Education Sector Working Group Meeting, December 2025

Minutes of Meeting

Date: December 4th, 2025

Place: Online

Chaired by: Isaac Makanani UNICEF, Maithree Abeyrathna NRC, and Hala Sarabi QRF.

Attendees: UNICEF, UNHCR, NRC, QRF, Save the children, Jordan Education Coalition, Caritas Germany, JOHUD, IMC, (Jordan Coalition for Education for All) and ARDD, Quest scope, COOPI, UNOPS, Plan International, UNRWA, PRM – US Embassy, Caritas Jordan.

Agenda:

- ESP 2026 – 2030 updates
- 3 RP/JRP updates
- EOI – GPE Grant Agent
- World Children's Day celebrations – camp updates
- Jordan Country Returnee Response Plan for Syrian Returnees
- Caritas presentation
- Any other business

ESP 2026 – 2030 updates

- The ESP development workshops have progressed well since their official launch in September, following technical preparation sessions.
- Workshops in September and November focused on setting priority programs, KPIs, targets, and developing the results matrix and multi-year operational plan.
- The December session will cover costing, financing, risk management, and the MEL framework, vital for finalizing financial and accountability aspects.
- The current ESP includes four main thematic areas—early childhood, basic and secondary education, technical and vocational training, and higher education—with cross-cutting themes like inclusive education, digitization, and green schools.

- The collaboration effort driving the development of the education sector plan have been progressing well. After December, a draft ESP for 2026–2030 will be shared for further partner engagement.

3RP/JRP updates

- The Inter-Sector Working Group has requested all the sector to start working on the 2026 3RP planning and it should be based on the prioritization exercise that took place in June 2025 where two scenarios of fund reduction have been adopted 30% and 50%.
- For Education sector, it has been recommended to apply the 30% reduction scenario as per the prioritization exercise took place in June 2025.
- The 3RP will focus on priority activities with direct, tangible impacts on refugees both in camps and host communities.
- Members will be expected to submit sound plans based on realistic funding and operational contexts. Activities must align with sector priorities, be logical to government stakeholders, and reflect the continued decrease in target population size due to returns.

EOI – GPE Grant Agent

- The Ministry has been in the process of finalizing the compact partnership document for the GPE multiplier fund, which amounts to $15 million. They have also advertised a position for a grant agent.
- The grant agent's role is to support the management of the grant, which remains under the Ministry's ownership, particularly handling fiduciary responsibilities and monitoring processes.
- Upon learning of this advertisement, the ESWG chairs saw an opportunity to expand the scope of the expression of interest and therefore circulated the announcement to all ESWG members.
- ESWG will not inquire about individual applications and look forward to collaborating with the appointed grant agent for the GPE system strengthening grant.

World Children's Day celebrations – camp updates

- UNICEF organized three activities to mark World Children's Day on November 19 2025.
- The main events was held in Amman, with others being hosted for the refugee children in Garden Camp and Azraq Camp, primarily targeting kindergarten-age

children. The celebrations were well attended, notably in Amman by members of the ESWG and representatives from various UN Agencies and INGOs including WFP, WHO, UNESCO, and JICA.

- The events provided an opportunity for interaction with children of different ages and sharing information on each organization's efforts to support children.
- UNICEF expressed appreciation for the participation and support of all partners involved in the three locations.

Jordan Country Returnee Response Plan for Syrian Returnees

- The second Doha sub-regional meeting in October followed the initial June meeting convened by UNICEF with education ministries from six countries supporting Syrian refugees to discuss continuity of learning. In June, the key outcome was to develop country-specific returnee response plans (RRPs), with Jordan involving the ESWG, EDPG, and a Ministry of Education task team to design its plan.
- The October meeting included education ministry representatives from Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, and Turkey, with deputy ministers from Syria, Lebanon, and Turkey attending. Donors and NGOs like UNICEF, the World Bank, EU/ECHO, and Save the Children also participated. Jordan presented its RRP through senior education officials.
- Discussions focused on collaboration to build resilient education systems supporting returnees and refugees amid Syria's complex political context, emphasizing leadership, coordination, and reliable data (notably a 30% Syrian returnee rate reported from Saudi Arabia).
- Jordan's Returnee Response Plan was refined post-meeting, featuring four pillars: enhancing formal education access and quality, reintegration via non-formal education, capacity building for Syrian education personnel, and inclusive education for vulnerable children particularly Children with Disabilities. The implementation timeline (3-5 years) is under discussion.
- Next steps involve finalizing and operationalizing the plan with Ministry coordination, aligning with host country strategies and refugee needs, securing donor engagement and funding aligned with the 3RP framework. Donor commitments are ongoing.

Caritas presentation

The presentation acknowledged all members' vital contributions to inclusive education and aimed to gather collective support for improving coordination in this sector. It emphasized that inclusive early childhood education is a priority in Jordan but remains mainly donor-driven, with a significant gap between policy and practice in kindergartens.

The project seeks to bridge this gap by developing scalable inclusive Early Childhood Development (ECD) standards. These standards will help kindergartens self-assess inclusion levels through a government-owned digital platform, enabling better resource mobilization and progress tracking against national targets.

The project also focuses on consolidating data on inclusive services and training for kindergartens and parents of children with disabilities, addressing current information gaps. Caritas is collaborating with partners such as UNESCO, GIZ, HI, and government bodies to create a unified, government-owned roadmap for inclusive ECD, ensuring sustainability.

The key goal is deep coordination and synergy at the outcome level, going beyond mere information sharing. Current efforts include joint work on a referral and diagnosis system for children with disabilities. The project continues to analyze existing initiatives and invites further input to strengthen inclusive education standards and coordination across the sector.

Next Meeting

- To be scheduled; members will be informed via email.

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