



FONDATION
IMPACT HOPE

Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons, Resilience and Opportunities

Amman-Jordan

Background

The Syrian and Iraqi conflicts have brought a lot of refugees and it is estimated that they now represent more than half of the population. They are mostly distributed in cities and do not necessarily live in camps. They do not have Jordanian nationality and therefore do not benefit from the related citizenship rights (work, social security).

The influx of refugees creates tensions and has a negative impact on employment, since some refugees work illegally and for wages far below Jordanian standards.

Recent refugees have mainly come from Syria and Iraq since the beginning of the war. Others have fled violence in other countries such as Sudan, Somalia, Yemen or Eritrea. They are usually people who have not had the means or the chance to migrate directly to Western countries. Most of them are in a transit situation in Jordan.

Many refugees eat only one meal a day and share tiny apartments far from the centre of Amman.

Some are single children and it is common for them to have been sexually and economically abused in their home countries. Sometimes they are also sexually and economically abused in their country of temporary adoption.

Brief summary of the project

The project aims to provide refugees with a dignified, decent and integrated life in Jordan in the first instance. In a second phase, with the help of UNHCR, it accompanies these people by training them to prepare their migration project in the West or their return to their country of origin when possible.

Two local organisations (the Jesuit Centre, established in Amman since 1989 and the Jesuit Refugee Service established in Amman since 2008) have decided to join forces and skills to meet this double challenge for refugees: to rebuild themselves psychologically, socially and intellectually and, on the basis of this human and intellectual baggage, to rebuild their lives in their country of origin or elsewhere.

The project brings together Jordanians and non-Jordanians, residents and refugees, migrant and settled workers, Muslims and Christians, women and men to teach them to know, respect, appreciate and live together. This learning will enable the most excluded to discover their potential, regain self-confidence and face their future lives with hope and determination.

Learning to live together and to be open to others is a priority for tomorrow's Middle Eastern society. This project aims to contribute to this by promoting learning and the organisation of cultural and sporting events where young people can assert themselves, develop and rebuild their lives.

Specific objective and expected results

The aim of the project is to enable refugees to begin a process of resilience, to regain self-confidence and to train for a better future. It also aims to facilitate the "living together" with the Jordanian host population.

In order to achieve this goal

- The young people will have learned to communicate and express themselves freely with respect for others and to better manage their anxieties.
- Young people will have changed their perception of other communities and will be open to dialogue.
- Young people will have been trained and able to pursue a life project in Jordan, in their country of origin or elsewhere.

Activities

All activities are aimed at improving the immediate well-being of refugees and their integration in Jordan. In the longer term, it will strengthen their knowledge, skills and attitudes. The various components of this project are intended to complement each other in order to provide comprehensive, effective support and training for all its beneficiaries.

- A cultural programme (song, dance, theatre, cinema, plastic arts) enables people to be recognized for their talent and personality, regardless of their status or origin.
- Sports activities encourage young people to excel and to respect others beyond any cultural, ethnic or religious barriers.

- Refugees with good intellectual abilities have access to courses from Western universities, which are taught via the Internet and run by local tutors. The project aims to orient post-secondary education towards training courses that offer quick opportunities in their country of origin in case of possible return. All exams are assessed by online instructors in collaboration with local facilitators. Precise feedback is given to each student. At the end of the training, students receive a certificate with the grades received for each course from the university concerned.

- English courses at different levels are offered. These courses, which are the subject of a certificate of completion, are designed to meet the immediate needs of the communities.

- Home visits are provided throughout the year in the city of Amman and its surroundings. These visits make it possible to identify the specific needs of families and individuals, to provide psycho-social support, to provide information on the services provided by the project or to refer to other structures.

Contribution of the project to a real change

This project approaches each refugee in his or her singularity and accompanies them in a personalised way so that they can find psycho-social well-being and be recognised as a fully-fledged human being in their host country. In this way, the project raises awareness and outlines gestures of solidarity among the Jordanian population. It helps to significantly reduce the many prejudices between the various communities and to encourage the resilience of people who have suffered a great deal.

People are trained at a high level and will be able to contribute both to changing mentalities and to the physical and moral reconstruction of their country.

Location of the project

The city of Amman and its suburbs. The Jesuit Centre and JRS are located in the Jabal Hussein district, near the city centre.

Local partner

The project is run jointly by the Jesuit Centre for the cultural and social component and the Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) for the training.

The Jesuit Center was established in 1989 by American Jesuits in Amman, in particular to help the many refugees and integrate them as far as possible into Jordanian society.

The Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) is an international organisation whose mission is to accompany, serve and defend refugees and displaced persons throughout the world.

The two organisations are working to improve communication and to encourage refugees on both sides to get involved in artistic, sports and training activities.

Direct and indirect beneficiaries

Approximately 1,000 young people participate in one activity or another every year. As mentioned above, they come from several countries in the Middle East and the Horn of Africa. They have all fled their countries for political and security reasons.

More than 600 families benefit indirectly from the project through the education and development of their children and from the home visits by the project team.

Sustainability of the project

An exit strategy is difficult to imagine in such a complex and unstable political environment. With refugees unable to work, it will be difficult for them to support themselves in Jordan. Nevertheless, the project team is negotiating with the Jordanian authorities to allow the refugees to carry out some work in Amman.

We will be able to consider as a success either the refugee's return and settlement in good conditions in his country of origin, or his settlement in a western country where he will start a new life but always with a form of solidarity with his country of origin.

Monitoring and evaluation

The project team's role as facilitator is based on listening, appreciating and revealing each person's strengths and not primarily based on problems to resolve. It does not provide ready-made solutions but identifies and reveals the capacities of individuals and communities to face their own challenges. Beyond differences, the emphasis is on the common humanity of people.

All students are assessed on their achievements. All studies are validated by examinations with a well-defined grading system. The overall results of the year are evaluated by the JRS academic team.