher than in rural areas. 70% of housing units are apartments and the remainder are houses. 73% of housing units are inhabited by their owners; 23% are rented and the remaining 6% inhabited by households allowed to live there for free or in exchange for work. (DoS 2011)
- About 370,000 or 18% of registered Palestinians live in one of the 10 UNRWA camps, some of which are severely overcrowded. (UNRWA 2013/01)
- 80% of households rely on gas or kerosene heaters for heating. Almost all households (99.9%) use gas for cooking. (DoS 2011, DoS 2011)
- **Impact of the Syrian crisis:** Over 80% of the Syrian refugee population are living in host communities, primarily in rented accommodations and with host families. Although Jordan had a relatively high proportion of vacant housing before the crisis, it has largely been rented out as a result of the refugee influx. An assessment in the northern governorates found that 20% of refugees live in sub-standard accommodations, such as garages, basements, chicken houses, and tents. There were a number of informal tented settlements identified, particularly in Mafraq, Irbid and Balqa governorates, however the authorities in Mafraq began a crackdown on such settlements, resulting in the eviction of hundreds of refugees. (ACTED 2013/09/01, UNHCR 2013/01, UNICEF/REACH 2013/12/29)

- Rent is the priority most frequently cited by Syrian refugees. Current rental costs for Syrian refugees range from JD 100 to 200 (USD 141 to 282). Rental costs have increased significantly in the northern governorates due to the high demand on housing placed by the influx of Syrians. In Mafrq, rents are reported to have increased by 400% and the demand for housing has increased 19 times the average annual need. The main challenge identified for refugees to access shelter is the high price as savings and other resources become depleted. In addition, landlords require several months' rent in advance. Household density among Syrians is increasing as a coping mechanism with the average household size increasing from 4.1 to 7.1 between March and August 2013. (UN-Habitat 2014/01/23, REACH/FCO 2013/11, [UNHCR/UNICEF/WFP 2014/01/08](#))

Annex A - Key background documents

- 2008 – WFP, Food Security in Poverty Pockets
<http://documents.wfp.org/stellent/groups/public/documents/ena/wfp204530.pdf>
- 2010 – Department of Statistics, Housing Income and Expenditure Survey
http://www.dos.gov.jo/dos_home_e/main/
- 2010 – Migration Information Source, Jordan: A Refugee Haven
<http://www.migrationinformation.org/feature/display.cfm?ID=794>
- 2012 - Department of Statistics, 2012 Yearbook
http://www.dos.gov.jo/dos_home_a/main/yearbook_2012.pdf
- 2011 – WHO, Jordan Health Systems Profile
<http://ajlunihm.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/07/Jordan-HSP-2010-Final.pdf>
- 2012 – Department of Statistics, Jordan Population and Family Health Survey
<http://www.measuredhs.com/pubs/pdf/PR32/PR32.pdf>
- 2012 – DoS/MoPIC/UNDP, Thinking Differently About the Poor
http://www.undp.org/content/dam/jordan/docs/Poverty/Jordan_Poverty%20Pocket%20Report.pdf
- 2013 – Department of Statistics, Population estimates
http://www.dos.gov.jo/dos_home_e/main/
- 2013 – World Bank, Jordan Economic Monitor
http://www.worldbank.org/content/dam/Worldbank/document/MNA/Jordan_EM_Spring_2013.pdf
- 2013 – UNDP/MoPIC, Needs Assessment Review of the Impact of the Syrian Crisis on Jordan
http://static.squarespace.com/static/522c2552e4b0d3c39ccd1e00/t/52c54f3de4b06a0555292dfa/1388662589575/Jordan%20Needs%20Assessment%20Review%20-%20FINAL_V2.pdf
- 2013 – UNICEF/WFP, Inter-Agency Nutrition Assessment
<http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/download.php?id=2744>
- 2013 – Human Rights Council, Jordan, Summary of the Joint Submissions to the UN Human Right Council for the UN Universal Periodic Review
<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/UPR/Pages/UPRMain.aspx>
- 2014 – UNHCR/UNICEF/WFP, Joint Assessment Review
<http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/JointAssessmentReview8Jan2014.pdf>