

**United Nations (UN) and Partners
Humanitarian Response for Syrian Refugees in Jordan**

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

Key Findings

Education Sector Gender Analysis was conducted by the Sector's Gender Focal Points (Zainab Khalil - Project Manager, ARDD Legal Aid and Dina Al Masri - Assistant Regional Director, Middle East Children's Institute [MECI]) and the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) Youth Manager (Paul Fean) with the technical support of Senior GenCap Advisers, Sarah Martin and Simon Opolot. The gender analysis assessed the gender dimensions of the education needs and challenges of Syrian refugee children in Jordan. The following are the key findings of the Gender Analysis.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.