

News story: UK creating jobs and getting children into school to help Jordan remain a beacon of hope and security

UK aid will boost the resilience and inclusivity of Jordan's economy so that the country can remain a beacon of hope and security in the Middle East, International Development Secretary Penny Mordaunt said in Amman today (Tuesday 10 April).

Our support will help provide more children with educational opportunities, boost skills, create jobs and encourage further investment that will benefit Jordanians as well as Syrian refugees, regardless of gender or disability.

In addition, food, water and medicine given by the UK is providing a vital life-line to Syrian refugees in Jordan who have been forced to flee their country because of the conflict, which is now in its eighth year and has created the world's largest humanitarian crisis.

Speaking at an inclusive school supported by UK aid in Amman, the International Development Secretary said:

"Jordan continues to be a beacon of hope and security in the Middle East, providing a safe place for hundreds of thousands of Syrian refugees to live. The UK is committed to transforming the country's economy and helping the government deliver on its commitment to create 200,000 jobs for Syrian refugees and give every child an education.

"We stand by the government of Jordan in creating a more resilient and inclusive economy and society so that all Jordanians and refugees get the opportunities they deserve, regardless of gender or disability. By empowering vulnerable people to provide for themselves and their families, we are reducing Jordan's reliance on traditional forms of aid.

"I urge the rest of the international community to get behind Jordan's reform plans so that millions of Syrian refugees can get the education, skills training and jobs they need to one day return home and rebuild their country."

Jordan is on the frontline of multiple crises in the region and has experienced a series of economic shocks – including the Global Financial Crisis, the Arab Spring and the Syria conflict – that mean Jordan's economy is suffering from slowing growth, high debt and 18% unemployment, which is at a 25-year high.

In addition, there are 650,000 registered Syrian refugees in Jordan, which is putting significant pressure on vital services and infrastructure.

It is in Britain's interest to support a partnership that goes further in seeking to resolve the ongoing violence and political tension across the region. Long term prosperity in the region will provide a vital foundation for long term stability on which our own security depends.

This year, UK aid will:

- provide loans to encourage over £150 million of investment from other donors to support education reform, as well as grants to create jobs, boost productivity and increase economic resilience;
- help construct critical infrastructure, benefitting millions of people, such as at a landfill site in Amman that is already under construction and will help 4 million people in the local area;
- provide a quality education for 135,000 Syrian refugees and additional school reading and maths support for 175,000 children in primary school;
- launch apprenticeships or vocational skills training to help 10,000 Jordanians over the next three years; and
- give live-saving support to 60,000 of the most vulnerable refugees and Jordanians, including healthcare and rehabilitation for people with disabilities.

As well as helping Jordan meet its pledge to get every child into education and to create 200,000 jobs for Syrian refugees, Ms Mordaunt has committed to provide up to double the amount of funding for economic resilience, in line with key reforms to deliver Jordan's Vision 2025.

The support is part of the UK's long-term partnership with Jordan, which was discussed by the Prime Minister and King Abdullah in November, and will support Jordan's ambitious reform plans the country.

Inclusivity and creating opportunities for all are a vital part of the partnership, which builds on the UK's existing support for inclusive schools so that all Jordanian and Syrian refugee children can have the opportunities they deserve.

The brutal Syrian civil war, now in its eighth year, has already cost an estimated 400,000 lives, with over 11 million people displaced by conflict and causing a severe shortage of food, clean water and healthcare.

Britain has been at the forefront of the response to the Syria crisis and continues to support the governments of Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey so that Syrian refugees can remain close to home until they are one day able to return safely.

Notes to Editors:

1. The Secretary of State has confirmed that Jordan will receive £110 million of UK aid funding for 2018/19, and announced that the UK will provide up to double the amount of funding for economic resilience.
2. Visiting Amman in November 2017, the Prime Minister discussed with King

Abdullah a long-term partnership to significantly increase UK funding and diplomatic support for Jordan's ambitious plans to reform the country.

3. The UK is a leading donor in the humanitarian response to the Syrian crisis. To date we have committed over £2.46 billion in humanitarian funding to the region.
4. We have already delivered 20.9 million food rations every month, 8.8 million relief packages, 3.3 million vaccines against deadly diseases and 8.1 million medical consultations for those in need in Syria.
5. In Jordan since 2012, UK aid has already:
 - provided 1.7 million monthly food rations
 - provided 4.5m vaccinations and 306,000 medical consultations
 - given more than 130,000 Syrian refugees an education
 - helped train more than 14,000 early grade teachers to boost education standards for over 260,000 Jordanian and Syrian children; and
 - helped issue more than 90,000 work permits for Syrian refugees.