

# Awareness-raising in schools on child abuse, neglect and exploitation

## *SGBV*

*The aim of this project was to raise awareness within the student population, both Jordanians and non-Jordanians, about services provided locally in case of abuse, neglect or exploitation. All children have access to these services regardless of their nationality.*



UNHCR/S. Malkawi

## Background

Violence is prevalent in Jordan's crowded public schools and, as minorities, refugee children are frequently targeted and subject to discrimination and bullying. Some children—mainly adolescents—do not attend school, often because war and flight disrupted their education or because they work to earn money for their families. Living in families where there is a high degree of stress due to the experience of war, displacement and prolonged uncertainty about their asylum status, refugee children are at a high risk of neglect or abuse. Children are unlikely to report such matters directly, and UNHCR's partners need additional training in identifying and reporting such cases. Unaccompanied and separated children face serious protection problems, including homelessness, substance abuse, psychological distress, and neglect.

<b>Location</b>	Irbid and Zarba districts, Amman, Jordan
<b>Time &amp; Duration</b>	25 November – 10 December 2009 (16 Days of Activism)
<b>Population Groups</b>	National and refugees students from private and public schools
<b>Actors</b>	UNHCR, Ministry of Education, Family Protection Department



## Description

Awareness-raising sessions about services provided locally in case of abuse, neglect or exploitation, took place in private and public schools with boys and girls.

Throughout the discussions during and after the sessions, feedback from male and female students was welcomed. There was more participation in mixed private schools than in public schools.

Also, in public schools (not mixed) boys' perceptions were shared with the girls and vice versa, encouraging animated discussions in regards to the other sex's views.

Notebooks, pens and posters were distributed to school students and in the community calling to commit, act and demand to stop physical and sexual violence.

## Steps to Implementation

- Prepare training material on violence against children, highlighting the vulnerability of refugee children.
- Map the geographical distribution of schools and organize trainings accordingly.
- Building networks and positive relationships with the Ministry of Education in order to liaise with private and government schools, and principals.
- Promote and organize the sessions through these contacts.
- Book venue/hall space well in advance and ensure size is adequate for the intended group
- Conduct sessions

Distribute evaluation forms at the sessions, and conduct evaluation interviews with school staff e.g. school advisors.

## Impact & Results

- UNHCR trainers distributed evaluation forms at the end of each session to receive immediate feedback.
- In private schools, social advisors gave positive feedback. Yet, in public schools no measurement was done.

## Constraints

A large room is needed for group sessions.

## Lessons Learned/Keys to Success

- Good mapping of the schools in which the trainings will take place is needed. This can be done in direct collaboration with the child protection unit in the Ministry of Education.
- Big public spaces are needed to assemble students from more than one school in a session. In this way more students can be reached at once.
- The vulnerability of refugee children as a result of bullying at school should be treated as a matter of children's rights.
- Coordinated feedback from students and schools (e.g. from the social advisors in private schools) is needed.