

The World Bank's support to Jordan's National Aid Fund Cash Transfer Program has helped the Government of Jordan expand the coverage and increase the effectiveness of its social safety nets, which has provided a lifeline of cash support to the poorest, most vulnerable households. Jordan's cash transfer program is now the largest such program in the Middle East and North Africa Region (MENA) in terms of coverage of the poorest people. It is a recognized best practice model for the reforms it has implemented to modernize, digitize, and increase the transparency of its cash transfer program.

EXPANSION OF COVERAGE & COST EFFECTIVENESS

Between 2019 and 2023, with support from the World Bank and other international partners, the Government of Jordan (GoJ) has more than doubled the budget of the [National Aid Fund \(NAF\)](#) cash transfer program from JOD100 million to JOD240 million (0.7 percent of GDP). The coverage of NAF's monthly support increased from 97,000 households in 2018 to 220,000 households in 2023. Jordan's cash transfer program is now the largest program in terms of coverage of the poorest in the Middle East and North Africa Region (MENA).

The NAF program was pivotal in delivering emergency cash transfers in response to the impacts of COVID-19 crisis on poor and vulnerable households. The GOJ launched 'Takaful 2- support to daily workers emergency cash transfer' in the first half of 2020, providing 3-months of emergency cash transfers to 237,000 households relying on informal income that had become poor. In December 2020, the GoJ launched 'Takaful 3 - support to daily workers emergency cash transfer', providing emergency cash transfers to 160,000 households over 12 months.

According to [World Bank analysis](#), Jordan's Unified Cash Transfer program (UCT) is the most redistributive and cost-effective item in Jordan's budget. Statistical analysis show that -in 2021- the UCT is estimated to have reduced inequality by 0.7 percentage points and poverty by 1.4 percentage points—the highest redistributive impact of any program in the GoJ's budget. It is also the program with the highest impact per JOD spent.

ACCESS, DIGITIZATION, & TRANSPARENCY

In addition to increased coverage, NAF has built a state-of-the-art platform to deliver the UCT program. The automated platform eliminates human decision in the calculation of the eligibility score, which ensures a transparent and objective process. The eligibility score is automatically calculated based on administrative data available within the National Unified Registry. The score and reasons for exclusion are available to applicants, to ensure full access to information, and all applicants have the right to submit a complaint if they feel that their data was incorrect, in which case NAF verifies and makes any required corrections. Through the platform, NAF uses digital technologies to automate processes, including for online registration, enrollment, data verification, selection of households for field verification, as well as for conducting face-to-face and virtual home visits.

Additional support is provided to anyone who faces challenges in accessing the system. To ensure equitable access, households can also register with assistance, either in-person at NAF offices or through the phone. NAF also provides support through mobile teams to elderly, people with disabilities or others that do not have access to registration centers. NAF operates a call center and an online grievance system, where complaints and grievances are received, documented on the information system, resolved, and feedback is provided to complainants.

The program also introduced digital payment to beneficiaries through basic bank accounts and e-wallets. The introduction of digitized payments has minimized errors, improved access to payments, and increased financial inclusion. The NAF program was the main driver behind establishing basic bank accounts by the Central Bank of Jordan to support poor households.

TARGETING

The World Bank has collaborated with the GoJ to strengthen the NAF and enhance its effectiveness in addressing poverty and social protection challenges. Through various programs, the World Bank, together with other international partners, has supported the NAF in expanding its coverage, improving targeting mechanisms, and enhancing its overall operational capacity. The targeting formula adopted under the program was developed by the GoJ and has undergone multiple rounds of revisions and improvements based on evidence-based assessments of its performance. The World Bank has worked closely with the GoJ to design and implement reforms to the social protection system, including the NAF, with the aim of ensuring that resources reach those who need them most.

WORLD BANK SOCIAL PROTECTION STRATEGY

The World Bank recognizes that the progressive realization of Universal Social Protection, which ensures access to social protection for all whenever and however they need it, is critical for effectively reducing poverty and boosting shared prosperity. Please see for more information our [latest strategy](#) update which provides a guide to our engagement with countries to learn the lessons from the COVID-19 pandemic, and importantly, to progressively build universal social protection systems that better protect and support people in the future.

The World Bank has also recently published a MENA Social Protection Report: [Built to Include: Reimagining Social Protection Systems in the Middle East and North Africa](#) which proposes a series of actions that governments in the region can take to make social protection systems more inclusive and efficient. Jordan is highlighted for the reforms it has implemented to modernize, digitize, and make more transparent its cash transfer program.

OVERVIEW OF WORLD BANK EMERGENCY COVID-19 RESPONSE CASH TRANSFER PROJECT

Project Development Objective	To provide cash support to poor and vulnerable households and workers affected by the COVID-19 pandemic in Jordan.
Allocated Budget	Parent Project: US\$350 million (IBRD Loan) + US\$24.17 million (grant) First Additional Financing: US\$290 million (IBRD Loan) Second Additional Financing: US\$350 (IBRD Loan) Total: US\$1,014.17 million
Project Duration	Approval date: 25-06-2020 Closing date: 31-12-2024
Project Components	Component 1: Cash support to poor and vulnerable households affected by the COVID-19 crisis (US\$815.450 million); Implemented by the National Aid Fund (NAF)
	Subcomponent 1.1: Temporary cash transfers to poor and vulnerable households affected by COVID-19 pandemic. This subcomponent supported 262,653 unique households with emergency CTs in 2020 and 2021.
	Subcomponent 1.2: Takaful Cash Transfer Program Progress to Date: 120,276 households are benefiting from the regular cash transfer program in 2022. The number of households supported in 2021 was 89,084 and 49,099 in 2020.
	Component 2: Project Management, Monitoring and Evaluation (US\$3 million). This component supports the establishment of the Project Management Unit and investment required by NAF to implement the program across Jordan.
	Component 3: Support to workers in firms affected by the COVID-19 crisis (US\$193.245 million); Implemented by the Social Security Corporation (SSC). Progress to Date: 109,327 workers have benefited from wage subsidies.