

PROTECTION MONITORING REPORT

December 2018

Syrian Refugees in Jordan and the Rectification of Status Process: A foot in the door

INTRODUCTION

This report details the third set of findings by the ECHO-funded protection monitoring consortium¹ from 1 July to 31 October 2018. The objective of the monitoring exercise is to continuously collect data and track changes and trends in the protection space of urban Syrian refugees in Jordan². The quantitative data collected during this reporting period covers 6024 households (representing 29440 individuals) across 9 governorates³. The qualitative data covers 11 governorates through Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and case studies⁴. Finally, IMPACT undertook a quantitative survey of 407 households on the specific documentation-related barriers refugees face to accessing health and education services; particularly in light of the recent changes to healthcare policy in 2018⁵, and reported changes in the education sector⁶.

The report is divided into five chapters:

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1 The consortium is made up of the Danish Refugee Council (DRC), IMPACT, International Catholic Migration Commission (ICMC), INTERSOS, Mercy Corps, and Premiere Urgence Internationale (PUI)

2 This report follows two previous monitoring reports released in April 2018 and June 2018 respectively

3 Data was collected in the governorates of Amman, Ajloun, Balqa, Irbid, Jerash, Ma'an, Madaba, Mafraq, and Zarqa

4 Qualitative research was conducted in the same governorates as above, plus Karak and Tafilah

5 "Jordan: Step Forward, Step Back for Urban Refugees" (March 2018), Human Rights Watch, accessed at <https://www.hrw.org/news/2018/03/25/jordan-step-forward-step-back-urban-refugees>

6 These reports were made to the consortium through team members and beneficiaries.

THE RECTIFICATION OF STATUS PROCESS

On 4 March 2018, the Ministry of Interior (MoI) and UNHCR announced a Rectification of Status Process (RSP) to legalise the status of urban Syrian refugees living informally outside the camps. The process allows eligible refugees to acquire a valid Asylum Seeker's Certificate (ASC) and, following that, a Ministry of Interior Service Card (MoI card). On 16 October 2018, a few weeks after the initial period of the RSP ended, the process was extended for a further 6 months, until 31 March 2019. The consortium has been monitoring the RSP and developments surrounding the process through close engagement with both UNHCR and Syrian refugee beneficiaries.

By the time of publishing this report, a total of 22,111 refugees had been through the RSP, and were issued ASCs⁷. This represents approximately 3,000 ASCs issued during the reporting period. Compared to the previous two reporting periods, where 4,947 and 14,419 ASCs⁸ were issued respectively, this represents a relative decrease, reflective of the late stage of the RSP. In addition to this, in the months of October and November, 3000 and 2165 MoI cards, respectively, were issued by the government⁹.

Among the 29,440 individuals assessed by the consortium during this reporting period, the following civil and legal documents were reported to be missing:

- 3,365 MoI cards needed (new or renewal)
- 478 health certificates (needed to issue an MoI card)
- 6,469 proofs of identity
- 143 marriage certificates
- 233 bail-outs
- 228 birth certificates
- 278 birth verifications
- 257 paternal ratifications

Terms and Definitions

MoI card – GoJ issued card serving as proof of legal Jordanian residency in a specific district.

Bail-out – Joint GoJ-UNHCR issued document certifying a refugee has been granted legal permission to reside outside the camps and is sponsored by a Jordanian who will be held accountable for any illegal actions that may be undertaken by the sponsored refugee.

Birth certificate – Jordanian document issued to children born in Jordan and under the age of 1.

Birth verification – Jordanian document issued to children born in Jordan over the age of 1 and under 18.

Paternal ratification – Jordanian document issued to children born in Syria and under 18.

During the consortium's quantitative data collection, 4,964 households were asked specifically about their experience with the RSP. From this sample, 29% reported not having heard about the RSP, an almost 10% increase from the last reporting period. As with the last reporting period, those resident in Mafraq were least likely to have heard about the RSP. This increase may be explained by the duration of the project, the need to reach and assess those still uninformed about the RSP, and the continuing identification by the consortium of those most vulnerable and most in need but hardest to find and contact. It highlights the difficulties in knowing exactly how many people are still without documentation, and the need for continued support for the most vulnerable.

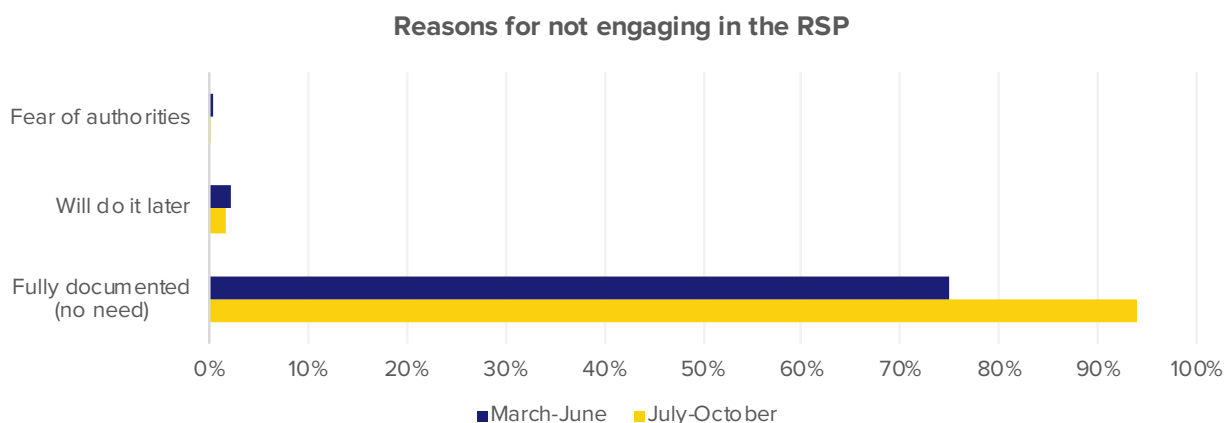
7 Figures presented by UNHCR at the consortium's End of Project event, December 11th 2018

8 Protection Working Group Meeting, August 2018

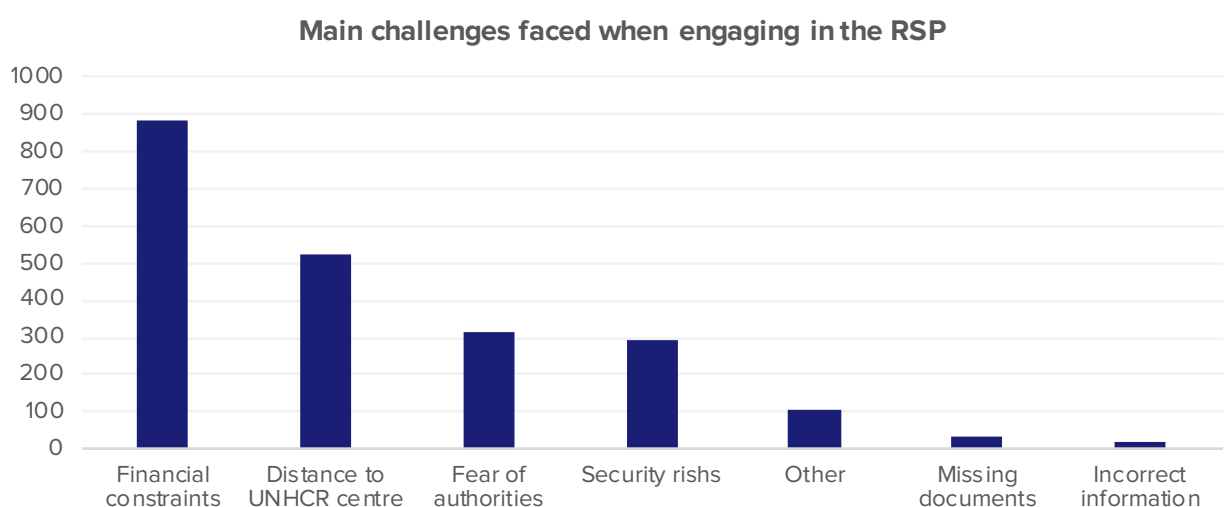
9 ibid

BARRIERS TO INCLUSION IN THE RSP

Among the beneficiaries who had not begun the process, 94% were already fully documented and had no outstanding documentation needs. Secondary reasons, such as fear of authorities, which had been significant barriers to starting the process during the last reporting period appear to have fallen to low levels. Fear of authorities is now only a factor for less than 0.1% of beneficiaries, with ineligibility (2.4%) and an expressed intention to do it later (1.6%) being more significant. This perhaps reflects the relatively late stage of the initial amnesty period, prior to the extension being announced in September 2018, where more people were attempting to complete the process, or had been notified of their ineligibility.



CHALLENGES FACED DURING THE RSP



Beneficiaries who had started the process were asked about their experiences in both the quantitative and qualitative data collection processes. For this group, the main challenges they faced were financial constraints, and distance to the UNHCR centre, continuing the trend from the last reporting period.

The fear of movement that was a significant element of people’s lives prior to being fully rectified was something that continued to be the case at the beginning of the process itself. Across the country, in FGDs, participants talked at length about the fears of being stopped and arrested on the way to UNHCR. Many recounted stories of friends or family members who had chosen not to participate for this reason. One man in the Ajloun FGD said he was arrested while going to UNHCR, and two women, also from Ajloun, said the same had happened to their husbands. Women in Madaba and Balqa said that they would often go to get appointments at UNHCR rather than their husbands as they were less at risk of being stopped by the police. One woman in Balqa even used a friend’s Mol card to go to a UNHCR centre to ensure her safety if she was stopped by police. Women in Mafraq noted that once they had heard of others successfully reaching the UNHCR offices, more people started to go. The role of women in engaging in interactions outside the house with officials is something that has been seen previously in Jordan¹⁰.

¹⁰ “Undocumented, Unseen, and at Risk: The Situation of Syrian Refugees Lacking Civil and Legal Documentation in Jordan” (September 2017), ICMC

31 households in the sample had a family member who had experienced arrest, detention or forced relocation in the last three months, the majority of these being in Amman (16 households). The most common reason for arrest was lack of documentation, both in Amman, and nationally. While relative to the size of the sample, this represents a very small amount of households, they remain vulnerable.

After fleeing from her home in Syria, Yasmeen arrived in Jordan in March 2016 and was registered in the Azraq refugee camp where she was added to her father's Asylum Seeker Certificate (ASC). After spending a year in the camp, Yasmeen met her now husband, Sami, while he was visiting a family member in the camp.

Sami, who is among the 80% of Syrian refugees who live outside of camps in Jordan, was issued his ASC and Ministry of Interior (Mol) card when he first arrived in Jordan back in 2012. However, so far he has not been able to add Yasmeen to his ASC, so she and their two children have been living between the camp and Amman. "After two years of going back and forth, I would love to settle in one place for a change," said Yasmeen.

Since the 25-year-old mother has been going back to the camp, she is considered ineligible for the Rectification process and hence cannot be added to her husband's ASC. After checking with the UNHCR and the authorities, Yasmeen's only hope to permanently move to Amman is if she gets approval for her reunification application. "I applied for reunification more than eight months ago, and even though we had an interview with the camp management we have never heard anything back," she added.

Sami has considered moving to the camp to be with his wife and children, however, he fears that he will not be able to find a job inside the camp and he needs his income as a construction worker and night guard to make ends meet and pay his debts. More than 70% of Syrian refugees in Jordan live under the poverty line and many rely on borrowing money to be able to cover their families' needs.

Yasmeen constantly worries about the future of her children, especially when her eldest girl, Sarah, needs to start going to school. If their situation continues as it is, then Sarah will not be able to stay in the camp, away from her family, to attend school, and would face barriers to enroll in school outside the camp as well; leaving her without an education. Until they find a solution that allows them to live together permanently, the young mother will have to go back to the camp every 30 days and request a new permit to leave again.

Another theme that recurred in FGDs across governorates in the central and south regions, and matches with the quantitative data, was the financial cost associated with transportation to UNHCR offices to participate in the RSP. The financial burden of travelling to UNHCR offices was noted especially in relation to travel to Amman. Many households in the south had to travel to Amman, at a high cost, despite the mobile registration schedule UNHCR put in place to deal with the case load in the south¹¹. In Ma'an, participants noted that many needed NGO cash assistance programs to cover the transportation cost. They mentioned that if they hadn't have had that, they wouldn't have engaged in with the process.

In most governorates, participants complained of long wait times and large crowds at UNHCR offices across the duration of the RSP. In Amman and Ma'an it was pointed out that this was especially hectic for children and the elderly. Slow responses and opaque decision making processes with regards to eligibility criteria were often cited by people who had yet to complete the process, including women in Karak who said that they knew of a number of people still pending a decision but with no clear reason why their cases were taking so long. In Zarqa, both men and women pointed to the disparity in wait times for relatively similar cases, some taking 1 month and others taking 5 months, and perceived this as dysfunction in the system. But the procedure itself was reported as "easy" by many. In Mafraq, male participants noted that the clear information given about the exact steps of the process saved them time, transport costs, and general tension. However, in Irbid, women were reportedly concerned about the number of supporting Syrian documents that were required by UNHCR, rather than just the Syrian Family Book.

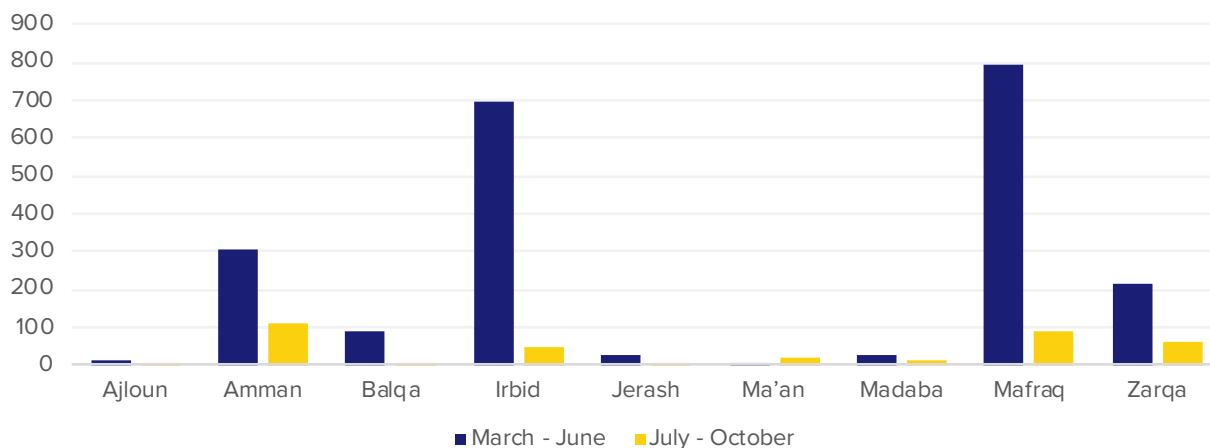
11 "Jordan Factsheet" (June 2018), UNHCR, accessed at <http://reporting.unhcr.org/sites/default/files/UNHCR%20Jordan%20Fact%20Sheet%20-%20June%202018.pdf>

Experiences at police stations when issuing the Mol card itself were generally positive, but varied between governorates. In Ma'an, participants talked about the supportive role of the police in helping them obtain both Mols and other civil and legal documents. Proof of residency was the most prominent issue refugees in the south were facing, and participants were asked to bring a Jordanian guarantor or landlord to the police station if they did not have a stamped lease contract, as providing a rent agreement is a requested condition for issuing Mol cards. Police officers in Ma'an helped them to obtain rent contracts or bring the owner as a witness. They were also very understanding and patient of refugees who needed time to get the documents they needed. In the central region, however, there were problems associated with supporting legal documents, with participants reporting that this was an added challenge. In some governorates there were issues surrounding staffing levels at certain police stations, sometimes with only one police officer working one day a week on issuing Mols. There were also reports of long delays due to broken printers and lack of toner cartridges, and other technical problems that lasted for months. In the south and in the north there were also reports that police stations were asking for Syrian documentation on top of the required ASC and Jordanian legal documents. This presented a challenge for many beneficiaries, whose documents were either lost or destroyed in Syria.

298 households (5%) reported being asked for money in exchange for assistance or services. For 87% of these households, money was requested for assistance with documentation procedures, and Amman, Mafraq, and Zarqa are the three governorates that make up approximately 75% of where these reported requests took place.

345 households (6%) reported having at least one family member who had experienced restrictions on their freedom of movement in the last three months, a substantial decrease from the last reporting period, where 35% of households had experienced restrictions. For this 6%, fear of movement due to lack of documentation continued to be the main reason for restrictions on movement, with 282 of these households (82%) stating this as the main fear. The main documents that these households were still missing were Mol cards (56%). Such overall sharp reductions in the number of people experiencing restrictions on their movement is reflected in qualitative data collected by the consortium through FGDs (discussed below), and are likely linked to the RSP.

Number of cases experiencing restrictions on freedom of movement, by governorate



BENEFITS AND SHORTCOMINGS OF THE RSP

The vast majority of beneficiaries who participated in FGDs conducted across 11 governorates were supportive of the RSP and had either completed the process or were still undertaking it. For participants across all governorates, and in line with the consortium's previous protection monitoring reports, freedom of movement was often cited as the main benefit of the RSP. Participants in FGDs across the country, but especially men, pointed out that they had to move a lot for work, sometimes across governorate borders, and that the increased freedom of movement afforded by the RSP was therefore very important to them. In Zarqa, Balqa, and Madaba, participants added that they were happy to be able to use public rather than expensive private transport. One man in Amman, who has not completed the process and has a daughter who suffers from serious health issues, is looking forward to official regularisation as travelling to and from the hospital currently opens up many dangers. In Zarqa, Balqa, and Madaba, participants spoke of being able to attend important life events such as weddings and funerals.



**it was a dream, because my uncle died
and I could go to his funeral.**

Man, Balqa

The other benefit that was noted by a majority of participants across all governorates was the increased feeling of safety and security that the RSP had brought them. In Amman and Ma'an, participants talked about a feeling of serenity and a sense of relief. In Karak and Tafilah, participants mentioned "being like all the others", in terms of feeling more at home and settled in Jordan. People from Ma'an said that the rectification process placed them under the perceived umbrella of UNHCR protection, guaranteeing their rights as refugees. This was reflected in the Endline survey for the project conducted by IMPACT. For this, a custom index measuring the Feeling of Safety and Dignity¹² of refugees was measured at baseline and endline, with a notable increase observed. Both improved freedom of movement, and a decrease of perceived disrespect from other societal groups were reported.

A major theme that came up in most governorates, and across genders, was a perceived link between the RSP and receiving assistance. This is something that was seen in the previous reporting period, but has deepened since then, and been augmented by an increasing sense of resentment and frustration. The RSP was often specifically linked to eligibility for UNHCR and WFP assistance, along with assistance provided by CBOs and CSOs. Winter cash assistance was also often cited as a specific expected benefit. While it is true that humanitarian assistance to Syrian refugees in urban areas requires proper registration and a valid ASC, many participants believed that an ASC would guarantee them assistance, rather than merely make them eligible for it. For instance, men in Karak and Tafilah thought they would immediately start receiving food coupons and cash assistance following the RSP. In Jerash and Ajloun there was an understanding more in line with the reality, where people spoke broadly about the RSP improving their chances of being registered with, and assisted by, humanitarian organisations, but for some the misinformation persisted. Rumour and personal stories often played a role in this misunderstanding. One man in Jerash directly linked the RSP to his receipt of winter cash assistance, and one woman from Amman also linked her recent cash assistance from UNHCR to the RSP. The general resentment expressed in the FGDs at the lack of commensurate services was palpable, with one woman in Irbid upset that after her family reunification case was accepted and she joined her husband, she was cut off from camp services but didn't receive any equivalent. Both men and women in Mafraq and Irbid said they were not receiving the assistance that is their "right" as refugees, and men in Irbid perceived a lack of fairness in who gets registered and receives assistance. Another woman from Irbid shared that there are people in Azraq camp who chose not to regularise because they have work permits and can get 14 days leave from the camp, which is better in their opinion.

In terms of broader benefits with regard to services, subsidised healthcare was seen as a specific expected benefit amongst participants in most governorates. Across many governorates, however, there was a recognition that the RSP would increase access to services, but not necessarily the ability to benefit from them. While one woman in Balqa noted that her children "have got free vaccinations now at the health center", others in Jerash and Ajloun pointed to the increased cost as a further barrier.



**health services and medication prices did
not differ before and after the amnesty**

Woman - Ajloun

In Ma'an, residents of Informal Tented Settlements (ITSs), who are often seasonal workers from other governorates, reported that as their place of residence on their MOI card is often a northern governorate, health clinics in Ma'an will not serve them. This is in line with government policy, but highlights a specific vulnerability faced by such workers. This is also something that was reported as being enforced more in the south than in the central and northern governorates.

Many participants also talked about the ability to apply for work permits, and believe that working conditions will improve, and exploitation of Syrian refugees will be more difficult now. Specific problems participants thought would be solved were an employer's abusive behavior or the withholding of salary.

¹² The Feeling of Safety and Dignity Index is a composite indicator based on four factors considered essential to a person's safety and dignity: freedom of movement, access to basic services, stability of household accommodation and feeling of respect.



we will have the right to file a complaint if we need to with an MOI card and a work permit

Woman – Zarqa

As in previous periods, some participants had believed that the RSP would lead more directly to formal work. However, many had come to realise that the current low availability of jobs is a problem in Jordan more broadly, that both Jordanians and non-Jordanians are facing.

Across all governorates, there was a significant amount of resentment at the lack of commensurate services and assistance following the RSP. In Amman, a less prominent view highlighted during the discussion was that if rectification will not be linked directly to humanitarian assistance, services or livelihood opportunities, it will be much better for refugees to stay in camps where services are available and the living cost is much lower. Again, this was in line with the findings of IMPACT during the Endline survey, where lack of access to basic services was one of the core areas in the Feeling of Safety and Dignity Index that saw a decrease across the entire project period¹³.

EXTENSION OF THE RSP

Awareness of the extension of the amnesty until 31 March 2019 was generally good across all governorates, although awareness was slightly less in the Balqa FGDs, and all male participants bar one in Karak were unaware of the extension. Often it was participants who had already been through the RSP for whom awareness of the extension was lower. There was also some confusion as to what the extension meant, with FGD participants in Amman believing the amnesty would be expanded to cover all camp-settled refugees.

Once it was discussed in the FGDs, all participants across all governorates expressed support for the extension of the amnesty, noting it would give people more time to engage in the process. Considering the many comments about the length of the process and remaining pending cases, this is understandable. In Irbid, both men and women talked about how police stations stopped issuing MOI cards as soon as the initial period finished and before the extension was announced¹⁴, and expressed their happiness that the issuance of cards had started again with the extension.

EXPANSION OF THE RSP

Many discussions focused on the positives of expanding the scope of the amnesty. There was unanimous support for the expansion to include groups previously ineligible under the current criteria. Participants in the central and northern regions talked about those who had left the camp after July 1st 2017, and across the country people mentioned cases where family reunification was an issue, especially in cases of early marriage. Female participants in Karak mentioned people who had been advised in the past by UNHCR to return to the camps because they were living irregularly in urban areas, suggesting that it was unfair that because of this advice they were now ineligible, and they should be given the option to reverse that decision.



One of the disadvantages of the amnesty is that it does not include all individuals and situations

Man – Ajloun

¹³ From December 2017 to December 2018

¹⁴ This was between the 28th September and the 16th of October 2018

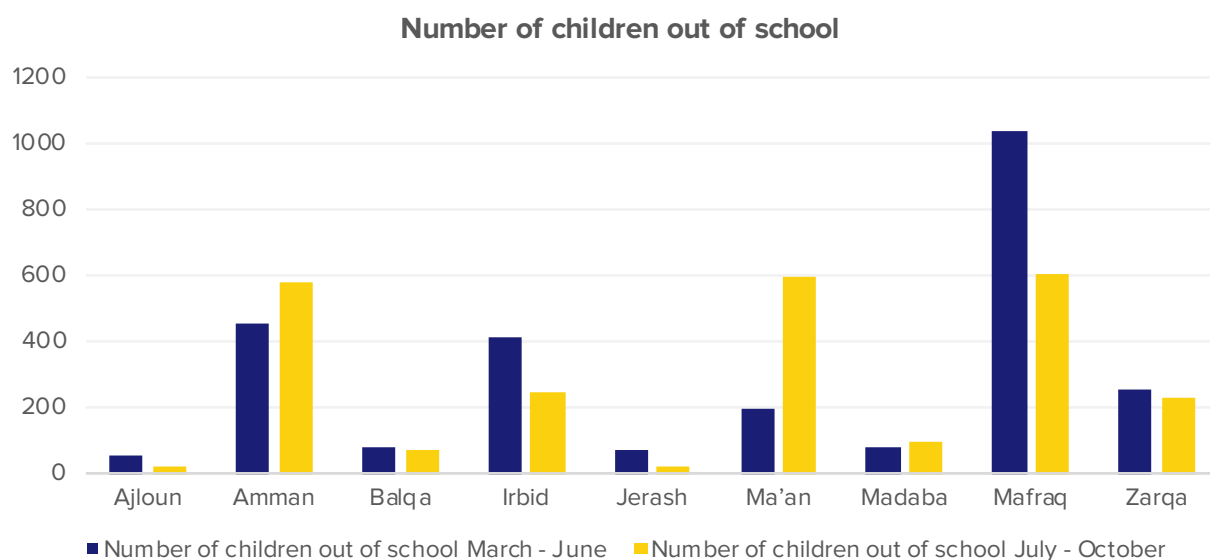
GENERAL PROTECTION FINDINGS

RENT

5,272 households (88%) are living in rented accommodation, and of these, 2,482 households (47%) did not have a written lease agreement, a reduction from the previous reporting period. 1,166 households (22%) were facing a threat of eviction, of whom 90% have rental arrears¹⁵. This represents a slight decrease in households facing a threat of eviction from the last report, but is still a significant number. This was once again reflected in the findings of the Endline survey conducted by IMPACT in relation to the Feeling of Safety and Dignity Index. Among households facing threat of eviction, 53% did not have a written lease agreement. The majority (78%) of eviction threats are verbal, with written notes of eviction occurring rarely (4%) for beneficiaries, and in Jordan broadly.

EDUCATION

The data on education was collected using the central methodology of the consortium assessments, alongside an independent phone survey conducted by IMPACT. For the main sample there were a total of 9,463 school-aged children, with an extra 684 children between the ages of 6 and 18 assessed by IMPACT¹⁶. In the main sample 2,472 (26%) were not in school, with the highest proportions in Mafraq, Ma'an, and Amman respectively. This represents an overall national decrease in children out of school from the previous reporting period¹⁷, although certain governorates, such as Amman and Ma'an, have seen a rise in the number of children out of school.



Education provides an example of how documentation is no longer as much of a barrier to accessing particular services as it once was. In FGDs, many people mentioned their newfound ability to enrol their children. Access to education was talked about by women more than men across all governorates, and a mother from Ma'an noted that she was happy to have recently registered her daughter in school after they obtained all their documents, after years of being refused by school management due to a lack of a valid ASC.

¹⁵ 58% of all assessed households had rental arrears.

¹⁶ Questions were always asked to the HoHH and do not reflect the opinions of the children themselves

¹⁷ This trend is opposite to that seen in Jordan previously, where school enrolment has been falling, and those out of school has been rising drastically over previous years. See: Carlier, W., "Kids Rights Report 2018" (March 2018), KidsRights Foundation, accessed at https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Background%20Report%202018%20-%20The%20Widening%20Educational%20Gap%20for%20Syrian%20Refugee%20Children_0.pdf

Basam is 11 years old. His mother, Suhair, is struggling to provide Basam with an education she knows he deserves. But she is determined.

At first, Basam was denied enrollment at the nearby public school because he did not have an MOI card. The process of obtaining the card is taking longer for Suhair and her family because her husband was previously arrested using a fake MOI card and deported back to Syria. Therefore the family is having to go through the SRAD clearance process. Undeterred, Suhair went to the Ministry of Education and finally got a letter of authorization for Basam to be enrolled in school. However, even when presenting the letter to the principal, the school rejected him once again, stating now that “they cannot accept Syrian children”.¹⁸

It has been nearly four years since Basam last went to school, and soon he will become “too old” to re-enter the system of formal education easily. There is no informal education program conducted in the area where he lives. Therefore, his mother spends part of her salary on private classes for him and keeps searching for a more affordable and long-term solution.

Even if Suhair can find a school for her son to join, she still feels extremely concerned about the violence she has heard Syrian children are exposed to at and around school; especially bullying, harassment and violence (including sexual violence). “I’m too afraid to let him go to a school that would be far away”, says Sohair. Basam is sad about not being able to attend “normal” school, as he wishes to, but feels grateful to his mother for getting him private classes that she can hardly afford to pay with the salary of a cleaner. But she is determined to give Basam his education.

For all children, whether they were attending school, not attending school, or those who had previously attended school but had stopped, the most cited issues they faced were financial constraints, and the distance to the school; this was reflected across governorates, genders, and across the main sample and the IMPACT study. This is also in line with the findings from the previous reporting period. IMPACT also found that, for currently enrolled students who worried about future enrolment, bullying by other students was mentioned by 5% of households, and physical and/or verbal abuse by staff by 1.6%. However, a lack of documentation (2.4%) or fear of documents being withheld by the school (0%) were not major causes of concerns for the future.

461 cases of child labour under the age of 18 were found in the main sample, 36% of which were under the 15 years of age. This is about the same as in the previous reporting period. Boys are much more likely to be engaged in child labour than girls, accounting for 86% of those under 18. Mafraq governorate had the highest proportion of child labour, followed by Amman.

236 cases of child marriage were identified, roughly the same as in the last reporting period, with 21% of those under the age of 15. Girls are much more likely to be married than boys, accounting for 95% of all child marriages under the age of 18. Again, Mafraq had the most reported cases of child marriage, followed by Amman. There were 62 cases of pregnancy among girls under the age of 18, 4 of whom were under the age of 15. None of these girls were reported as attending school. Additionally, there were a total of 79 cases of lactating girls between the ages of 15 and 17 (including pregnant girls), and 1 girl lactating under the age of 15. Only one of these girls, aged 16, was currently attending school.

¹⁸ This quote is representative of the interview with Suhair, and may not represent the precise words spoken by the school official. PUI, a partner in the consortium, has however seen a copy of the MoE authorization letter for Bilal to attend school

Solution

Samar can enrol her children in schools that help with cases like hers, however, the daily transportation fees to get her children to and from school would exceed JOD 10 (USD 7.5).



Samar and her three children fled to Jordan in 2014 after they lost their father and house in Syria.



Azraq camp

The family arrived to the Azraq camp and stayed there for three months.

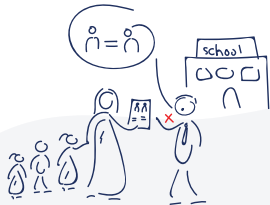


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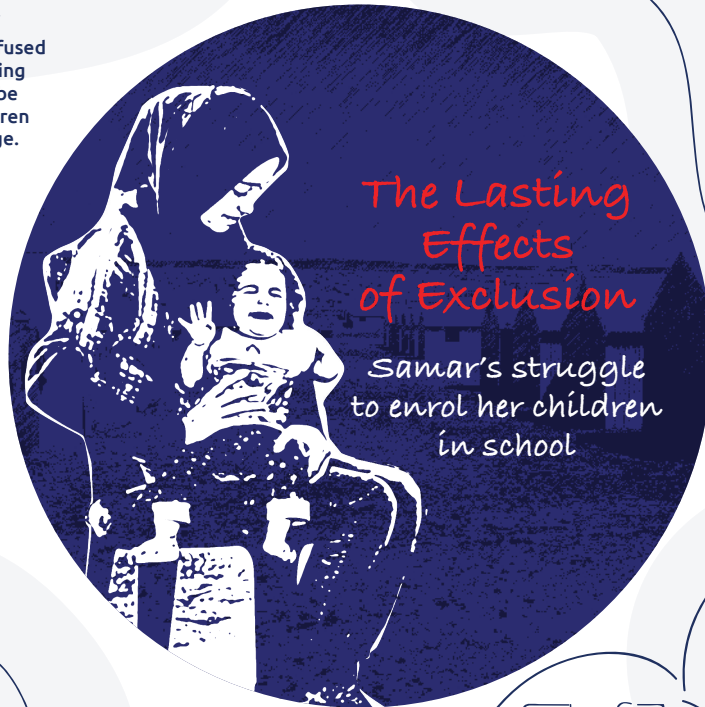
The Situation was bad. There were no bathrooms, no electricity and no water. I could not stay there for one more night. ”



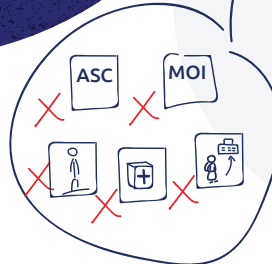
Due to horrible living circumstances, Samar decided to leave the camp and move to Amman.



Schools in Jordan refused her request, insisting that they should be enrolled with children from their own age.



Samar tried to enrol her youngest children in schools and wanted to register them both in the first grade.



After leaving their Asylum Seeker Certificate (ASC) in the camp and without a Ministry of Interior (MOI) card, Samar and her family were not able to move freely, access services, or even go to schools.

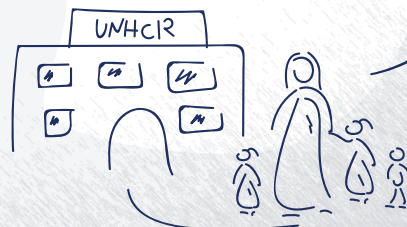


Having been excluded from the education system in Jordan for so long, Samar's youngest children, Noor (10) and Jawad (12), don't even know the basics, like the alphabet.



Samar and her children were among the lucky 20,000 families who were able to rectify their status.

To help undocumented Syrian refugees living outside of camps, UNHCR and the Ministry of Interior started the Rectification of Status Process in early 2018.

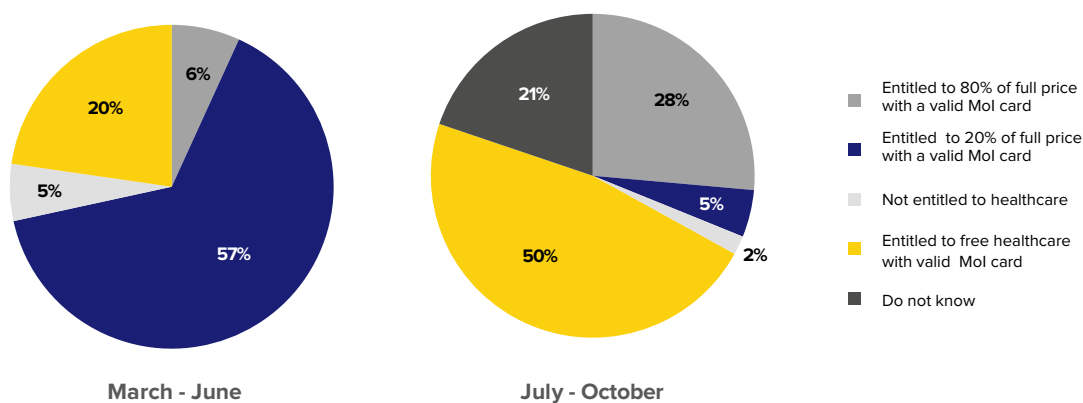


PROTECTION IMPLICATIONS IN THE HEALTH SECTOR LINKED TO DOCUMENTATION

On 26 January 2018 the Ministry of Health (MoH) issued new directives changing the healthcare entitlements for urban Syrian refugees. Refugees were previously able to access healthcare at MoH facilities for the same cost as uninsured Jordanians (20% of the foreigner rate); now, they are required to pay 80% of the foreigner rate. The consortium has continued monitoring the implications of this policy change, with independent data collection by IMPACT. For this survey, 407 households were contacted across 12 governorates.

During the last reporting period, beneficiary understanding of the health policy change was low, with 50% of respondents believing the Mol card would entitle them to free healthcare, and 21% not knowing what their healthcare entitlements were. Only 22% of respondents knew they would receive healthcare at 80% of the full price. In this reporting period, the level of unawareness remains, but has shifted focus. Now, 57% of respondents believe they are not entitled to healthcare at all (up from 2% in the previous report). A further 20% do not know what they are entitled to. Only 12% knew that they were entitled to healthcare at 80% of the full rate.

Understanding of the healthcare policy change



For those attempting to access healthcare services, the main barriers cited were financial, with the user fee noted by 97% of respondents, and transportation costs being noted by 32% of respondents. Lack of documentation was only mentioned by 1.2% of respondents as a barrier to access. However, 40 households, or 9.8% of respondents, reported having their newly acquired documents withheld by health facilities, with the majority of these (75%) being held at government hospitals, and the remaining 25% at private hospitals and clinics. Documents are held in lieu of payment, and 28 of these households (70%) said that the only way they have found to solve this is by paying the healthcare bill in full, while 9 households (23%) said that the issue remains unsolved and the hospital or health clinic are still holding their documents.

Bilal was born with Down Syndrome in Syria, and the war left no medical facilities that could help him. His condition was getting increasingly worse, and so his family decided to move to Jordan in search of safety and medical care. Once in Jordan, Bilal's conditions kept worsening, and he had difficulties in talking and breathing, and often acted restless. Bilal has a large family, and his parents face great financial challenges to provide for their children.

In order to support Bilal, his family started searching for medical options in Jordan. Some neighbors informed his father about a local center for disabled children that might accept Bilal, and also provide him with both medical assistance and some educational support. Bilal's father went to the center a few years ago and managed to enroll him. Thanks to this essential treatment, Bilal's health was finally under control and his family could see improvements in his condition.

Some time ago, however, during a medical visit at a local hospital, the family lost 3 MOI cards and Bilal's documents due to the crowds and hectic environment. The family did not have copies of the documents, and because of their difficult financial situation they were not able to afford the expenses linked to obtaining new MOI cards. Because of the lack of documentation the center refused to renew Bilal's enrollment, and he stopped receiving their services.

Thanks to the consortium documentation programme the family was assisted by INTERSOS with both financial support and legal advice and they managed to obtain new MOI cards for the family. But the situation in Jordan has changed since Bilal last sought treatment. With the new healthcare policy passed this year, the facility Bilal used to attend has started asking for 50JODs per month. The family is not able to afford this, and therefore Bilal hasn't been able to be properly and regularly treated for almost ten months. Even with documentation, Bilal cannot access the medical treatment he once had.

Households reported adopting a number of negative coping strategies that are jeopardising their health. 77% of respondents reported reducing their visits to hospitals or health clinics following the change in the health policy, while 30% of respondents had increased their debt, and 16% of households had stopped their health visits all together. In terms of medication, 22% were reducing their intake, 18% were choosing cheaper medicines, and 15% were resorting to self-medication. For pregnant women, of which there were 79 in the sample, 86% were reducing their ante-natal visits. 7 of these women were deciding not to go to a hospital or clinic for their birth, with 5 of them citing the costs of doing so, and only 1 citing a lack of documentation. 54 women in the sample had recently given birth, the majority (49 households) in either government hospitals or private clinics. Of those 49 women, 24% had had their documents withheld. Out of the 54 women who had recently given birth, 80% were intending to reduce the number of post-natal visits they would make.

As a result of the RSP, refugees who are fully documented are now able to access healthcare services in Jordan, in theory. However, as a result of the change in health policy, there is in reality a new and far greater financial barrier to taking advantage of healthcare services. The MOI card is able to get you through the door where previously you would have been turned away, but healthcare provision now requires that you be able to pay a high fee. Households are increasingly adopting various negative coping strategies to deal with the financial burden, but those who simply cannot afford the healthcare they need are often left with either worsening or untreated conditions, or are having their newly acquired documents withheld. With documents being kept by hospitals, there is a high risk that the situation of these refugees will become similar to what it was before the RSP, with limits on freedom of movement, reduced feelings of safety and security, and an inability to gain other material benefits such as work permits.

A VICIOUS CIRCLE

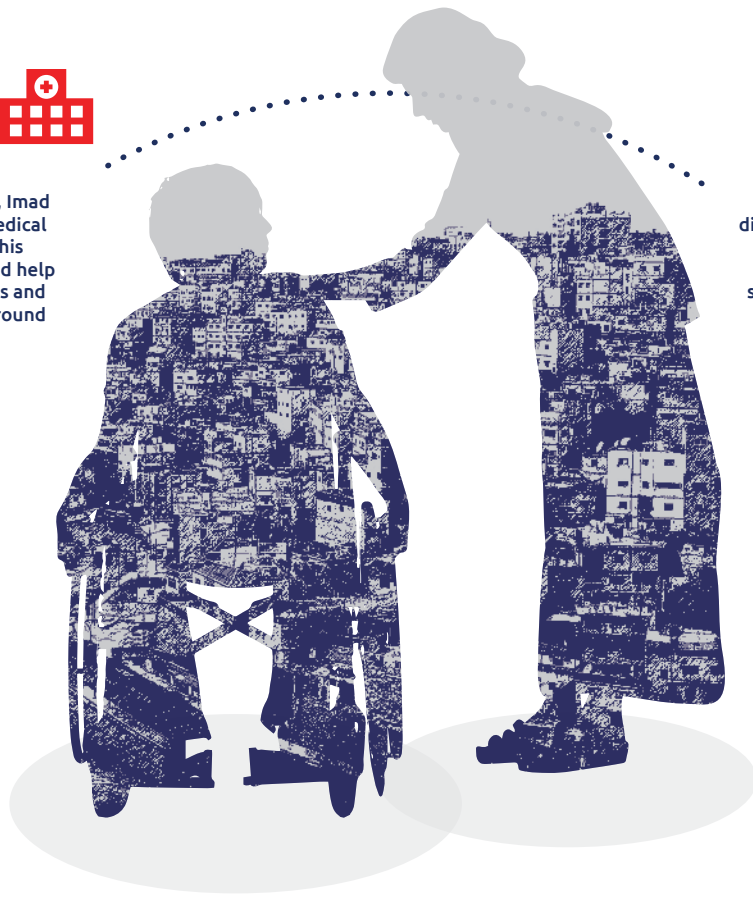
BARRIERS TO DOCUMENTATION FOR THOSE WITH DISABILITIES



Without an MOI card, Imad cannot access the medical help he needs for his condition, which would help relieve the symptoms and allow him to move around more freely.



30 year old Imad was diagnosed with cerebral palsy when he was a child and suffers from epileptic seizures. Due to his disease, Imad's behaviour is often unpredictable and violent.



To issue the Ministry of Interior (MOI) Card, Imad's mother needs to take her son to the local police station. However, she is worried she will not be able to take him on her own because of his violent behaviour.

“ There are no alternatives, Imad has to be present according to the police. ”



Both Imad and his mother are housebound, but because UNHCR dispatches teams to help those with disabilities they both have a valid Asylum Seeker Certificate (ASC).



After her daughter and other son left the house, Imad's mother is the sole caretaker of her son. Since she has a chronic heart problem, she cannot work to provide for her son.

CONCLUSION

The Regularisation of Status Process began with the intention of addressing the often dire situation of Syrian refugees living in urban areas in Jordan, with the expected outcome of a tangible improvement in the everyday lives of refugees. In many ways, the RSP has been a success in this respect. Refugees report feeling safer, more secure, and more dignified in their daily lives. They report an end to restrictions on their freedom of movement, allowing them to travel, learn, work, and engage in the types of key life events such as births, weddings, funerals, and other celebrations that are important to them. The RSP has given Syrians greater confidence in asserting their rights in the work place, and as refugees. With more formal documentation, children who previously had no record of their existence can now begin engaging in many aspects of society that were closed to them before, with school enrolment noted by many as specific positive outcome. Marriages can be registered, and previously separated families are enjoying the benefits of reunification. Syrians are now also able to access health services, and apply for work permits.

However, documentation can only be considered a foot in the door. There are a number of hurdles that refugees still face, which documentation can only begin to address and cannot be considered as a panacea. These are struggles that both Syrians and Jordanians currently face in Jordan, such as the availability of safe and dignified employment, and affordable rent. Healthcare remains a particular challenge for many Syrians, with the change in policy announced earlier this year by the government, essentially mitigating many of the expected benefits with regards to refugee's use of healthcare services. Now, while refugees can access health services with their newly acquired documents, without the ability to pay, health services remain either out of reach for many, or come with the threat of having documentation held in lieu of payment. Without documentation, even those who have gone through the RSP may find there is a high risk that their situation will become similar to what it was before the RSP. Syrians, as a particularly vulnerable population in Jordan, feel these challenges more acutely, and are more at risk of engaging in negative coping mechanism as a result. More research needs to be conducted into the exact situation of Syrian refugees after the RSP, with more detailed programmatic recommendations resulting from this. Ultimately, documentation provides the opportunity, but not the resources needed to improve the material situation of Syrian refugees in urban areas in Jordan.

RECOMMENDATIONS

As a protection consortium focused on the documentation needs of Syrian refugees living in urban areas of Jordan, the recommendations from this report have focused specifically on the RSP itself, alongside broader suggestions for future programmatic focus that the research has highlighted in relation to protection, rather than specific programmatic ideas. There is a continued need for all responsible actors in Jordan to:

- **Increase** the procedural awareness and visibility of processes amongst all actors involved with the RSP, including but not limited to: NGOs, UNHCR, ministries, and local authorities.
- **Increase** the awareness of material benefits of the RSP amongst Syrian refugees, to ensure that they are fully aware of what they are, and are not, entitled to following regularisation.
- **Expand** the eligibility criteria for the RSP, including but not limited to extending the cut-off date to those who left the camps after July 1st 2017, and cases of families split between the camps and urban areas.
- **Address** the continuing necessity of civil and legal documentation associated with everyday life (birth, marriage divorce, and death certificates, and MOI renewal), recognising the hurdles in accessing certain documents, including their cost, the length of the process, their interconnected nature, and the opacity of their procedure; with specific attention on the right to proof of existence provided by birth certificates, and the fines associated with marriage certificates.
- **Tackle** the barriers impeding refugees' access to healthcare services, including the threat of having documents withheld in lieu of payment.
- **Increase** legal and dignified income generating opportunities for Syrian refugees in Jordan as a means to secure decent housing and to prevent negative coping strategies, which are only partially addressed through access to documentation.

METHODOLOGY

This report is made up of 5 distinct methodological components:

- Between 1st July 2018 and 31st October 2018, consortium partners collected quantitative data using a household level survey via the Consortium Assessment Tool¹⁹. 6,024 households across 9 Jordanian governorates were surveyed.
- During October 2018, consortium partners also conducted 22 Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) across 11 governorates. The FGDs typically had 10-15 participants, were split by gender, and focused specifically on experiences of the Rectification of Status Process
- During October 2018, consortium partners compiled in depth case studies on the RSP, people with disabilities, and education, using anonymised information from the case management component of the wider consortium project
- During October 2018, IMPACT conducted a phone survey of 407 households across 12 governorates, asking questions focused specifically on documentation issues within the healthcare and education sectors
- During November 2018, IMPACT conducted an Endline survey for the consortium, measuring the impact of the project. This survey included 774 households, as well as 348 extra households that specifically received cash assistance from the consortium, and was used to augment and reinforce key findings of the main data collection methods.

All data was triangulated with published materials by other NGOs, and builds upon data collected by the two previous ECHO-funded consortiums. The sample size for this report, and split between governorates, is not representative, but can be considered an indication of the protection situation on the ground in Jordan.

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¹⁹ The CAT is an adaptation of the Vulnerability Assessment Framework



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IMPACT Shaping practices
influencing policies
impacting lives

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