

## Report

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**TRAFIG Internal Fieldwork Report:  
Jordan Period 1 (July-Dec. 2019)**

## Authors

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## Project

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TRAFIG is a multi-country and multi-partner research project funded by the European Union (2019–21). The project aims at generating new knowledge to help develop solutions for protracted displacement that are tailored to the needs and capacities of persons affected by displacement. TRAFIG studies how transnational and local networks as well as mobility are used as resources by displaced people to manage their everyday lives. The preliminary report covers four themes (Highlights) based on 100 semi-structured interviews by local field staff with Syrian refugees (Data Collection).

## Disclaimer

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## Report: Highlights

TRAFIG seeks to improve the protection and resilience of refugees and to enhance trust and cooperation between refugees and host communities. The preliminary report covers key findings from the four main research themes (1-4):

### 1. Navigating Governance Regimes

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- **FOOD SECURITY & HEALTH:** With aid volumes shrinking, families are food insecure and subsist at or below poverty levels, at times struggling to meet basic needs. Health care is also inadequate.
- **EMPLOYMENT:** Work permits are available but difficult to access. Women want paid work but find it difficult to combine with caring for children. Most men find work in the informal sector.
- **RESETTLEMENT:** Third-country resettlement opportunities are available (UN), but the selection process is seen as random, and some neither register nor seek to resettle.

### 2. Living in Limbo

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- **FAMILY SUPPORT:** Proximity to family is important as is nuclear family independence, which at times is hard to balance.
- **GENDERED VULNERABILITY:** Women have distinct security-related concerns and vulnerabilities for themselves. They are also concerned by threats of conscripting their male children in Syria.
- **EDUCATION & SCHOOLING:** There is a preference for private school enrolments, especially as a tool for social stratification within the Syrian community.

### 3. Following the Networks

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- **MOBILITY:** Networks and personal links are key and include support for the refugees' safe passage to Jordan by Syrian opposition groups.
- **CONNECTIVITY:** Links to home country and family are maintained by mobile devices and apps.
- **SELF-SETTLEMENT:** Settlement is correlated with age and gender: males at age of conscription and older Syrian refugees prefer to stay in Jordan. Cultural and ethnic ties have been, and continue to be, important for settlement choices.

### 4. Building Alliances

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- **ETHNIC & FAMILY ALLIANCES:** Refugees are extremely reliant on ethnic, tribal and familial relations.
- **MARKET SECTOR INTEGRATION:** Work and jobs are crucial for social and economic integration but in limited supply.
- **SECURITY CONCERNS:** Security issues in host and sending countries limit local social and economic integration and interaction with host society in Jordan.

# Report: Background

This internal fieldwork report serves as a benchmark for the Horizon 2020-TRAFIG project, documenting the first year’s research (2019) progress in Jordan.

## Data collection

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## Field staff

- Rasha Jadaan Husban
- Ahmad Ghanem Shdefat
- Wurud Abdelrazak Alawad
- Khalid Hassan Momani
- Rola Fares Saleem AlMassad

## Data sources

In 2019, the team collected 100 semi-structured interviews with Syrian refugees (male-female ratio 4/6). In 2020, the entire data set collected will include:

- 100 semi-structured interviews
- 30 expert interviews
- 30 biographic/life histories
- 12 focus group discussions
- 24 participatory methods
- 300 quantitative surveys

## Limitations

This report is preliminary. At the time of writing, just over 100 interviews across the five themes had been collected, with a greater focus on Themes 1 and 2. Of the 100 interviews, 40 of them had been transcribed into Arabic, and 20 of them translated into English. The preliminary findings are based upon these interviews, mixed Arabic-English conversations with the researchers and team leads in both Jordan and Norway, and the contextual knowledge and expertise of our staff.

**Note:** Many of the Syrian interviewees are not willing to provide detailed personal information because of security concerns.

## 1. Displacement

- **Refugees:** Jordan has provided refuge to more over one million Syrians, more than half of whom are registered as refugees. Current figures place the refugee population at 650,000 approx., with around 120,000 refugees living in camp settings (19%). The majority live in non-camp settings in rural and urban areas.
- **Legal:** The legal framework governing the treatment of refugees in Jordan is the 1998 MoU between Jordan and UNHCR.
- **Policy:** The main policy instrument for responding to the Syria crisis is the Jordan Response Plan (JRP).

## 2. Field Sites

- **Sites:** The project field sites are major urban locations for Syrian refugees in North Jordan (Irbid, Mafraq), while the third site (Zaatari) is Jordan largest refugee camp (see, Field localities).
- **Irbid** is the second largest urban area in the country (after the capital city of Amman). As of 2016, about 30% of the country’s urban refugees lived in the larger Irbid area.
- **Mafraq** is one of the earliest sites for Syrian refugees to congregate in Jordan due to its proximity to the border with Syria. Mafraq is now home to more than 200,000 people, many or most of whom are Syrians.
- **Zaatari** is located about 15 km from Mafraq City. The camp opened on July 28, 2012. It now has about 76,500 residents.

## 3. Field Localities

