

Our project concerns housing in the Za'atari Refugee Camp, north of Amman, Jordan, home to 80,000 Syrian refugees. Our focus, advised by NGO-International Relief and Development with the United Nations High Commission for Refugees, was to adapt current UNHCR supplied caravan homes to address refugee needs for storage, privacy, structural and material stability in a harsh desert environment. Two design approaches ensued: what can we do now with existing caravans, and what could the future of housing look like with best material practices? Our method is to arrange homes into safe familial communities (Board 1), design flexible furniture as room dividers, construct rainwater collection and greywater recycling (Boards 2-3) that supports individual bathrooms for privacy, cleanliness, and security (Boards 4-5). Future housing (Boards 6-7) is built with concrete masonry units (cmu), and sunscreens, the traditional Mashrabiya, thereby applying an historical sustainable response to living in the desert environment.