

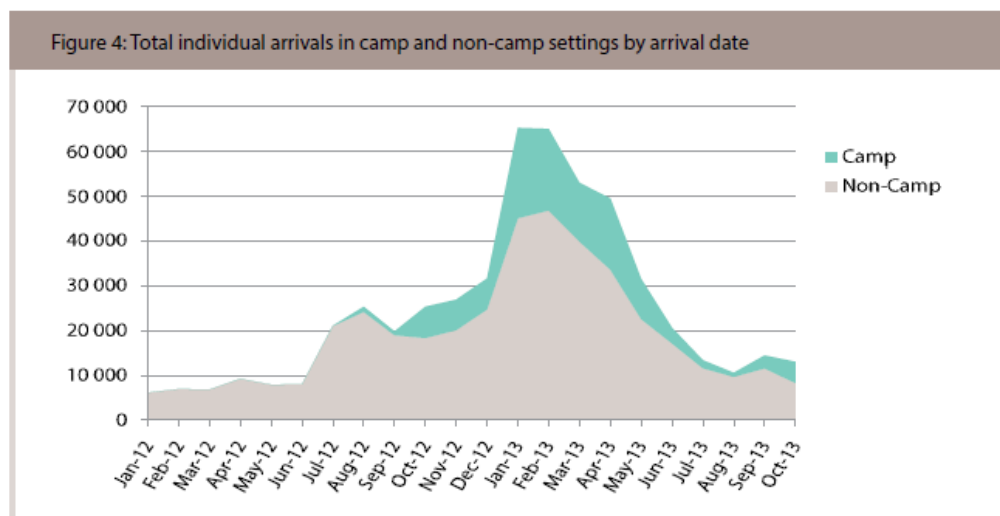
OUTSIDE THE CAMPS: THE STRUGGLE FACING SYRIAN REFUGEES IN JORDAN'S TOWNS AND CITIES

Media Summary

Three years after the start of Syria's conflict, the refugee crisis shows no signs of abating. Global attention has focused on the massive and expanding camps near Syria's borders: Jordan's Zaatari camp – home to 125,000 people – has become one of the most high-profile symbols of the war. Less known, however, is that Zaatari only represents a small portion of Syrian refugees living in Jordan: less than 20 per cent.

A landmark study by the UN Refugee Agency sheds new light on the hidden majority of Syrian refugees who have moved on from, or never lived in, Jordan's camps. "Syrian Refugees Living Outside Camps in Jordan" is the outcome of more than a year-long effort to assess their needs and provide help.

Over the course of 2012-2013, UNHCR and its longstanding partner International Relief and Development (IRD) conducted interviews with 92,000 households, putting together a compelling snapshot of their daily struggle to survive. They found a population of almost 450,000 people in growing difficulty, despite the outstanding generosity and significant support that Jordan has continued to offer them, including free public health and education. Half of the tens of thousands refugee families surveyed reported living in inadequate accommodation, facing rising rents, many struggling to pay the bills and facing educational challenges for their children. This summary highlights some of their key findings; the full report can be found at <http://rfg.ee/upYs5>



Source: UNHCR Refugee Registration database

1. Syrian Refugees in Jordan: In and Out of the Camps

As of 31 December 2013, almost 450,000 Syrian refugees were registered in Jordan outside UNHCR camps. By contrast there were 125,000 refugees registered in Zaatari camp. *Almost 80 per cent of all refugees in Syria live outside the formal camps, away from the international spotlight. Their needs must be addressed.*

Most are living in Jordan’s northwestern towns and cities, but a number have moved to more remote areas – a small number have opted to live in informal tented settlements, close to agricultural areas. The majority of Syrian refugees in Jordan come from three areas: Dara’a, Homs, and Damascus. Dara’a, in Syria’s south, has a large percentage of rural inhabitants, who work mainly in agriculture, trade and transportation. Most refugees tend to stay in one location, but there is nonetheless significant movement around the country as people look for work, or move closer to family and charity networks.

2. A Crisis in Rent and Accommodation

Of the 450,000 people living outside camps, 93 per cent live in apartments, and 91 per cent rent their homes. The remaining 7 per cent live in basements, self-made shelters, prefabs, tents and even mud houses. Most are concentrated around the major urban areas of the northwest, such as Amman and Irbid. Of those shelters, only 49 per cent were deemed adequate for habitation. *More than half of their dwellings were deemed by refugees to be substandard or worse.* Substandard could refer to an earthen entryway, narrow rooms, limited ventilation, mold, or an outside bathroom. Dwellings in severe state of disrepair, or posing a danger to inhabitants, were classed as ‘emergency’.

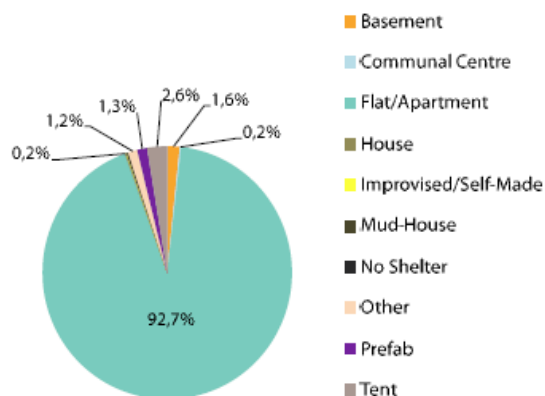


Figure 15: Types of shelter (2013)

Source: UNHCR /IRD Home Visits 2013

Refugee families reported that an average 60 per cent of expenditure goes on rent. They mentioned to UNHCR and IRD that the second largest expenditure is food, at 26 per cent. *Average rents for refugees are rising across the country, in some cases by more than 25 per cent for Syrians in some locations from 2012 to 2013.*

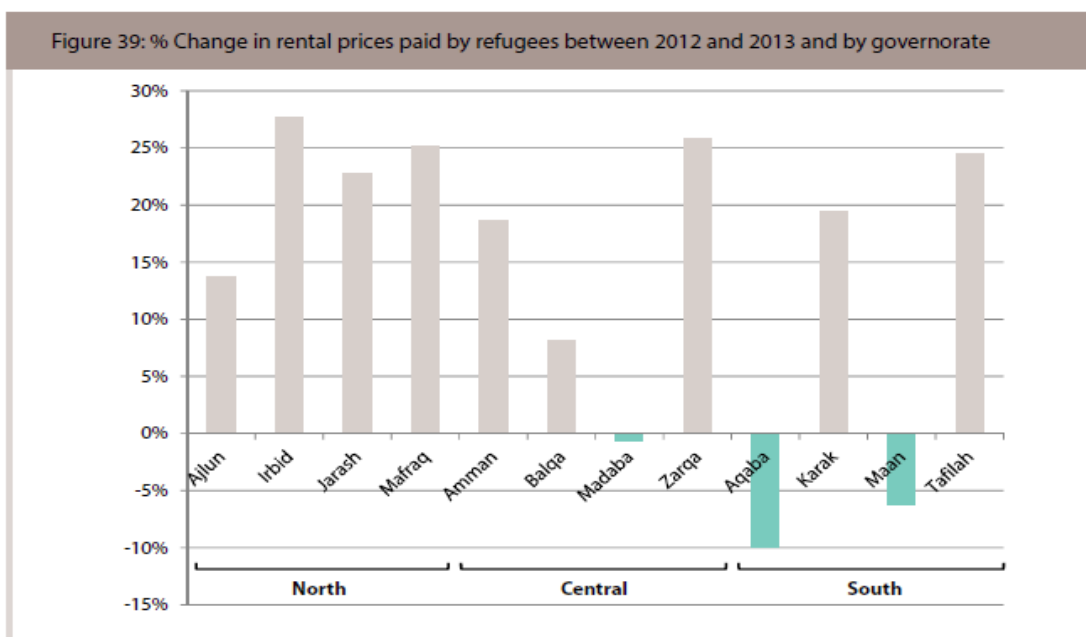


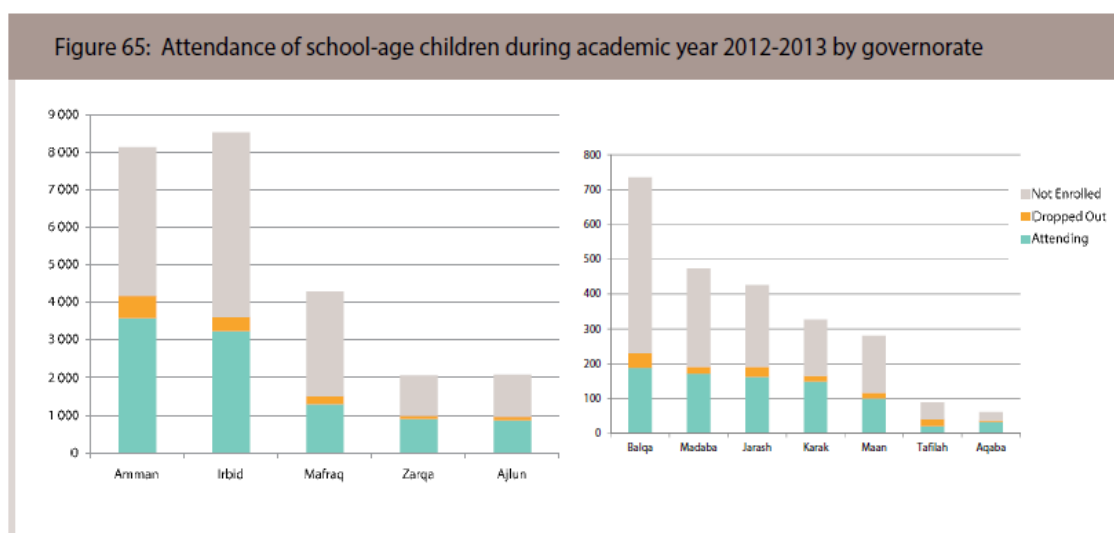
Figure 39: % Change in rental prices paid by refugees between 2012 and 2013 and by governorate

Source: UNHCR /IRD Home Visits 2012- 2013

3. Syria's Lost Education

Jordan offers free access to public education to all registered refugees. Despite this, home surveys indicated that *over half of Syrian school-age children in Jordan were not going to school* during the 2012-2013 academic year (September-June). Up to 5 per cent of children reported having dropped out.

UNHCR continues to investigate this issue in on-going home visits, but known reasons include bullying, challenges in adjusting to the Jordanian curriculum, inability to catch up after missing months or even years of schooling, children working to earn money for their families, and, not least, the exhausted capacities of the Jordanian public education system. *These trends are deeply worrying for the future of Syria and the region.*



Source: UNHCR /IRD Home Visits 2012-2013

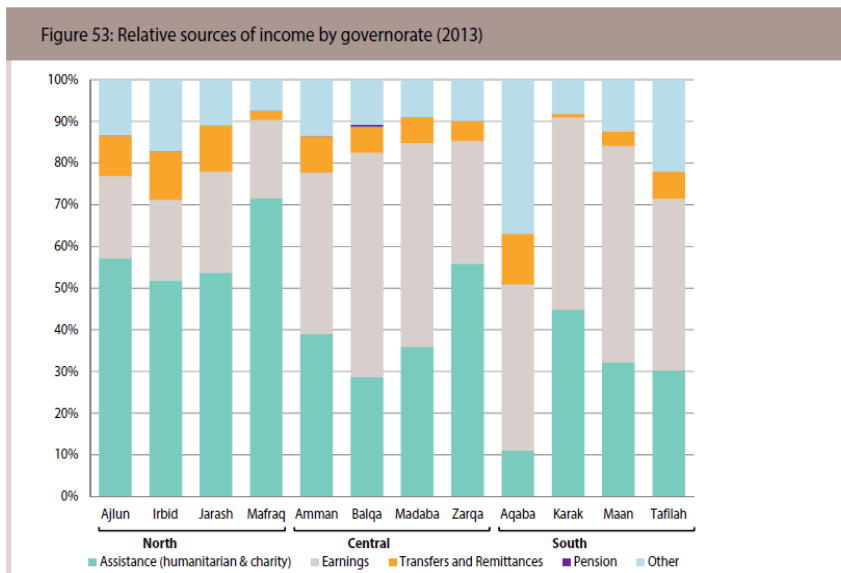
4. The Search for Adequate Water and Sanitation

Water and sanitation was deemed adequate by 84 and 87 per cent of refugees respectively. Nonetheless, 16 per cent reported faced substandard or worse water quality – having to buy water outside the house, or travel a distance to fill jerry cans. This situation varied between governorate, and *in particular in the south such as Karak, close to half (49%) of refugees had substandard water.*

5. Earning a Living

It is not easy for Syrian refugees to get work permits in Jordan. Nonetheless, a quarter of all refugee income from January-October 2013 came from earnings from work, and further income came from seasonal agricultural work in November and December. The amount of refugees working was highest in the capital Amman, where more than 30 per cent of households reported income from work.

A trend of increasing self-reliance is emerging. The total percentage of refugees reporting income from work increased from 28 per cent to 36 per cent between 2012 and 2013. By contrast, income from humanitarian assistance and charity decreased from 63 per cent to 49 per cent. The percentage of cases reporting receiving income from transfers and remittances and other sources also increased.



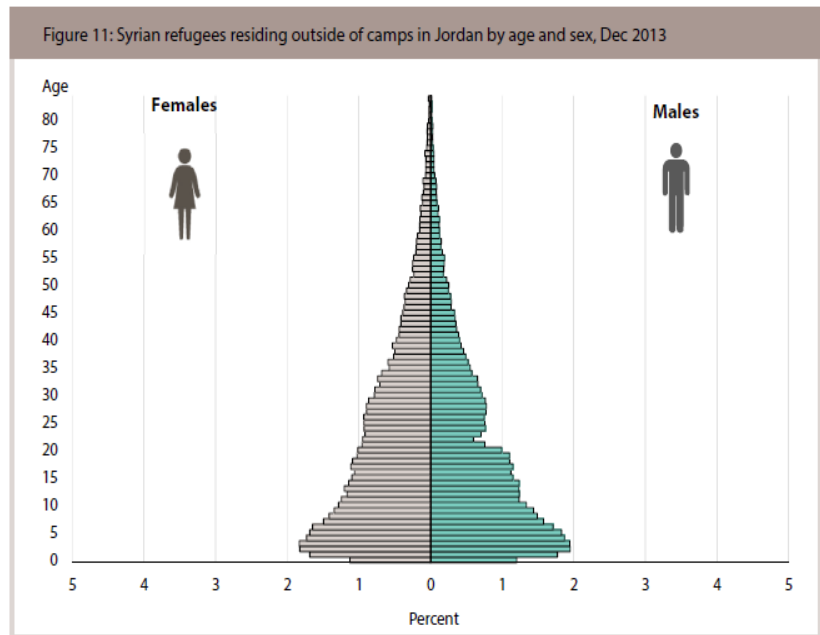
Source: UNHCR /IRD Home Visits 2013

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6. Syria's Separated Families

One-quarter of respondents surveyed in January-October 2013 classified their families as 'separated'. This was self-defined, reflecting individual assessments of the integrity of their families. The starting point for family separation was the *daftar al-'a'ila* [family book], which includes members of the nuclear family, but it also covered extended family members, and included temporary separation - with the intent of reuniting either in Jordan or in Syria.



Source: UNHCR Refugee Registration database

Refugee families in Jordan are younger than the Syrian norm. Children under 20 years old within the refugee population comprised 56 per cent of the population, compared with 46 per cent in Syria in 2010. The proportion of women is also increasing. Demographic analysis shows a relative dip in the number of men in their early 20s, possibly as they look for work elsewhere, or because they stayed behind in Syria. *Nearly one third of Syrian refugee families in Jordan with at least one child are headed by women.*