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Refugee UN Volunteer Medical Doctor Basma Abdullah, serving with UNHCR at Al-Hussein bin Abdullah II hospital in Balqa, Jordan.
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Engaging Refugee UN Volunteers as agents of change in Jordan

Refugee UN Volunteers are contributing to the development and wellbeing of their own and host communities in Jordan. In this piece, we underline how volunteering can serve as an enabler for refugees, by engaging them as agents of change while creating livelihood opportunities for them.

Following the adoption of the Global Compact on Refugees by the UN General Assembly in 2018, and in partnership with the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR), UNV launched a special initiative to facilitate the deployment of people of concern with UNHCR as Refugee UN Volunteers. This enables them to engage in an income generating opportunity which also assists them in building on their competencies and skills.

Since August 2021, UNHCR has deployed 12 Refugee UN Volunteers in Jordan, including 10 medical doctors serving in support of Jordan's COVID-19 response. The other two serve as

Refugee Electrical Assistants in Za'atari and Azraq refugee camps.

Commenting on the results achieved through the deployment of Refugee UN Volunteers in Jordan, UNHCR Representative Dominik Bartsch emphasizes the utility of this UNV-UNHCR special initiative in engaging refugees as agents of change.

Refugee UN Volunteer Eyad Al-Masri (34) has 16 years of experience in the field of electricity networks. He was deployed as an electrical assistant in Za'atari camp, which hosts almost [81,000 Syrian refugees](#), in September 2021.

“ This assignment enabled me to do some good for people forced to flee their homes, including myself. It also allowed me to gain invaluable experience. This enhanced my self-confidence and my sense of belonging to the community. --Eyad Al-Masri, Refugee UN Volunteer Electrical Assistant, UNHCR Jordan.

For Eyad, helping ensure the provision of electricity to the camps' inhabitants emphasizes the value of his work, which entails monitoring and maintaining the electricity network in the camp. In addition, he is engaged in raising community awareness on issues related to safety and saving energy.

Souzan Mansour (32) and Abdulrazzak Al-Darkashli (64) are both part of the team of the Refugee Medical Doctors deployed by UNHCR in support of COVID-19 Response in Jordan, under an agreement with the Ministry of Health.

Souzan was deployed as a General Practitioner within the Emergency department at Princess Basma hospital in Irbid, the same facility in which she spent one year training after graduating from the university in 2019. For her, this assignment has been namely useful to gain experience in communicating with the patients. “It also allowed me to give back to the country which welcomed me and my family with hospitality,” she explains.

“ Volunteering made me feel safer and further polished my personality. It broadened my knowledge and experience. I hope I can keep giving by engaging in more opportunities to serve my community. --Souzan Mansour, Refugee Medical Doctor, UNHCR Jordan.

Meanwhile, Abdulrazzak joined the COVID-19 vaccination team at Al-Bashir hospital in

Amman as a General Practitioner. There, he was assigned to monitor and treat side effects among the vaccine recipients, namely those who show allergic reactions or have underlying conditions. When a few people developed such adverse reactions, his role was to respond quickly through the proper protocol to ensure their safety and wellbeing.

"Having spent a while off-service, this assignment helped me regain my self-confidence. Being able to put my skills and expertise in the service of others once again is namely very rewarding," Abdulrazzak shares.

UNHCR Representative Dominik Bartsch is highly appreciative of the partnership and this UNV-UNHCR special initiative.

“ This is an enormous untapped potential in terms of opportunities, not just for UNHCR operations, but really for the entire UN family. Refugee UN Volunteers can be deployed in many different programmes and I really do see great potential for this facility. -- Dominik Bartsch, UNHCR Representative in Jordan.

 Arab States

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