

Summary of Focus Group Discussions on youth concerns in Zaatari camp

YTF members conducted FGDs through their own programming and spaces in the camp to find out from youth aged 15-32, what they see as their main concerns for their lives as youth living in the camp and which areas they feel we should be working on and advocating for.

A total of 138 (65M, 73F) participated in 17 FGDs facilitated by (IRD, NRC, QS, WCUK, IFH, RI) all organisations engaged youth from different districts from the camp. Reports showed positive engagement from both males and females participants.

Youth responses were mainly focused on participation, representation, education and livelihoods, in addition to sharing thoughts on health, infrastructure and feedback on organisations' way of work as they perceive it.

Youth believed that many organisations work on their mandates and programmes provided, but not necessarily focusing on the rapid changing youth needs in the camp. They felt that organisations can modify or do more than the current youth services provided.

Participation: female youth still believe that cultural gender barriers and stereotypes are the main obstacle for their meaningful participation. They mentioned that they feel freer to share thoughts within the family and with organisations, especially when engaged in programmes but not within the community. Males felt that they can represent themselves by social media, youth committees, NGOs activities and some community gatherings; participants also believed that issues related to already existing youth programmes are easily discussed with organisations.

As most of the organisations conduct youth gatherings or FGDs for specific reasons, both male and female participants mentioned that they don't know exactly where to go to share their thoughts on general topics or to suggest community solutions. They believed also that they lack the knowledge on the best way to represent other youth – "We know that individual requests will not be taken into consideration".

Both sexes mentioned that they should attend trainings that will lead to a better understanding on how to be more vocal and influential.

Youth Engagement: in daily camp living needs and other household responsibilities were seen as one of the major challenges for youth participation in youth gatherings and other youth services, in addition that they don't feel that youth opinions are taken seriously.

Male participants believed that they are not well represented and current youth committees are limited and don't have fair representation. – "youth committee members should not be permanent members and should be diverse".

Females asked for location where they can practice and learn new hobbies – "we attend early marriage awareness sessions almost in each organisation, but there is nowhere for us just to hang out and do new things"

Health: females asked for more female doctors in the clinics and asked if service providers can offer health care courses in the camp.

Infrastructure: both sexes asked for road structure enhancement, transportation, internet and longer electricity hours.

Education: females believed that they have better education quality than males in the camp. They also mentioned that separating male/female schools and unifying schools time will make school attending time more efficient and will allow them to better learn and practice. Both mentioned that scientific and computer labs are needed in the schools.

Male participants criticized the same training opportunities provided among different organisations and asked for more different courses offering to match the different youth needs. They also asked for literacy and numeracy classes for all ages interested to learn.

Female participants asked for relaxed scholarship criteria where providers should take in consideration the camp contexts and the hardship to achieve high Tawjihi grades. Some also asked for CFW opportunities for current university students to allow them to generate some income that would help them attending university. Teachers trainings and open courses and programmes to all ages was mentioned a lot in the discussions.

Protection: Females also mentioned that organisations and the community should work more to reduce harassment and bullying.

Livelihoods: all participants asked to increase CFW opportunities in the camp. Nepotism was mentioned a lot and both sexes believe that organisations can invest more in the recruitment of CFW, they showed an understanding to opportunities given to vulnerable cases, yet they wished that qualified and certified people take a fair opportunity.

Male participants asked for a way to connect skilled people in the camp with employers outside the camp, and to create a center for all CFW opportunities announcements.

ANNEX I: Notes and Quotes from FGDs

Female FGDs

Participation

They are not aware of most of the gatherings conducted for youth

Usually the concentration goes to the organisations interest

Asked requests usually takes time

20% of participants reported that they feel listened to.

In this age most of the females are married with a lot of responsibilities

The community doesn't take youth seriously

Stereotypes restrict female participation

Females feels that their voice is heard more at a family level than on a community level

Females agreed said that their voice is heard on an activity level once they are engaged with in youth programmes

Youth doesn't know much about leadership most of them prefer guidance

Playgrounds are all for males

Education

Relax the selection criteria to include Tawjih graduates with average marks to access Scholarships

CFW opportunities for collogue students.

students do not have a quiet place to study in as the size of the household is small compared to the family size.

training courses should be open and available to interested refugees, regardless of age

Increasing the number of the provided scholarship

Look into increasing school time and include practical classes and computer labs

Asked for health care education programmes

Try to separate female and male schools and unify the school time for both, most of the female harassment take place between schools shifting time.

Train and equip school's teachers

most of the course offered are limited for a specific age. And that, the service provides that offer course regardless the age, its certificates are not accredited and do not provide all the needed courses for youth.

They believed that female education environment and opportunities are better than the male opportunities

Representation

Feels more represented at HH level or with in the org programmes

They don't feel that there is a structure or entity to represent females in the camp

Organisations should focus on representation and empowerment not only basic services

livelihoods

CFW opportunities for collogue students.

More CFW opportunities for females

Enhance CFW announcements, and make sure that they are disseminated equally among the community members

Maternity leaves for working mothers

Concerns

Cultural differentiation between males and females

No internet connections

Harassment and bullying

We attend too many awareness sessions on early marriage, we wish we find a place to do something else, practice and learn new hobbies

Most of the organisations receive individual requests, that's most probably why they don't respond

Males

Participation

Some trainings are only for a specific people in the camp

Stakeholders needs to listen to us

Lake of knowledge on where to go to give feedback or complain about organisations

We don't know how to ask for things or how to talk to organisations

"Organisations only care about their work"

issues related to NGOs existing programmes are easy to discuss and might be solved.

We are mainly busy finding jobs

Most of the youth gatherings focus on general topics that are not directly related to youth

Discussing the issue is something but being involved in the decision making or design is another issue

Representation

Males felt that they can represent themselves by social media, youth committees, NGOs activities and some community gatherings.

Education

Enhancing the organizations to provide different training topics, because all NGOs provide the same courses i.e communications skills, ICDL, etc.

We think that Literacy classes for all ages is highly needed

livelihoods

Nepotism

They feel that organisations are not closely monitoring the recruitment processes

Degree holders doesn't have a chance because of wasta

Work on connecting skilled labor with employers outside the camp

A recruitment center for CFW opportunities