

# **RUNNING ON EMPTY II**

**A LONGITUDINAL  
WELFARE STUDY  
OF SYRIAN  
REFUGEE  
CHILDREN  
RESIDING IN  
JORDAN'S HOST  
COMMUNITIES**

UNICEF JORDAN



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## **RUNNING ON EMPTY II: A LONGITUDINAL WELFARE STUDY OF SYRIAN REFUGEE CHILDREN RESIDING IN JORDAN'S HOST COMMUNITIES**

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## Chapter 1

### Executive Summary

## Chapter 2

### List of Acronyms

## Chapter 3

### List of Figures



## Chapter 4

### Introduction

#### METHODOLOGY

- Page 12

## Chapter 5

### Education

#### ACCESS TO FORMAL EDUCATION

- Page 20

#### PARTIAL ATTENDANCE

- Page 20

#### BARRIERS TO ENROLMENT IN FORMAL EDUCATION

- Page 22

#### REASONS FOR DROPPING OUT OF FORMAL EDUCATION

- Page 25

#### UNCERTIFIED AND NON-FORMAL EDUCATION

- Page 26

## Chapter 6

### Child Protection

#### CHILD LABOUR

- Page 30

#### BIRTH REGISTRATION

- Page 33



## Chapter 7

### Health

#### BARRIERS TO ACCESSING HEALTH SERVICES

- Page 38



## Chapter 8

### Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

#### WATER SUPPLY SERVICE

- Page 42

#### WASTEWATER SERVICE

- Page 42



## Chapter 9

### Conclusion

#### REFERENCES

- Page 45



## Chapter 1

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

After six years of war, the 659,593 Syrian refugees registered in Jordan continue to live precariously. Many Syrian families that arrived in Jordan after the outbreak of the war depend heavily on various forms of cash assistance, are more likely to have accumulated debt over the years in exile and face continuous financial stress. Increasingly pushed into less expensive housing, transportation costs to reach services have become a real burden, particularly impacting girls and young women. Families continue to rely on negative coping mechanisms, such as child labour, often with detrimental effects on boys' education.

In order to better understand the changing circumstances of Syrian refugee families with children living in host community over time, UNICEF undertook a longitudinal study starting in January 2016. Running on Empty analyzed the initial wave of data collection in January 2016, focusing on monetary welfare of Syrian families in Jordan, access to services and social cohesion. This current instalment of the study includes findings from the next two waves in May and October 2016. This report focuses primarily on access and barriers to services for Syrian refugees living in host community.

This third wave of data collection in the longitudinal study showed notable changes in the fields of education, child protection, health and water and sanitation:

- Education:** The percentage of Syrian school-aged refugee children attending formal education improved from 72% in January 2016 to 79% in October 2016. A third of children who have never been enrolled in formal education in Jordan could not enroll for reasons including lack of proper documentation. For boys, child labour, school violence, and the high costs related to schooling (for transportation and stationery supplies) are the main barriers to their enrolment. For girls, barriers include the distance to the nearest school, the high cost of transportation, the need to help out with household chores, health problems, and families refusing to educate their daughters.



- Drop-out rates:** Sixty-eight per cent of out of school Syrian refugee children were previously enrolled in school in Jordan and have dropped out since. The poor quality of teaching and learning environment and violence in schools are the main reasons why children say they drop out of school.

- Labour and Child Labour:** As the policy context changed over the past year, Syrian refugees report high levels of awareness (92 per cent) of the work permit application fee waiver, but only 18 per cent report that they or members of their family have registered for work permits. Children continue to be major contributors to household income. This study found that for Syrians in host communities, 22 per cent of the total household income generated through labour (which excludes any form of cash transfer or assistance) comes from children under the age of 16.

- Birth and civil registration:** 41% of Syrian households with children that are registered with UNHCR have at least one child born in Jordan. Of these children, 6% do not have valid birth certificates from the Government of Jordan and will have a hard time obtaining them, primarily because of their family books being unavailable. This will affect their access to education and other basic services in the future.

- Health:** 85% of children in the study had medical needs in the last six months prior to this assessment. The number of children accessing NGO and CBO clinics has increased since the first dataset collected in this study. The number of respondents reporting that transportation costs are a barrier to accessing public healthcare has also risen.

- Water and Sanitation:** 23% of Syrian refugee households in host communities do not have enough water for all their household needs. 35% of households suffered overflows of sewerage in the last year, while 18% suffer this on monthly basis. This leads to a high risk of contamination and unsafe and unhealthy living environments.

It is important to emphasize that despite the multi-faceted nature of these challenges, the Government of Jordan, humanitarian partners, communities, parents and the children themselves continue to strive to meet the needs of all through this prolonged crisis. Critical to their success are sustained and predictable investments, timely implementation of high quality programmes and solid advocacy efforts for sound and evidence-based policy decisions.

## KEY NUMBERS



### Education

Syrian school-aged refugee children attending formal education improved from 72% in January 2016 to 79% in October 2016

### Drop-out Rates

68% of out of school Syrian refugee children were previously enrolled in Jordan and have dropped out since



### Health

85% of children had medical needs in the last six months

### Birth and Civil Registration

41% of Syrian households with children that are registered with UNHCR have at least one child born in Jordan



### Water and Sanitation

23% of Syrian refugee households in host communities do not have enough water for all their household needs

### Labour and Child Labour

22% of the total household income generated through labour comes from children under the age of 16



## Chapter 2

### LIST OF ACRONYMS

<b>CBO</b>	Community Based Organization
<b>CHTG</b>	Community Health Task Group
<b>DOS</b>	Department of Statistics
<b>FE</b>	Formal education
<b>FGD</b>	Focus Group Discussion
<b>HH</b>	Household
<b>IFE</b>	Informal education
<b>ILO</b>	International Labour Organization
<b>MoE</b>	Ministry of Education
<b>MoH</b>	Ministry of Health
<b>MoI</b>	Ministry of Interior
<b>MoL</b>	Ministry of Labour
<b>MoWI</b>	Ministry of Water and Irrigation
<b>NFE</b>	Non-formal education
<b>NGO</b>	Non-Governmental Organization
<b>OOSC</b>	Out-of-school children
<b>UNFPA</b>	United Nations Population Fund
<b>UNHCR</b>	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
<b>UNICEF</b>	United Nations Children's Fund
<b>UNRWA</b>	United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East
<b>WASH</b>	Water, sanitation and hygiene

## Chapter 3

### LIST OF FIGURES

<b>Figure 1:</b>	Sample size by wave	13
<b>Figure 2:</b>	School-aged children's attendance in any type of education – by wave	20
<b>Figure 3:</b>	Barriers affecting regular formal education attendance - by sex (Wave 3)	21
<b>Figure 4:</b>	Barriers affecting regular formal education attendance - by Wave	22
<b>Figure 5:</b>	Reasons why children were denied access to formal education (Wave 3)	24
<b>Figure 6:</b>	Barriers to enrolment in formal education (excluding denial of access) - by sex (Wave 3)	24
<b>Figure 7:</b>	Reasons for children dropping out of formal education - by sex (Wave 3)	25
<b>Figure 8:</b>	Reasons for children dropping out of formal education - by wave	26
<b>Figure 9:</b>	Barriers affecting attendance of alternative education streams (IFE or NFE) - by sex (Wave 3)	27
<b>Figure 10:</b>	Sources of income of refugee households (Wave 2)	31
<b>Figure 11:</b>	Reasons for not registering for a work permit (Wave 3)	33
<b>Figure 12:</b>	Perceived impact of obtaining a work permit on socio-economic condition (Wave 3)	33
<b>Figure 13:</b>	Documentation of Syrian refugee children born in Jordan (Wave 2)	34
<b>Figure 14:</b>	Percentage of households in which children had medical needs during the last six months	38
<b>Figure 15:</b>	Barriers to accessing public health care – by Wave	39
<b>Figure 16:</b>	Children's healthcare access in the past six months – by Wave	39
<b>Figure 17:</b>	Reasons for accessing private healthcare	39
<b>Figure 18:</b>	Reported frequency of households connected to a network needing to supplement their water supply in summer - (Wave 3)	42
<b>Figure 19:</b>	Frequency of sewerage overflows (Wave 3)	42

## Chapter 4

# INTRODUCTION

The conflict in Syria has caused in the worst refugee crisis since the Second World War. Six years after the start of the war, Syria's neighbours are hosting the majority of people displaced by the conflict. There are 659,593 registered Syrian refugees in Jordan (UNHCR, June 2017), although some sources put the actual number of Syrians living in Jordan (registered and non-registered) as high as 1.5 million (Department of Statistics, 2015). This large number of Syrians, on top of an already existing refugee population, adds pressure on national systems. Around 79% of registered Syrian refugees live in host communities, 96 per cent of whom live in northern and central Jordan. Of these registered refugees, 51 per cent are children under 18 years of age. These

percentages translate to approximately 262,000 registered Syrian refugee children under the age of 18 living in host communities (UNHCR, 31 Dec 2016).

The Government of Jordan and the international community have contributed substantial assistance to refugees and crisis-affected communities. Yet, Syrian families are increasingly challenged to meet their children's basic needs. National systems are stretched to deliver services to the Syrian population, which currently constitutes a sixth of the population of Jordan, and the increasing pressure has exposed weaknesses in the national systems. Six years into a protracted crisis, funding is becoming

increasingly unpredictable, making sudden reductions in or suspensions of assistance likely.

In order to better understand the changing circumstances of Syrian refugee families with children over time, UNICEF has undertaken a longitudinal study starting in January 2016. Running on Empty analyzed the initial wave of data collection in January 2016, focusing on monetary welfare of Syrian families in Jordan, access to services and social cohesion. This current study includes findings from the next two waves in May and October 2016. This report focuses on access and barriers to services to inform UNICEF's design and implementation of adequate interventions.



## Methodology

**910 Syrian refugee families with 3,746 children under 18 years old were surveyed over the three waves**

The first survey was conducted in January 2016 administered to a random sample of 1,201 Syrian refugee families with children reaching a total of 4,871 children under 18 years old in the northern and central Jordanian governorates of Mafraq, Irbid, Zarqa and Amman. At the time of study design in December 2015, the four selected governorates hosted about 80 per cent of registered refugees in host communities (recently down to 78%). The number of cases selected in each of the four governorates was proportional to the size of the total Syrian refugee population at the time of survey design, as per UNHCR data in December 2015 (UNICEF, 2016a).

The three waves of data collection have taken place at intervals of four months.

The first round of data collection (Wave 1) was conducted between 13 January and 3 February 2016. The second round (Wave 2) was conducted between 1 May and 6 June 2016, and the third round (Wave 3) was conducted between 19 September and 13 October 2016.

Between Wave 1 and Wave 2 the attrition rate was 18 per cent and between Wave 2 and Wave 3 it was 8 per cent. The sample size of registered Syrian refugee families with school-aged children during 2016 was 26 per cent smaller than the initial selection. The attrition rate was anticipated and part of the survey design. Therefore, 910 Syrian refugee families with 3,746 children under 18 years old were surveyed over the three waves as shown in Figure 1.

Mothers were the primary source for interviews, although other family members were also consulted depending on the circumstance of the family. Of the sample of 910 families, 66 per cent of the household respondents were female (up from 61% in the original sample), with an even split between boys and girls. Twenty-six per cent of the children were five or younger (down from 29% in the original sample), while 75 per cent of the children were of school age (up from 71%).

The interviews also informed beneficiaries about key service providers in their neighbourhood, and UNICEF ensured follow up on cases that needed referrals.

Figure 1: Sample size by wave

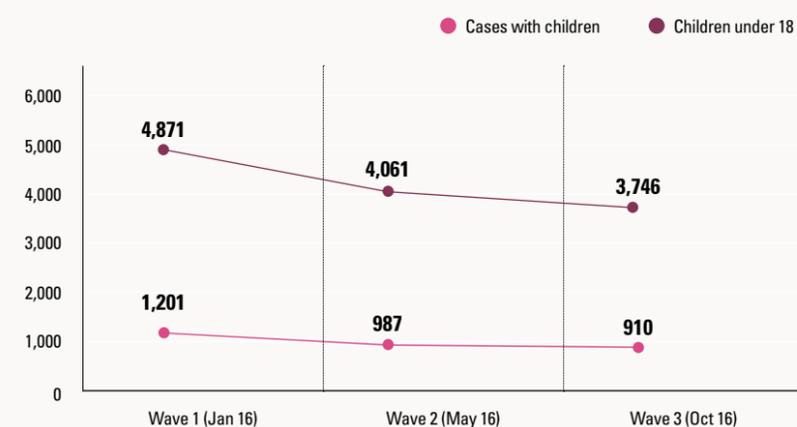
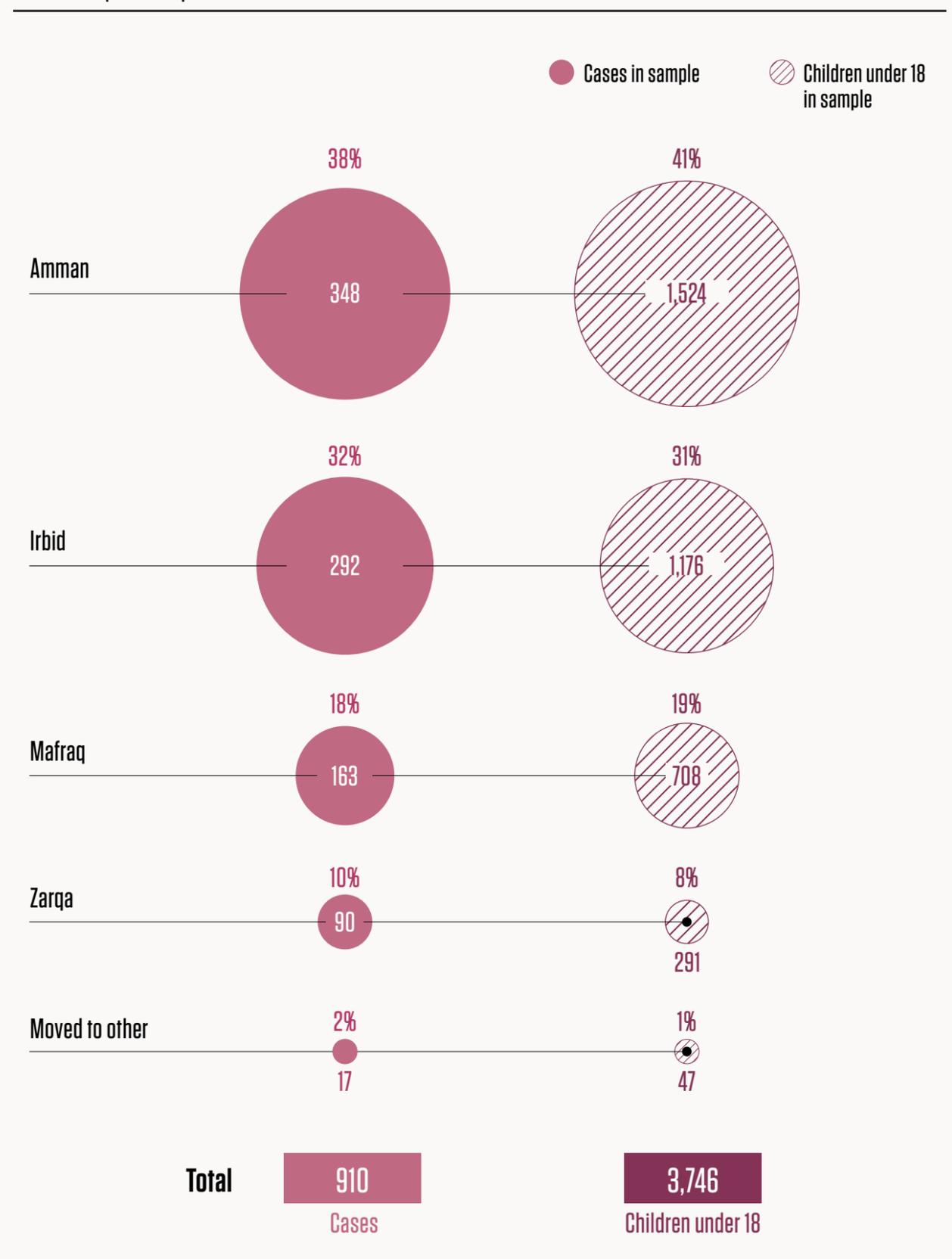


Table 1: Sample description (Wave 3)



This study also incorporated qualitative information from two rounds of focus group discussions that were conducted after every round of data collection (six focus groups in total). The discussions happened with heads of households, with separate male and female groups. These discussions took place in Amman, Mafraq and Irbid with about 10 participants, so that each participant would have the opportunity to express their opinions fully. Due to over-recruitment, occasionally more than 10 participants attended. Individuals were selected based on their geographic location, gender and the educational status of their children. The sessions lasted from 60 to 90 minutes and the groups discussed issues related to certification and registration, enrolment and quality of education, social protection, child labour, social cohesion and work permits.

Breakdown of Focus Group Discussions:

1. Female caregivers (mothers of children under age of 18), Amman, 9 participants
2. Male caregivers (fathers of children under age of 18), Amman, 9 participants
3. Male caregivers (fathers of children under age of 18), Mafraq, 11 participants
4. Female caregivers (mothers of children under age of 18), Mafraq, 12 participants
5. Female caregivers (mothers of children under age of 18), Irbid, 9 participants

1. All studies reviewed are listed in the reference section

6. Male caregivers with children under the age of 18, Irbid, 10 participants

This study had several limitations:

- Most of the studies reviewed in this publication<sup>1</sup> are based on large surveys that were only administered to registered refugees. As such, estimates are not representative of the full population of Syrian refugees in host communities, which also includes an unidentified number of unregistered refugees.

• Comparing data across different studies can be challenging as survey questions on the same topic may be asked in different ways.

• Due to attrition of the initial sample, the proportionality of the sample to the size of the total Syrian refugee population in the four major Syrian refugee hosting governorates is slightly distorted and will need to be corrected before proceeding with Waves 4, 5 and 6 in 2017-2018.





Chapter 5

# Education

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The Government of Jordan, the international community, and UNICEF and its partners have been working to increase access to education for Syrian refugees and vulnerable children of all nationalities in host communities, particularly after commitments made at the Supporting Syria and the Region conference in London (also referred to as the London Conference) in February 2016. According to Jordan Response Plan 2017-2019, about 90,846 registered Syrian refugee children remained out of formal education in the 2015/2016 school year, a figure that substantially increases to 118,840 children when calculations are based on the 2015 Census data. At the end of the 2015/2016 school year, there was an increase in enrolment of 16,104 students (12 percent) compared to the previous academic year.



The expansion in school spaces based on London Conference commitments included the opening of an additional 100 double-shift schools in the 2016/2017 school year, which have enrolled an additional 17,601 students (UNICEF, 2017a), in addition to the existing 98 double-shifted schools in host communities. The uptake of school places by Syrian children has been lower than expected for a variety of reasons. Transportation to school in the host communities remains a barrier, especially in the instances where the double-shifted school with space for Syrians is some distance from a child's house. Violence in schools, amongst students, amongst Jordanians and Syrians between shifts, and between teachers and students leads to an unsafe school environment and increases student drop out. The quality of teaching and learning

remains an underlying issue within the overstretched school system in Jordan. Improvements in quality may retain a higher number of students and entice larger numbers to enrol.

As part of its commitment to ensure access to education for all Syrian children in Jordan, UNICEF supported alternative streams of education for children who are out of school. First, in non-formal education (NFE), the Drop-Out programme is certified by the Ministry of Education (MoE) for ages 13-20 (female) and 13-18 (male). It provides students with the opportunity to gain a certificate equivalent to Grade 10, after which they may continue their studies through a home schooling programme to continue learning and complete Grade 12 or enter vocational

education and technical training. Currently there are 87 operational NFE centres in Jordan's host communities administered by Questscope, a UNICEF partner, in cooperation with MoE. An additional 2 NFE centres are operational in Azraq camp.

Second, in late October 2016, UNICEF supported MoE to establish the Catch-Up programme for accelerated learning for 9-12 year old children who have been out of school for over three years. In Jordan, children who have missed school for three years cannot enter school without 'catching up'. The goal is to integrate these children back into the formal education system. Currently there are 55 centres supporting 1,276 children living in host communities with an additional 13 centres in camps.

Third, uncertified education service are provided to children who are ineligible for or who cannot access formal education. IFE provides learning support in four subjects - Arabic, English, math and science - through a network of 235 Makani ('my space') centres<sup>2</sup>. While the majority of uncertified education services are being provided by UNICEF in partnership with I/NGO partners through Makani centres, there are a small number of NGOs who also provide uncertified education. The uncertified education approach also provides learning support services in the form of remedial education for children enrolled in formal education. Remedial education provides additional tutorial support to children in order to improve their learning achievement in formal school. There are currently around 68,690 registered beneficiaries in the host communities in Makani centres, of whom 78 per cent are Syrian and 21 per cent are Jordanian (UNICEF, 2016b).



2. At the time of this report there were 103 operational Makani's in host communities, 39 in camp and 93 standalone sites in Informal Tented Settlements (ITS).



**The expansion in school spaces based on London Conference commitments included the opening of an additional 100 double-shift schools in the 2016/2017 school year, which have enrolled an additional 17,601 students (UNICEF, 2017a), in addition to the existing 98 double-shifted schools in host communities**

### ACCESS TO FORMAL EDUCATION

This longitudinal study highlights the need to expand spaces in schools. This can be accomplished through the interim double shifting of schools with an understanding that there is a need to tackle the transportation cost barrier while addressing violence in school and improving the quality of teaching and learning environment.

The study shows that the majority of registered school-aged Syrian refugee children are in formal education, and this has increased slightly in the third wave

of data collection. The number of school-aged children attending formal education improved modestly from 72 per cent in January 2016 to 79 per cent at the start of the new school year in fall 2016. Despite this, by October 2016 about 17 per cent of school-aged children were still not accessing any type of education (down from 19 per cent).

The enrolment rate in any type of education, i.e., formal, non-formal and uncertified, is slightly higher among school-aged girls (86 per cent) than among school-aged boys (80 per cent). The Jordan Population and Housing Census 2015 (Department

of Statistics, 2015), shows that Syrian children have the lowest enrolment rate compared to Jordanians or Palestinians with 38 per cent of Syrian children between the ages of five and fifteen out of school at the end of 2015. It is important to note that these figures include Syrian children who are not registered with UNHCR.

### PARTIAL ATTENDANCE

The third wave of the longitudinal study shows that for children enrolled in any form of education, 95 per cent are in formal education, 2 per cent in uncertified education and 3 per cent in non-formal education. Relatively more school-aged girls are enrolled in formal education (96 per cent versus 93 per cent for boys), while relatively more school-aged boys are enrolled in non-formal education (4 per cent versus 2 per cent for girls). This could be because flexible non-formal education shifts appeal more to working boys.

Only 2 per cent of those enrolled in formal education have low attendance, defined as being absent two to four days per week. Children with low attendance are at higher risk of dropping out of school at later stages. In the third wave of the longitudinal study, one of the biggest hindrances to children attending formal education regularly (four to five days per week) is their obligation to provide financial support for their families. This affects 10 percentage points more boys than girls (Figure 3) and is more pronounced after the summer than the winter (Figure 4).

Many more boys than girls attend less frequently due to the quality of the teaching and learning environment. A higher percentage of male teachers (28 per cent) used both shouting and hitting as methods of discipline than female teachers (21 per cent), according to a UNICEF study done in 2014. Other contributing factors may include overcrowded classrooms, unruliness in classrooms placing

Figure 2: School-aged children's attendance in any type of education – by wave

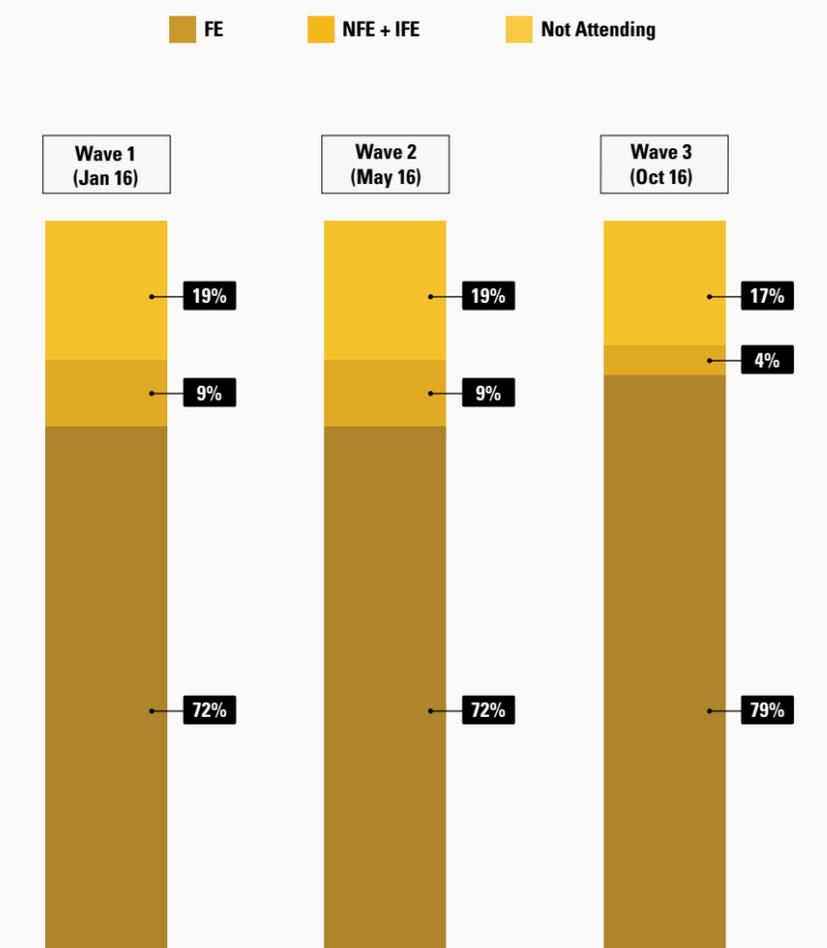
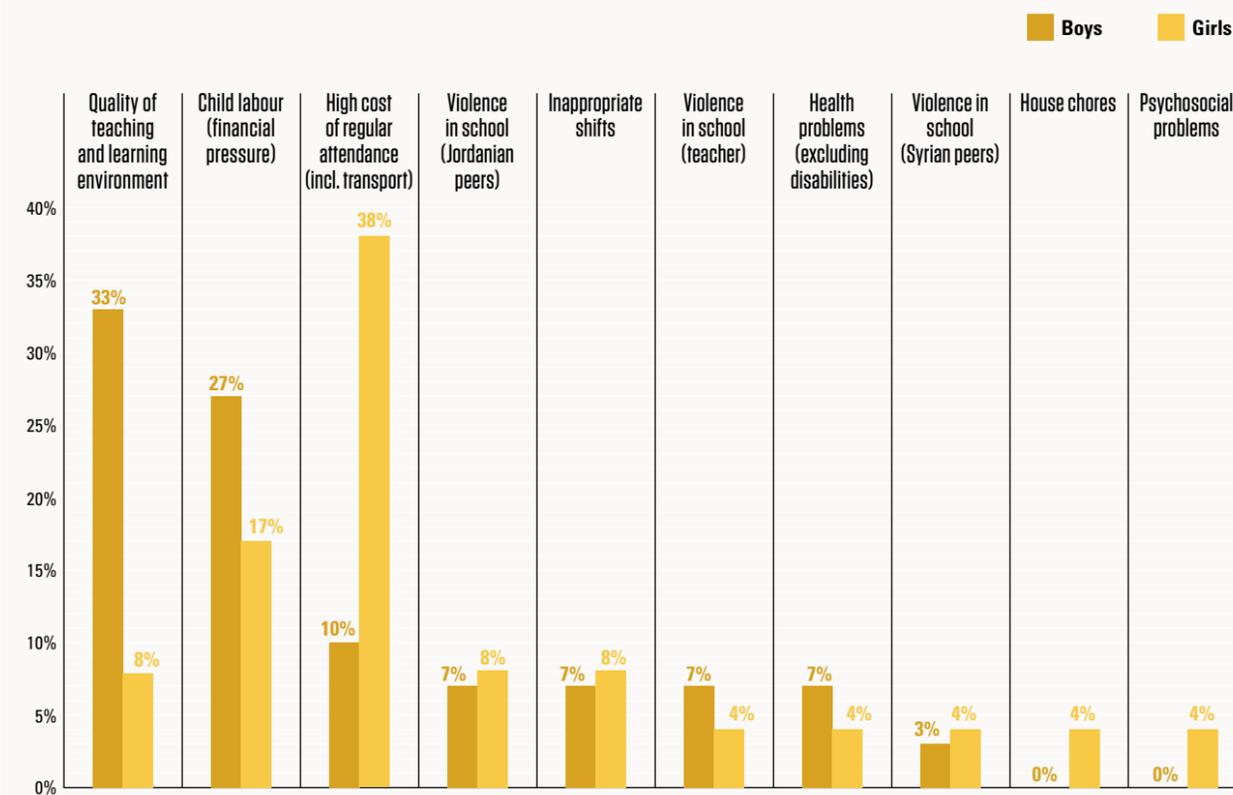


Figure 3: Barriers affecting regular formal education attendance - by sex (Wave 3)

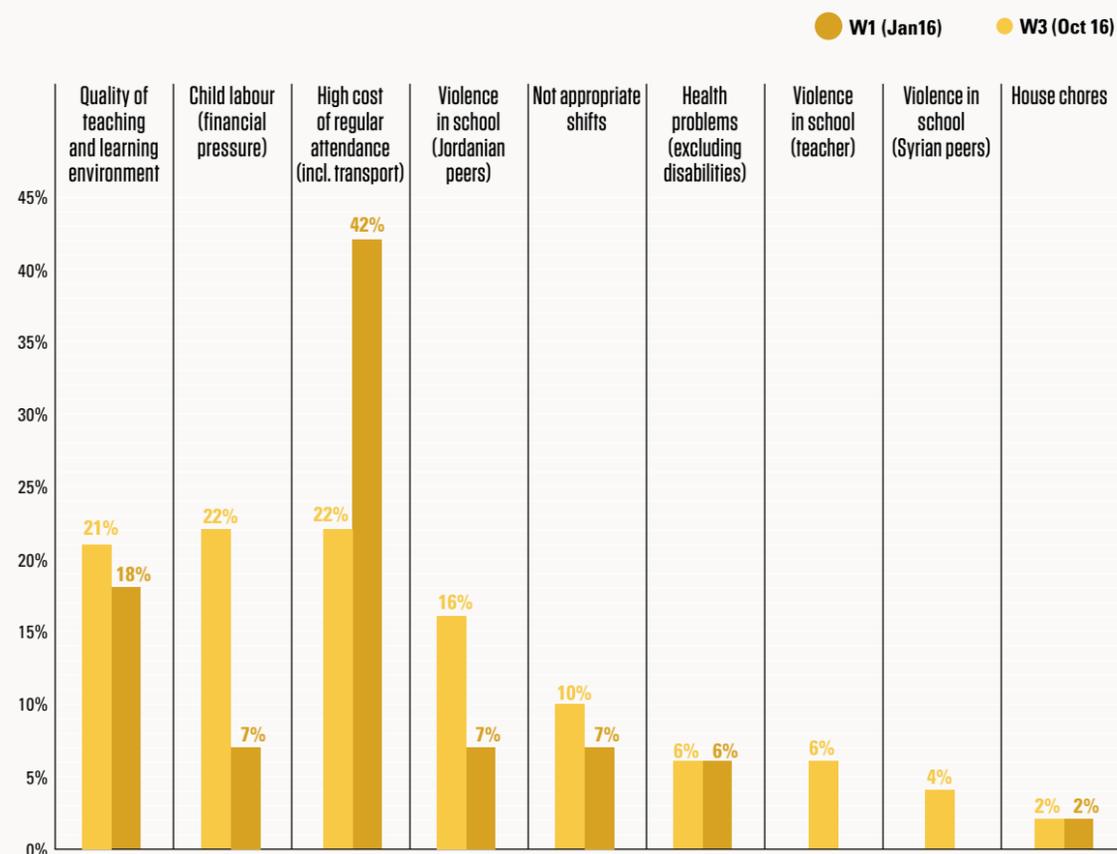


teachers under pressure, and students being subjected to violence. Teachers have also complained of a condensed curriculum (UNICEF, 2017a). Altogether these elements do not create a positive learning environment for children seeking to learn (UNICEF, 2015). A comprehensive assessment of double-shifted schools highlights parents' perception that teachers are not motivated to teach and children are insufficiently engaged in learning (UNICEF, 2017a). The low quality of the learning environment in Jordan is further confirmed by other studies that looked into the poor basic and secondary education learning outcomes (Jordan Student Performance, 2012).

The factor that most affects frequent attendance of girls is the long distances to school, as girls are less likely to be allowed to walk alone if the school is far away. Therefore, the high cost of transportation to school (especially during the winter months when it becomes dark earlier and is therefore perceived as less safe for girls) contributes to girls attending less frequently. Public schools have no transportation option, such as busing.

**The number of school-aged children attending formal education improved modestly from 72 per cent in January 2016 to 79 per cent at the start of the new school year in fall 2016**

Figure 4: Barriers affecting regular formal education attendance - by Wave



### BARRIERS TO ENROLMENT IN FORMAL EDUCATION

Children who are not accessing formal education include those who have never enrolled in formal education and those who were enrolled but have dropped out. The results of Wave 3 of this longitudinal study indicate that 32 per cent of those currently not enrolled in formal education had never enrolled since arriving in Jordan. However, 68 per cent of those currently not enrolled in formal education have dropped out of schools in Jordan.

#### Reasons for never enrolling

In Wave 2 of this study in May 2016, 28 per cent of respondents with children who had never been enrolled in formal education indicated that they had been denied access to public schools and listed this as the main reason why their children had never been enrolled in Jordan. Building on these findings, in Wave 3 (October 2016), researchers specifically asked about the denial of access to public schools, and 32 per cent of total respondents confirmed that this was still the case. The main reason for denial of access was school overcrowding, as illustrated in Figure 5. This was further confirmed during the focus group

discussions. Since Syrian refugees in host communities are often in specific poorer neighbourhoods, there is a high demand for school spaces in particular schools leading to a strain on the existing infrastructure due to limited Ministry of Education operating budget. (UNICEF, 2015) Because of the high demand on certain schools, families sometimes struggle to get their children registered at nearby schools. Children who cannot register in their local school have to travel long distances to the next closest school: this leads to high transportation costs, as well fear of safety for girls. In some cases, enrolment may be denied to these students from far off communities, as students residing closest to schools are given priority.

**FGD 5, P8:** "They sent me from one school to another, and in the end registered my children in a school that is half an hour away, and we can't move them to another one. School started a month ago but they couldn't go: I can't afford the transportation."

**FGD 5:** "I haven't registered my children this year, all the schools are far away. There are no nearby schools for boys."



Refugee children in Jordan must have an asylum seeker certificate and a new Ministry of Interior card to enrol in formal education in public schools. At the start of the 2016-2017 school year, the Ministry of Education announced a grace period of one semester to regularize the child's identity and residence documentation. This waiver on these particular pieces of documentation was positively received and many families sought to enrol their children in formal education, although there are questions about what would happen to children if they could not produce the necessary documentation at the expiration of the grace period. In some cases, schools allow children to continue schooling once enrolled despite not having secured the necessary identity card.

Nonetheless, the findings of this study show that 13 per cent of rejections from formal education were still due to a lack of proper documentation. During focus group discussions, participants reported that those with all the necessary paperwork have no complications with school registration. When documents are missing, however, registration becomes much more difficult, and a barrier to accessing education.

Additionally, children's enrollment in education is also jeopardized by their engagement in the labour market caused by the financial pressures their families face. This will be covered in the Child Protection chapter.

**FGD 5, P3:** "I had no problem with registration because I have my papers, nothing was difficult."

**FGD 5, P6:** "I have a cousin... he did not study...because he doesn't have an ID. No state or private school accepted him. Any place you go, the papers are the most important thing."

**FGD 6, P4:** "...he was supposed to be registered in Grade 1, but they haven't registered him...they wanted his ID card. I do not have it."

Although access to formal education in public schools in Jordan is free for Syrian children, indirect costs such as transportation and stationery have been identified as major barriers to children enrolling. UNICEF estimates that transportation could cost around 20 JOD (about 28 USD) per month per child, which is unaffordable for a large proportion of Syrian refugees (UNICEF, 2017a). In Wave 3 of this survey, 15 per cent of families cited the high costs of schooling (including transportation) as the main reason for not enrolling their child in formal education. In addition, 13 per cent of families said that the nearest school is too far. This is further supported by UNHCR's Living in the Shadows report, in which more than a third of respondents mention financial constraints as the main barrier to enrolling their children in school (UNHCR, 2014).



When these figures are further disaggregated by gender (Figure 6), child labour is shown to be the biggest barriers to boys' enrolment in education. For girls, the reasons are more complicated, including distance to schools, helping out with household chores, health problems<sup>3</sup> and families refusing to educate girls.

Figure 5: Reasons why children were denied access to formal education (Wave 3)

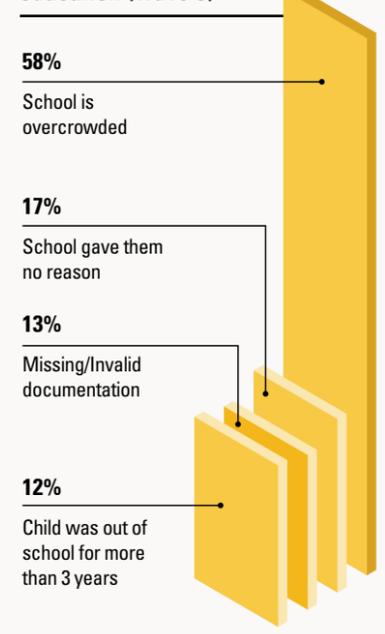
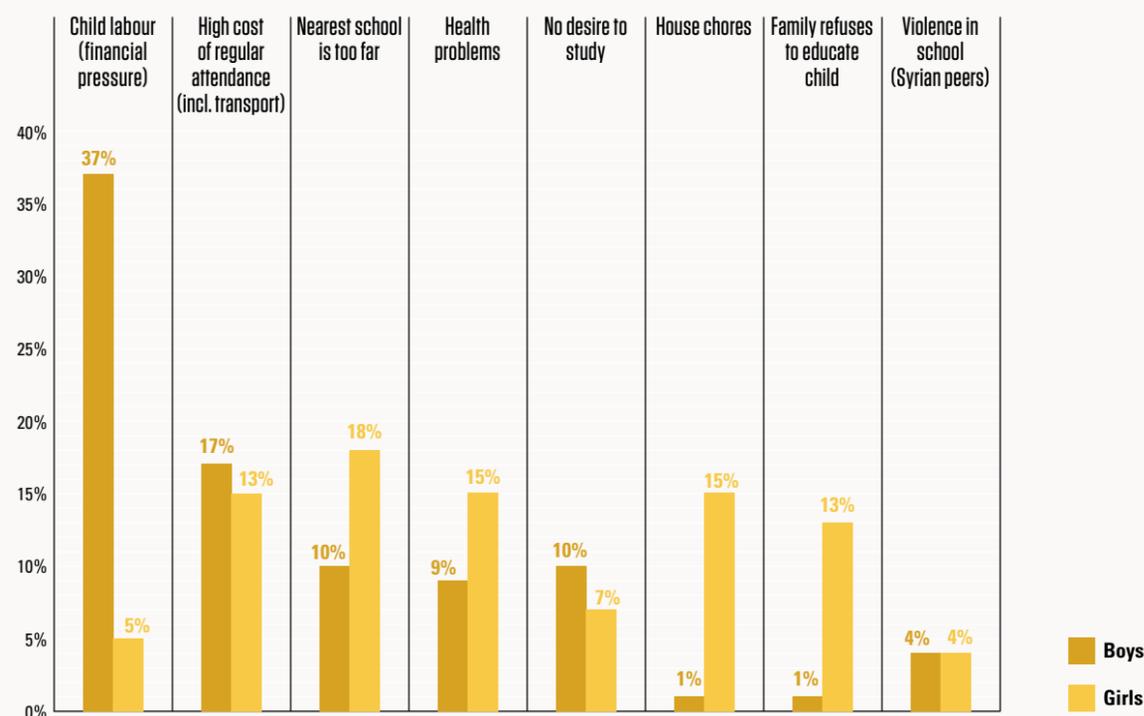


Figure 6: Barriers to enrolment in formal education (excluding denial of access) - by sex (Wave 3)



3. Waves 1-3 did not examine the specific health problems encountered. In future waves, surveys will seek to gather more information.

REASONS FOR DROPPING OUT OF FORMAL EDUCATION

For Syrian children who are not currently in formal education, 68 per cent are dropouts. This figure implies that the majority of Syrian out of school children have attempted to attend public school but are no longer doing so. The results of this longitudinal study show that violence in school is the main reason for dropping out. Harassment and bullying by Jordanian peers as a reason for dropping out increased from 13 per cent in Wave 1 to 18 per cent in Wave 3 (Figure 8), leading to a negative impact on school attendance and increasing drop-out rates.

During Wave 1 of the longitudinal survey, 78 per cent of parents said that their children were exposed to physical violence by teachers and 68 per cent said that their children were exposed to verbal abuse at school. An in-depth study on violence in schools in Jordan in 2014 showed that a much higher proportion of boys witnessed physical and verbal violence at their school than girls. The report also indicated that the actual rate of reporting is comparatively low illustrating how the problems of bullying and corporal

punishment remain 'hidden in plain sight'. The study further highlights that schools serving Syrian students had the highest rate of violence of all schools and the use of physical and humiliating punishment was more openly tolerated (UNICEF, 2014).

In the focus group discussions, most parents voiced their concerns about bullying and violence between Jordanian and Syrian peer students in public schools. Harassment and bullying led to more boys dropping out than girls (Figure 7). Focus group discussions confirm higher dropout rates for boys, because of the more violent nature of the harassment and bullying they face.

In the more recent wave of data collection for this study, more parents report that their children had to work as the reason for dropping out of school, affecting more boys than girls. According to the Living in the Shadows report (UNHCR, 2014), the coping strategy of withdrawing children from school to support the family was most prevalent in the governorates of Balqa (more than 50% of households) and Mafraq (40% of households). Girls are more affected than boys by distance to school, helping out with tasks around the house and early marriage.

Other studies indicate that children are at higher risk of dropping out as they get older, because of poverty and mounting pressure on boys to generate income or – for girls – to get married. This can lead to twice as many children dropping out of lower secondary than primary school (UNICEF, 2015).

FGD 1, P8: "my son dropped out, he doesn't want to go anymore... He said that every time he went to school he was threatened, and now he is scared to go."

FGD 4, P8: "my son... he went to school and was being bullied by the Jordanian kids...they wanted to fight him, they pulled a knife on him and were going to hurt him."

FGD 5, P3: "They bully my daughter even on the bus, and I am not sending her back to school. She did not go to school half of last year because of the bullying and this year she didn't go at all."

Figure 7: Reasons for children dropping out of formal education - by sex (Wave 3)

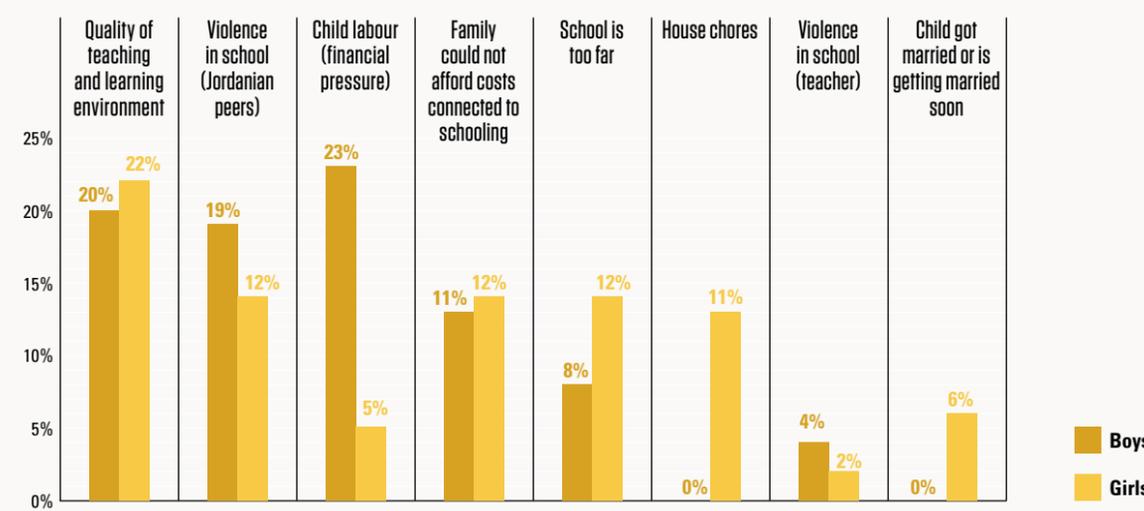


Figure 8: Reasons for children dropping out of formal education - by wave

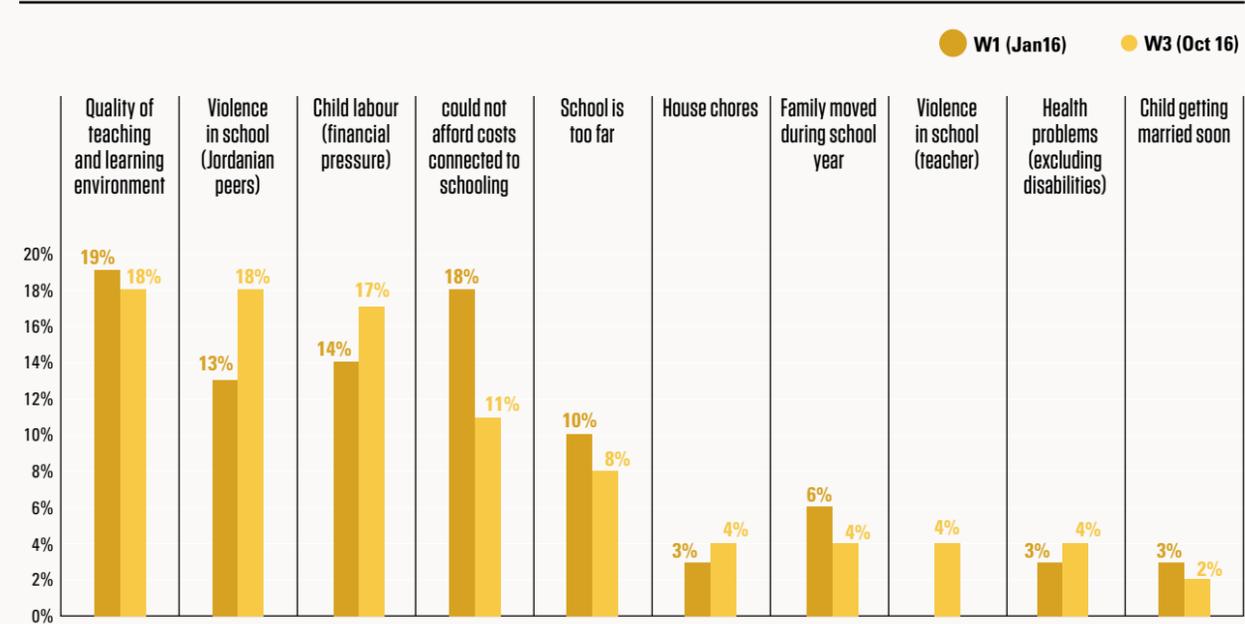
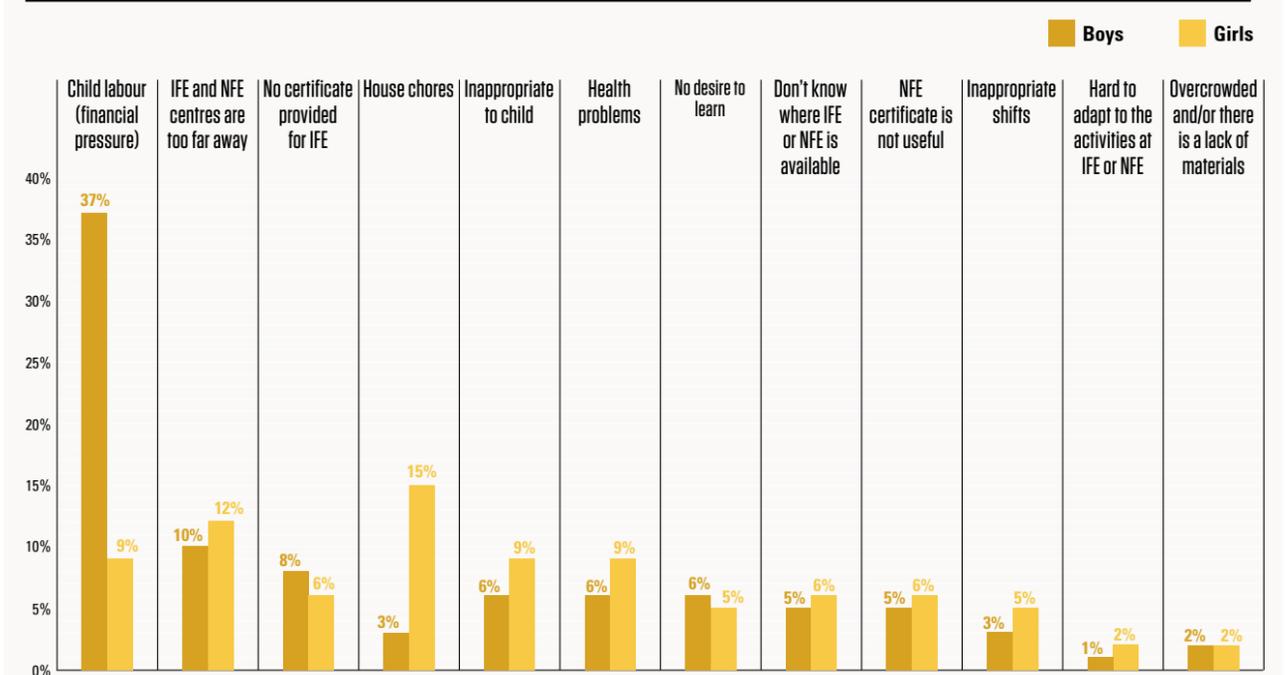


Figure 9: Barriers affecting attendance of alternative education streams (IFE or NFE) - by sex (Wave 3)



**UNCERTIFIED AND NON-FORMAL EDUCATION**

Households with children who are out of school and don't attend uncertified education or non-formal education were asked in January 2016 and in October 2016 why their children do not use these services. In each wave the enumerators explained the options to the households and provided them with information about nearby educational service providers. By the latter waves of the survey, the perception of uncertified education being expensive fell significantly. Although it was to be expected, the impact of child labour (for boys) and helping out with tasks around the house (for girls) affects attendance in alternative streams as much as formal schools.

The high percentage of responses related to uncertified education and non-formal education centres being too far away has led UNICEF to conduct an exercise to optimize its distribution network of Makani centres across the country to better serve districts with multidimensional child vulnerabilities.





Chapter 6

# CHILD PROTECTION

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**CHILD LABOUR**

Child labour is defined as work that is physically and mentally harmful to children, deprives children of opportunities to attend school, causes them to leave school prematurely or forces them to miss numerous school days, according to the ILO. The minimum employment age in Jordan is 16 years by law. <sup>4</sup>In Jordan, child labour includes children under the age of 16 who are employed, children between the ages of 16 and 17 working more than 36 hours a week, or children under 18 years old with dangerous working conditions (International Labour Organization, 2016).

The Living in the Shadows report found that child labour was a coping strategy for 6 per cent of Syrian households with school-aged children (UNHCR, 2014). Wave 2 of this longitudinal study in mid-2016 found that 6 per cent of the reported household income of registered Syrian refugees with children originates from the labour of individuals under the age of 16. Household income of Syrian refugees often includes various forms of assistance from international and national actors; when this assistance is removed from the household income figures, 22 per cent of the total household income generated by labour comes from children under the age of 16. The remaining household income

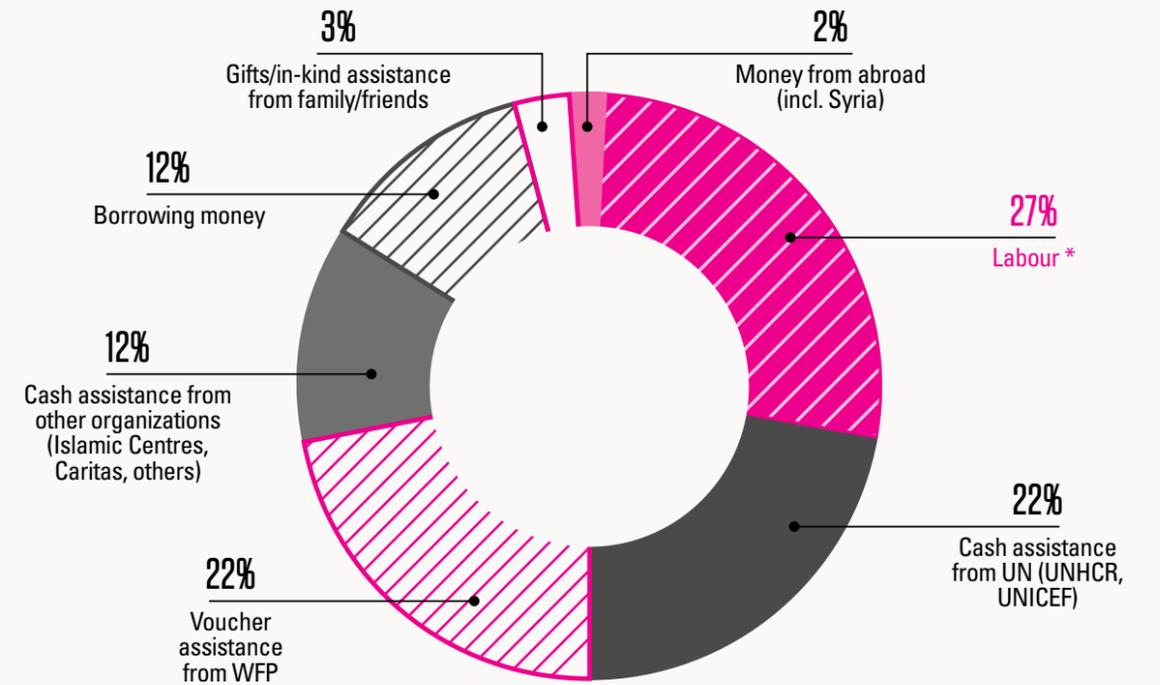
comes from family members working, often without work permits.

The National Child Labour Survey, findings from which were released in 2016, indicates that 1.7 per cent of all children living in Jordan between the ages of 5 and 17 are engaged in labour. Findings also show that 1.1 per cent of children are engaged in hazardous forms of labour which are likely to harm the health, safety and morals of the child (International Labour Organization, 2016). The ILO also mentions that the majority (over 88 per cent) of working children are boys, in line with the finding of our longitudinal assessment.



4. Jordan is a party to the ILO Minimum Age Convention, which stipulates that the minimum age of employment should not be less than 15. Because Jordanian labour law establishes 16 years old as the legal minimum age to begin employment, working 15 year olds in Jordan are considered child labourers.

Figure 10: Sources of income of refugee households (Wave 2)



\* Labour



19%

Labour of male adult



2%

Labour of female adult



6%

Labour of children under 16 years

In February 2016, at the London Conference, the government signed the Jordan Compact, a new partnership between Jordan and the international community to build Jordan's resilience in the context of the Syria crisis. In addition to access to education for Syrian children, the agreement aimed to turn the Syrian crisis into a development opportunity to attract new investment and create jobs for both Jordanians and Syrian refugees.

Part of the agreement was the provision of 200,000 work permits for Syrians in Jordan. In April 2016, the Government of Jordan announced that it would waive the application fee for Syrian refugees applying for work permits. With a Ministry of Interior (MoI) card, Syrians could apply for work permits for specific categories of work according to the quotas set by the Ministry of Labour in Jordan. However, only 39 per cent planned to take advantage of the waiver according to a CARE study, which was conducted a few months after the announcement. (CARE, 2016) In January 2017, the Jordan Response Plan, the government's primary policy document on its response to the Syrian crisis, indicated that 32,000 work permits had been issued to date (Ministry of Planning, 2017).

According to our longitudinal study, while 92 per cent of Syrian heads of households interviewed in Wave 3 are aware that Syrians are now able to legally work in certain jobs in Jordan, only 18 per cent report that either they or a member of their family have registered for a work permit. Only 36 per cent of households felt that obtaining a work permit would improve their socio-economic condition (Figure 12). Many report health issues, lack of sponsorship, eligibility issues, lack of motivation, complexity and cost of the application process as the main reasons for not registering for a work permit (Figure 11).

It is no surprise, then, that children's engagement in labour helps to cover



**FGD 3, P9:** "It's all because there isn't enough money for the family to spend on [the children's] needs and they're not benefitting from schools at all, so why keep them there?"

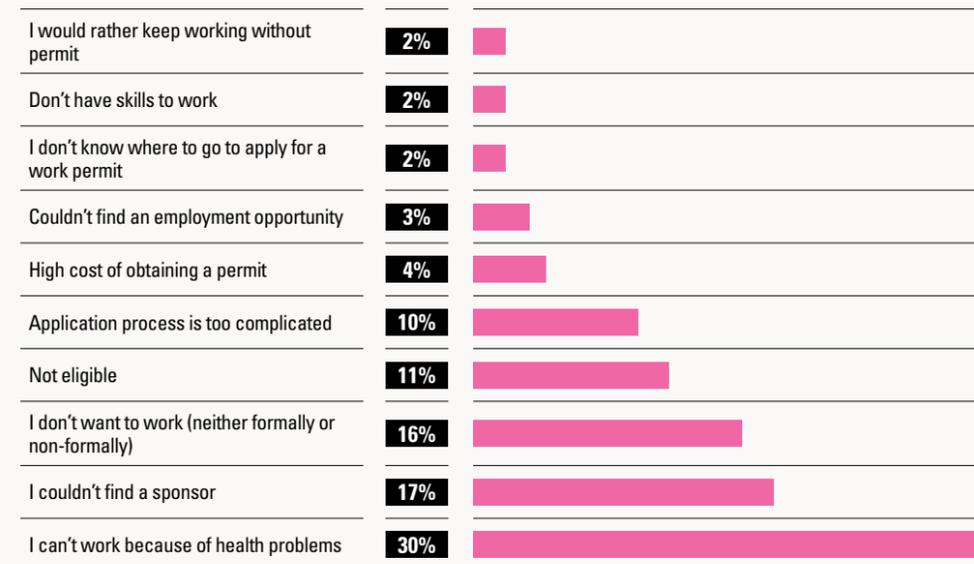
**FGD 4, P4:** "I can't work, so who is going to help me? My son works, and whether he brings home 3JDs or 4JDs I am happy with it. Circumstances are now much harder than they were, so he left school to help me with the household. And everyone we know does the same thing."

the household income-expenditure gap. However, it is well documented that child labour jeopardizes children's right to education and health, and involvement in hazardous forms of labour is a particular concern. When asked why their male children have never been enrolled in formal education (excluding those families who reported denial of access), more than a third of the respondents said that boys financially help support the family (see Figure 6). Similarly almost a quarter of boys drop out of formal education because of work (see Figure 7). Preliminary figures from UNICEF's Makani centres show that the

governorates with the highest drop out rates from formal education because of child labour are Mafraq, followed by Balqa and Ajloun (UNICEF, 2016b).

In the focus group discussions, there was a consensus among parents that because the quality of teaching and the learning environment for Syrian children in host communities is poor, parents often feel that there would be no benefit to sending their children to school. This, coupled with the need to increase household income, as well as caregivers being unable to work (most do not have work permits), drives child labour in host communities.

Figure 11: Reasons for not registering for a work permit (Wave 3)



## BIRTH REGISTRATION

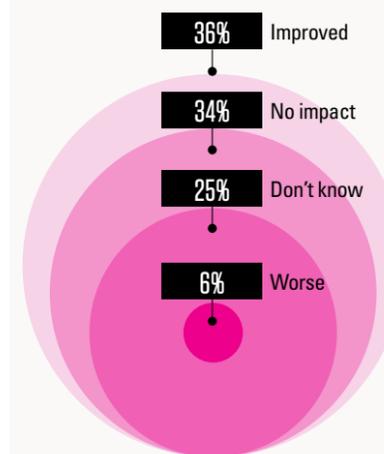
In order to formally register a newborn child with the Civil Status Department in Jordan, parents must first obtain an official birth notification from a hospital or licensed midwife, and then present proof of identity and marriage (UNHCR and UNICEF, 2014). If parents had a home birth without a certified midwife, a birth notification can be requested from the local authority by presenting two witnesses to the birth, after which it must be validated by officials the Governorate or sub-Governorate levels. Proof of identity and marriage can sometimes be barriers to birth registration for Syrian refugees. A Syrian marriage certificate or Syrian family booklet<sup>5</sup> listing the spouse is accepted as proof of marriage. However, according to the Personal Status Law both parents have to be at least 15 years old. If parents do not provide the necessary documentation or have not reached that age, they will be unable to register a child born in Jordan and no birth certificate will be issued. If a child is not registered

within one year, a lawsuit will need to be filed at the conciliation courts to have the child legally recognized as theirs (UNHCR and UNICEF, 2014).

Syrian parents who were married in Syria and whose children were born in Jordan have a hard time registering their children's births if they have lost their official documents, had not yet registered their marriages in Syria before fleeing, or have no official birth notification for children born in Jordan. If documents were lost or destroyed in Syria, UNHCR can be approached for counselling. In some instances a court case can be filed to obtain legal proof of marriage but this can be a lengthy and costly process.

5. A family book is a government-issued document that a couple receives when they register their marriage; the names of the children born to the marriage are added to the document when they are registered.

Figure 12: Perceived impact of obtaining a work permit on socio-economic condition (Wave 3)



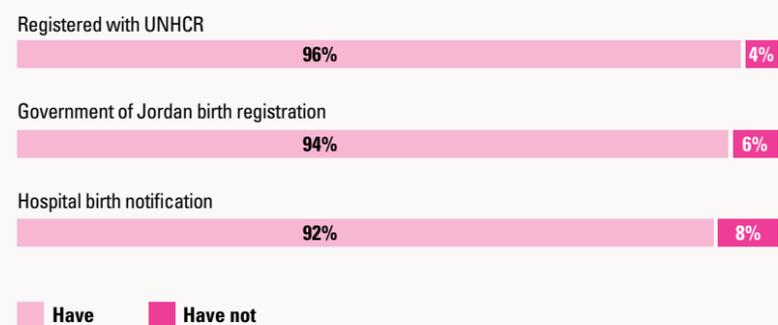


There are significant implications for lack of birth registration. Often children without birth registration are not able to obtain Ministry of Interior cards, necessary for school registration. More broadly, lack of identity documents could lead to restricted access to services, such as health and education, limitations on eligibility to receive humanitarian and development assistance, and restrictions on movement. In the longer term, adults and children without civil and legal documentation face difficulties proving legal identity and nationality and face a higher risk of exploitation. (NRC and IHRC, 2016)

This longitudinal study found that 41 per cent of households with children interviewed during Wave 2 have at least one child born in Jordan. Of these children born in Jordan, 8 per cent did not have a hospital birth notification and 6 per cent did not have a Government of Jordan birth certificate at the time of the assessment (Figure 13).

During the focus group discussions, there was a general consensus that when families present all the required documents, registering newborn children is relatively simple and straightforward. The focus group discussions however also confirm that families who lost their family book during the war in Syria have difficulties in registering their children born in Jordan.

**Figure 13: Documentation of Syrian refugee children born in Jordan (Wave 2)**



**FGD 3, P4:** "If both the mother and father have their passports, then the child gets a birth certificate."

**FGD 3, P5:** "I was at the Civil Status Department the other day to get my baby's birth certificate, and it was easy because I have my family book."

**FGD 3, P3:** "When I went to register her [to get the birth certificate], it was rejected because I don't have my family book to prove she is my daughter, and only have the card from UNHCR. It doesn't matter how many witnesses I bring to prove she is my daughter, they still reject registering her.... If you have proof then you can register, and if you don't then you're going to have a very hard time getting what you need."

**FGD 4, P4:** "Our neighbour's daughter had come into Jordan without a birth certificate. Because she was born during all the events [in Syria], they weren't able to register her.... The complication is that they can't get any documents [in Jordan] if they don't have their Syrian birth certificates."

**FGD 4, P6:** "My sister gave birth here in Jordan, and the baby is nearly one and they still haven't been able to register him."



Chapter 7

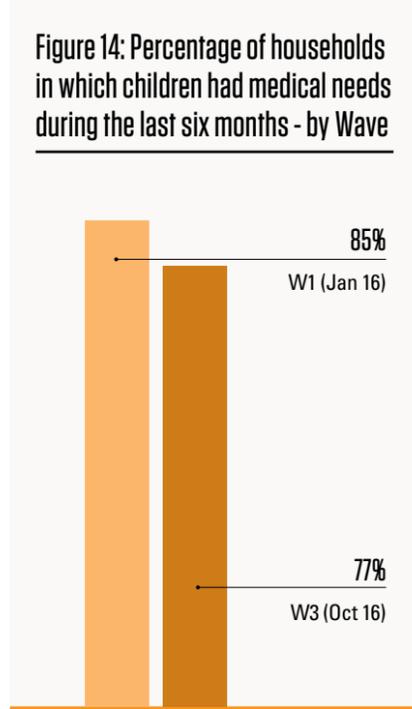
# HEALTH

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Syrian refugee families generally access public, private or NGO health services. The Ministry of Health runs the largest health system in the country with 31 hospitals, 99 comprehensive health centres, 378 primary health centres, 198 secondary health centres, 460 maternal and child health centres, 12 chest disease centres and 402 dental clinics. The private health sector in Jordan is a substantial source of healthcare for many Jordanians. There are 59 private hospitals in Jordan, along with many private clinics, health centres, general practitioners and medical specialists (MoH, 2016). UN agencies such as UNICEF, UNFPA, UNRWA and UNHCR provide primary healthcare services to vulnerable populations, and NGOs operate around 44 charitable clinics through the country (CHTG, 2016).

The main barrier to accessing health services was the cost, and although fewer respondents (69 per cent) in Wave 3 listed cost as a barrier compared to the earlier Wave 1 (89 per cent), it still remained by far the biggest barrier. More respondents reported transportation costs as a barrier to accessing public healthcare in Wave 3, a figure that has jumped by 17 percentage points between January and October 2016 (Figure 15). Although the cost of medical services in the public health sector remained the same during the different waves, the introduction of free services by some NGOs alleviated some of the cost barrier to access. This highlights the need to re-evaluate the distribution and utilization of different public health facilities to meet demand in areas affected by the Syrian refugee influx.



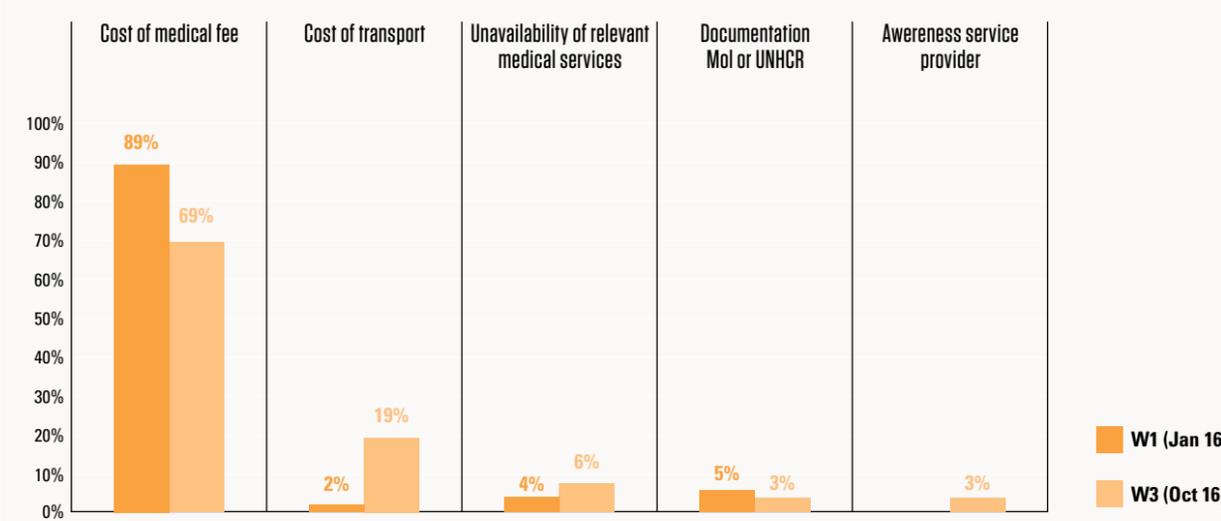
**BARRIERS TO ACCESSING HEALTH SERVICES**

Primary health services for children under 6 years old and mothers are provided to all nationalities in Jordan for free, where it includes family planning, antenatal care, postnatal care and immunization. In addition, TB treatment is also free for all. Public healthcare services are accessible at the non-insured Jordanian rate to registered Syrian refugees who have valid asylum seeker certificates. Refugees who lack proper documentation need to pay the foreigner rate (unsubsidized rate). However, mandatory immunization according to the National Immunization Plan is still open to everyone and free of charge regardless of nationality or documentation status.

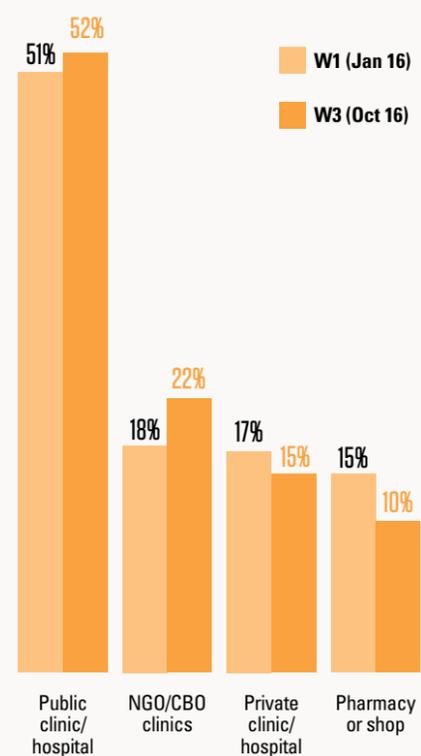
More children needed medical attention in Wave 3 compared to Wave 1 of this study. At the same time, frustrations among Syrian refugees with public healthcare centres remains high, and tend to focus on the quality and type of services provided, the cost, and the requirement to provide documentation (Figure 17).



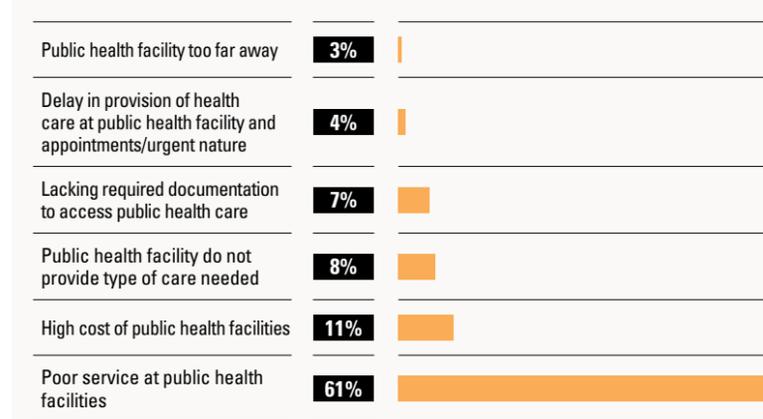
**Figure 15: Barriers to accessing public health care – by Wave**



**Figure 16: Children's healthcare access in the past six months – by Wave**



**Figure 17: Reasons for accessing private healthcare (Wave 3)**





Chapter 8

# WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE

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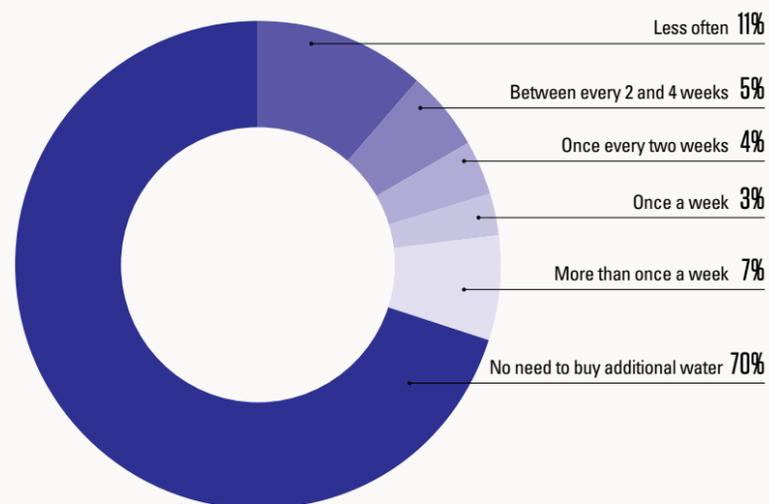
## WATER SUPPLY SERVICE

Jordan is one of the most water-scarce countries in the world and is facing chronic challenges providing its population with sustainable access to water and sanitation services. Water and sanitation vulnerabilities have increased with the influx of refugees, particularly in the northern and central governorates, where the majority of refugees now live. In the northern governorates, water demand increased by 40 per cent between 2011 and 2014 which has had a notable impact on the frequency and reliability of water supply in these governorates (UNICEF, 2017).

According to Wave 2 of our longitudinal study, 23 per cent of Syrian households with children do not have sufficient water for all of their household needs. About 6 per cent of households do not have access to a piped water system, which is generally consistent with the national estimate of 3 per cent, as reported in the National Water Strategy of 2016-2025 (MoWI, 2016). Of those households with access to piped water, Wave 3 data indicates that 30 per cent need to supplement their household needs by purchasing additional water during the critical summer months. Of those surveyed, 7 per cent need to purchase additional water more than once a week (Figure 18).

Due to the irregular, and at times unpredictable, water supply through the network, more than 90 per cent of households reported during Wave 2 that they had additional storage capacity, with 55 per cent of households reporting that they had 2m<sup>3</sup> of storage and 21 per cent had storage of 3m<sup>3</sup> or more.

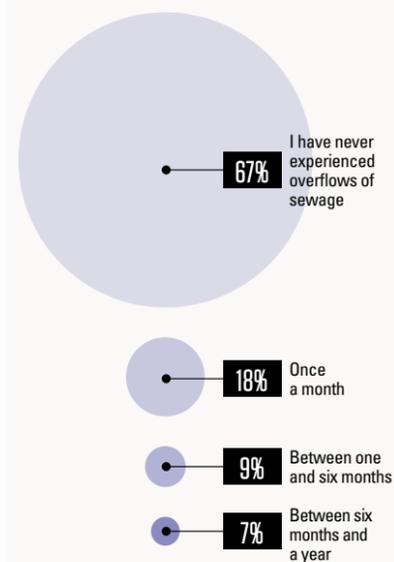
Figure 18: Reported frequency of households connected to a network needing to supplement their water supply in summer - (Wave 3)



## WASTEWATER SERVICE

Across the country, an estimated 63 per cent of households are connected to a public sewage system (MoWI, 2016). For the remainder, wastewater is discharged to pits or tanks, or in an open area. Due to the limited size of tanks/pits, and regular blockages in the network, sewage overflows occur. This is a critical public health and environmental concern because of the potential risk of contamination (UNICEF, 2017). In Wave 3 of this survey, 35 per cent of households reported that they had experienced sewage overflows in the previous year, with 18 per cent experiencing overflows on a monthly basis (Figure 19).

Figure 19: Frequency of sewerage overflows (Wave 3)



## Chapter 9

# CONCLUSION

Although there have been modest improvements in formal education attendance of Syrian refugee school-aged children who are registered in host communities (from 72% in January 2016 to 79% in October 2016), many challenges remain. Direct and indirect costs, issues of access and health issues continue to be major barriers to enrolment in a context where child labour continues to be an important household strategy to cover the income-expenditure gap. When the child is enrolled in school, the quality of teaching and learning environment, including violence in schools, is an important indicator of whether that child will drop out. Sixty-eight per cent of the registered Syrian refugee children who are school-aged and are currently out of school, dropped out of school while in Jordan. Therefore particular attention needs to be paid to those at risk of dropping out.

Going forward in 2017, UNICEF will continue working with the Ministry of Education to increase access and enrolment, including through advocacy for increased school shifts, particularly in areas with large numbers of out-of-school children. UNICEF has also adjusted its distribution network of Learning Support Services to better serve vulnerable children – while at the same time mobilising its Makani partners to provide children transportation to schools near their centers. This has supported out-of-school children in enrolling and staying in school. Currently, UNICEF is exploring a comprehensive cash

for education called “Hajati” (My Need) option to support families in addressing barriers they face sending their children to school. This option includes a cash grant, direct household outreach and referral. UNICEF will continue working with the Ministry of Education to increase access and enrolment through advocacy, enhancing the quality of education, and after-school activities. The MoE has in place a 10-year infrastructure strategy to absorb all second shift students into new single shift schools.

This survey shows that more Syrian children are requiring medical attention, compounding the pressure on the public healthcare system and leading to an increase in children accessing NGO clinics. However, a rising number of respondents report that transportation costs are a barrier to accessing public healthcare.

Almost a quarter of Syrian households with children living in host communities do not have sufficient water for all their household needs. Six per cent of households do not have access to a piped system. Of those households with access to piped water, 30 per cent need to supplement their household needs by purchasing additional water during the critical summer months. 35 per cent of households reported that they had experienced overflows of sewerage in the previous year, with 18 per cent reporting experiencing overflows on a monthly basis. Going forward in 2017, UNICEF has and

will continue to provide water filters, water tanks, prefabricated latrines and hygiene kits as well as strengthen the monitoring of water quality and waste water disposal and conduct hygiene awareness trainings in Informal Tented Settlements (ITS). UNICEF is also currently supporting the construction of water supply systems, which include borehole drilling and network upgrade, to improve access to safe water in Mafraq, Irbid, Jarash, Ajloun and Amman governorates. In the summer of 2017, UNICEF is going to rehabilitate the waste water treatment plant in Balqa.

UNICEF will continue to gather data to frequently monitor Syrian children’s welfare: the refugee families interviewed in January, May and October 2016 will be surveyed again in May and September 2017 as well as in January 2018. This type of longitudinal study provides opportunities to investigate patterns in child outcomes over time, learn about cause-and-effect relationships, and examine connections between different events or shocks. The objective is to generate a solid evidence base for UNICEF to improve its response and its support to the Government of Jordan in implementing policies that guarantee fulfilment of the rights of all children in Jordan.



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