



**Press Statement on the Occasion of
Launching Programs
Supporting Jordan in Coping with the Syrian Crisis**

The Netherlands supports Jordan in coping with the protracted Syrian crisis. As the Syrian population now comprises 20% of the total population we understand the pressure imposed on public services and infra-structure. The Netherlands government also acknowledges steps adopted by Jordan in following the London Conference last February. Access for Syrian children to the formal education system and opening up of employment possibilities are commended.

The Netherlands, both as EU Presidency and EU Member State, strongly supports increased access of Jordanian products to European markets; through relaxing the Rules of Origin. Our focus is now to promote the use of this increased access and to promote Dutch investment.

In response to the Syrian crisis the Netherlands Government launched this May a special regional fund to support the affected countries, Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey and Iraq, with a total of EUR 260 million. This program runs from 2016-2019.

The total of all Netherlands commitments, however, that is specifically allocated to Jordan for this period shall reach EUR 130.1 million. Grants shall support Jordan's efforts at addressing pressing issues like: education, economic development, host communities, social cohesion, human rights and good governance, renewable energy and humanitarian assistance.

Please find below some specific interventions that will be started in 2016 bearing in mind that additional programs shall be announced later on in early 2017:

- We will contribute to the education's global commitment that all children have access to quality education, through the Ministry of Education's *Catch up Program*, in partnership with UNICEF. Through our support almost 8000 children are enabled to eventually enrol in the formal education system after passing the end of level exam.
- The Netherlands acknowledges the continued needs of Palestinian Refugees from Syria. Thus, UNRWA is supported to continue its mission in sustaining education in its established schools in Palestinian camps. This comes on top of the regular Netherlands contribution to UNWRA
- In support of the agricultural sector that is strongly affected by the Syrian crisis –by the closure of neighbouring markets- but that remains of high potential. The Netherlands will support Jordanian *Hydroponic Farming*. ECO Consult together with a Dutch consortium consisting of: academics, consultants, trainers and suppliers shall address bottlenecks and will create job opportunities for Jordanians and Syrians.

- Youth is the backbone of each society, thus, we will share Dutch experience in entrepreneurship. The Dutch organisation SPARK shall assist, guide and coach Jordanian and Syrian younger generation to either start up their own businesses or expand existing initiatives.
- Believing in the principal 'stronger together', the Norwegian Refugee Council and the Justice Centre for Legal Aid shall support improved legal access of Jordanians and Syrians. This program also aims at offering guidance on developing economic capabilities by either starting up businesses at home or small and medium sized enterprises.
- The alliance of Mercy Corps and Stichting Vluchteling/International Rescue Committee is another example of joint project venture. The intervention shall tackle challenges arising from lack of access to legal information together with the provision of employability skills to enable youth securing jobs as well as work on the advancement of markets.
- Last but not least, peace and stability is the main condition to advance growth and prosperity. SIREN together with Jordanian police shall improve community policing in host communities. Deployment in neighbourhoods shall aim at reducing pressures and addressing social tensions before they exacerbate.