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| Jordan Humanitarian Fund  2019 Position paper |  |

1. **Introduction**

The origins of the Jordan Humanitarian Fund (JHF) are rooted in the Regional Humanitarian Fund for the Syria Crisis administered under the stewardship of the Regional Humanitarian Coordination for the Syria Crisis. In 2014 it was agreed to devolve the regional fund into separate country-based funds with the Humanitarian Fund for Jordan was established in July 2014, under the stewardship of the Humanitarian Coordinator in Jordan, to support response to the impact of the Syria crisis.

Since its inception the objective of the JHF is to enable the effective delivery of humanitarian assistance by providing humanitarian partners with rapid, timely and flexible funding to respond to the current humanitarian situation affecting Jordan. With the investment of a broader range of donors in 2015, the JHF was enabled to support projects in both Jordan and projects in southern Syria conducted as part of the cross-border operations. Thus, as of 2015 the JHF has allocated up to 70% of funding to projects implemented in Jordan and 30% to projects implemented in southern Syria.

Since its establishment, the Jordan Humanitarian Fund received a total amount of US $46.21 million. The contributors to the fund are Belgium, Sweden, Germany, United Kingdom, Ireland, Netherlands, Italy, and India. An annual target of US $ 10 million was set for the JHF, the fund was able to meet its target in the years that followed. However, in 2016, the JHF exceeded its target reaching US $ 12.69 million.

Under the UNSC resolutions 2165, 2191, 2258, 2332, and 2393 the JHF started funding projects in south Syria in mid-2015 and continued to do so until the regain of the Syrian government the southern governorates in July 2018. The total funds that have been allocated to projects in south Syria US$ 7.75 million enabling humanitarian assistance to reach 487,315 beneficiaries. The funding amount constitutes 19% of the total funds allocated during the aforementioned period. The focus of the JHF has been to support of INGOs and NNGOs, however, the door was also open to fund UN agencies and Red Cross/Crescent societies as needed. The largest portion (74%) of funding went to INGOs, 20% to NNGOs, where UN agencies and Red Cross/Crescent societies received 4% and 2% of the allocations respectively.

The JHF funded 46 organizations: 28 INGOs, 14 NNGOs, 3 UN agencies, and 1 Red Crescent Society. For 2019 we have currently 83 eligible partners to access the Fund, out of which are 19 national NGOs.

1. **Evolution of the Humanitarian Context**

Jordan remains at the forefront of one of the worst humanitarian crises of our time. The situation in the country continues to be precarious with extensive humanitarian and development needs. Jordan has received a large share of Syrian refugees and addressing the needs of Syrian refugees has placed considerable strain on national resources and has impacted on the development gains of the last decade. Currently 673,414 Syrians continue to seek refuge in Jordan as registered refugees and overall an estimated total of 1.3 million Syrians now account for 10 per cent of Jordan’s population. According to UNHCR’s statistics over 80 per cent of the registered refugees live in urban and rural communities across the country, with less than 20% residing in camps. With the Syria crisis now entering its ninth year, Jordan is faced with multiple economic challenges as it struggles to meet the continued needs of refugees in the Kingdom as well as address the needs of vulnerable Jordanians. This places critical pressure on the country’s social, economic, institutional and natural resources with increased competition for access to public utilities, schooling, health services, and employment opportunities placing Jordan in a fragile situation.

The last six months has witnessed rapid and significant developments in southern Syria. In June and July, the Government of Syria launched a robust offensive against the opposition controlled south-west of the country creating transitory high levels of humanitarian need and eventually resulted in a complete shift of territorial control from the opposition forces to the Government of Syria. As a result of the shift in territorial control the last formal cross border convoy under the framework of the UN Security Council Resolution 2165 took place on 25 June. Essentially suspending indefinitely, formal cross border operations. In August and September the cross-border partners worked closely with their Syrian counterparts to ensure transition of operations to Syria and plan for a final exceptional convoy of residual humanitarian assistance to Syria from Jordan which is currently under-way. In 2019 the JHF will mainly focus on responding to humanitarian needs of the most vulnerable Syrian refugees and host communities in Jordan, while maintaining the option to act in line with SCR 2449.

UNHCR’s position remains that present conditions in Syria are premature for a rapid shift to facilitated voluntary repatriation. As the situation in Syria is evolving and people decide to voluntarily return, it is important to safeguard space for free and informed decision making and respect for such decisions. It is further critical to continue planning for eventual UNHCR-assisted repatriation to Syria, including for a potential larger-scale facilitation of voluntary repatriation if and when conditions for a safe and dignified return are in place. However, at this stage, UNHCR does not yet facilitate nor promote returns to Syria. In concert with its efforts in ensuring the voluntary exercise of the right to return, UNHCR continue to pursue durable solutions comprehensively, including through resettlement and other pathways.

However, until these discussions come to fruition, humanitarian assistance will still be required and the JHF will continue to be a critical tool in supporting these efforts.

In alignment with the outcomes of the **World Humanitarian Summit (WHS) in 2015 and the Grand Bargain** which articulate commitments on improving the transparency, efficiency, flexibility and longevity of aid and by giving more support to local and national responders, both directly and through country-based pooled funds; the JHF will strive to increase its donor base in 2019 and continue to promote localization by supporting national partners. In addition, the JHF team together with the Advisory Board will continue to enhance the efficiency of the Fund at all levels.

1. **Principles guiding 2019 Allocations**

**The JHF will continue to support national priorities as articulated in the Jordan Response Plan 2019-2021 by supporting coordination and** multi sectoral prioritized humanitarian interventions with a special focus on protection and gender as a cross cutting approach. The JHF will maintain its flexibility to respond to the needs of southern Syria following the renewal of the cross-border resolution. If the restriction is lifted, then the Fund will be ready to respond as the situation evolves. Tacking stock, the following principles should guide the future JHF allocation.

* **Target 1:** In line with the guidelines of the JHF to The JHF will continue to focus on responding to humanitarian needs of vulnerable individuals and those with specific Needs. The Fund will especially target critical funding gaps **and urgent humanitarian needs (Needs Based Approach) of the specific groups (Annex I)**
* **Target 2:** **Localisation of Delivery of Assistance:** In line with the objectives of the “*Grand Bargain*” and commitments made by the UN Secretary-General at the World Humanitarian Summit in May 2016 to prioritise national “*front line responders*”, engage a more diverse range of actors, in particular increasing local and national partners, the JHF will continue supporting and promoting diversity in partnership by choosing the **best placed actor to deliver humanitarian support to people in need.** JHF partners will be a variety of humanitarian actors, including national NGOs. The Fund will look to directly support national partners that have passed a due Diligence and Capacity Assessment and who are best placed actors to implement projects locally. In 2019 the JHF will strive to increase the percentage of funds directed at national partners to up to %30 of the total allocations.The Fund will also favor interventions that demonstrate clear partnership between national and international NGOs.
* **Target 3: The JHF will promote increase focus on choice of aid modality and response analysis, including the choice of cash based programming**: In alignment with the World Humanitarian summit, the JHF but not limited, will also strive to support cash-based interventions, when deemed the most appropriate aid modality through a qualitative response analysis.
* **Target 4: The JHF will continue to maintain its flexibility** as a funding mechanism and focus on the life sustain activities, filling funding gaps and addressing most urgent humanitarian needs in the country. The JHF will continue aligning its programmatic focus with the JRP and sector priorities retaining flexibility to respond to unforeseen needs and emergencies when they arise.
* **Target 5: Enhancing efficiency of the Fund:** The JHF will adopt an agile stand so that it can adapt as needed and remain fit for purpose. The JHF continues to be the instrument that is available toamplify the quality of humanitarian response, including but not limited to accountability to affected populations, gender and protection mainstreaming, environment and ‘do no harm’ at all project stages. The Fund will seek integration across sectors and complementarity with other funding sources, to ensure timely and efficient prioritizations in support of a stronger collective response and maximise impact of limited resources.

***The JHF will also seek to review the management of the Fund with a view to reduce transaction costs and*** ensure greater transparency in order to demonstrate the impact/value-for-money both to donors as well as to affected people. Pooled funds have proven to reduce transaction costs and enhance accountability and transparency, thus, enabling better reporting of aid flows and the impact of donor investment. Given the nature of the Fund, administration fees and costs are minimised allowing funds to be channelled into programme delivery reaching beneficiaries more efficiently.

**Humanitarian Financing Unit**

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