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CASE STUDY

JORDANIAN MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

A government-led
knowledge ecosystem
on forced displacement



As part of an initiative funded by the Canadian International Development Research Centre (IDRC) in collaboration with the Local Engagement Refugee Research Network (LERRN) at Carleton University and the African Migration and Development Policy Centre (AMADPOC) in Kenya, the Issam Fares Institute for Public Policy & International Affairs (IFI) at the American University of Beirut conducted this research project seeking to generate a more nuanced understanding of how localized knowledge ecosystems on forced displacement can be effective, policy impactful and sustainable. This project builds on earlier research undertaken in 2019 and 2020 which aimed to support an evidence-based understanding on how to localize research on refugee and forced migration issues in key regions of the Global South. The aim of this phase is to transition from anecdotal to evidence-based insights on how localized “ecosystems” of research, civil society, and refugee-led initiatives produce new forms of knowledge on displacement issues that have an impact on policy and practice.

Project researchers set out to understand how localized knowledge ecosystems in Kenya and Ethiopia in East Africa and Jordan and Lebanon in the Middle East produce, translate, and use knowledge to effect change. This was achieved through in-depth case studies of knowledge ecosystems, sub-ecosystems, and entities that make up knowledge ecosystems in each of the four included countries. For the purpose of this study, and in the context of forced migration, the study adopted the following definition of knowledge ecosystem:

Localized knowledge ecosystems include actors with lived experience, research actors, practitioners who produce and use knowledge on forced migration (including, but not limited to, NGOs/INGOs, research centers, institutes, networks and universities and academics) who coordinate with each other to advance new knowledge production within this system and translate and mobilize this knowledge to influence policy, practice, action and discourses, and narratives to advance the well-being of refugees.

For the definitions used in this project and an overview of the research conducted in East Africa and the Middle East, read our working paper [here](#).

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INTRODUCTION

Jordan hosts around 1.36 million Syrian refugees, 660,892 of whom are registered with UNHCR, and 133,751 currently live in camps (UNHCR, 2022). Every year, the number of Syrian refugees in Jordan is expected to rise by 3%. There is a discrepancy between Government of Jordan (GoJ) and UNHCR with regard to the number of registered Syrian refugees in Jordan. This can be attributed to a number of factors, including requests from Syrians not to be recognized as refugees. While for others who reside with their extended family in Jordan, also chose not to register with UNHCR. In partnership with the international community, the Government of Jordan had to proactively plan for the crisis' unforeseen considerable long-term obligations and difficulties. The Government of Jordan's limited human and financial resources rendered it unable to offset the impact and continuing repercussions of the crisis. The crisis not only resulted in the creation of refugee camps, but also affected host communities, as they had to adjust to increased pressure on services, housing, and already overburdened infrastructure (Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation [MoPIC], 2020). Indeed, the Syrian refugee influx exacerbated socioeconomic strains and worsened living conditions in host communities, especially in Jordan's northern regions. The availability of government administrative services and resources such as water, housing and solid waste disposal was overburdened.

The government's response to the Syrian refugee crisis was carried out and led by The Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation (MoPIC), as it is the main entity tasked with obtaining and organizing international aid. By default, this role placed MoPIC in the lead to produce and disseminate required data, collaborate with the international community to support initiatives in host communities and organize work with the line ministries. Here it is important to note that any work related to security agencies does not fall under the umbrella of MoPIC. The government intervention was key in managing the refugee portfolio and mitigating the negative impact this crisis had on already weak and burdened services and infrastructure. Since MoPIC leads the work of the Department of Statistics - the main entity producing data for Jordan - this entitled MoPIC to lead data release, data requests and the design of response plans which include all knowledge related to refugee and host communities.

The Syrian civil war caused significant implications in the region and resulted in a widespread refugee influx. In Jordan, this exacerbated socioeconomic strains and worsened living conditions in host communities, especially in Jordan's northern regions. The availability of government administrative services and resources such as water, housing and solid waste disposal was overburdened.

The Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation hosts knowledge ecosystem initiatives that inform policy implementation on behalf of MoPIC and other government bodies. As per its mandate, MoPIC issues a wide range of policies including those related to refugees, and obtains the needed funding for national development projects including refugee-related projects. MoPIC also has access to substantial resources, such as international aid and public sector budgets, where it nurtures excellent channels and relations with the international community. Beyond fiscal resources, the ministry also operates under the direction of qualified ministers and influential members of Jordanian society that are selected due to their high level of expertise. MoPIC's work is collated in the Jordan Response Plan (JRP), which is supported by the Host Community Support Platform (HCSP). MoPIC also issues national strategies including Jordan 2025: A National Vision and Strategy, the National Social Protection Strategy 2019 – 2025, and Jordan's National Employment Strategy 2011-2020, among others.

This case study¹ aims to identify the types of knowledge produced by the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation. Through the Host Community Support Platform (HCSP) and the Jordan Response Plan (JRP), MoPIC issued an inclusive strategy to unify knowledge and information efforts in Jordan that specifically tackle the crisis. The HCSP has now become the Jordan Response Platform for the Syria Crisis (JRPSC), carrying the same impact and influence. Throughout the case study, JRPSC

⁽¹⁾ This case study was commissioned by the Issam Fares Institute for Public Policy and International Affairs at the American University of Beirut as part of a joint IDRC/LERNN research study aiming to understand how localized knowledge ecosystems of research, civil society, and refugee-led initiatives produce new forms of knowledge that have an impact on policy and practice. The case studies are meant to provide an in-depth look at the nature and function of localized knowledge ecosystems in the Middle East and North Africa region.

and HCSP are used interchangeably. The aim of the JRPSC/HCSP initiative is to maximize the utilization of the limited resources available and reduce inefficacy and overlap in knowledge production and government technical support covering all aspects of refugees in Jordan to inform policymaking and in turn contribute to positive development in Jordan. The choice of this case study was thought of in an innovative manner to present a new scope of knowledge ecosystems versus forced displacement.

The case study highlights how key stakeholders, including members of the Jordanian public sector and invested international communities, form part of the coalition responding to the Syrian refugee crisis in Jordan. The JRPSC, under the authority and jurisdiction of MoPIC, utilizes information and knowledge to generate the JRP, which functions as the main platform that transforms knowledge to benefit refugees and vulnerable host community members in Jordan. The importance of MoPIC leading this initiative is due to two main reasons; MoPIC's relation with the international community and MoPIC's role as a forerunner in data production. It is also worth noting that MoPIC is responsible for producing national policies on the local, national and sectoral levels; this also lends MoPIC leverage to handle this portfolio. The production of the different JRPs is part of its policy design and production that falls under its policy production jurisdiction. The JRPSC presents a unique type of knowledge production and utilization not found in other host countries, as it demonstrates the creation of a support system to refugee and host communities based on locally yielded data and knowledge. The data is usually produced by the Department of Statistics, or any other officially accepted data produced by local think tanks (such as the Yarmouk Refugees Studies Center), the World Bank, EU, UN agencies, among others.

The Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation being a government entity that uses and produces knowledge on forced displacement, played a major role in the Syrian refugee crisis response. The Ministry brings together different stakeholders; local actors, international organizations, and civil society organizations, in order to respond to and manage the refugee crisis. This case study aims to identify the unique role played by the Ministry in collaboration with other members in the response to the Syrian crisis and the knowledge produced on forced displacement.

METHODOLOGY

Before implementing the case study, a mapping exercise was done to identify the different entities within the local knowledge ecosystem on refugee and forced displacement in Jordan. The mapped entities were then validated through a phone call survey to ensure their eligibility as a localized knowledge ecosystem in Jordan. This resulted in a comprehensive list from which this case study was chosen.

The methodology adopted is a combination of field research and desk review. The desk review was done using widely available sources and government issued documents that outlined the processes, strategies, pillars, budgets, and impact of the work carried out. The desk review, this case study adopted a qualitative research approach. Between December 2021 and February 2022, five interviews included a detailed review and analysis of the different produced JRPs, which represent the main mode of knowledge transfer. Five interviews were conducted due to a number of challenges related to the COVID-19 pandemic, and the travel of several stakeholders. The interviews were guided by a questionnaire designed specifically for the purpose of this study. They were recorded and transcribed verbatim to capture the exact information disclosed by the participants, and were analyzed to highlight emerging themes relevant to knowledge ecosystems on forced displacement.

Concerning the different challenges faced while conducting the case study, they were limited. Mainly, scheduling meetings and interviews with relevant stakeholders was difficult due to the COVID-19 pandemic and related restrictions, in some cases interviews had to be cancelled. A second limitation concerns deficiencies in the public sector, including its staff, who are experiencing a lack of work motivation to meet with or support consultants. A final challenge relates to UNDP's staff, who recently moved out of Jordan and, as such, were unable to be interviewed as part of the knowledge ecosystem.

BACKGROUND ON MOPIC

This section discusses the history and network of the Coordination Platform and MoPIC's work in producing knowledge related to refugee issues in Jordan. The Ministry of Planning, which took over from the National Planning Council in 1984, is governed by the Planning Law No. 68 of 1971. On October 25, 2003, the Ministry of Planning was renamed "the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation," with the same statute, powers, and responsibilities. MoPIC strives to promote a culture of excellence, good governance, sustainable development, and improvement in line with best practices, and to activate its role and desired goal in development, planning, and international cooperation in best interests of Jordan and its citizens. The Ministry works to retain its strategic planning approach to remain up to date with the newest advancements and face problems in accordance with national priorities and goals, which leads to a strong performance and is in turn reflected in the quality of services offered. When priorities shift, MoPIC is forced to shift gears and produce the needed knowledge for the purpose at hand. For example, at the onset of Syrian refugee crisis, MoPIC's focus shifted to this issue, producing response plans, strategic approaches, and enhancing links with the international community. Furthermore, given the impact the refugee crisis had in Jordan, the intervention of MoPIC into forced migration knowledge production was inevitable.

The Ministry works under three pillars to contribute to the overall improvement of vulnerable communities in Jordan, which includes refugees and Jordanian families on the poverty line (MoPIC, 2021). These three pillars govern its set priorities and include: improving the business and investment environment (Pillar 1); enhancing competition and increasing employment (Pillar 2); supporting priority sectors such as tourism, Information technology, and agriculture (Pillar 3). Strategic goals are developed by MoPIC using options derived from an integrated analysis of the internal and external environments. The analysis includes identifying elements of strength and weakness related to eight determinants governing the internal environment, opportunities and challenges facing MoPIC related to these eight determinants, and the legal dimension of the external analysis (MoPIC, 2021).

MoPIC produces a wide range of knowledge, including but not limited to; national statistics and analysis, reports, studies, policies, strategies and economic models. The focus in this case study is on refugee related knowledge and the different JRPs. MoPIC's leadership of the Department of Statistics is another form of support to knowledge production. All statistics are analysed and validated by MoPIC staff. Having this kind of relationship with the statistics department and the international community lends MoPIC leverage on knowledge production.

The Host Community Support Platform (HCSP) was established by the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation (MoPIC) in September 2013 as a strategic consultative body comprised of government line ministries, donors, UN agencies, and international and national Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) to ensure coordination and provide advice to the GoJ regarding Jordan's response to the refugee crisis. The establishment of the HCSP is a result of strategic preparation to equip refugee and host communities to become more autonomous. The HCSP is now known as the JRPSC, which has become the main strategic partnership structure established by MoPIC, donors, and UN agencies to design a refugee, resilience building, and development response to the Syrian crisis' impact on Jordan (Jordan Response Plan [JRP], 2021).

The JRP is implemented through the JRPSC and is the main activity in the context of Jordan's knowledge ecosystem on forced displacement. Since its induction in 2015, the JRP has been funded by governing bodies in Jordan with contributions from NGOs and international aid agencies. There have been several versions of the JRP published, as it is continuously updated and modified in response to local knowledge produced and collated by MoPIC produces a wide range of knowledge, including but not limited to; national statistics and analysis, reports, studies, policies, strategies and economic models. through MoPIC staff. Having this kind of relationship with the statistics department and the international community lends MoPIC leverage on knowledge production. The most recent JRP document produced by JRPSC is the JRP 2020-2022. The initial JRP was a resilience plan that later shifted into a response

plan. This not only was a change in title, but also a shift from humanitarian aid to development and integration aid. This entailed a wide range of donor support changes but in the case of the knowledge produced it became more detailed and covered more sectors.

The two pillars of the JRP 2020-2022 remain the same as the pillars of previous plans: The Refugee/ Humanitarian pillar and the Resilience pillar. There are three components that fall under these two pillars: Refugee Needs, Host Community Needs, and Infrastructure and Institutional Capacity Development Needs. Syrian refugees will continue to benefit from services provided by the host community, infrastructure, and institutional capacity development, as in past years. These elements will ensure that the JRP is in line with Jordan's aim of Syrian refugees being self-sufficient and receiving high-quality services. The overarching goal behind the JRPSC and the JRP is to fill the gap and bridge the transition between the emergency assistance carried out at the start of the crisis and the longer-term development plan that is implemented chiefly by development partners and the Government of Jordan (GoJ) through MoPIC (MoPIC, 2014).

LOCALIZATION

Power and decision making in the MoPIC and ultimately in the JRP and JRPSC (previously known as HCSP), is made by local political and economic decision makers in close collaboration with UNDP, as they fund the activities of the JRPSC. MoPIC staff are primarily Jordanian. Most of the decision-makers are neither international nor regional individuals or entities. The overall demographic profile of MoPIC is Jordanian dominant, as members and ministers in the organizations are elected democratically given that they are in a governmental organization/ministry that acts on behalf of Jordan. Figure 1 shows the members involved in the network who contribute to the knowledge production process. The implementation of the JRP is open to any government organization, UN organizations, private sectors, as well as national and international Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs).

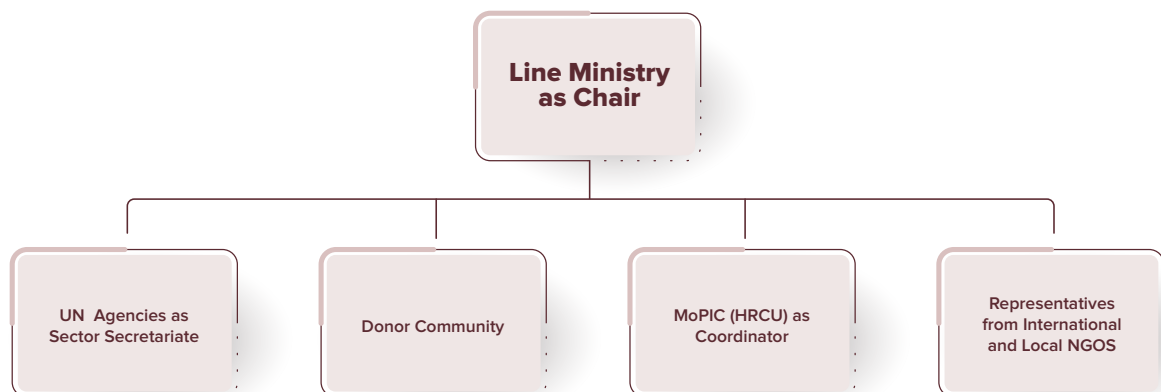


Figure 1: Diagram illustrating the JRPSC Working Structure

Source: *JRP 2020-2022*

It is important to note that MoPIC utilizes donor money to best run the platform and its deliverables including an automated system to direct funding and enhance implementation. Detailed input on the composition of the JRPSC is outlined in the following section. While the Ministry does not have direct representation of refugees in the typical sense, it includes them through the data compiled on their situation, interventions, and funding. Accordingly, the interventions implemented by the JRPSC (Figure 2) are tailored for refugees and accordingly their best interests are streamlined.



Figure 2: Diagram illustrating the JRPSC Knowledge Streamline

In October 2020, Nasser Shraideh was named Minister of MoPIC. He is an economist with over 30 years of experience in the public sector in international economics and development policy research. He also has expertise with the UN system on multilateral and interagency coordination procedures. Furthermore, Shraideh has extensive expertise in international cooperation and fundraising, economic and trade policy, tourism, investment, private sector development, Small and Medium-size Enterprises (SMEs) finance, community development, and institutional capacity building, among other fields. Such talent and expertise like Shraideh reside in the JRPSC and thus represent the local knowledge network that exists in Jordan. Through engaging individuals of such a caliber, the JRPSC is implementing effective use of local talent to enhance sustainable and impactful policy.

Upon assessing the working structure, an overview of the knowledge production composition is made clearer. Many members are from the Jordanian host community and major contributions are channeled through local and international NGOs and UN agencies. This government-run platform makes its connection to the governing powers of the host community strong and influential. The JRPs govern the work concerning refugees for all sectors within the plan. The partners are the local government agencies and the related international community organizations that interact from within the mentioned committee. Since the first JRP launched in 2014, MoPIC has worked to guarantee that Syrian refugees and vulnerable communities continue to receive the lifesaving and life-sustaining humanitarian aid that they require. Over time, this help has shifted to a greater emphasis on integrated, dignified solutions that improve people's resilience and options.

The localization of knowledge production entails that all implementing partners – including government institutions, UN agencies, local and international NGOs, and the private sector – submit project information through the Jordan Response Information System for the Syria Crisis (JORISS), which is the only government-owned online project submission system for tracking, monitoring, and reporting JRP projects.

According to Jordanian law, JORISS is utilized by the Jordanian government to approve foreign contributions. JORISS is utilized to collect and organize all JRP financial and technical project data, allowing MoPIC to track activities and financing by sector, implementing partner, donor, and geographic area. In this way, JORISS provides a tool for the Jordanian government to improve its ability to monitor JRP results, hence boosting overall transparency. JORISS enables MoPIC to achieve effective targeting and prioritization, eliminate duplications and gaps in the refugee crisis response, and give policy and decision-makers up-to-date analyses on the shifting situation by providing updated information. This initiative and its outputs bring together different donors, which is typically not the case. Usually, each donor or member of the international community tends to work independently. This is a first experience in this level and kind of coordination. In turn, donors provide the MoPIC with substantial access to both data and resources to enable localized decision-making.

For the current JRP, a 6.6 billion United States Dollars (USD) endorsement was secured - a billion dollars short of the previous plan that secured 7.6 billion USD (Husseini, 2017). MoPIC has announced that they plan on distributing the funds for the current JRP equally across the duration of the plan,

this amounts to 2.2 billion USD each year. The Jordanian government and international community - composed of around 150 countries - acquired the funding to invest in providing a sustainable resolution to the crisis. It is important to note that major investors include the World Bank and United Nations Development Program (UNDP). When taking a deeper look, the major supporters for Jordan on the refugee front were, the World Bank, the EU, Department for International Development (DFID) and international funds gathered for refugee related issues. UN agencies have been especially active in their financial support, even outpacing think tanks and consultancies on bids.

UNICEF, UNHCR are of the few remaining (United Nation) UN agencies that have their own funds and support countries financially and technically. They also provide MoPIC with substantial access to data and resources that enable localized decision making, enabling MoPIC to retain a highly localized knowledge ecosystem (Al-Nawas, 2020). The JRPSC and JRP are funded by foreign aid sources such as USAID, UNDP, EU, GIZ to name a few. Although there are international agendas, the GoJ guides and directs funds according to its needs and based on its policies. Financial aid, in addition to the substantial humanitarian aid that has already been provided since the onset of the crisis, primarily flows to the country's national and local institutions and development partners such as the UN and NGOs. This aid enables Jordan's government and MoPIC to assume greater responsibility for the development, implementation, and administration of response efforts aimed at both Jordan's host communities and Syrian refugees (MoPIC, 2014).

MOPIC ACTIVITIES, INFLUENCE, AND REACH

The main activity that the MoPIC engages in under the JRPSC is delivering the Jordan Response Plan (JRP), the latest version is the 2020-22 edition, which outlines the Kingdom's plan to coordinate efforts to tackle the protracted displacement crisis. The JRP for the Syrian crisis is a strategic partnership structure that brings together the Jordanian government, donors, and UN agencies to design a refugee, resilience-building, and development response to the impact of the Syrian crisis on Jordan (JRPSC, 2020).

The JRP is currently the only plan that addresses the needs and vulnerabilities of both Syrian refugees and vulnerable Jordanians affected by the Syrian crisis, accounting for their unique geographical regions and their corresponding data.

Development of the JRP entails a great deal of knowledge production, as all the activities detailed in the plan are based on the data collected from ongoing projects and interventions on the ground that are processed locally through MoPIC. This includes cooperation across multiple networks within Jordan's greater knowledge ecosystem, such as collaborations between the MoPIC and UN agencies and other international and local organizations. Because the burden of the crisis cannot be addressed unilaterally, the JRP, which is based on a multidisciplinary approach, is critical in assessing the total impact for Syrian refugees and vulnerable Jordanians in host communities, especially with regard to resources such as power generation and water. Furthermore, the importance of the JRP is emphasized as it deepens local and international understanding of how a significant host community like Jordan behaves.

The plan covers seven sectors and several sub-sectors, these include: Public services, Education, Health, Economic Empowerment, Social Protection and Justice, Shelter, and WASH. These selected sectors are tied to the UN sustainable development goals (SDGs). The JRP works to produce knowledge and policy that tackles the pillars for Refugee Needs, Host Community Needs and Infrastructure and Institutional Capacity Development Needs under the sectors. The public sector, including MoPIC, continues to demonstrate a strong commitment to delivering services to 660,892 registered Syrian refugees, particularly in the Northern governorates of Jordan: Mafraq, Irbid, Jerash,

Balqa, Madaba, Zarqa, and Amman. In the past, the JRP tackled more sectors. However, due to budgeting changes, the MoPIC concentrated their efforts on the seven sectors. The seven sectors are selected by the JRPSC working structure which is composed of local, international, and UN agencies. This collaboration resulted in a support from each and every entity based on their area of added value. The JRPs are validated, approved, and reviewed by all partners, who provide support according to their area of expertise.

Initially, the JRP was designed to serve as a national model for managing the Syrian refugee crisis, achieving global public benefit and informing global stakeholders. Despite the enormous economic, military, security, and humanitarian costs, the Jordan Response Plan provides promising economic prospects to Syrian refugees in Jordan through collecting data and knowledge to inform policies. In turn, this serves to increase understanding of refugees and forced migration issues. The new JRP 2020-2022 intends to relieve strain on Jordan as a host country and enhance living circumstances and self-reliance, which will aid in eliminating vulnerabilities and fostering Jordan's ability to deliver high-quality services to Syrian refugees. It is worth mentioning that the different JRPs were presented in the different Syrian refugee-related international conferences, whereby they were the based upon which international agreements were signed to enhance refugee livelihoods and increase their integration within the Jordanian community.

Perceived influence & impact

For the past 11 years, the JRP has been a highly influential and successful tool that has unified stakeholders in gathering information and informing policy for the benefit of Syrian refugees and host communities. Meanwhile, UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in Jordan Anders Pedersen, speaking on behalf of the international community in Jordan, said the JRP's "hard work" in planning, implementation, and monitoring over the last six years has proven to be a "catalyst to and a cornerstone of" the strong partnership between the international community and Jordan's government (MoPIC, 2021).

In order to assess the JRP's impact, several of the JRP sectors will be addressed in the sections below. The aim is to understand how JRP benefitted the host and refugee community, since JRP-produced knowledge enhances refugee protection, solutions, and well-being. It is important to note that no studies were conducted to assess the impact of implementing the different initiatives of the periodic JRPs. Additionally, the weak ability to allocate the required funding clearly indicates that implementation was not done as conveyed or required in the different JRPs.

Public services

The Public Services Sector covers public services such as transport, energy and the environment. In this sector, the Ministry of Local Administration, the Ministry of Energy, the Ministry of Environment, and the Ministry of Transportation in addition to various international partners, work to inform and impact efforts to support Jordanian municipalities affected by the influx of Syrian refugees in delivering services and providing Jordanians and Syrians with job options to improve their resilience. These interventions focus on enhancing public services, as a result of the additional pressures placed on the public sector due to the influx of the Syrian refugee population.

The Public Services Sector Response Strategy includes measures to meet the immediate needs of the most vulnerable while also planning medium and long-term strategies to support self-sufficiency, increase infrastructure resilience, improve service delivery to support systems and contribute to social cohesion between Syrians and host communities. The strategy is based upon knowledge produced by partners and local knowledge systems that inform on the gaps that exist within the sector, such that many reforms in the public services took place from the previous JRP 2018-2020 to the JRP 2020-

2022. The JRSP has recorded multiple initiatives dedicated to tackling public services policy under the JRP where its impact is enhanced by the presence of a knowledge ecosystem and knowledge production. Examples include the “Support to the implementation of the National Solid Waste Management Strategy” and The Municipal Services and Social Resilience Project (MSSRP). Those projects facilitated funding that allowed for sector interventions in supporting refugees and vulnerable communities.

Health sector

As a result of JRPSC intervention, more than 2.2 million Jordanians without health insurance have been offered discounted access to public health services by the Jordanian government. Furthermore, beginning in March 2019, Syrian refugees have had to pay the Jordanian tariff for public health care, which is subsidized at 80% of the cost. This program was implemented to increase access to a comprehensive range of health treatments for refugees, improving their health and lowering the burden of the crisis on the public health system (Department of Statistics, 2017). With the support of the Ministry of Health, the achievements of the JRPSC signify the impact of knowledge production on policy generation: Pneumococcal Conjugate Vaccine (PCV) was introduced to the national Expanded Program of Immunization (EPI) and increased resources were allocated to strengthen the national screening program for the detection and treatment of Phenylketonuria (PKU). In addition, increased support was extended to all Ministry of Health facilities to tackle increased pressures in the health sector since the arrival of Syrian refugees, and the persistent wealth gaps amongst the Jordanian population.

Education sector

This sector comprises the combined efforts of the Ministry of Education (and their respective ministry plans) and the Ministry of Higher Education (and their respective ministry plans) in accordance with the National Strategy for Human Resource Development and related UN SDGs, aiming to increase access and inclusion of all children and minors to basic education, and to empower youth to pursue higher education that equips them with the necessary skills to work according to the labor market demands in Jordan. As a result of the previous JRP and related efforts, the MoPIC notes that there was recorded progress in school enrolment. In 2019/2020, 136,400 school-aged Syrian refugee children were enrolled in formal education, an increase from 134,100 in 2018/2019 (Ministry of Education, 2018). This aims to increase access and inclusion of all children and minors to basic education. As well as empower youth to pursue higher education that equips them with the necessary skills to work according to the labour market demands in Jordan.

Shelter sector

One of the most impacted sectors since the start of the Jordanian refugee crisis is the housing sector. This impact seemed severe in regions that hosted the most refugees, such as Amman. JRP uses the data and knowledge gathered to enhance accessibility of adequate housing to both Syrian and affected Jordanian communities. Through a range of interventions, MoPIC addresses specific vulnerabilities to create a positive impact in the housing market. MoPIC does this by providing housing units to the market to relieve upward pressure on rental prices and provide affordable options.

Economic empowerment

Economic empowerment in JRP interventions is addressed through two sub-sectors: food security and livelihoods. In 2018, the World Food Program’s (WFP) Comprehensive Food Security Vulnerability Assessment (CFSVA) revealed an increase in food insecurity among Syrians living outside the camps. MoPIC and JRP continues to provide necessary interventions to ensure that affected households are not negatively impacted. The JRP recorded the following impact data: Nearly 110,260 vulnerable Syrian

refugees in camps received in-kind food aid (bread, welcome meals, and school lunches) (MoPIC, 2020, p.,65) . Monetary support was provided to 110,260 Syrian refugees living in camps. Cash support was provided to 377,845 Syrian refugees living outside the camps. 158,892 needy Jordanians and Syrian refugees in host communities received in-kind food aid. Jordanians receiving National Aid Fund (NAF), Palestinian refugees from Syria, and refugees of other nationalities were included in the annual comprehensive food security vulnerability assessment exercise for the first time.

With regard to livelihoods, the Jordanian government, host communities, and Syrians are all concerned about the employment of Syrian refugees. The JRPSC established an internal working group to address this issue titled the 'Livelihoods Working Group', which is a sub-knowledge ecosystem that exchanges information and analysis on policy. The working group participants represent the range of Livelihood actors including the Government of Jordan; UN agencies; INGOs and microfinance entities. The impact recorded for this committee are as follows (these estimates were quantified through JORISS JRP 2019) (MoPIC, 2020, p.53): Improved short-term self-sufficiency methods to improve income availability for long-term economic possibilities. Support provided to almost 12,000 Syrian refugees and nearly 92,00 Jordanians. Formal employment that met decent work standards increased, impacting nearly 3,400 Syrian refugees and 850 vulnerable Jordanians. Entrepreneurial development through the establishment of an enabling environment for economic prosperity for entrepreneurs and their venture, an estimated 8,200 Syrian refugees and 5,920 Jordanians were positively impacted. Sustainable and long-term growth by increasing public sector capacity has benefitted around 80 Jordanians.

WASH (water, sanitation and hygiene)

Much like the housing sector, this sector was greatly affected by the sudden surge in population. Only 93.8% of the population had access to properly managed water, and 80.6% had access to securely managed sanitation facilities, with only 12.6% in urban areas connected to a sewer system (Ministry of Water and Irrigation, n.d.). Due to interventions made by JRPSC, more than 120,000 refugees were provided with life-saving WASH interventions in camps and over 20 WASH facilities were provided to schools that have over 9,000 Syrian and Jordanian pupils (MoPIC,, 2020, p.71).

Social protection and justice

Jordan's government developed a comprehensive National Social Protection Strategy to break the intergenerational cycle of poverty and offer a social safety net; however, it excludes refugees. The government spends around 3.64% of its GDP on education, 4.11% on health care and only 0.94% on non-contributory Social Security programs (The Jordanian National Commission for Women, 2019). Because refugees are not eligible for any non-contributory programs, most humanitarian support programs are only for refugees, with little cooperation between the national system and humanitarian assistance programs. Jordan's aims for assisting Syrian refugees in terms of social protection are outlined in a variety of national programs, including the JRP, Jordanian National Action Plan (JONAP) for the Implementation of UN Security Council resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security 2018 - 2021, and Jordan Vision 2025, as well as the National Action Plan to minimize underage marriage. Furthermore, in the sector of social protection and justice, JRP and the work of MoPIC is vital to fill this gap. The Justice Sector recommended interventions in the 2017-2019 Jordan Response Plan to build institutional capacity and offer legal help to both Jordanians and Syrian refugees in host communities.

MoPIC under the JRPSC and partnering organizations were able to stimulate growth and improvements in key sectors that impact the lives and situations of refugees. From what can be 'measured', MoPIC's JRPSC is a highly influential platform that generates JRPs and supporting strategies that enhance the overall situation and improve the livelihoods of displaced individuals and the host community. Most of its influence is derived from the JRP, which combines the influence of major government policy change, enhances public opinion and raises awareness amongst major political and economic influencers.

The MoPIC's and JRP's impact is also enhanced by its seamless integration of the UN SDG model in policy creation and implementation. The SDGs provide public policy professionals a critical chance to help society build adequate circumstances for a brighter future via concerted efforts. To achieve the optimal development outcomes from the SDGs, a new type of systems thinking will be required across the three pillars of sustainable development (planet, people, and prosperity). The issues of sustainability and gender, among others became a prerequisite to any implementation of any initiative or project. This on its own created a new direction of thought not only important to knowledge production but the transfer of knowledge through initiative implementation. In order to achieve this task, MoPIC forms partnerships with many agents and stakeholders to widen the impact for refugees and host community. The integration of the SDGs as part of the JRP also allowed for an overall increased efficiency for impact. The different sectors represent the different SDGs overall. SDG 5: Gender equality and women's empowerment is represented throughout the different JRPs, poverty reduction and livelihoods are represented as specific sectors and are a prime example of two other SDGs. Examples also cover sustainability, environment and housing which can be directly linked to different SDGs.

Factors that explain MoPIC's influence and reach

Perhaps the most significant factor in explaining the achieved impact and power of MoPIC and ultimately by the JRPSC and JRP is that MoPIC is a senior government organization with decision-making power at the national-level. MoPIC has the ability to facilitate and accelerate data gathering and knowledge sharing from the top-down to the greater population. In fact, much of the influence discussed in the previous section highlights how the JRP generated impact through policy change and outcomes for vulnerable host communities and refugees, such as through better infrastructure, more job opportunities and livelihoods to survive, enhanced education and health services.

The purpose of the JRP is to uplift the livelihoods of both the host and refugee communities in harmony with national policies and development strategies, such as the Executive Development Plan and the most current Economic Modernization Plan, among others. Furthermore, MoPIC also leads the board of the Department of Statistics (DoS), this is of added value due to the data used and obtained from the Department to fulfil the domains of the different sectors of the JRP. Another success factor is MoPIC's creative methods and modalities, which guarantee that the JRP is a significant model for achieving resilience and mitigating humanitarian needs in an efficient, cost-effective, and transparent way, all while demonstrating strong national leadership. This national leadership is represented through fruitful collaborations with ministries, local governments and experts across Jordan. As such, the JRP was developed under the general supervision of the Jordanian government, as represented by MoPIC (leadership), and with the active engagement of sector Task Forces (ownership and inclusive participation) representing all key national and international stakeholders. Although funded by the international community, this knowledge ecosystem collates local data and knowledge from the ground.

Another key highlight that can be extracted is MoPIC's overall approach taken to tackle the crisis. MoPIC has prioritized the wellbeing of the host and refugee community by adopting a forward-thinking attitude. What started as a reactive response plan to mitigate immediate risks, is now a long-term response plan that advocates for continuity and resilience. Focus has shifted from refugees and the host community being researched and governed on the basis of temporary refuge and the fulfilment of basic needs. The focus now encompasses real influence in social cohesion and financial freedom.

A lesson learnt from this would be that in order for a successful knowledge ecosystem to prosper, there is a need to stay dynamic and elastic to respond to contextual changes, much like how the JRP evolved. Since its inception in 2015, collaborative and transparent principles were at the core of the plan's development, which engaged over 150 national and international partners. The role of external actors in achieving the success of the HCSP is vital. UN agencies, foreign aid agencies, local and international NGOs, and similar stakeholders have provided the necessary resources and means for

the success of the plan's goals and influence. Total foreign assistance committed to Jordan in the second quarter of 2021 reached about 301 million USD. Around 70% of the funding goes to the General Budget, demonstrating the donors' faith in the national processes. This support includes regular grants, concessional loans, support for regional projects and additional grants to the JRP and MoPIC, which by default supported implementing projects from the JRP or other related refugee and host community support projects ("Foreign assistance", 2021). The below chart is extracted from the latest foreign assistance report summarizing the sources of foreign income.

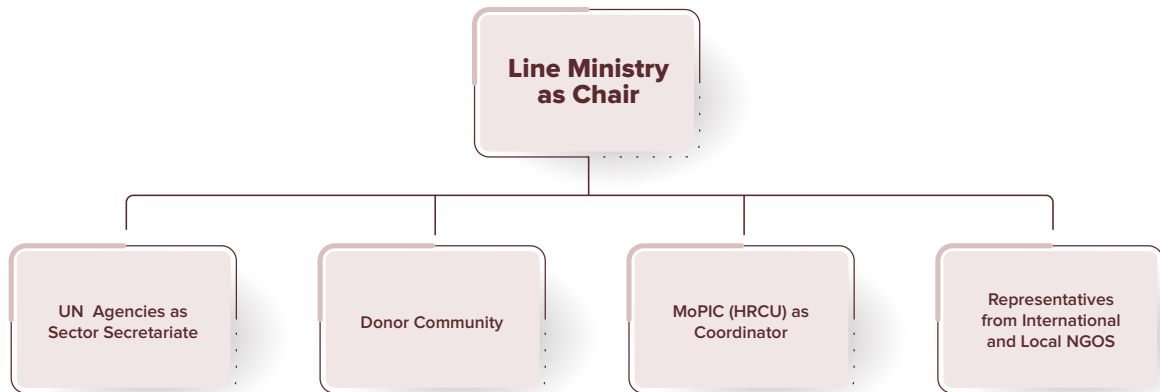


Figure 3: Chart of Grants for Budget Support by Donors (2018-2021)

Source: *Foreign Assistance Committed to Jordan Report (Q2 2021)*

The utilization and effective coordination of the public sector is another strength. This is mostly due to MoPIC leading the JRPSC/JRP. The unification of efforts by relevant stakeholders can also be a lesson learnt for organizations that operate under similar goals. National ownership or collaboration of development plans and knowledge ecosystems is widely recognized as the most suitable response for donors given the amount of influence governments hold. Demonstrating a collaborative and operative front with other local government entities possibly helped attract financial resources especially since international and external aid is favorably given to the country's national and local institutions, as well as UN and NGO development partners.

Interventions of external stakeholders come from both an international and national front. National assistance was predominantly from other ministries in Jordan. For example, the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Higher Education played a vital role in delivering on JRPSC/JRP education objectives and implementation. Throughout the JRP and much of the work done for refugees, different actors were able to contribute beyond financials. Such that JRP included many references and data-sharing between organizations such as UN Women, ILO and other independent research findings.

CONCLUSION

In accordance with the principles of aid coordination established in the Paris Declaration in 2005, Accra in 2009 and Busan in 2011, Jordan's government pioneered a new approach that brought together Jordan's existing refugee, resilience-building, and development responses to the Syria crisis under one national planning and coordination framework - MoPIC's JRP - with the pre-existing host JRPSC (formerly HCSP) serving as its backbone. The JRP serves as a strategic collaboration tool between the government, private sector, and the international community to support the vulnerable Jordanian host community and refugees residing in Jordan (The Jordan Response Platform for the Syria Crisis [JRPSC], n.d.). Even though over a decade has passed since the onset of crisis, there are still ongoing needs to be met for the refugees, who remain susceptible to the conditions of displacement.

MoPIC sponsors knowledge ecosystem activities that strive to influence policy implementation. MoPIC's effect and impact on the Syrian refugee crisis reveals that the JRP remains an effective and impactful mechanism to deliver JRPSC services to Syrian refugees. Factors attributed to the successes of the JRP are rooted in its well-informed analysis which moulded its policy generation and reform. The JRP combines the resources, efforts, and knowledge of different external and internal actors to enhance the protection and well-being of Syrian refugees in Jordan. Overall, both the internal and external community praise the progression and development that resulted from MoPIC's efforts through the JRP and the knowledge that was collated and produced in it.

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About the Refugee Research and Policy Program

Lebanon and the Arab region are facing one of the largest refugee crises spawning serious public policy challenges. Given this context, the Refugee Research and Policy program generates refugee related/policy-oriented research that addresses an existing knowledge gap in the field of refugee studies. Moreover, the program seeks to enrich the quality of debate among scholars, officials, international organizations, and civil society actors, with the aim to inform policymaking relating to refugees in the Middle East and beyond.

About the Issam Fares Institute for Public Policy & International Affairs

Inaugurated in 2006, the Issam Fares Institute for Public Policy & International Affairs (IFI) at the American University of Beirut is an independent, research-based, policy-oriented institute. It aims to initiate and develop policy-relevant research in and about the Arab world. The Institute aims at bridging the gap between academia and policymaking by conducting high quality research on the complex issues and challenges faced by Lebanese and Arab societies within shifting international and global contexts, by generating evidence-based policy recommendations and solutions for Lebanon and the Arab world, and by creating an intellectual space for an interdisciplinary exchange of ideas among researchers, scholars, civil society actors, media, and policymakers.

ABOUT LERRN

LERRN is the Local Engagement Refugee Response Network bringing together global researcher and practitioners committed to promoting protection and solutions with and for refugees. The aim is to reshape the discourse and politics of the global refugee regime by enhancing the role of civil society in all stages of the development and functioning of the regime. This is done through partnered and collaborative research, various capacity building activities, knowledge mobilization tools, and promoting the value of refugee participation.



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