

United Nations and Partners Humanitarian Response for Syrian Refugees in Jordan

Inter-Agency Task Force (IATF) Education Sector Gender Analysis

Final Report

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Abbreviations

AFS	Adolescent Friendly Spaces
CCFA	Comprehensive Child Focused Assessment
CFS	Child Friendly Spaces
CWD	Children With Disabilities
DAAD	Deutsche Akademische Austauschdienst (German Academic Exchange Service)
DAFI	Deutsche Akademische Flüchtlingsinitiative Albert Einstein (Albert Einstein German Academic Refugee Initiative Fund)
ESWG	Education Sector Working Group
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FSA	Free Syrian Army
GenCap	Gender Capacity Project
HE	Higher Education
HRW	Human Rights Watch
IATF	Inter-Agency Task Force
IFE	Informal Education
JENA	Joint Education Needs Assessment
MAC	Multi Access Centers
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoI	Ministry of Interior
NFE	Non- Formal Education
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
NRC	Norwegian Refugee Council
OOS	Out of School
TE	Tertiary Education
UN	United Nations
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

Executive Summary

A. Education Sector Humanitarian Services Overview: The report presents the results of the Education Sector Gender Analysis conducted by the Sector's Gender Focal Points. The services being delivered to Syrian Refugees under the sector include: Formal education, Non Formal Education and Informal education.

B. Purpose and Objectives of the Gender Analysis: The purpose of the gender analysis was to assess the gender dimensions of the education needs and challenges of Syrian refugee children in Jordan. Findings and learning from the analysis will inform humanitarian education service delivery in a gender-sensitive manner.

C. Gender Analysis Methodology: The gender analysis was undertaken through desk review of education sector documents, focus groups and a workshop process. Qualitative data was analyzed by categorizing information collected under the thematic areas of the analysis. Quantitative data was analyzed with tabulations and frequencies to supplement the qualitative data.

D. Constraints and Challenges of the Gender Analysis: The analysis was conducted under the changing context of the (ongoing) Syrian Crisis. Under these circumstances the numbers of children with education related needs and challenges is ever growing. The extent of felt need may have not been fully captured by this gender analysis.

E. Child Recruitment: The use of children as soldiers, porters and helpers for armed groups in Syria was reported. Human Rights Watch (HRW), for instance, found that boys as young as 15 were used in active combat and 14-year-olds filled support roles. In addition, a UN report indicated that the recruitment of children below 18 years to the rebel movements in camps in Jordan is accompanied by economic incentives. The analysis noted that boy children are particularly affected by child recruitment.

F. Early Marriage: As the Syrian crisis continues the pressure on Syrian refugees to offer girl children into early marriage increases. Although the importance of education is acknowledged, a view exists that girls who do not perform well in school should be married as soon as was appropriate. Marriage generally continues to be a coping strategy for some Syrian families, and child marriage, in particular, is seen as a form of 'protection' and a way for families to keep the 'honor' of their daughters. A girl given into early marriage sooner than later drops out of school.

G. Child Labor: The gender analysis found that some families continue to depend on income from children, especially teenage boys who also work to cover their basic needs. In Irbid, for example, many children and teenagers continued to work, in addition to attending schools. In Mufraq a nine-year-old girl, together with her ten-year-old brother, were found collecting plastic bottles to support their family.

H. Formal Education: Jordan's formal government schools and infrastructure are under increasing pressure to accommodate a large influx of Syrian students. For example, in the school year 2014/2015, more than 130,000 Syrian students were attending formal education, where the number increased greatly to 145,458 students in the school year of 2015/2016. Sustainable

solutions for education infrastructure and delivery should be sought by government and partners to accommodate the increasing number of Syrian children.

I. Out-of-School Children and Other Educational Activities: The number of Syrian children out of school is still alarmingly high. This has interrupted education that many children had started in Syria.

J. Children with Disabilities (CWD): Although a smaller proportion of children with disabilities compared to children overall attend school, the trend across age-groups followed a similar pattern, with younger children more likely to be attending formal education compared to older peers. Girls with disabilities were more likely to be attending formal schooling than boys. Majority of girls and boys with disabilities and/or chronic illness were not attending school.

K. Non-Formal Education (NFE): Children spoke positively about NFE centres, with the boys highlighting how well they are treated by teachers and the flexibility of schedules while girls spoke of the wide variety of activities to take part in. More boys have been targeted in the provision of NFE, as they are more in need of alternative education programs due to their lower attendance rates in formal education.

L. Tertiary Education (TE): Most Syrian refugee youth (both girls and boys) have expressed a high need for accessible TE programmes. Humanitarian actors should work towards bringing TE opportunities to them beyond higher education which some of them have attained.

M. Conclusions: The gender analysis has shown that children have been used as soldiers, porters and helpers for armed groups in Syria, with boys as young as 15 having been used in active combat and 14-year-olds filling support roles. The crisis has also exacerbated the number of underage girls forced/or going into early marriage, which is encouraged as a form of 'protection' and a way for families to keep the 'honor' of their daughters.

Although most children are now attending school, the gender analysis has established that some families continue to depend on income from children, especially teenage boys, working to cover their basic needs.

Due to the Syrian refugee crisis, Jordan's formal government schools have had to quickly accommodate a large influx of Syrian students. This has placed more pressure on the educational infrastructure as well as teaching staff.

The gender analysis has shown that school attendance among Syrian refugee students in formal schools varies widely by age group and, to some extent, gender; with more children attending school at ages 6-11 for both boys and girls. A lower attendance rate was noted among older Syrian boy and girl students aged 12-17. Overall, more girls were attending school more than boys most of who opt into child labor to support their families.

While refugee boys and girls said "learning/gaining knowledge" as the biggest factor in their schooling; they noted several factors that affect their school attendance, including (among others): low interest in going to school, violence at school, distance to and from school; the quality of

education is not good, parents do not feel that education is important/ applicable for the child, they have never been enrolled in school before in any location, financial constraints, lack of available schools in the area or insufficient space in the school, cost of school materials , overcrowding in schools, not having an Ministry of Interior (MoI) card¹. Children with a disability found it difficult to find appropriate school facilities.

In addition, the gender analysis found the characteristics of the head of the household affect the enrollment of Syrian children in school. While younger Syrian boys with an uneducated parent attended school, in comparison older boys who opt or are encouraged to earn income for their household. In contrast, older Syrian girls with an uneducated parent attended formal education. Also notable, in terms of gender, Syrian boys and girls with female headed households had a slightly higher likelihood of attending formal schools.

N. Recommendations: The following recommendations are made to IATF Education Sector stakeholders.

- 1) Boy children have been shown to be vulnerable to recruitment as soldiers, porters and helpers for armed groups in Syria, while girl children are particularly vulnerable to early marriage. As such, education sector should integrate child protection mechanisms into education service planning and delivery and/or coordinate its operations with the Protection Sector.
- 2) To mitigate the continued dependence of refugee families on income from child labor, especially teenage boys, who were also found to work to cover their basic needs; Livelihoods opportunities should be extended to families. Education sector should coordinate efforts aimed at addressing this need with the Livelihoods sector.
- 3) To assure the education of Syrian refugee children, education sector partners should invest in sustainable solutions for infrastructure, funding and teaching staff in support of Jordan's formal government schools which are currently under pressure to accommodate a large influx of Syrian students.
- 4) Considering that school attendance among Syrian refugee students in formal schools varies widely by age group and, to some extent, gender; with more children attending school at ages 6-11 for both boys and girls, and lower attendance noted among older boy and girls aged 12-17; innovative ways should be adapted to encourage older children to attend and stay in school.
- 5) A better learning environment should be cultivated by addressing bullying and violence at school and other factors that have been noted by the gender analysis as affecting school attendance of refugee boys and girls. The unique needs of Children with disabilities should also be considered. This also calls for better integration of Syrian boys and girls in host community schools to help improve the relationship between Syrian and Jordanian students.
- 6) Education sector should incorporate key performance indicators (KPIs) that are gender-sensitive.

¹ MoI card is the legal document/card that refugees attain from the government of Jordan after registering with UNHCR and getting asylum seeker certificate.

I. Introduction

The ongoing Syrian conflict has led to over 5 million Syrians fleeing to neighboring countries, with four in five of them being women and children. Jordan is hosting around 1.4 million Syrians, of whom 655,217 are refugees². Eighty per cent of refugees live outside camps in some of the poorest areas of the country. Approximately 53 per cent of all Syrian refugees are children under age 18³. The Syrian crisis has had a profound impact on the education sector in Jordan affecting service providers' ability to offer quality, access, resources and financing to all learners – Jordanian and Syrian that are battling with the same challenges – increased accommodation and living costs, and access to overstretched public services.

Research to date on the experiences of Syrian boys and girls in the formal school system focuses almost entirely on issues of access and lacks sufficient, gendered information on areas like achievement or outcome. Further information was therefore needed to fully assess and analyze the experience of Syrian boys and girls in the Jordanian public school system. This is the major reason the gender analysis was undertaken and this report, attempts to cover the gap.

² UNHCR, Syria Regional Refugee Response: Inter-agency Information Sharing Portal, <http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/country.php?id=107> (last update June, 2016). Jordan Response Plan for the Syria Crises, 2015.

³ Norwegian peace building resource center. Report. February 2015.// http://peacebuilding.no/var/ezflow_site/storage/original/application/f2c1eef2efb2c782b9a9dab621ceaf75.pdfpeacebuilding resource center. The big dilemma of small soldiers: recruiting children to the war in Syria.

1.1 Classification of the Education Sector Services

The following are the services provided by the education sector:

Table 1: Services Provided by the IATF Education Sector		
Education Services	Description	Target Group
Formal education	<p>Certified education services provided by the Ministry of Education public schools (grade 1-12) in addition to schools of Private Education Sector, UNRWA and Armed Forces Culture.</p> <p>Kindergarten: Second year of Kindergarten stage (KG2) for those children who were born from Jan 1st until Dec. 31st, provided that the child's age is not over 5 years</p> <p>Lower Primary Education: This includes the first 3 grades (First, Second, and Third) The eligibility of students for first grade includes those children who were born between Jan 1st - Dec. 31st, provided that the child's age does not exceed 10 years on 31/12 for the same year.</p> <p>Higher Primary Education: This includes grades 4 to 10</p> <p>Secondary Education: This includes grades 11 and 12 for all branches</p> <p>Remedial education: Supplementary education classes to support children to be able to follow formal schooling through tutoring classes following the public school curriculum</p> <p>Remarks: Students who have dropped-out of school can go back to formal education, provided that there is no more than 3-year- age difference between them and the other students in the grade they will be admitted in. This is to be decided based on the average date of birth of the students in that grade (from 1 Jan to 31 Dec), and based on the admission age in the first grade as a base year.</p>	<p>6-17 yrs old</p> <p>5 yrs old</p> <p>6-8 yrs old</p> <p>9-15 yrs old 16-18 yrs old</p> <p>6-17 yrs old</p>
Non Formal Education	<p>DROP OUT EDUCATING PROGRAMME It is an educational programme implemented and certified by the Ministry of Education. Its duration is two-years. The children who are eligible for this program are : i) male aged (13-18) ii) female aged (13-20) to empower them with knowledge, expertise, skills and attitudes, expand their future choices through the access to the institution of vocational training, or complete their academic studying as non-formal students. More detail is given below. Students who completed the drop out educating programme requirements and have obtained their certificate can continue studying with homeschooling programme based on their age as described below: 14.5-16 y.o. will do the 7th grade placement test and study 8th grade as homeschoolers; 16-17 y.o. will do the 8th grade placement test and study 9th grade as homeschoolers; 17+ y.o. will do the 9th grade placement test and study 10th grade as homeschoolers. After the completion of 1 year as homeschoolers, learners can go back to Formal school if their age allows them (3 years age difference).</p> <p>HOME SCHOOLING PROGRAMME Students who don't hold any certificate and are 12years old and above can do a 6th Grade placement test and study 7th grade as homeschooler. Students who have 6th grade certificate and above and are 18 years old and above can do a 9th grade placement test and study 10th grade as homeschoolers.</p> <p>EVENING STUDIES PROGRAMME Educational services provided by the Ministry of Education in its schools (after school) for people who wish to pursue education that could not be achieved through formal education. Learners have to pay 60JDs a year and buy text books.</p> <p>SUMMER STUDIES PROGRAMME This program aims to organize summer study centers in order to strengthen or expand students' abilities and develop their aptitudes, skills, arts and culture. Summer studies plan includes all subjects and educational activities that the student chooses receive more strengthening or deepening or expansion</p> <p>ADULT EDUCATION AND LITERACY PROGRAM This program is divided in terms of educational level into two stages: a) Stage of novices: it lasts for 16 months (or two years); the graduate is given a certificate equivalent to that of fourth (4th) grade. b) Stage of followers: it lasts for 16 months; the graduate is given a certificate equivalent to that of the sixth (6th) grade.</p>	<p>Boys: 13 – 18 yrs old Girls: 13 – 20 yrs old</p> <p>12+ yrs old and based on certificate held by learner</p> <p>12+ yrs old</p> <p>students attending formal schools</p> <p>15+ yrs old</p>
Informal education	<p>Educational activities that range from recreational activities to literacy numeracy, and life skills sessions. These educational activities are not certifiable by the Ministry of Education and not specifically bound to certain age or target group. The main categories are:1. Basic learning; 2. Technical skills/Post Basic education; 3. Recreational activities. Catch-up classes -Accelerated Learning: Education services designed specifically to support reintegration into formal schooling for those children who have missed out months up to 3 years of schooling.</p>	N/A

2. Purpose and Objectives of the Gender Analysis

The purpose of the gender analysis was to assess the gender dimensions of the education needs and challenges of Syrian refugee children in Jordan. In addition, the gender analysis aimed at proposing solutions to redress inequality.

The objective of the gender analysis was to generate gender related data/information to inform design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of interventions in the education sector. The specific objectives of the gender analysis were to:

- 1) Assess the current challenges to school access, attendance and retention.
- 2) Establish what needs to be considered in the provision of education services to refugees.
- 3) Review and/or develop gender Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) in the Education Sector M&E System.

3. Gender Analysis Methodology

The approaches used in the gender analysis included: (i) Desk review of education sector project/program documents (reports, etc.), researched materials and other documentations that provided information on the education needs of Syrian refugees (documents reviewed are listed under references); and (ii) A full day gender analysis workshop process, organized by education sector gender focal points with the participation of 22 members of ESWG (see Appendix I for participant list). The workshop had three main components, including:

- 1) Discussion of key themes and concepts in education and gender;
- 2) Orientation of participants on the methodology to be used in the gender analysis; and
- 3) Actual conduct of the Gender Analysis in which Participants were randomly divided into groups which provided a greater opportunity to generate different opinions and perceptions. This also provided a cross-check of the information obtained.

Both qualitative and quantitative research methods were used to analyze the data. Qualitative data was categorized under the themes areas of the study with analysis of trends in each area and the progress made to date in addressing associated challenges. Quantitative methods were used to analyze the data with tabulations and frequencies to supplement the qualitative data. Triangulation of the data of the literature review, FGDs and the workshop process was used to confirm validity of findings.

3.1 Constraints and Challenges of the Gender Analysis

The analysis was conducted under the changing context of the (ongoing) Syrian Crisis. Under these circumstances, the numbers of children with education related needs and challenges are ever growing. The extent of felt needs may have not been fully captured by this gender analysis.

4. Findings

The findings of the gender analysis are presented in the following sub sections, which show the Syrian crisis has generally impacted the lives of women, girls, boys and men, and specifically generated education related challenges and needs for both girls and boys.

4.1 Child Recruitment

From the start of the civil war there have been reports about the use of children as soldiers, porters and helpers for armed groups in Syria. Human Rights Watch (HRW) found that boys as young as 15 were used in active combat and 14-year-olds filled support roles. There are also reports of children being trained for suicide operations. The 25 children interviewed by HRW in 2014 described different reasons for participation: whereas some had joined relatives, others had been recruited after having participated in protests against the Syrian regime. Some of the children described having lived in areas without functioning schools and that joining an armed group was one option among very few.⁵

Recruitment of children from Syria's neighboring countries – and the return of children to the war zone – is poorly documented. At the same time, a UN report indicated that the recruitment of children below 18 years to the rebel movements in camps in Jordan is accompanied by economic incentives: the families of the young fighters receive monthly salaries from the Free Syrian Army (FSA) and even priority in the distribution of food aid and cash assistance in the camp.

There are, nonetheless, economic incentives in northern parts of Jordan that work against child soldier recruitment. For example, various cash assistance schemes from NGOs target parents in Mafraq to keep refugee children in school.

4.2 Early Marriage

Early marriage has long been an accepted practice in Syria, but that the Syrian crisis has exacerbated existing pressures believed to encourage early marriage and has also increased the danger that girls married early may end up in abusive or exploitative situations. Interview results carried out by UNICEF, indicated a strong relationship between girls' educational achievements and child marriage. While most parents acknowledged the importance of education, the opinion was frequently expressed that girls who did not perform well in school should be married as soon as was appropriate.⁶

⁵Norwegian peace building resource center. Report. February 2015.
http://peacebuilding.no/var/ezflow_site/storage/original/application/f2c1eef2efb2c782b9a9dab621ceaf75.pdfpeacebuilding resource center. The big dilemma of small soldiers: recruiting children to the war in Syria.

⁶ UNICEF. A study on early marriage in Jordan, 2014//http://www.unicef.org/jordan/UNICEFJordan_EarlyMarriageStudy2014-E_COPY_.pdf

The proportion of marriages involving Syrians girls aged 15-17 (as a percentage of all marriages) more than tripled in a period of 12 months (rising from 0.5 per cent to 1.7 per cent), presumably due in significant part to the influx of Syrian refugees to Jordan since 2012. The total number of registered marriages between Jordanian men/boys and Syrian women or girls for 2012 (495) was dramatically higher than the 2011 total (270). The percentage of marriages involving girls aged 15-17 among all Syrian marriages was lower in 2011 (8.3 %), but rose to 13.3 % in 2012 and further increasing significantly in 2013 to 25%⁷ and to just under 32% in the first quarter of 2014 and has reached that percentage since then.

Marriage continues to be a coping strategy for some Syrian families. Child marriage was seen as a form of ‘protection’ and a way for families to keep the ‘honour’ of their daughters. It was also seen as a way to reduce the number of people in a household and the related economic burden of feeding their child, clothing her, etc. ⁹In Mafraq Jordanians regularly accused “Gulf men” of paying camp personnel to enter the camp to offer informal marriage to under-aged girls, and rumors abound of sexual abuse of Syrian boys.¹⁰

4.3 Child Labor

Even if most children are now attending school, the gender analysis found that some families continue to depend on income from children, especially teenage boys, working to cover their basic needs. While the number of children reported in the household survey to be working was low – probably reflecting parents’ attitude and awareness rather than actual prevalence of child labor – information collected through a focus-group discussion with male teenagers in Irbid indicates that many children and teenagers continue to work, sometimes in addition to attending schools or on the weekends. Of the 11 participants ages 13–17, nine were attending school while the majority was also working or had worked before. While ten of the twelve children reported in the household survey as working were boys, in Mufraq one nine-year-old girl, together with her ten-year-old brother, was identified through the household survey as collecting plastic bottles to support the family.¹¹

4.4 Formal Education

Due to the Syrian Refugee Crisis, Jordan’s formal government schools have had to quickly accommodate a large influx of Syrian students. As of the 2014/2015 school year, there were more than 130,000 Syrian students (approximately 61.6% of school-aged Syrian refugee

⁷ Ibid.

⁹ CARE. To protect her honor.. //http://insights.careinternational.org.uk/media/k2/attachments/CARE_Child-marriage-in-emergencies_2015.pdf

¹⁰ Norwegian peace building resource center. Report. February 2015.//

http://peacebuilding.no/var/ezflow_site/storage/original/application/f2c1eef2efb2c782b9a9dab621ceaf75.pdfpeacebuilding resource center. The big dilemma of small soldiers: recruiting children to the war in Syria.

¹¹ Care international. Lives Unseen: Urban Syrian Refugees and Jordanian Host Communities Three Years into the Syria Crisis. April. 2014. Dina to update

children across Jordan were attending formal education, amounting to 63.5% of school-aged girls and 59.8% of school-aged boys.¹²) enrolled in Jordanian public schools, including 18,780 Syrian students in Zaatari Schools (UNICEF 2015). Enrollment in formal education was higher among school-aged girls (63.5% host communities, camps) than school-aged boys (59.8% host communities, camps) (JENA Reports, 2014/5). In the school year of 2015/2016 the number of Syrian refugee students enrolled in public schools increased to 145,458 (52% girls and 48% boys), of which 96% are in Elementary level (1-10 grades) and remainder 4% in Secondary education (10&11 grades), including 26,200 Syrian refugee students in camps.¹³

Attendance among Syrian refugee students in formal schools varied widely by age group and, to some extent, gender. As of 2014, the average attendance rate for Syrian children ages 6-11 is 61.3% (70% host communities, 52.7% Zaatari) for boys and 66.8% (71% host communities, 62.7% Zaatari) for girls. This contrasts the attendance rates of Syrian adolescents ages 12-17, which is 54.5% (in both host communities and Zaatari) for girls and 40.2% (47.2% host communities, 33.2% Zaatari) for boys (JENA Zaatari, 2015). Although the overall attendance rate for *all* Syrian students has almost doubled since 2013, there is still a lower attendance rate among older Syrian boy and girl students (JENA Reports, 2014/5). Since March 2015, attendance rates across the kingdom have increased amongst the younger age groups (6-11) in all governorates - 70% of boys and 70.4% of girls, compared to 47.2% of boys and 54.5% of girls aged 12-17.¹⁴ Based on latest public school enrollment reports by UNICEF, in extraction of MOE enrollment data; a total of 145,458 Syrian students enrolled in formal schooling for the school year of 2015/2016. Girls continued to have higher enrollment rates than boys with 75,640 Syrian girls and 69,818 Syrian boys enrolled in 2015/2016 scholastic year (62,278 girls in and 56,980 boys in HC, and 13,362 girls and 12,838 boys in Camps). (JEN, 2016)¹⁵ (see Figure 1 below).

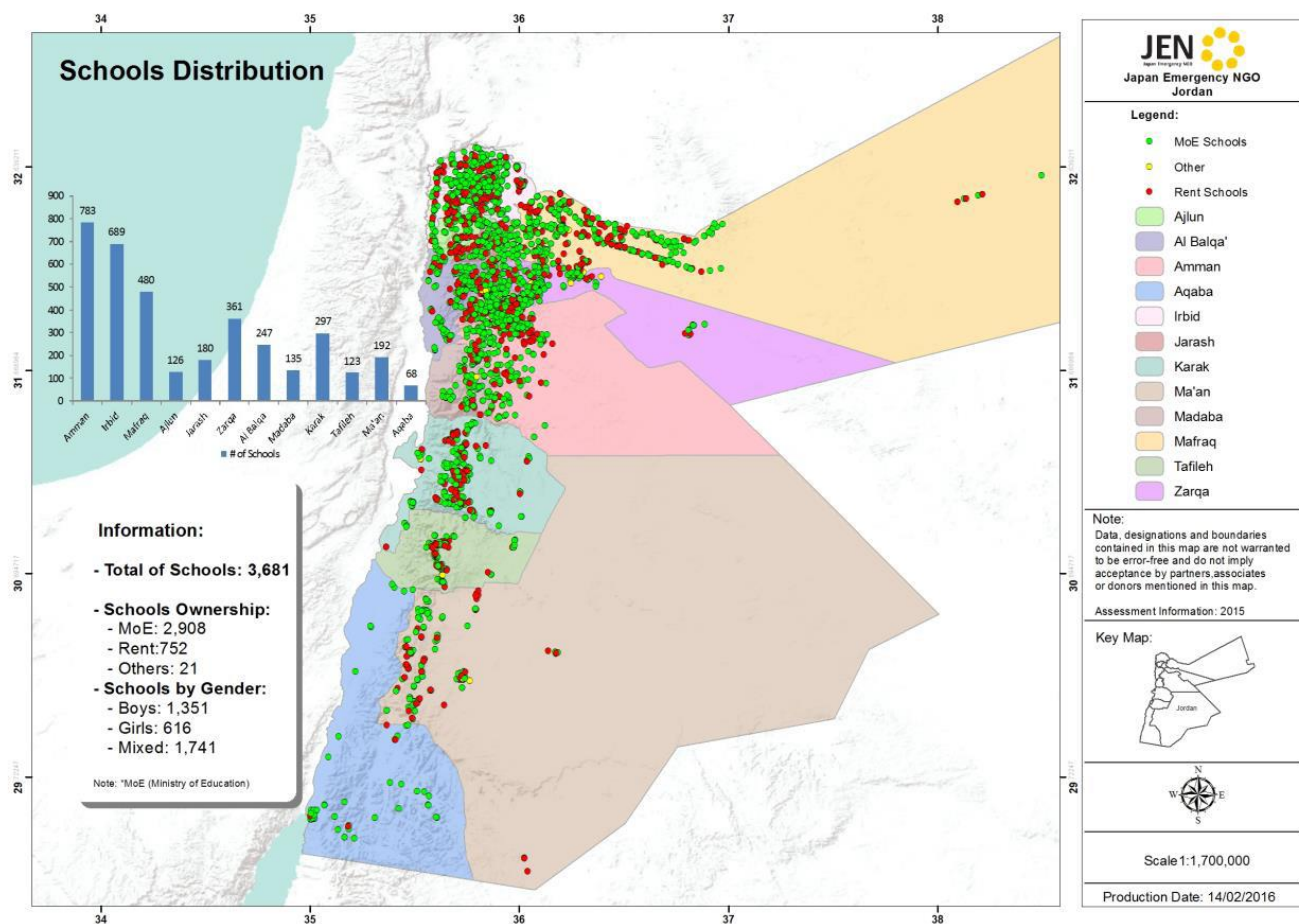
¹² ACCESS TO EDUCATION FOR SYRIAN REFUGEE CHILDREN AND YOUTH IN JORDAN HOST COMMUNITIES - Joint Education Needs Assessment -Jordan - March 2015 -Education Sector Working Group

¹³ UNICEF. Syrian refugee children enrolled in public schools-by directorates (2015-2016) - https://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/working_group.php?Page=Country&LocationId=107&Id=14

¹⁴ ACCESS TO EDUCATION FOR SYRIAN REFUGEE CHILDREN AND YOUTH IN JORDAN HOST COMMUNITIES - Joint Education Needs Assessment -Jordan - March 2015 -Education Sector Working Group - Attendance rates were calculated from the questionnaire, question 16b: "How many school-aged children attend formal education at all at pre-primary, primary and secondary school level?" Answers were recorded into gender and age groups

¹⁵ Jordan Nationwide Assessment in Public Schools for Strategic Planning 2015 – 2016 MOE, JEN, UNICEF

Figure I: Schools Distribution in Jordan



In Jordan, public schools are culturally segregated by gender above third grade, which is also culturally supported and accepted by local communities. The number of girls' schools is less than half the number of boys' schools, even though the population of girl students is slightly larger than that of boys.

Syrian students accounted for 7% of the total number enrolled in public schools in Jordan. UNHCR statistics on March 14 2015 indicated the number of Syrian children of school age (5-17 year old) was 217,820. The Nationwide Assessment in Public Schools found that 41% of the Syrian children attended Jordanian public schools. The male-female ratio of Syrian children enrolled in public school in Jordan was 51% (boys) and 49% (girls) which is proportional to the gender ratio of all school-aged, Syrian children in Jordan, 51.5% for boys and 48.5% for girls. Syrian students were concentrated in urban or semi-urban areas. The highest proportion of Syrian refugee students was hosted by Irbid (32%), Amman (31%), Mafrqa (13%), and Zarqa (11%). The rest of governorates hosted 13% of enrolled Syrian students, which corresponds with the distribution of the total number Syrian refugee students by governorate. (JEN, 2016)¹⁶

¹⁶ Jordan Nationwide Assessment in Public Schools for Strategic Planning 2015 – 2016 MOE, JEN, UNICEF

Many factors raise and lower attendance rates for Syrian boys and girls in formal education. In host community focus group discussions, both boys and girls stated that they attend school because they view school as an “opportunity to learn and meet friends”. Then, in Zaatari camp, both boys and girls agreed that “learning/gaining knowledge” was the biggest factor in attending school, while “certification” was the second factor. Syrian boys and girls also agreed on several factors that lower their attendance, including: low interest in going to school, family expectations to return to Syria, violence at school, distance to and from school and lack of resources for school materials (disproportionately affecting Syrian girls), and the need to earn money (disproportionately affecting boys inside the host community and camp settings) (JENA Reports, 2014/5).

Additionally, school-related violence is a key deterrent to enrollment and attendance in public schools for both Syrian boys and girls. For boys ages 6-11 in host communities, the most frequent type of violence that affected school attendance was bullying from other students and violence from teachers. In particular, boys stated that they struggled with student gangs. Syrian girls from the same demographic reported discrimination, physical aggression and bullying as key violence-related deterrents to school attendance. One recommendation from the 2015 Joint Education Needs Assessment is to focus on better integration of Syrian boys and girls (in host community schools) to help improve the relationship between Syrian and Jordanian students (JENA Zaatari, 62, 2015).

There is a significant overlap between barriers to attendance and the issue of drop-outs for Syrian boys and girls. Interestingly enough, Syrian boys’ and girls’ enrollment in schools have both been influenced the most by the same barriers, ultimately leading to their drop-outs. The Education Sector Working Group (ESWG) found during household interviews that both Syrian boys and girls aged 6-11 were most affected by discrimination, verbal abuse/bullying and a lack of safety (in order from most to least impact). Then, for Syrian boys and girls students aged 12-17, drop-outs were caused by the difficult curriculum, lack of safety and a need to work (in order from most to least impact) (JENA, 38, 2014).

The characteristics of the head of the household have also shown to affect the enrollment of Syrian students. The two variables of the parent that influence their child’s enrollment in formal schools are his or her ‘education status’ and gender (JENA, 27, 2015). Amongst Syrian boys aged 6-11, 63% of those with an uneducated parent attended school, in comparison to 66.8% of students with a parent that completed primary school and 80% of students with a university graduate parent (JENA, 27, 2015). In contrast, for Syrian girls aged 12-17, 37.6% of those with an uneducated parent attended formal education, in comparison to (a nearly double) 66.7% of those with a university graduate parent (JENA, 27, 2015). Then, in terms of gender, Syrian students with female headed households had a slightly higher likelihood of attending formal schools. The biggest difference was found for boys aged 12-17, where 44% of those from a male headed household attended formal schools in comparison to 57.5% of those from a female headed household (JENA, 28, 2015).

NGOs have made significant contributions to assist schools in Jordan, especially those affected by the Syrian crisis which began in 2011. NGOs have been actively working or planning activities in 37% of the schools. Due to a larger influx of Syrian refugees, Irbid, Amman and Mafrq governorates received more support from NGOs. Looking into the situation by gender, about half of all girls' schools have drawn attention from NGOs. However, by raw numbers, more boys' and mixed schools have received attention from NGOs.¹⁷

4.5 Out-of-School Children and Other Educational Activities

4.5.1 Barriers to Access in Education and attendance

With the percentage of Syrian children out of school still alarmingly high, the interruption of education that for many children started in Syria is prolonged in Jordan. A range of causes prevent children from attending school, including the cost of school materials (books and stationery) and transportation; fear that boys could get involved in fighting; verbal harassment and physical violence from both peers and teachers, especially of girls; the need for children, especially boys, to contribute to the family's income; concerns about low-quality education and lack of care by teachers; lack of school certificates from Syria and interruption of education during the conflict (resulting in children sometimes being registered in levels that are not appropriate to their actual competences); different education systems; and lack of capacities/space in local schools. Girls are particularly affected by verbal harassment at schools, often related to stereotypes about Syrian women and girls.¹⁸

Main gender specific barriers include:

- **Early marriage:** This applied to 12-17 year old girls. None of the 8% of married 12-17 year olds were attending school. Marriage has been identified as the second most important reason for 12-17 year old girls dropping-out. When girls are married, they are less likely to finish school.¹⁹
- **Work:** Of children attending school, 6.1% of 12-17 year old boys and 1.8% of 6-11 year old boys work. Having to work was identified as a barrier by the group of 12-17 boys who had never attended school, but not discussed by any other group of OOS children. In the JENA 2014 FGDs, no girls attending school have reported working, whereas in another study in 2015 conducted by Tamkeen Fields for Aid, 14% of girls reported working against a little less than 50% of boys are working children.^{20 21}

¹⁷ Jordan Nationwide Assessment in Public Schools for Strategic Planning 2015 – 2016 MOE, JEN, UNICEF

¹⁸ Care international. Lives Unseen: Urban Syrian Refugees and Jordanian Host Communities Three Years into the Syria Crisis. April. 2014.

¹⁹ CARE. "TO PROTECT HER HONOUR" Child marriage in emergencies 2015

²⁰ Tamkeen. Syrian Refugee Child Labour in Jordan and the Risk of Exploitation 2015

²¹ JENA Report ESWG SEPTEMBER 2014

Table 2: Reasons for Dropping Out				
	6-11 Boys	6-11 Girls	12-17 Boys	12-17 Girls
Most common reason	11.3% Lack of interest in going to school	9.9% Distance to school	17.5 % Lack of interest in going to school	11.1% Distance to school
Second most common reason	11.3% feeling insecure /unconfident to go to school	8.5% verbal/physical violence at school	9.5% Need to earn money	6.3% Need to help at home 6.3% Preparation for marriage

The most common barrier across all groups except boys aged 6-11 was lack of financial resources needed to attend school. This was most prominent for girls aged 12-17 that had never attended school (reported for 14%), compared to boys aged 6-11 who were least likely to report this barrier (11%). Another barrier for boys aged 6-11 was overcrowded schools, reported in 7% of cases.²²

Reasons for dropping out according to news article: child labor, lack of family role and responsibilities (parent engagement), cash needs, lack of basic needs, poverty, family socio-economic status, expanded family members, unemployment, need better income, lack of follow-up from schools and NGOs, educational abuse practices, lack of interest in education, weak educational accomplishments, non-friendly educational environment, curriculum is inaccessible, "sadistic" practices - especially in boys schools, learning disabilities, drugs or other illegal behavior, and generally, lack of communication between children/schools/families.²³

For Syrian girls, ages 6 – 11 reasons for dropping out include: lack of resources for school materials, worry about teasing, turned away, school too far. Boys 6-11, turned away, school too far, overcrowding / shifts at bad times (meaning that it interfered with their jobs). While for girls aged 12 - 17 the reasons include: school too far, lack of resources for school materials, imminent return to Syria, violence (harassment and bullying) in schools and on the way to and back from school.

Boys 12 – 17 cited: earning income, also violence (harassment and bullying) in schools and on the way, and no resources to get school materials. Others explained that some reasons are related to the school venues i.e. schools damaged, fences and play areas damaged, inadequacy of sanitation systems may disproportionately affect female students.²⁴

4.5.2 Participation in other educational activities

a. Informal Education (IFE)

Among children ineligible for formal schooling, an estimated 14-23% currently attend IFE. The IFE attendance rate among out-of-school children boys aged 6-17 is 21% and 19% for girls aged 6-17. Reported IFE attendance for both boys and girls are shown to decline with age. According to assessment findings, 6% of school-aged children were currently attending at least

²² JENA report, March 2015,

²³ Al-Rai newsletter 6/7/2015 - child labor and drop outs

²⁴ JENA report, March 2015,

one type of informal education. Based on quantitative data reporting system extraction; ActivityInfo on 9 June 2016 covering the period of six months, 25,107 Syrian children were enrolled in IFE programs; of which 50.1% were boys and 49.9% girls.

The age group with the largest proportion of girls attending informal education was 6-8 years at 8%, while for boys it was equivalent for age groups 6-8 and 9-11 years at 7%. While more females were reported as attending informal education in the youngest age group, this trend was reversed for the oldest age group (16-17years) with the proportion of males attending double that of females. Reported IFE attendance for both boys and girls are shown to decline with age, reflecting the same trend in reported formal education attendance among older children, as was observed in JENA. Although further exploration is required, this may suggest that older children have additional responsibilities outside of school, such as work or domestic labor, which reduce their likelihood of attending informal education.²⁵

Most children interviewed in informal education settings reported that they attended informal education centers to complement formal education.

- Access to transportation to and from centers was the key issue raised by informal education students. Safety concerns did not feature as strongly here, with FGD participants largely reporting that they faced no particular safety and security issues when attending informal education.

Students choose informal education over formal schooling, the most commonly stated reasons concerned better treatment of students; safety; location; financially advantageous; better attention and follow-up by facilitators and better relations between teachers and students.²⁶

Reasons students choose informal education over formal education (According to facilitators)	FGD Mentions
Better treatment	9
Feel safe	9
Better location/Closer than formal school	8
Formal school too difficult	7
Better option financially	6
Better attention and follow up	5
Better relations with teacher and students	4

Overall, 30% of school aged children living in Za’atari camp were reported as not attending any type of education (including formal, informal education and CFS/AFS/MAC).

²⁵ COMPREHENSIVE CHILD FOCUSED ASSESSMENT ZA’ATARI REFUGEE CAMP, June 2015

²⁶ JENA report, march 2015

4.6 Children with Disabilities

Overall, 46% of children with disabilities were attending school, with 51% of boys 6-11 with at least one disability, 33% of boys 12-17, 65% of girls 6-11, and 47% of girls 12-17 attending. Although a smaller proportion compared to children overall, the trend across age-groups followed a similar pattern, with younger children more likely to be attending formal education compared to older peers, as shown in the graph below. There was also considerable difference depending on gender, with girls more likely to be attending formal schooling than boys. Girls with disabilities in the 6-11 age-group were twice as likely to be receiving a formal education (65%) compared to boys in the 12-17 age-group (33%).²⁷

The majority of girls and boys with disabilities and/or chronic illness were not attending school due to their stated condition (66.7% of females and 56.2% of males).

4.6.1 Non-Formal Education (NFE)

- Children spoke positively about NFE centres in focus group discussions. Specifically boys highlighted how well they are treated by teachers and the flexibility of schedules while girls in particular highlighted the wide variety of activities.
- Safety is the largest concern for NFE students, with both boys and girls reporting facing harassment outside the centres, usually on their way to the NFE centres.
- As of March 2015, the ongoing NFE program has over 2000 students enrolled, 40% of whom are female and 60% of whom are male. The Ministry of Education (MoE) has targeted males at a higher rate in NFE, as they are more in need of alternative education programs due to their lower attendance rates (for both Syrians and Jordanians). The NFE program aimed for a 30/70% female-to-male breakdown, but has enrolled 33% more females than expected.
- Females have a slightly higher average attendance rate at NFE than males for both Syrians and Jordanians. Labor is cited as the number one reason for males being unable to complete NFE, while early marriage and transportation are the top reasons for females who do not complete the program.
- NFE provides a space for gender-targeted learning as the centers are gender segregated and the Participatory Learning Methodology allows for flexibility in curriculum delivery as learners bring their own experiences into the classrooms. Male and female classes will discuss the curriculum differently, owing to the different experiences and backgrounds that the learners of different genders bring to the learning environment. In addition, learners choose extracurricular activities for their center to participate in, which allows facilitators to target activities to their interests, which inherently reflect their gendered identities.

²⁷ JENA report, march 2015

The latest JENA Host Community assessment did not properly define NFE to respondents and did not differentiate between IFE and NFE. As such, the results on NFE are not trustworthy and for the most part were not included in the report.

In general, boys sometimes “took over the household” in the absence or lack of ability of the father in the household because of an injury or disability. Not attending school in order to work to provide income was mentioned in every FGD with boys at NFE centres. Along with providing income, boys also mentioned missing class at the centres in order to escort their sisters to school or NFE centres to protect them from gangs and going to the market for their mothers to pick up food and other goods. Other reasons boys missed classes include issues with transportation and leaving the NFE centre because they enrolled in formal school. In the FGD with only four students, participants said most of the absent students were working. In general, girls missed class at NFE centres because of protection concerns.²⁸ (JENA report, 2015).

Latest quantitative reporting by NFE implementing partners have been extracted by UNICEF to indicate total enrollment of 476 students over first two quarters of 2016, where male students had a higher enrollment rate of 56.1% to 43.9% for females.

4.7 Tertiary Education

Syrian refugee youth have expressed a high need for Higher Education (HE) opportunities and frustration regarding the lack of accessible HE programmes (Participatory Assessment, 2015). It should be noted, that generally, there is a lack of data on Tertiary Education (TE). When data is available, it is often not gender disaggregated making it difficult to draw gender-specific conclusions.

4.7.1 Pre-conflict TE Background and Implications

Prior to the conflict in Syria, after completion of basic education in 9th grade, students could follow three tracks:

- general academic secondary education, which could lead to university study,
- technical secondary education
- vocational secondary education (Buckner, 2013)

Tertiary Education (TE) of Syrian refugee youth should therefore address the diverse interests included in these three tracks, rather than be limited to academic HE.

Prior to the conflict in Syria, slightly more than half of all university students were female (50.5% female, 49.5% male) and had higher graduation rates than males²⁹. Overall, there was a

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Buckner and Saba, 2010, cited in Buckner, 2013

lower participation rate for both genders from rural areas compared to urban areas (17% of rural youth studied in university, compared to 26% of urban youth). While in urban areas there was gender parity in university enrollment (26% of urban youth of both genders enrolled), in rural areas a lower proportion of rural females studied HE than males (15% of rural females, compared with 18% of rural males)³⁰. The TE interests of both genders of the refugee population in Jordan may therefore differ according to their education backgrounds in urban or rural contexts.

4.7.2 Syrian Youth Engagement and Interests in TE

There are over 120,000 Syrian refugees between the ages of 15-24 years currently in Jordan, with over 16,000 of these youth living in Za'atari, Azraq and the Emirati-Jordanian camps³¹. The proportion of male and female youth is almost equal:

- Youth aged 15-17 are 40,456 in total, comprised of 21,044 male and 19,412 female
- Youth aged 18-24 are 80,471 in total, comprised of 39,025 male and 41,446 female (Inter-Sector, 2015).

Although not disaggregated by gender, the Comprehensive Child Focused Assessment (CCFA) in Azraq showed that 20.2% of youth aged 19-24 had completed high school, 1.5% had completed university and 5.5% had started university but did not complete due to the Syrian crisis. This indicates the potentially high number of Syrian youth eligible for TE.

By contrast, the CCFA in Zaatari camp showed that only 92.5% of male and female youth aged 16-24 are in education, employment and volunteering. As shown in Table 1, more male youth are engaged in such activities than female youth. Notably, male youth are much more likely to participate in livelihoods activities than females.

Table 3: Youth Engagement in Zaatari Camps (CCFA, 2015)

% youth aged 19-24 in paid employment/training/unpaid volunteering/none of the above by age and sex

Demographic	None of the above	Paid employment	Training	Unpaid volunteering
Females 16-18	98.7%	0.1%	1.1%	0.1%
Males 16-18	89.3%	7.2%	3.3%	0.2%
Females 19-24	96.7%	2.2%	0.9%	0.2%
Males 19-24	84.5%	13.8%	1.6%	0.2%

92.5% of youth (16-24) are not in any form of employment training or unpaid volunteering.

³⁰ Kabbani and Salloum, 2011, cited in Buckner, 2013

³¹ Youth population per camp: Zaatari 5006 aged 15-17, 8796 aged 18-24; Azraq and EJC 980 aged 15-17, 1885 aged 18-24 (Inter-Sector, March 2015).

Despite these findings, male and female youth have expressed strong interest in TE (JENA Zaatari, 2014; Participatory Assessment, 2015). In urban areas, female youth were more likely to express interest in continuing their studies (13 mentions in female FGDs and 8 in male FGDs), whereas male youth mentioned returning to Syria more often (11 times male FGDs and 5 in female FGDs), both genders also mentioned obtaining employment (3 mentions in male FGDs and 5 in female FGDs) (JENA Host Community, 2015).

Male and female secondary students in Zaatari (JENA Zaatari, 2014) expressed strong desire to pursue HE in Jordan. Secondary-aged girls who had dropped out of school asked if secondary level completers would be able to study HE, indicating that the lack of HE opportunities negatively impacts on the motivation and retention of secondary level students (JENA Zaatari, 2014).

The Zaatari Participatory Assessment (2015) showed that both female and male youth had strong interests in pursuing HE, but differences between genders were expressed in terms of mobility and modes of education delivery. Male youth generally expressed willingness to travel to access HE opportunities, both within Jordan and abroad, with the exception of male youth who support their family in the camp. As male youth are more mobile, they were also more likely to express fear of harassment or return to Syria (Zaatari Safety Audit, 2014). Female youth stated they have greater restrictions on their movement due to cultural reasons and family responsibilities. These gender differences show the need for gender sensitive approaches to HE provision. Female youth are more likely to express interest in distance or blended learning, rather than campus HE or international scholarships that require them to travel away from their families.

UNHCR has provided DAFI scholarships for Syrian refugees in Jordan. In 2014, 17 females and 8 males received DAFI scholarships. In 2015, the recipients were 6 females and 5 males. DAAD has also offered in-country and international scholarships for Syrians and Jordanians, figures are not currently available.

Further information is required about the HE interests of Syrian males and females. UNESCO launched the *Jami3ati* initiative in 2015, comprising a HE survey and a clearing house for scholarship providers and applicants. A gender breakdown of the HE interests of youth in the survey will be available from UNESCO.

5. Conclusions

The gender analysis has shown that children have been used as soldiers, porters and helpers for armed groups in Syria, with boys as young as 15 having been used in active combat and 14-year-olds filling support roles. The crisis has also exacerbated the number of underage girls forced/or going into early marriage, which is encouraged as a form of 'protection' and a way for families to keep the 'honor' of their daughters.

Although most children are now attending school, the gender analysis has established that some families continue to depend on income from children, especially teenage boys, working to cover their basic needs.

Due to the Syrian Refugee Crisis, Jordan's formal government schools have had to quickly accommodate a large influx of Syrian students. This has placed more pressure on the educational infrastructure as well as teaching staff.

The gender analysis has shown that school attendance among Syrian refugee students in formal schools varies widely by age group and, to some extent, gender; with more children attending school at ages 6-11 for both boys and girls. A lower attendance rate was noted among older Syrian boy and girl students aged 12-17. Overall, more girls were attending school more than boys most of who opt into child labor to support their families.

While refugee boys and girls said "learning/gaining knowledge" as the biggest factor in their school their; they noted several factors that affect their school attendance, including (among others): low interest in going to school, violence at school, distance to and from school; the quality of education is not good, parents do not feel that education is important/ applicable for the child, they have never been enrolled in school before in any location, financial constraints, lack of available schools in the area or insufficient space in the school, cost of school materials , overcrowding in schools, not having an MOI card. Children with a disability found it difficult to find appropriate school facilities.

In addition, the gender analysis found the characteristics of the head of the household affect the enrollment of Syrian children in school. While younger Syrian boys with an uneducated parent attended school, in comparison older boys who opt or are encouraged to earn income for their household. In contrast, older Syrian girls with an uneducated parent attended formal education. Also notable, in terms of gender, Syrian boys and girls with female headed households had a slightly higher likelihood of attending formal schools.

6. Recommendations

The following recommendations are made to IATF Education Sector stakeholders.

- 1) Boy children have been shown to be vulnerable to recruitment as soldiers, porters and helpers for armed groups in Syria, while girl children are particularly vulnerable to early marriage. As such, education sector should integrate child protection mechanisms into education service planning and delivery and/or coordinate its operations with the Protection Sector.
- 2) To mitigate the continued dependence of refugee families on income from child labor, especially teenage boys, who were also found to work to cover their basic needs; Livelihoods opportunities should be extended to families. Education sector should coordinate efforts aimed at addressing this need with the livelihoods sector.

- 3) To assure the education of Syrian refugee children, education sector partners should invest in sustainable solutions for infrastructure, funding and teaching staff in support of Jordan's formal government schools which are currently under pressure to accommodate a large influx of Syrian students.
- 4) Considering that school attendance among Syrian refugee students in formal schools varies widely by age group and, to some extent, gender; with more children attending school at ages 6-11 for both boys and girls, and lower attendance noted among older boy and girls aged 12-17; innovative ways should be adapted to encourage older children to attend and stay in school.
- 5) A better learning environment should be cultivated by addressing bullying and violence at school and other factors that have been noted by the gender analysis as affecting school attendance of refugee boys and girls. The unique needs of Children with disabilities should also be considered. This also calls for better integration of Syrian boys and girls in host community schools to help improve the relationship between Syrian and Jordanian students.
- 6) Education sector should incorporate key performance indicators (KPIs) that are gender-sensitive.

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Appendix I: List of Participants

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