June 2017

East Amman Area-Based Livelihoods Assessment
Objectives

- **Context:** Rising unemployment rates in Jordan; Challenges faced by Syrian refugees in accessing formal employment opportunities
  - Growing interest among humanitarian and development actors towards developing sustainable livelihood solutions
- **Primary objective:** Support humanitarian and development actors implementing livelihoods programmes in East Amman
  - Providing a deeper understanding of the barriers faced by Syrians and Jordanians seeking to access work opportunities and employers seeking to provide work opportunities in East Amman
- **Hypothesis:** Mobility is the main barrier to accessing income generating opportunities for Syrians and Jordanians living in East Amman
  - Identified by DRC and REACH teams based on programmatic observations
  - DRC observed that users of job matching services frequently stated that opportunities were too far away or transport services were too expensive for them to use
- **Approach:** Qualitative area-based assessment, with East Amman as the target unit
Methodology

Data collection was conducted by REACH in March 2017, in collaboration with the Danish Refugee Council, using a qualitative, area-based approach.

**Data collection method**

- **Focus group discussions** with Jordanians and Syrians looking for work
- **Key informant interviews** with business owners
- **Key informant interviews** with stakeholders

**Specific objectives**

- Identify **barriers** to accessing work
- Identify **economic catchment zone**, based on proximity to transport routes and trade sectors, through **participatory mapping**
- Identify challenges with **hiring** staff
- Identify employers’ hiring **preferences** in terms of **skill sets** and **profiles**
- Identify employers’ propensity to provide **training** and other **benefits**
- Understand roles and responsibilities of external parties in improving access to livelihood opportunities

**Sample disaggregation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Syrian</th>
<th>Jordanian</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**KIs**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>KIs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food processing</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restaurants</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Type**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>KIs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CBOs/NGOs</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business associations</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Mobility and access to transport services
Nationality

Syrian worker

Presence of work permit → Access to legal employment

Feel more secure → Travel further for work opportunities

Restricted to single employer → Potential for reduced wages/exploitation

Concerns about security → Work closer to home

Illegal work → No formal ties to single employer

Access to daily work and daily pay
For those with families, the willingness to travel to specific areas is largely constrained by the **time spent away from the home**.

- Maximum journey time was typically between 2 and 4 hours each day (or 12 to 14 hours spent away from the home in total).

### Profile Examples

- **Single Syrian male**: Work permits
- **Single Jordanian male**: Social factors
- **Male with family**: Family responsibilities
### Skill sets and experience

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employer sector</th>
<th>Job role</th>
<th>Preferred profile</th>
<th>Reason</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Retail</td>
<td>Low profile roles such as service workers or drivers</td>
<td>Syrians or Egyptians</td>
<td>Jordanians will not accept such low profile roles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restaurant</td>
<td>Cashier</td>
<td>Jordanian</td>
<td>Can only trust Jordanians</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food processing (sweet shop)</td>
<td>Hospitality</td>
<td>Syrians</td>
<td>Have good communication skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kanafe chef</td>
<td>Jordanians</td>
<td>Only Jordanians are capable of this role</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services (mechanics)</td>
<td>Technical roles</td>
<td>Jordanians</td>
<td>New hybrid cars are not common in Syria</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Main Conclusion

Mobility is a key factor in ensuring access to work opportunities and is determined by the profile of the household, rather than the individual alone.

Work permits offer increased mobility for some but do not necessarily represent a catch-all solution in their current format.

The loss of flexibility with regards to labour mobility once a work permit is obtained is a significant disincentive and often outweighs the benefits of having of work permit in terms of personal security.

Employers face few challenges in finding staff to meet their needs but staff retention and commitment levels are the main problems faced.

High level of dynamism and change in the labour market is a key consideration for those engaging in livelihoods programming.
Recommendations

> Skills matching programmes should start at the neighbourhood level in order to overcome the more immediate issues of physical transportation and personal security.

> Livelihoods programmes need to address high staff turnover and challenges with commitment.

> Financial support should be considered for those who are unable to cover transport costs during the first months of employment.

> Support should be provided to smaller businesses who lack the financial or staff capacity to stay up to date with work permit legislation.

> Efforts should be made to ensure Syrians are well informed on issues related to work permits and ongoing monitoring of the working conditions of those with work permits should be considered.

> Existing measures made by employers to improve employee mobility should be supported and replicated elsewhere.
Employers prioritise local staff because it reduces the potential for commitment issues.

However finding staff locally can be a challenge – concerns around interacting with friends, relatives, and neighbours.

One solution put in place by multiple business owners is to provide transport to employees.
Provision of other employee benefits

For those living outside Amman who do not wish to relocate, a transport allowance is provided.

Company bus travels daily from specific locations in East Amman, such as Raghadan bus station.

For those living outside Amman, accommodation is provided.