



Jordan Country Report:

Children & Security

The Roméo Dallaire Child Soldiers Initiative

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I. BACKGROUND

Map of Jordan¹



¹ Central Intelligence Agency, 'The World Factbook: Jordan', available <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/jo.html> accessed 26 January 2017.



Impact of Conflict on Children

Ongoing conflict in the region and recent involvement in the fight against the Islamic State and the Levant (ISIL) has impacted the security situation in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. Today, Jordan is facing increasing insecurity along and within its border.

The spillover from conflicts in neighbouring Syria and Iraq has had a major impact on Jordanian society. The ongoing crisis in the region and influx of refugees to Jordan have continued to strain the provision of public services, with children and women being the most affected. As of November 2016, there were over 726,000 registered refugees in Jordan.² Among them are refugees from Syria, Iraq, Yemen, Sudan and Somalia, with numbers growing.³ The majority of refugees are from Syria (655,675) and at least half are children.⁴ The Government of Jordan contends that it is host to about 1.4 million Syrians, including refugees.⁵ An additional 60,647 Iraqis are registered with the United Nations (UN) High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Jordan, over a third of whom are children.⁶ The influx of refugees to Jordan has been increasing yearly and has led Jordanian authorities to limit new refugee arrivals.⁷

Meeting the growing humanitarian needs is becoming increasingly challenging, with Jordanian officials indicating that the country has received insufficient international aid to cope with the influx of refugees.⁸ Nearly one in three – 226,000 out of 660,000 – Syrians registered with UNHCR in Jordan are school-aged children between 5-17 years old.⁹ It is estimated that one third of refugee children (80,000) in Jordan did

² UNHCR, 'Jordan: UNHCR Operational Update' (December 2016), <http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/UNHCR%20Jordan%20Operational%20Update%20December%202016%20FINAL.pdf> accessed 26 January 2017 ('UNHCR Operational Update'), p. 2.

³ UNHCR Operational Update, p. 5.

⁴ See 3RP, 'Syria Regional Refugee Response: Interagency Information Sharing Portal (19 January 2017) <http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/regional.php> accessed 26 January 2017.

⁵ Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation, 'Jordan Response Plan for the Syria Crisis 2016-2018' (14 January 2016), available http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/JRP16_18_Document-final%2Bdraft.pdf accessed 26 January 2017, p. 14.

⁶ UNHCR Operational Update, p. 1.

⁷ Human Rights Watch, 'World Report 2017: Events of 2016' (2017) ('2017 Human Rights Watch Report'), p. 367; Human Rights Watch, 'World Report 2016: Events of 2015' (2016) ('2016 Human Rights Watch Report'), p. 339.

⁸ 2017 Human Rights Watch Report, p. 367; UNICEF, 'Annual Report 2015: Jordan', available https://www.unicef.org/about/annualreport/files/Jordan_2015_COAR.pdf accessed 26 January 2017, p. 1.

⁹ Human Rights Watch, "'We're Afraid for Their Future': Barriers to Education for Syrian Refugee Children in Jordan' (16 August 2016), <https://www.hrw.org/report/2016/08/16/were-afraid-their-future/barriers-education-syrian-refugee-children-jordan> accessed 26 January 2017 ('HRW Barriers to Education').



not receive formal education in 2015.¹⁰ Refugee children in Jordan are susceptible to sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), child marriage, recruitment and use of children, and trafficking. They are also susceptible to malnutrition, poor sanitation and diseases.

II. SECURITY SITUATION

1. Context

Jordan faces insecurity within and along its borders and is surrounded and impacted by conflicts in neighbouring countries. Between 1948-1949 and 1967-1968, Jordan was involved in wars with neighbouring Israel. In the first Arab-Israeli War, Jordan occupied the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. Almost twenty years later in the Six Day War, Israeli forces defeated Jordan and its allies, recapturing the West Bank and East Jerusalem.¹¹ Jordan and Israel later signed a peace treaty in the 1990s, eliminating security threats on Jordan's western border. Today, Jordan hosts more than two million Palestinian refugees and 10 official refugee camps.¹²

Jordan has also played a role in more recent conflicts in Libya, Yemen, Iraq, and most notably in Syria. Jordan joined the Saudi Arabia-led coalition that launched airstrikes and other military action against Houthi forces in Yemen and continues to participate in US-led attacks against ISIL and other armed groups in Iraq and Syria.¹³

Jordan has witnessed increased violence within its borders as a result of its participation in actions against ISIL. ISIL, for instance, has targeted Jordanian civilians and military outposts and personnel. On 21 June 2016, ISIL attacked and killed Jordanian soldiers in Rukban in northeastern Jordan. In response, the government temporarily closed its northern border with Syria, preventing refugees in a desolate area along the border area between Jordan and Syria – known as the Berm – from entering the country.¹⁴ At least

¹⁰ HRW Barriers to Education.

¹¹ US Department of State Office of the Historian, 'The 1967 Arab-Israeli War', <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1961-1968/arab-israeli-war-1967> accessed 26 January 2017.

¹² UNRWA, 'Where we work: Jordan' (1 December 2015), available <https://www.unrwa.org/where-we-work/jordan> accessed 26 January 2017.

¹³ 2016 Human Rights Watch Report, p. 343.

¹⁴ See Amnesty International, 'Syria-Jordan border: 75,000 refugees trapped in desert no man's land in dire conditions' (15 September 2016), <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2016/09/syria-jordan-border-75000-refugees-trapped-in-desert-no-mans-land-in-dire-conditions/> accessed 26 January 2017. See also UNICEF, 'Syria Crisis: September



seven Jordanian troops were killed and more than 13 wounded.¹⁵ In October, the refugee camp on the border was attacked killing three people and injuring at least 20.¹⁶ ISIL struck again in December 2016 in the southern Jordanian city of Karak (a city 120 kilometres south of Amman), killing 10 people, including seven Jordanian security officers, a Canadian female tourist and two Jordanian civilians.¹⁷ In January 2017, a car bomb blast killed at least seven civilians at a camp for displaced Syrians by the border with Jordan. Further, the smuggling of ammunition and other materiel from Syria is notably on the rise.

2. State, Non-State, and International Actors

a) Government Forces

The Jordanian Armed Forces (JAF) consists of the Jordan Arab Army, the Royal Air Force, and the Royal Coast Guard.¹⁸ The JAF stood at approximately 88,000 active personnel as of November 2016.¹⁹ Jordan's Public Security Force includes approximately 25,000 personnel. Jordan has also a Civil Defence Brigade and a coastguard patrol.²⁰

From the start of the Syrian conflict in 2012, the relations between Jordan and Syria became strained as Jordanian forces clashed with Syrian forces along the border. On 26 May 2014, Jordan expelled the Syrian ambassador.²¹ Jordan joined the coalition against ISIL in September 2014, and since 2015 has been subject to ISIL attacks. In early 2015, ISIL burned alive a captured Jordanian pilot, to which Jordan responded with,

2016 Humanitarian Results' (30 September 2016), available http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/UNICEF%20Syria%20Crisis%20Situation%20Report_September%202016.pdf accessed 26 January 2017, p. 2.

¹⁵ Al-Jazeera, 'ISIL claims responsibility for Jordan border attack' (27 June 2016), available <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2016/06/isil-claims-responsibility-jordan-border-attack-160627044348399.html> accessed 26 January 2017.

¹⁶ The Jordan Times, 'Suicide bomber kills three near Syria-Jordan border' (16 October 2016), available <http://www.jordantimes.com/news/local/suicide-bomber-kills-three-near-syria-jordan-border> accessed 26 January 2017.

¹⁷ Rana F. Sweis, 'ISIS Is Said to Claim Responsibility for Deadly Attack in Jordan' (The New York Times, 20 December 2016), <http://www.nytimes.com/2016/12/20/world/middleeast/jordan-attack-isis-karak.html> accessed 26 January 2017.

¹⁸ The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, 'Government: The Armed Forces', available <http://www.kinghussein.gov.jo/government5.html> accessed 26 January 2017 ('Jordan Armed Forces').

¹⁹ Jordan Armed Forces.

²⁰ Jordan Armed Forces.

²¹ Areej Abuqudairi, 'Jordan expels Syria ambassador for "insults"' (Al-Jazeera, 26 May 2014), available <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2014/05/jordan-expels-offensive-syrian-ambassador-201452612936528650.html> accessed 26 January 2017.



inter alia, airstrikes that hit 56 targets.²² The JAF has been a strong supporter and participant of several UN peacekeeping missions and it ranks among the leading troop contributing forces partaking in UN missions.²³

b) Other Armed Groups (Non-State Actors)

Islamic State of Iraq and Levant (ISIL)

ISIL is a designated terrorist organisation responsible for grave violations against civilians. First established by Abu Musab al-Zarqawi in 2004 in Iraq, ISIL was initially linked to al-Qaeda and known as al-Qaeda in Iraq. Following the death of al-Zarqawi in June 2006, the group merged with a number of other radical groups and rebranded itself as the Islamic State in Iraq. It became widely known for igniting a sectarian war with Iraq's Shi'ite community and for its use of particularly brutal tactics. In 2011, ISIL helped found Jabhat al-Nusra, marking its first entry into the Syrian conflict. After a falling-out between the two groups in April 2013, ISIL commenced its own operations in Syria, rebranding itself in the process as the Islamic State in Iraq and al-Sham.²⁴ On 29 June 2014, two weeks after capturing Mosul, Iraq's second city, ISIL declared the creation of a caliphate over the Muslim world and renamed itself as 'the Islamic State' in recognition of its global ambitions.²⁵

ISIL has actively promoted its brutality through publications, photographs, video footage, and social media, in an attempt to consolidate its authority, attract recruits, and threaten those that challenge its ideology.²⁶ ISIL is listed by the UN Secretary-General for its recruitment and use of children.²⁷ It has reportedly

²² Al-Jazeera, 'Jordan says it has bombed ISIL 56 times in three days' (8 February 2015), available <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2015/02/jordan-bombed-isil-56-times-days-150208133049169.html> accessed 26 January 2017.

²³ The Permanent Mission of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan to the United Nations, 'United Nations Peacekeeping', available <http://www.missionjordanun.org/un-peacekeeping.html> accessed 26 January 2017.

²⁴ Cole Bunzel, 'From Paper State to Caliphate: The Ideology of the Islamic State' (Brookings, March 2015), available <https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/The-ideology-of-the-Islamic-State.pdf> accessed 26 January 2017 ('From Paper State to Caliphate'), pp. 25–26.

²⁵ From Paper State to Caliphate, p. 31.

²⁶ United Nations Human Rights Council, 'Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic, Rule of Terror: Living under ISIL in Syria', UN Doc. A/HRC/27/CRP.3 (19 November 2014) ('Rule of Terror'), paras. 2–3.

²⁷ United Nations Security Council, 'Children and Armed Conflict: report of the Secretary-General', UN Doc. S/2016/360 (20 April 2016), para. 150, Annex I.



recruited and trained children as young as six and has extensively used young people in both support and combat roles, including suicide bombing missions.²⁸

The ongoing actions of ISIL in Syria has continued to have further impact on the security situation in Jordan, including the insecurity and killings on the border, as well as other cities in Jordan, and blocking of humanitarian aid.²⁹ ISIL has also claimed responsibility for a number of attacks within Jordan and along its border. For instance, in June 2016, ISIL claimed responsibility for a car bomb suicide attack on the Jordanian border with Syria which killed seven Jordanian troops and wounded 13, as well as an attack on a popular tourist area in December 2016.

Free Syrian Army (FSA) and Affiliated Groups

The FSA, formed in summer 2011 in the early months of the resistance, is now more of an umbrella label incorporating various nationalist and secular groups.³⁰ In December 2012, these groups formed the Supreme Military Council (SMC) to serve as a central coordinating structure for more moderate armed groups. The SMC, however, has struggled to unite the various groups under its authority, which included more than 70 factions as of November 2014.³¹ Competition among the various armed factions for external support and weaponry has further fragmented the opposition.³² The opposition movement has thus been characterised by shifting alliances and considerable infighting among its members, significantly hampering its overall military effectiveness.³³ Gradually, as of late 2012, the FSA was squeezed between regime forces, Al-Nusra Front, numerous factions and formations that were fighting the Syrian Armed Forces on the ground, and (as of summer 2014) ISIL. These developments significantly weakened the moderate elements and less radical

²⁸ United Nations Security Council, 'Report of the Secretary-General on children and armed conflict in Iraq', UN Doc. S/2015/852 (9 November 2015), para. 33; United Nations Human Rights Council, 'Report of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic', UN Doc. A/HRC/30/48 (13 August 2015), para. 75.

²⁹ See United Nations Security Council, 'Report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of Security Council resolutions 2139 (2014), 2165 (2014) and 2191 (2014)', UN Doc. S/2015/468 (23 June 2015), para. 38.

³⁰ Charles Lister and William McCants, 'The Syrian Civil War: Political and Military State of Play' (War on the Rocks, 18 February 2014), available <http://www.brookings.edu/research/articles/2014/02/18-syrian-civil-war-lister-mccants> accessed 26 January 2017, ('Political and Military State of Play').

³¹ Anthony H. Cordesman, 'The Islamic State War: No Clear U.S. Strategy' (Center for Strategic & International Studies, 10 November 2014), available <https://www.csis.org/analysis/islamic-state-war-no-clear-us-strategy> accessed 26 January 2017.

³² Dynamic Stalemate, p. 5.

³³ See Al Monitor, 'Syria dissent groups still not united' (5 March 2015), available <http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/security/2015/03/syria-southern-front-differences.html> accessed 26 January 2017.



components of the opposition. The FSA has been involved in the Daraa province (bordering Jordan) since April 2011. Starting with smaller attacks, FSA managed to seize several important areas in the province.³⁴

The FSA is associated with a number of armed groups, including the Southern Front, established in early 2014 to consolidate the command structure and military operations of 49 southern opposition brigades attempting to overthrow the Assad Regime.³⁵ A self-described moderate opposition group, it is reported to use guerrilla tactics to combat the Syrian army.³⁶ Although association between the FSA and Southern Front is reported, the Southern Front maintains its own command structure and does not take orders from the FSA. The Southern Front has reportedly received funding from Jordan as well as the United States (US), United Kingdom (UK), Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates.³⁷ The Syrian-based Army of Free Tribes, reportedly backed by Jordan, has allegedly supported the Southern Front in fighting around Daraa's Sanamayn.

c) Regional Actors and International Actors

Jordan has increasing military and economic cooperation with states in the region. For instance, in 2015, Jordan joined the Saudi-led military operation against Yemen's Iran-backed Shiite Houthi insurgents with the strategic aim to defend the Arab national security.³⁸ Jordan also has ties with the United States, with military aid increasing since Jordan commenced operations against ISIL. In 2016, the US provided \$1,275 billion in bilateral economic and military aid to Jordan.³⁹ US military aid is directed further towards the procurement and maintenance of conventional weapons.⁴⁰ As a result of the influx of refugees, the US also

³⁴ See Al-Jazeera Centre for Studies, 'Mapping Southern Syria's Armed Opposition' (13 October 2015), available <http://studies.aljazeera.net/en/reports/2015/10/2015101383740214464.html> accessed 26 January 2017 ('Mapping Southern Syria').

³⁵ Stanford University, 'Mapping Militant Organizations: The Southern Front' (5 November 2016), available <http://web.stanford.edu/group/mappingmilitants/cgi-bin/groups/view/645> accessed 26 January 2017 ('Mapping Militants').

³⁶ Mapping Militants.

³⁷ Mapping Militants.

³⁸ Raed Omari, 'Jordan's role in Yemen part of its commitment to Arab stability: analysts' (Al Arabiya News, 27 March 2015), available <http://english.alarabiya.net/en/perspective/analysis/2015/03/27/Jordan-s-role-in-Yemen-part-of-its-commitment-to-Arab-stability-analysts.html> accessed 26 January 2017.

³⁹ House Appropriations Committee, 'FY 2016 Omnibus – State and Foreign Operations Appropriations', available http://appropriations.house.gov/uploadedfiles/12.15.15_fy_2016_omnibus_-_sfops_-_summary.pdf accessed 26 January 2017, p. 3.

⁴⁰ See Jeremy M. Sharp, 'Jordan: Background and U.S. Relations' (Congressional Research Service, 27 January 2016), available <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/mideast/RL33546.pdf> accessed 26 January 2017, p. 14.



provides assistance to help meet increasing humanitarian needs.⁴¹ The European Union (EU) has similarly assisted Jordan with the spillover effect of the Syrian conflict by supporting humanitarian needs.⁴²

Notably, ever since the Syrian conflict, relations between Syria and Jordan have strained. On 26 May 2014, Jordan expelled Syrian ambassador.⁴³

III. CHILD PROTECTION CONCERNS

1. Recruitment and Use of Child Soldiers

Jordan has publicly spoken out against the recruitment and use of children, urging the international bodies to closely monitor violations and develop instruments and guidelines.⁴⁴ In April 2014, the Jordanian parliament passed an amendment to the country's anti-terrorist law criminalising the act of joining the extremist Islamist groups fighting outside Jordan.⁴⁵

Despite this, displaced children are reportedly being recruited from refugee camps in Jordan,⁴⁶ often returning to Syria and taking on roles on the front line, and as porters and helpers. In August 2013, a UN official estimated that half of the 200 new recruits listed in rebel ranks and who boarded buses each week

⁴¹ US Department of State, 'New US Humanitarian Assistance in Response to the Syrian crisis' (21 September 2015), available <https://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2015/09/247115.htm> accessed 26 January 2017; US Department of State, 'The United States and Jordan sign a Memorandum of Understanding on US assistance' (3 February 2015) available <https://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2015/02/237128.htm> accessed 26 January 2017.

⁴² European Union, 'Managing the Refugee Crisis: EU Support to Jordan', available https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/9_jordan_3pg.pdf accessed 26 January 2017; European Union, 'Europe's Support to Refugees and Their Host Countries: EU Regional Trust Fund in Response to the Syrian Crisis', available https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/20161220-eutf-syria_0.pdf accessed 26 January 2017.

⁴³ Areej Abuqudairi, 'Jordan expels Syria ambassador for "insults"' (Al-Jazeera, 26 May 2014), available <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2014/05/jordan-expels-offensive-syrian-ambassador-201452612936528650.html> accessed 26 January 2017.

⁴⁴ See United Nations Security Council, '7414th meeting', UN Doc. S/Pv.7129 (25 March 2015), p. 23.

⁴⁵ Al Monitor, 'Jordan bill to criminalize membership in "terrorist" groups' (6 March 2014), available <http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/security/2014/03/jordan-bill-criminalize-terrorist-groups-criticism.html> accessed 26 January 2017. See also Human Rights Watch, 'Jordan: Terrorism Amendments Threaten Rights' (17 May 2014), available <https://www.hrw.org/news/2014/05/17/jordan-terrorism-amendments-threaten-rights> accessed 26 January 2017.

⁴⁶ UNHCR, 'United Nations and Partners Humanitarian Response for Syrian Refugees in Jordan, Inter-Agency Task Force (IATF) Education Sector Gender Analysis' (June 2016), available <https://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/download.php?id=11700> accessed 26 January 2017 ('UNHCR IATF'), p. 12.



to Syria from the Za'atari camp were under age of 18.⁴⁷ The recruitment of children is reported by The Norwegian Peacebuilding Resource Centre to be an 'open secret' among the Jordanian national authorities and the humanitarian community.⁴⁸ Human Rights Watch issued a report in 2014 finding that boys as young as 15 were being used in active combat and that 14-year-old boys filled support roles in Syria.⁴⁹ In addition, it also documented a case of a boy between 10 and 12 years old who was tasked with whipping prisoners at an ISIL detention centre.⁵⁰ There are also reports of children being trained for suicide operations,⁵¹ and operations concerning atrocities.⁵²

The reasons for the recruitment of children include the following, among others: (i) recruitment through family relations and personal ties; (ii) ideological acceptance and support and/or protest; (iii) lack of education; and (iv) lack of financial means.⁵³

2. Trafficking and Child Labour

Jordan is reported to be a source, destination, and transit country for adults and children subjected to forced labour and to lesser extent sex trafficking.⁵⁴ The Jordanian Ministry of Labour reported that in 2015, 40 per cent of child labourers identified during inspections were non-Jordanians, and mostly Syrian refugee children.⁵⁵ Syrian refugees are especially vulnerable to child labour and trafficking.⁵⁶ Child labour is reported among Syrian refugee children who work alongside their families in agriculture, service industries, peddling goods, and begging.⁵⁷ Women and girls have been forced to undertake jobs working in nightclubs,

⁴⁷ Taylor Luck, 'As Syrian rebels' losses mount, teenagers begin filling ranks' (The Washington Post, 24 August 2013), available https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle_east/as-syrian-rebels-losses-mount-teenagers-begin-filling-ranks/2013/08/24/2bdbdfea-0a8f-11e3-9941-6711ed662e71_story.html accessed 26 January 2017.

⁴⁸ Tone Sommerfelt and Mark B. Taylor, 'The big dilemma of small soldiers: recruiting children to the war in Syria' (NOREF Norwegian Peacebuilding Resource Centre, February 2015), available http://noref.no/var/ezflow_site/storage/original/application/f2c1eef2efb2c782b9a9dab621ceaf75.pdf accessed 26 January 2017 ('NOREF: Big Dilemma'), p. 1.

⁴⁹ Human Rights Watch, "'Maybe We Live and Maybe We Die': Recruitment and Use of Children by Armed Groups in Syria' (23 June 2014), available <http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Maybe%20We%20Live%20and%20Maybe%20We%20Die.pdf> accessed 26 January 2017 ('HRW: Armed Groups Syria'), p. 1.

⁵⁰ HRW: Armed Groups Syria, p. 1.

⁵¹ HRW: Armed Groups Syria, p. 20.

⁵² NOREF: Big Dilemma, p. 2.

⁵³ NOREF: Big Dilemma, p. 2.

⁵⁴ United States Department of State, 'Trafficking in Persons Report' (June 2016) ('2016 TIP Report'), p. 220.

⁵⁵ United States Department of Labor, 'Findings on the Worst Forms of Child Labor – Jordan' (2015), available https://www.dol.gov/sites/default/files/images/ilab/child-labor/Jordan_0.pdf accessed 26 January 2017, p. 2.

⁵⁶ 2016 TIP Report, p. 220.

⁵⁷ 2016 TIP Report, p. 220.



often leading to prostitution, or to consider early, forced and temporary marriages.⁵⁸ Syrian children, some as young as five or six years old and up to the age of 16, have also been documented working on construction sites and collecting trash.⁵⁹ On average, the children earn between 3-5 JOD per day, amounting to 4-7 USD. Syrian children work under harsh conditions, have lower school attendance rates and come from poorer families than the Jordanian child workers.⁶⁰

Jordan, in light of the spillover of the Syrian conflict, has also adopted a law, expanding the definition of juveniles in need of protection to include child labourers such as street vendors and garbage collectors.⁶¹ In addition, the Jordanian government enacted a new policy in March 2016 that allows Syrian refugees to obtain legal work permits.⁶²

Migrants from Egypt, Southeast Asia, and East Africa are subjected to forced labour and experience debt bondage. In particular, workers in factories in Jordan pay unauthorised fees to recruitment agents in their country of origin, making them vulnerable to debt bondage.

3. Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV)

Incidents of sexual violence are significantly underreported, owing to fear of stigmatisation or retaliation.⁶³ Since the beginning of the Syrian conflict, the traditional protection networks in place have broken down, and this has had negative impact on women, girls, boys and men.⁶⁴ Refugees in Jordan have reported fear of rape as a major factor inducing flight from Syria.⁶⁵ Domestic violence, child marriages, and sexual violence are well documented, as well as the physical and psychological violence committed by family members. Underreporting of SGBV in Jordan is prevalent as a result of social stigma, and in particular in relation to sexual violence involving men or boys. Domestic violence is the most commonly reported from

⁵⁸ 2016 TIP Report, p. 220.

⁵⁹ Terre des Hommes International Federation, “‘Because we struggle to survive’: Child Labour among Refugees of the Syrian Conflict’ (2016), available <https://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/download.php?id=11674> accessed 26 January 2017 (‘Terres des Hommes’), p. 21.

⁶⁰ Terre des Hommes, p. 23.

⁶¹ Terre des Hommes, p. 23.

⁶² 2016 TIP Report 2016, p. 220.

⁶³ UNHCR, ‘Sexual and Gender-Based Violence: Refugees in Jordan’ (June 2015), available <https://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/download.php?id=9065> accessed 26 January 2017 (‘UNHCR SGBV’), p. 2.

⁶⁴ UNHCR SGBV, p. 1.

⁶⁵ United Nations Security Council, ‘Report of the Secretary-General on Conflict-Related Sexual Violence’, UN Doc. S/2016/361 (20 April 2016), para. 70.



of SGBV, both inside and outside camps, with more than half of survivors seeking support in Jordan experiencing physical assault and psychological abuse perpetrated by a spouse or family member.⁶⁶

Furthermore, despite the legal age for marriage in Jordan being 18⁶⁷, it is common for a child of 15 to 17 years to be permitted under special circumstances to marry.⁶⁸ It is documented that in Jordan, there was an increase in child marriage in 2014 and 2015.⁶⁹ Between 2000 and 2009, prior to the crisis in Syria, only 13 per cent of women aged between 20 and 25 had been married as a child.⁷⁰ Ever since the spillover of the crisis to Jordan, child marriage amongst the Syrian population has increased alarmingly.⁷¹ The rate of child marriage among Syrian refugees rose to 32 per cent in the first quarter of 2014.⁷² The ‘protection’ that is believed to come with marriage, as well as maintaining ‘honour’, are factors which lead to child marriage.⁷³ Parents also believe that child marriage might secure a better future for their children and ease the financial burden on families.⁷⁴ The United Nations Children’s Fund further carried out interviews indicating a strong relationship between girls’ educational achievement and child marriages: most parents expressed that the girls who did not perform well in school should be married as soon as was appropriate.⁷⁵ Marriage is still considered as an achievement, culturally.⁷⁶ Negative effects such as health problems, inability to cope with pregnancy and childbirth have been reported.⁷⁷

4. Education

Although Jordanian children enjoy high rates of school attendance,⁷⁸ refugee children in Jordan face challenges in school enrolment and attendance. In August 2016, it was estimated that close to one in three

⁶⁶ UNHCR SGBV, p. 1; See Inter-Agency UNHCR Participatory Assessments, 2015.

⁶⁷ UNICEF, ‘A study on early marriages in Jordan’ (2014), available https://www.unicef.org/jordan/UNICEFJordan_EarlyMarriageStudy2014-E_COPY_.pdf accessed 26 January 2017 (‘UNICEF Early Marriages’), p. 13.

⁶⁸ UNICEF Early Marriages, pp. 12-13.

⁶⁹ See 2016 TIP Report, p. 220; UNHCR SGBV, p. 1.

⁷⁰ Danielle Spencer, ‘“To Protect Her Honour”: Child marriages in emergencies – the fatal confusion between protecting girls and sexual violence’ (CARE, 2015), available http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/CARE_Child-marriage-in-emergencies_2015.pdf accessed 26 January 2017 (‘CARE’), p. 7.

⁷¹ CARE, pp. 6-7.

⁷² UNHCR SGBV, p. 2.

⁷³ CARE, pp. 6-7.

⁷⁴ UNHCR SGBV, p. 1.

⁷⁵ UNHCR IATF, p. 11.

⁷⁶ UNICEF Early Marriages, p. 26.

⁷⁷ UNICEF Early Marriages, p. 30.

⁷⁸ In the Human Development Report in 2011, Jordan ranked 95 out of 188 countries with a good education system showing an enrolment rate at primary school level of 96.8 per cent (see UNDP, ‘Human Development Report 2011 –



Syrians registered with the UNHCR in Jordan were school-aged children between 5-17 years old.⁷⁹ Of these, more than one-third did not receive formal education in 2016.⁸⁰ Lower attendance rates were also noted among older Syrian students aged 12-17.⁸¹

There are several factors impacting access to education and school attendance. First, as of April 2016, about 200,000 Syrians outside refugee camps did not have service cards required to prove their status.⁸² In 2016, Jordan, however, instructed public schools to allow Syrian children without service cards to enrol for the fall semester.⁸³ Second, certification and documentary requirements are inflexible, often preventing older children from enrolment in school.⁸⁴ Many Syrian children have fled without carrying documentation, including birth certificates,⁸⁵ and their enrolment, which has been dependant on these, or some of these, certificates, has been impossible. Poverty is also a contributing factor, forcing some families to depend on income from children to cover their basic needs.⁸⁶ A UN assessment found that in 2015, 97 per cent of school age Syrian children were at risk of not going to school because of financial hardship.⁸⁷ Many Syrian parents also cannot afford school-related costs such as transportation. Out-of-school girls in Jordan are more susceptible to child marriage.⁸⁸

In May 2015, Jordan endorsed the Safe Schools Declaration, committing to do more to protect students, teachers, and schools during times of armed conflict, including implementing the Guidelines on Protecting Schools from Military Use.⁸⁹

Sustainability and Equity: A Better Future for All' (2011), available http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/reports/271/hdr_2011_en_complete.pdf accessed 26 January 2017, p. 159).

⁷⁹ HRW Barriers to Education.

⁸⁰ HRW Barriers to Education.

⁸¹ UNHCR IATF, p. 23.

⁸² HRW Barriers to Education.

⁸³ See Human Rights Watch, 'Jordan: Positive Steps on Education for Syrian Children: Thousands More Eligible to Enroll, but Challenges Remain' (22 August 2016), available <https://www.hrw.org/news/2016/08/22/jordan-positive-steps-education-syrian-children> accessed 26 January 2017.

⁸⁴ 2017 Human Rights Watch Report, p. 56.

⁸⁵ HRW Barriers to Education.

⁸⁶ UNHCR IATF, p. 17.

⁸⁷ HRW Barriers to Education.

⁸⁸ 2017 Human Rights Watch Report, p. 57.

⁸⁹ See Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack, 'Safe Schools Declaration Endorsements' (9 September 2016), available <http://www.protectingeducation.org/guidelines/support> accessed 26 January 2017.



5. Access to Healthcare

The healthcare system in Jordan has been generally considered one of the best in the region, with an advanced health care system.⁹⁰ However, ever since the Syrian crisis, the health sector has been impacted by an increase in demand for health services.⁹¹ Refugees living in refugee camps receive some basic support, while refugees living outside refugee camps have challenges obtaining access to health care due to cumbersome documentation requirements and charges for healthcare beyond the reach of most refugees.⁹² These factors, among others, have led to a decrease in access to preventive and curative health care services among Syrian refugees in urban areas.⁹³

Moreover, Jordan also provides healthcare to Syrians with war-related injuries but their entry into Jordan is dependant on the presentation of a valid identification card, something which most Syrians fleeing war do not possess.⁹⁴

⁹⁰ Amnesty International, 'Jordan: Living on the Margins – Syrian Refugees in Jordan Struggle to Access Health Care' (23 March 2016), available <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde16/3628/2016/en/> accessed 26 January 2017 ('Amnesty Healthcare'), p. 17.

⁹¹ See Amnesty Healthcare.

⁹² Amnesty Healthcare, p. 10.

⁹³ Amnesty Healthcare, pp. 6, 18.

⁹⁴ Amnesty Healthcare, pp. 22-24.



ANNEX I: LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

EU	European Union
FSA	Free Syrian Army
ISIL	Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant
JAF	Jordanian Armed Forces
PLO	Palestinian Liberation Organization
SGBV	Sexual and Gender-Based Violence
SMC	Supreme Military Council
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
US	United States
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees



ANNEX II: KEY FACTS⁹⁵

Jordan in a Snapshot

	Name of Country
Geography	<p>Climate: mostly arid desert; rainy season in west (November to April)</p> <p>Terrain: mostly desert plateau in east, highland area in west; Great Rift Valley separates eastern and western banks of the Jordan River</p> <p>Border countries: (5) – Iraq 179 km, Israel 307 km, Saudi Arabia 731 km, Syria 379 km, West Bank 148 km</p> <p>Coastline: 26 km</p>
People	<p>Population: 8,185,384 (note: increased estimate reflects revised assumptions about the net migration rate due to the increased flow of Syrian refugees – July 2016 est.)</p> <p>Median age: 22.3 years (2016 est.)</p> <p>Languages: Arabic (official), English (widely understood among upper and middle classes)</p> <p>Ethnic groups: Arab 98%, Circassian 1%, Armenian 1%</p> <p>Religions: Muslim 97.2% (official; predominantly Sunni), Christian 2.2% (majority Greek Orthodox, but some Greek and Roman Catholics, Syrian Orthodox, Coptic Orthodox, Armenian Orthodox, and Protestant denominations), Buddhist 0.4%, Hindu 0.1%, Jewish <0.1, folk religionist <0.1, unaffiliated <0.1, other <0.1 (2010 est.)</p>
Economy	<p>Capital: Amman</p> <p>Major urban areas: Amman 1.155 million (2015)</p> <p>GDP: \$39.45 billion (2015 est.)</p> <p>GDP per capita: \$11,100 (2016 est.)</p> <p>GDP by sector: Agriculture 4.2%, Industry 29.6%, Services 66.2% (2016 est.)</p>

⁹⁵ Central Intelligence Agency, 'Jordan', available <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ct.html> accessed 30 January 2017.



Children and youth	<p>Population under age of 25: 55.13%</p> <p>Unemployment (ages 15-24): 29.3% (2012 est.)</p> <p>Child labour (ages 5-14): n/a</p> <p>Legal age of conscription: 17 for voluntary male military service; initial service term 2 years, with option to reenlist for 18 years; conscription at age 18 suspended in 1999; women not subject to conscription, but can volunteer to serve in noncombat military positions in the Royal Jordanian Arab Army Women's Corps and RJAF (2013)</p>
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Jordanian Child Protection Legislation

Jordan	
National	<p>Jordanian Constitution</p> <p>Jordanian Labour Law No. 8 of 1996</p> <p>Temporary Personal Status Law No. 36 of 2010</p> <p>Law No. 32 of 2014 concerning Juvenile Law</p>
International	<p>Geneva Convention relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War (acceded 29 May 1951)</p> <p>International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (acceded 30 May 1974)</p> <p>International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ratified 28 May 1975)</p> <p>Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and Relating to the Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts (Protocol I) (acceded 1 May 1979)</p> <p>Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and Relating to the Protection of Victims on Non-International Armed Conflicts (Protocol II) (acceded 1 May 1979)</p> <p>Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (acceded 13 November 1991)</p> <p>Convention on the Rights of the Child (ratified 24 May 1991) (Declaration)</p> <p>Convention concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labor (ratified 20 April 2000)</p> <p>Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict (ratified 23 May 2007)</p> <p>Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography (ratified 4 December 2006)</p> <p>Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (ratified 31 March 2008)</p>



ANNEX III: TIMELINE OF NOTABLE EVENTS⁹⁶

1922

The Council of the League of Nations recognises Transjordan as a state under British supervision.

1946

UN recognises Jordan as an independent sovereign kingdom.

1948

State of Israel created in British-mandate Palestine. Thousands of Palestinians flee Arab-Israeli fighting to West Bank and Jordan.

1950

Jordan annexes West Bank.

1951

July: King Abdullah assassinated by Palestinian extremists, angry at his apparent collusion with Israel in the carve-up of Palestine.

1952

August: Hussein proclaimed king after his father, Talal, is declared mentally unfit to rule.

1957

British troops complete their withdrawal from Jordan.

1967

June: Israel takes control of Jerusalem and the West Bank during the Six-Day War, causing a major influx of refugees into Jordan.

1970

September: Major clashes break out between government forces and Palestinian guerrillas resulting in thousands of casualties in civil war (remembered as Black September).

1972

⁹⁶ BBC, 'Jordan profile – Timeline' (20 December 2016), available <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-14636713> accessed 26 January 2017; Middle East Observer, 'Jordan Timeline' (2016), available <https://www.middleeastobserver.org/saudi-arabia/jordan-timeline-2/> accessed 26 January 2017; Timeline of History, 'Timeline Jordan', available <http://www.timelines.ws/countries/JORDAN.HTML> accessed 26 January 2017.



Attempted military coup foiled.

1974

October: King Hussein recognises Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) as sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.

1986

February: Hussein severs political links with the PLO and orders its main offices to close.

1988

July: King Hussein publicly backs Palestinian uprising (intifada) against Israeli rule.

1989

April: Price increases result in riots in several cities.

November: First general election since 1967, contested only by independent candidates due to the ban on political parties in 1963.

1990

August: Jordan comes under severe economic and diplomatic strain as a result of the Gulf crisis following Iraq's invasion of Kuwait.

1994

July: Jordan signs peace treaty with Israel, ending 46-year official state of war.

1996

August: Food price riots after subsidies removed under economic plan supervised by the International Monetary Fund.

1997

November: Parliamentary elections boycotted by several parties, associations and leading figures.

1998

July: King Hussein treated for lymphatic cancer in the United States.

1999

February: King Hussein dies, more than 50 Heads of State attend his funeral. His eldest son, Crown Prince Abdullah succeeds to the throne.

2000



September: A military court sentences six men to death for plotting attacks against Israeli and US targets.

2001

March: King Abdullah and Presidents Bashar al-Assad of Syria and Hosni Mubarak of Egypt inaugurate a \$300m electricity line linking the grids of the three countries.

2002

August: Spat with Qatar over programme on Qatar-based Al-Jazeera TV, which Jordan says insulted its royal family. Jordan shuts down Al-Jazeera's office in Amman and recalls its ambassador in Qatar.

September: Jordan and Israel agree on a plan to pipe water from the Red Sea to the shrinking Dead Sea. The project, costing \$800m, is the two nations' biggest joint venture to date.

October: Senior US diplomat Laurence Foley is gunned down outside his home in Amman, in the first assassination of a Western diplomat in Jordan. Scores of political activists are rounded up.

2003

June: First parliamentary elections under King Abdullah II. Independent candidates loyal to the king win two-thirds of the seats.

August: Bomb attack on Jordan's embassy in Baghdad, Iraq, kills 11 people and injures over 50.

September: Jordan's Central Bank retracts decision to freeze accounts belonging to leaders of Hamas.

October: A new cabinet is appointed following the resignation of Prime Minister Ali Abu al-Ragheb. Faisal al-Fayez is appointed prime minister. King Abdallah II appoints three female ministers.

2004

April: Eight Islamic militants are sentenced to death for killing a US government official in 2002. Authorities seize cars filled with explosives and arrest several suspects said to be linked to al-Qaeda and planning chemical bomb attack on intelligence services HQ in Amman.

2005

March: Jordan returns its ambassador to Israel after a four-year absence. Amman recalled its envoy in 2000 after the outbreak of the Palestinian uprising.

August: Three missiles are fired from the port of Aqaba. Two of them miss a US naval vessel; a third one lands in Israel, and a Jordanian soldier is killed.

November: Sixty people are killed in suicide bombings at three international hotels in Amman, and most victims are Jordanians. Al-Qaeda in Iraq claims responsibility. A day of mourning is declared.

2006

June: Iraq's prime minister announces that Jordanian-born Abu Musad al-Zarqawi, the leader of al-Qaeda in Iraq, has been killed in an air strike.



August: King Abdullah criticises the United States and Israel over fighting in Lebanon.

2007

November: Parliamentary elections strengthen position of tribal leaders and other pro-government candidates. Fortunes of the opposition Islamic Action Front decline. Political moderate Nader Dahabi appointed prime minister.

2008

August: King Abdullah visits Iraq, the first Arab leader to visit the country since the US invasion in 2003.

2009

July: Military tribunal sentences an Al-Qaeda militant to death for his involvement in the 2003 killing of US diplomat Laurence Foley in Amman.

November: King dissolves parliament halfway through its four-year term.

December: King Abdullah appoints new premier to push through economic reform.

2010

May: New electoral law introduced. Pro-reform campaigners say it does little to make system more representational.

October: Leader of Islamist militant group jailed for plotting attacks on the army.

November: Parliamentary elections boycotted by the opposition Islamic Action Front. Pro-government candidates win a sweeping victory, causing riots to break out.

2011

January: Tunisian street protests that unseat the president encourage similar demonstrations in other countries, including Jordan.

February: Against a background of large-scale street protests, King Abdullah appoints Marouf Bakhit, former army general, as the new prime minister, and charges him with carrying out political reforms.

October: Protests continue through the summer, on a smaller scale, prompting King Abdullah to replace Prime Minister Bakhit with Awn al-Khasawneh, a judge at the International Court of Justice (ICJ).

2012

October: King Abdullah calls early parliamentary elections for January. The Muslim Brotherhood's political wing, the Islamic Action Front, decides to continue to boycott them in protest at unequal constituency sizes and lack of real parliamentary power. The King appoints Abdullah Ensour, a former minister and vocal advocate of democratic reform, as prime minister. The King also appoints a new ambassador to Israel, filling a post that has been vacant for two years.

November: Clashes between protesters and supporters of the King follow mass demonstrations in Amman against the lifting of fuel subsidies, calling for the end of the monarchy. Three people are killed.



2013

January: Pro-government candidates victorious in parliamentary elections which are boycotted by the main opposition, Islamic Action Front.

March: New government sworn in, with incumbent Abdullah Ensour reinstated as prime minister, following unprecedented consultation between the King and parliament.

July: Britain deports Muslim cleric Abu Qatada to Jordan, where he faces terrorism charges, after an eight-year legal battle.

2014

May: Jordan expels Syrian ambassador over accusations that Jordan harbours Syrian rebels.

June: Radical Muslim preacher Abu Qatada, deported from UK in 2013, found not guilty of terrorism offenses by a court in Jordan over an alleged plot 1998.

September: Jordan is one of four Arab states to take part, together with the US, in air strikes on Islamic State militants in Syria.

November: Jordanian authorities arrest the deputy head of the country's Muslim Brotherhood organisation, in the first arrest of a major opposition figure in Jordan for several years.

December: Jordan executes eleven men convicted of murder, ending a suspension on the death penalty.

2015

February: Islamic State publishes video purporting to show captured Jordanian pilot Muath Kasasbeh being burned alive. Jordan responds by stepping up its anti-IS air campaign and executing prisoners. EU says they will provide 100 million EUR (113 million USD) in loans to Jordan in order to deal with the fallout from crises in Syria and Iraq.

March: Jordan takes part in Saudi-led air strikes on Houthi rebels in Yemen.

2016

February: King Abdullah says Jordan has reached saturation point in its ability to take more Syrian refugees.

September: First parliamentary elections under proportional representation since 1989, when the single non-transferable vote system was introduced to weaken Islamist parties. The Muslim Brotherhood's Islamic Action Front ends its boycott and makes some gains, as do female candidates, but pro-government candidates win most seats on a low turnout.

December: 10 people, including a tourist, are killed in an attack claimed by ISIL at a Crusader castle in the town of Karak.



ANNEX IV: RECOMMENDED READING

Amnesty International, 'Jordan: Living on the Margins – Syrian Refugees in Jordan Struggle to Access Health Care' (23 March 2016).

Anthony H. Cordesman, 'The Islamic State War: No Clear U.S. Strategy' (Center for Strategic & International Studies, 10 November 2014).

Charles Lister and William McCants, 'The Syrian Civil War: Political and Military State of Play' (War on the Rocks, 18 February 2014).

Cole Bunzel, 'From Paper State to Caliphate: The Ideology of the Islamic State' (Brookings, March 2015).

Danielle Spencer, "'To Protect Her Honour': Child marriages in emergencies – the fatal confusion between protecting girls and sexual violence' (CARE, 2015).

European Union, 'Europe's Support to Refugees and Their Host Countries: EU Regional Trust Fund in Response to the Syrian Crisis'.

European Union, 'Managing the Refugee Crisis: EU Support to Jordan'.

Human Rights Watch, "'Maybe We Live and Maybe We Die': Recruitment and Use of Children by Armed Groups in Syria' (23 June 2014).

Human Rights Watch, "'We're Afraid for Their Future': Barriers to Education for Syrian Refugee Children in Jordan' (16 August 2016).

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Mercy Corps, 'Seeking Stability: Evidence on Strategies for Reducing the Risk of Conflict in Northern Jordanian Communities Hosting Syrian Refugees' (May 2014).

Stanford University, 'Mapping Militant Organizations: The Southern Front' (5 November 2016).

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Tone Sommerfelt and Mark B. Taylor, 'The big dilemma of small soldiers: recruiting children to the war in Syria' (NOREF Norwegian Peacebuilding Resource Centre, February 2015).

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UNHCR, 'Sexual and Gender-Based Violence: Refugees in Jordan' (June 2015).

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United Nations Security Council. 'Report of the Secretary-General on children and armed conflict in Iraq'. UN Doc. S/2015/852 (9 November 2015).

United Nations Security Council, 'Report of the Secretary-General on Conflict-Related Sexual Violence', UN Doc. S/2016/361 (20 April 2016).

United States Department of Labor, 'Findings on the Worst Forms of Child Labor – Jordan' (2015).

United States Department of State, 'Trafficking in Persons Report' (June 2016).