



children first.



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UNICEF JORDAN

Empowering Syrian Refugee Women

A REPORT PREPARED FOR DINING FOR WOMEN

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Program Summary

In February 2018, with generous funding from Dining for Women, UNICEF launched a livelihood empowerment program to benefit Syrian refugee women and their families in Jordan. The program addresses many of the challenges facing Syrian refugees by linking the empowerment and productive capacities of vulnerable women living in camps and host communities in Jordan with the need for a maternal and newborn health package of services. The program is composed of three main components: 1) youth and adolescent development; 2) livelihood opportunities; and 3) support for new mothers and their infants.

The program was launched right around the time that the Syrian civil war entered its 8th year. In the months since, the conflict has continued to cause widespread displacement, deepening the impact of the refugee crisis on neighbouring countries. Jordan, known historically as a nation of refuge in the Middle East, has contributed substantial assistance to Syrian refugees over the past six years. Today, Jordan has one of the world's largest numbers of refugees relative to its population and one of the highest densities of refugees relative to its territory. There are 657,000 Syrians officially registered as refugees, and nearly 50,000 vulnerable Syrians that remain at remote locations near Jordan's northeast desert border.

Since the start of the Syrian crisis, UNICEF has provided urgent humanitarian assistance to refugees in Jordan with special attention given to the most vulnerable children and their families. UNICEF operates in camps and host communities across Jordan with emergency response interventions that encompass health, nutrition, water, sanitation and hygiene, education, child protection, and social protection.

Syrian refugees in Jordan are generally younger than the pre-crisis population and have higher fertility rates. Each month, an average of 2,000 Syrian refugee children are born in Jordan. According to a recent health service assessment, many new Syrian mothers and their infants in Jordan lack access to appropriate maternal and newborn health care. Over half of all under-five deaths in Jordan occur in the neonatal period. The assessment suggests a strong need for an evidence-based maternal and newborn health service package that would include counselling on breastfeeding, essential newborn care at home, early detection and treatment of newborn infections and kits with supplies for mothers and their babies.



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The distribution by UNICEF and partners of lifesaving newborn kits to vulnerable families helps to ensure the best start to life for refugee newborns. This program addresses the above-mentioned challenges and opportunities by linking the empowerment and productive capacities of vulnerable women living in camps and host communities in Jordan with the need for a maternal and newborn health package of services.

The Impact of Your Support

Dining for Women's support has been instrumental in enhancing the resilience of refugees affected by the crisis and equipping women with the resources and opportunities to become the next generation of female leaders and entrepreneurs. Specifically, your contribution has ensured that 19 young women living in refugee camps are accessing income generating activities and opportunities to advance their economic empowerment. **The 19 program beneficiaries**

have helped produce 500 newborn kits in 2018 and will continue to work on the production of new kits in the months ahead.

Today, some of Jordan's world's most vulnerable women and children have access to meaningful opportunities, care and support. Below are the results from the past 6 months, which have been made possible with your support.

YOUTH AND ADOLESCENT SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

Young people in Jordan's refugee camps, especially young women, have limited access to opportunities that build employability skills. Once they complete school, they encounter challenges transitioning to safe and meaningful work or entrepreneurship opportunities. It is estimated that there are nearly 20,000 youth, ages 15-24 years, living in refugee camps. Many remain out of school and are not engaged in employment or skills training. Today, a generation of Syrian refugee youth is growing up in Jordan with very limited opportunities in terms of vocational training, higher education and an even more limited access to the labour market than the Jordanian youth. This is a generation at risk of losing everything if they are not provided with the opportunities to positively engage in their communities.

In recent years, UNICEF has scaled up youth integrated humanitarian interventions in camps and host communities. Those interventions have largely focused on skills building in market oriented technical and vocational training, technology skills and entrepreneurship as well as essential 21st century skills. In parallel to this, UNICEF is also providing increased opportunities for systematic and meaningful engagement for adolescents and youth in Jordan. However, many refugee youth, as well as affected Jordanian youth, remain highly vulnerable to economic instability, with potential deleterious effects on their wellbeing and futures.



Evidence shows that, given the opportunity, most refugees will work in any geographic location and in any field that provides them with a livelihood. Furthermore, access to safe and lawful work helps refugees contribute to the needs of their family, community and the country in which they reside. Allowing refugees access to employment and self-employment is beneficial to both refugees and their host countries. Well supervised programs with adequate job training can help refugees become an economic and social asset for their host countries.

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In 2018, UNICEF continued its partnership with the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) to prepare women to work in the production lines through vocational training programs targeting young men and women, building their skills and confidence, and providing a pathway to income-generating opportunities in both Za'atari and Azraq camps.

The program aimed at building the capacities of young people through a series of demand driven technical and vocational training. Since 2018, young people have had the opportunity to access the youth centers and attend the most appropriate courses based on their interests and skills. Young people accessed six-month training courses to ensure they have an in-depth understanding of the relevant technical areas, inclusive of support to get the youth better prepared for their transition to access employment both within and outside the camp.

LIVELIHOOD OPPORTUNITIES

Starting in 2017, UNICEF Jordan began to actively identify opportunities to more effectively engage young people in the production of supplies required for UNICEF programming. UNICEF investigated a model for producing its baby kits locally within the Za'atari camp, injecting cash into the local economy and helping refugees support refugees. This model would also empower the youth who produced the products through the productive use of their skills. The production line started with producing clothing kits for babies aged 0–3 months. To make the baby kits, the production lines began operating eight hours per day, five days per week.

With support from Dining for Women, UNICEF identified 19 vulnerable women aged 18 – 24 in refugee camps who were interested in employment opportunities. These 19 women were subsequently hired and trained to produce winter clothes, baby kits, vests and t-shirts used by NRC and UNICEF staff and volunteers throughout the camp. It is expected that 15-20 additional females will join the program and be part of the production line in the coming months.

As part of UNICEF's sustainable procurement strategy, UNICEF is procuring goods needed for program implementation through the youth centers production line. This gives youth the opportunity to learn and practice the skills acquired while also earning an income in a safe and supporting working environment. Through this approach, all 19 program beneficiaries have been engaged in the tailoring course, while having access to 21st century skills and mentoring and coaching support.¹



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The young graduates were then engaged in the production line and were able to produce 500 baby kits to be distributed to mothers of newborns in the camps. It is estimated that additional 1000 kits will be produced by end of 2018. The active participation of women in the production line reflects positively on the women themselves, as this is not only a key source of financial income for them, but also allows them to become active member of their communities and positive role models for other girls and young women.

This program has broadened economic opportunities for youth by strengthening linkages between youth skills-building and employment opportunities through partnership with the private sector. Efforts have also been made to accredit the trainings courses. NRC partnered with the Center for Accreditation and Quality Assurance Center (CAQA) to accredit the courses in the UNICEF-NRC youth supported centers, which helps to facilitate youth's access to livelihood opportunities in the Jordanian market.

IMPROVING MATERNAL AND NEWBORN HEALTH

Once the newborn kits were assembled by refugee women, they were distributed to other vulnerable Syrian refugee families living in settlements and host communities. Community health workers distribute the kits during counselling visits

¹ Young women engaged in the program are coached on core skills that have been identified using the four-dimensional learning model: 'Learning to Know' (Cognitive Dimension), 'Learning to Do' (Instrumental Dimension), 'Learning to Be' (Individual Dimension), and 'Learning to Live Together' (Social Dimension). The twelve core life skills are lifelong and they build on evidence that underlines the importance of skills acquisition from an early age. Furthermore, the twelve core life skills are acquired and sustained through all forms of learning in a systems approach that recognizes multiple pathways of learning, formal, non-formal and informal.

to new mothers in order to promote maternal and child health care. The distribution of these kits is integrated into routine antenatal and postnatal health services as part of a continuum of care.

To date, 500 babies have received these newborn kits, supporting their health and wellbeing.



The Way Forward

Support from Dining for Women has made a notable difference in the lives of vulnerable young women in Jordan and has helped leverage funding from other donors, including UNICEF's Next Generation, a group of young professionals who have committed their resources to supporting UNICEF's lifesaving working. Together, Dining for Women and NextGen have raised more than \$250,000 to support this project, exceeding original fundraising targets.

UNICEF will continue working towards strengthening the livelihood of mothers in both Za'atari and Azraq camps. It is expected that an additional 20 women will be working in the production lines in Za'atari and Azraq camps bringing total women engaging in this activity to 39. Those women along with other young people will produce an additional 1,000 newborn kits that will be distributed for new mothers in both camps.

On behalf of women and children in Jordan, thank you for your partnership. Your support is empowering vulnerable women in Jordan and allowing 500 babies to stay healthy and warm this winter.



Handmade outwear, hats, mittens, scarfs and socks ready to be assembled for the newborn kit. @UNICEF/Jordan

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The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) works in more than 190 countries and territories to put children first. UNICEF has helped save more children's lives than any other humanitarian organization by providing health care and immunizations, safe water and sanitation, nutrition, education, emergency relief and more. UNICEF USA supports UNICEF's work through fundraising, advocacy and education in the United States. Together, we are working toward the day when no children die from preventable causes and every child has a safe and healthy childhood. For more information, visit unicefusa.org.

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