

OVERVIEW

The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan has been one of the most welcoming and accepting of refugees in the Middle East, but this has proven burdensome in recent years. Refugees have flooded the country by the hundreds of thousands. The king, meanwhile, is contending with a host of regional problems, including the crisis in neighboring Syria; the rise of Islamic extremism; civil war in Yemen; the sectarian rift in Iraq; continued tensions between Israel and the Palestinians; and overall cooling of relations with Israel.

ECONOMIC IMPACT

The influx of refugees has pushed Jordan's economy to the brink of collapse. With more than a million Syrian refugees, and many also from Iraq, the country is overwhelmed. Inflation and unemployment are both high, and have impacted every community — national or refugee — in this resource-poor country of eight million people.

IMPACT ON CHRISTIANS

Jordan has long valued the presence of Christians, who remain a small minority — no more than 4 percent of the population — in a country that is overwhelmingly Sunni Muslim. Radical Islam has had an impact on the country, and many Christians have noticed changes at the workplace and in the streets. Many fear the extremism and violence in neighboring Syria and Iraq could seep into Jordan. Much of the Christian elite is known to have an escape plan if the situation deteriorates. Nonetheless, the leadership of the churches continues to work hard at fostering good relations with the Islamic community to build up the country, advance dialogue and mitigate religious tensions.

CNEWA'S PRESENCE

CNEWA has deep roots in Jordan. We have long been one of the most ardent and dedicated supporters of refugees, Christian and Muslim, sheltering there — whether from Palestine, Bangladesh, Lebanon, Iraq or Syria. Although the churches in Jordan are small and lack resources, we bolster their health care initiatives for the poorest of the poor and provide the best in pre- and post-natal care. Working with women religious, we offer formation programs for youth and young adults

and sponsor activities for at-risk girls. And when Iraqi Christian refugees fleeing ISIS poured into the country, CNEWA worked with parishes across the kingdom to help settle them, offering emergency assistance, including food and bedding.



Here are just a few ways CNEWA helps the churches of Jordan serve the kingdom's people:

- **Helping the Dominican Sisters of the Presentation provide health care to the poorest of Jordan's poor, including Syrian and Iraqi refugees, at the Italian Hospital in Amman**
- **Develop ongoing faith formation programs for Jordan's Bedouin Christian communities near Kerak**
- **Provide support to the Pontifical Mission Community Center in Amman, which offers counseling and tutorial support, as well as courses in English for refugees**
- **Assist Jordan's Catholic and Orthodox parishes secure blankets, mattresses, food and counseling for Christian refugees settling there**