

## Jordan hires UK contractor to train refugee camp police



Photo: Muhammad Hamed/Reuters

### Significance

Jordan is increasingly concerned about the security threat posed by refugees and is seeking international expertise to step up its community management capabilities. The move signals opportunities for boutique security firms to provide training and consulting services in the region as Syria's neighbors continue to grapple with massive refugee inflows.

### Impacts

#### Business

Defense contractors with expertise in community management may be called upon to help Syria's neighbors.

## Political

Syrians are becoming a sizable population in Jordan, with implications for the country's long-term demographics.

## Social

Improved policing methods taught by Western defense firms could improve security for refugees and Jordanians.

## Map



## ON-THE-GROUND

"The main aim is to make the relationship between the police and the refugees more solid, so that the refugees understand both their rights and their responsibilities."

- Azraq camp security official

## Full Briefing

UK contractor Siren Associates is training a new community policing unit for Jordan's largest refugee camp, Zaatari.

The Jordanian security forces have hired a UK defense contractor to train a new community policing unit in the country's Zaatari refugee camp, after several incidents over the last year raised concerns about security there. The move is emblematic of how international expertise will be vital in managing the security risks across the region as Syria's neighbors struggle to cope with a refugees inflow that has exceeded 2 million people. The needs represent an opportunity for boutique defense contracting firms.

Siren Associates has been training the Jordanian police to patrol the refugee camp, home to 85,000 Syrians, using tactics developed in Northern Ireland. The units will consistently patrol neighborhoods, liaise with local leaders, and focus on issues such as domestic violence and inter-

household conflict. A new refugee camp, Azraq camp, which could host up to 130,000 people, will rely on a similar policing model, Monitor Global Outlook has learned.

"The main aim is to make the relationship between the police and the refugees more solid, so that the refugees understand both their rights and their responsibilities," an Azraq camp security official tells MGO. "The aim is also humanitarian - to get the refugees help as quickly as possible when they need it."

Zaatari camp, near Jordan's border with Syria, was founded in July 2012 in emergency circumstances to house refugees fleeing the Syrian conflict. At its peak, the camp hosted roughly 120,000 Syrians. Security became a major concern at the camp in 2013, when frequent protests and riots broke out, with refugees expressing frustration at living conditions, including their inability to leave the camp. One Syrian refugee was killed on April 6, 2014, when a protest degenerated into violent clashes with Jordanian security forces.

Some areas of the camp are still run by local strongmen from the refugee community, who took advantage of a policing vacuum when the camp was founded in 2012. These networks of local leaders at times operate similar to mafias, charging residents for services such as water, which should be free, and levying protection fees.

Siren Associates will train the Jordanian police, 64 of whom will patrol the neighborhoods at a time. The officers are charged with managing local security in the camp's 12 sprawling districts. As part of the program, local residents in each district are also being enlisted to liaise with the Jordanian police - an attempt to break local resident monopolies on security.

Police training could help improve refugees' safety and living conditions but also security in Jordan more broadly, as officers currently assigned to the camps will likely return to civilian duty later. Community management will prove increasingly important as Jordan absorbs more than 600,000 Syrian refugees - roughly 80 percent of whom now live in urban areas.