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المجـلـس الـوطنـي لـشـؤون الأسـرة
NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR FAMILY AFFAIRS

NATIONAL STUDY ON VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN IN JORDAN

2019-2020

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This study was conducted through co-operation and partnership between **the National Council for Family Affairs (NCFA), UNICEF Jordan Country Office** and relevant national governmental and non-governmental institutions. For years, this partnership has led to the successful implementation of several programs and activities related to the protection of children and the family at different levels, including legislative, preventative and service provision, in order to institutionalize the child and family protection system at the national level.

This study aims to shed light on societal practices and trends relating to violence against children, and to provide relevant data, which will help build an integrated picture of violence against children in Jordan and contribute to determining the requirements of the child and family protection system for the coming years. We hope that this study will serve as a reference for decision makers in national governmental and non-governmental institutions and international institutions, to unite visions and efforts towards priorities for action to develop and strengthen the child protection system at its Preventive, Service and Legislative levels.

In conclusion, we affirm our pride in our partnership with all relevant stakeholders, and our commitment to work with all concerned parties to promote participatory action in the field of child protection to strengthen the child and family protection system at the national level. We would like to extend our thanks and gratitude to the National Team for family Protection from the National Council for Family Affairs, UNICEF in Jordan and UNICEF Regional Office for the Middle East and North Africa, in addition to the Advisory Group for the study, and for everyone who contributed to the preparation of this study, stressing the importance of continuing participatory work among all institutions, calling on the -ALL-Mighty God- that our concerted efforts to provide a decent livelihood for the sons and daughters of our beloved homeland are united, in the presence of His Majesty King Abdullah II Ibn Al-Hussein.

The Secretary General of the National Council for Family Affairs	**UNICEF Representative/Jordan Country Office**
Dr. Mohamed Fakhri Meqdady	Ms Tanya Chapuisat

Definition of Violence Against Children

The right of children to be protected from violence is enshrined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child, yet one billion children are subjected to some kind of emotional, physical or sexual violence every year; one child dies from violence every five minutes.[1]

Violence against children knows no boundaries of culture, class or education. It may occur against children in institutions, in schools, and at home. Peer-to-peer violence is also a concern, as is growing cyberbullying. Children exposed to violence live in isolation, loneliness and fear, not knowing where to turn for help, especially when the offender is a relative. Children's gender, disability, poverty, nationality or religious origin may increase the risk of violence, with younger people being particularly vulnerable because they are less able to speak out and seek support.[2]

For the purposes of this report, we adopt the definition of violence against children adopted by the United Nations Children's Fund ([3], aligned with the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which defines violence as *"All forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse"* against persons under the age of eighteen (18), whether committed by parents, other caregivers, peers, institutions or others.

THE DEFINITION OF VIOLENCE EMPHASIZES:

1. No justification for violence – so that *"No violence against children can be justified; all kinds of violence against children can be prevented".*

2. No Exception – to consider "*All forms of violence against children as unacceptable as they may be"*, and that the child's fundamental right to dignity, humanity and physical and psychological integrity should not be undermined in any way, shape or form and in particular that no form of violence should be characterized as "[I]egally, socially or culturally acceptable".

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[1] United Nations. (Official Website). Global Issues, Children. Recovered from un.org:
https://www.un.org/ar/global-issues/children

[2] Ibid.

[3] UNICEF. (Official Website). The text of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Recovered from https://www.unicef.org/ar/%D9%86%D8%B5-%D8%A7%D8%AA%D9%81%D8%A7%D9%82%D9%8A%D8%A9%D8%AD%D9%82%D9%88%D9%82-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B7%D9%81%D9%84/%D8%A7%D8%AA%D9%81%D8%A7%D9%82%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D8%AD%D9%82%D9%88%D9%82-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B7%D9%81%D9%84

FORMS OF VIOLENCE:

Physical Violence: It is any punishment in which physical force is used and intends to cause some degree of pain or discomfort, however light in intensity. Most forms of this punishment include beating children ("Smacking" or "Slapping" or "Spanking on the buttocks") by hand or using an implement (e,g. whip, stick, belt, shoe, wooden spoon, etc.)

Sexual Violence: Sexual violence and exploitation include:

» The inducement or coercion of a child to engage in any unlawful or psychologically harmful sexual activity;

» The use of children in commercial sexual exploitation;

» The use of children in audio or visual images of child sexual abuse cases; and,

» Any sexual abuse in which no physical force is used, yet it constitutes transgression against the other, and is based on exploitation and leads to trauma.

Psychological Violence: Psychological, mental, verbal and emotional abuse which includes:

» All forms of persistent harmful interactions with the child, for ex-ample, conveying to children that they are worthless, unloved, unwanted, endangered or only of value in meeting another's needs;

» Scaring, terrorizing and threatening; exploiting and corrupting; spurning and rejecting; isolating, ignoring and favouritism;

» Denying emotional responsiveness; neglecting mental health, medical and educational needs;

» Insults, name-calling, humiliation, belittling, ridiculing and hurting a child's feelings;

» Placement in solitary confinement, isolation or humiliating or degrading conditions of detention; and,

» Psychological bullying and hazing by adults or other children, includ-ing via information and communication technologies (ICTs) such as mobile phones and the Internet (Known as "Cyberbullying").

Cyber Violence (Violence Through Information and Communications Technologies (ICT)): Child protection risks in relation to (ICT) comprise the following overlapping areas:

» Sexual abuse of children to produce both visual and audio child abuse images facilitated by the Internet and other (ICT);

» The process of taking, making, permitting to take, distributing, showing, possessing or advertising indecent photographs or pseudo photographs (Morphing) and videos of children and those making a mockery of an individual child or categories of children; or producing and permitting to be taken, distributed, displayed, possessed or advertised;

» As recipients of information, children may be exposed to actually or potentially harmful advertisements, spam, sponsorship, personal infor-mation and content which is aggressive, violent, hateful, biased, racist, pornographic, unwelcome and/or misleading, and that are already harmful or potentially harmful;

» As children in contact with others through (ICT), children may be bullied, harassed or stalked (Child "Luring") and/or coerced, tricked or persuaded into meeting strangers off-line, being "Groomed" for involvement in sexual activities and/or providing personal information; and,

» As actors, children may become involved in bullying or harassing of others, playing games that negatively influence their psychological devel-opment, creating and uploading inappropriate sexual material, providing misleading information or advice, and/or illegal downloading, hacking, gambling, financial scams and/or terrorism.

Neglect or Negligent Treatment: Neglect means the failure to meet children's physical and psychological needs, protect them from danger, or obtain medical, birth registration or other services when those responsible for children's care have the means, knowledge and access to services to do so. Negligence includes:

» Physical Neglect: Failure to protect a child from harm, including through lack of supervision, or failure to provide the child with basic necessities including adequate food, shelter, clothing and basic medical care;

» Psychological or Emotional Neglect: Including lack of any emotional support and love, chronic inattention to the child, caregivers being "psychologically unavailable" by overlooking young children's cues and signals, and exposure to intimate partner violence, drug or alcohol abuse;

» Neglect of Children's Physical or Mental Health: Withholding essential medical care;

» Educational Neglect: Failure to comply with laws requiring caregivers to secure their children's education through attendance at school or other-wise; and,

» Abandonment: A practice which is of great concern and which can disproportionately affect children more than others, especially children with disabilities in some societies.

Study Background & Methodology

> More than 40% of the population in Jordan is under the age of 18, or more than 4.221 million children, according to the Jordanian Statistics Department's Estimates (General Statistics Department, 2020)[4]

Jordan attaches great importance to children's affairs and place it among its priorities, whether it is at the level of services provided to children, legislation upholding their rights and ways to meeting them or mechanisms protecting these rights and putting them into full effect. It is worth noting that Jordan was one of the first countries to sign **the Convention on the Rights of the Child** and issued a special law to endorse it in 2006. Similarly the national legislative framework in Jordan promotes and ensures the protection and rights of children. **The National Council for Family Affairs (NCFA)**, established in **2001**, uses a multisectoral approach to develop and implement national programmes and projects for the protection of children. This work is led by a National Team, which operates under the umbrella of the NCFA, and which is comprised of rep-resentatives of relevant national governmental and non-governmental

institutions. The National Team aims to strengthen coordination between all relevant institutions and actors for the development of relevant national as well as policies defining mechanisms, methods, roles, and responsibilities in the field of family protection. In (2016), the **by-law of The National Team for Family Protection** No. (33) was issued. The team has the task of supervising and monitoring the implementation of na-tional directives, policies and strategic plans for the protection of the family and the extent to which national institutions are committed to them, monitoring the commitment of institutions to use a system to automate procedures for dealing with cases of domestic violence, determining national priorities in the field of family protection, supervising the application of the national framework document for the protection of the family from violence, and standards for accreditation and quality control

of services provided in cases of domestic violence when dealing with such cases of domestic violence. The team's tasks also include providing technical support to national projects implemented by the Council or partners and following up on the implementation of the recommendations of Arab and regional conferences related to the protection of the family.

The Government's commitment to the protection of children was demonstrated with the establishment in 1997 of the Directorate of Public Security's "**Family Protection Department**" to promote the work of the protection of children and their families from domestic violence and sexual abuse; which provides a (24)-hour confidential and free telephone helpline for receiving and registering cases of violence against children.

In addition to starting to focus on

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[4] Department of General Statistics. (19 11, 2020). Statistics: (40%) of Children in the Kingdom's Population. Retrieved from Jordan News Agency: https://www.petra.gov.jo/Include/InnerPage.jsp?ID=159482&lang=ar&name=news.

developing a national mechanism of action based on a participatory approach that includes all official and civil institutions related to family protection. In 2000 , the Government of Jordan launched the project "**Protection of the Family from Violence**" with the support of the British Government .The project aimed to strengthen the coordination between governmental and non-governmental institu-tions concerned with family affairs and to reduce domestic violence and sexual abuse through the strengthening of the institutional capacity of concerned institutions. The project, which ended in 2005, resulted in the establishment of the **National Team for Family Protection.** In 2003, the National Team was eventually awarded the **United Nations Human Rights Award** for its work. Efforts were pursued in following years and eventually resulted in the development of the **National Framework for Family Protection** and the **Strategic Plan for the Protection of the Family and the Prevention of Domestic Violence.** In addition, several initiatives to improve the legislative framework, delivery of services as well as to raise awareness were undertaken. Those included, among others: the **Electronic Link Project** to collect testimonies of child survivors of violence; the development internal of procedures to **deal with Cases of Domestic Violence** for the **Ministries of Health, Education, Social Development and Justice**; the establishment of a **Judicial Council** and **Specialized Units** in each of different ministries to follow up on

50%

of children were physically abused by parents/legal guardians, school teachers, administrators and siblings

cases of domestic violence. ; the implementation of several **Training Programmes** for concerned staff of national institutions on procedures to deal with cases of domestic violence; the promulgation of the **Family Protection Law** and the establishment of the **Dar Al-Wifaq** shelter for women survivors of violence by the Ministry of Social Development.

In 2007, NCFA and UNICEF partnered to conduct a first national study on Violence against children. According to the study, 50% of children were physically abused by parents/legal guardians, school teachers, administrators and siblings, while about one third were physically abused by adults and children in the neighbourhood; and one in 1000 children were subjected to severe violence, requiring the intervention of responsible authorities, such as the Family Protection Department of the Public Security Directorate. Due to the lack of other studies specifically focusing on violence against children, we also refer to the **Demographic and Health Surveys**

one in (1000) children were subjected to severe violence, requiring the intervention of responsible authorities, such as the Family Protection Department of the Public Security Directorate.

(DHS) on domestic violence. The 2012 DHS found that 89.4% of children aged 2-18 had experienced at least one form of violent discipline. This figure slightly decreased in the 2018 survey, which indicated that 81% of children aged 1-14 had been subjected to violent methods of discipline.

This new study is therefore the second national study on Violence Against Children. It includes a nationwide quantitative survey of school students aged 8-17 (With a total participation of 3,837 students), youth aged 18-24 (with a total participation of 1,118 young men and women), and family/ informal or professional caregivers (with a total participation of 1,706 of primary caregivers); as well as a qualitative survey involving targeted discussions across 34 focus groups with children and caregivers, 23 in-depth interviews with child protection specialists, officials and activists.

Objective of the Study

Such national studies aim to identify the prevalence, forms, frequency and perpetrators of various practices of violence against children, and to assess any change in such practices, particularly in countries that adopt specific approaches, strategies and programs to protect from violence, including Jordan.

Assessing the current state of violence against children in Jordan is therefore an essential first step to review existing strategies and mechanisms to reduce violence against children and their level of enforcement and effectiveness. It provides the required basis, including up-to-date data and information, aimed at enhancing strategies and mechanisms tackling violence against children. This study provide for the first time estimates describing the magnitude and nature of violence against children in Jordan following a methodology that allows projection, deduction and comparison of the results, while taking into account the specific characteristics of the Jordanian context and its population groups.

Hence, the study aims to identify the most prevalent forms of violence in Jordan and to assess their patterns, frequency, prevalence, associated risks, as well as the extent of awareness among the target population. The study also aims at identifying the perpetrators of such practices and any context-specific determinants, including the factors that may drive or deter such practices, the mechanisms available for assistance, the patterns of their use and their effectiveness from the point of view of children and caregivers who have experienced violence.
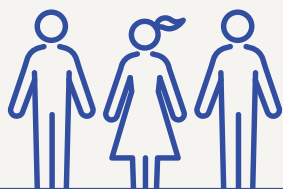
Study Sample

The study relied on qualitative and quantitative surveys, including:

First:

Survey of children 8-17 years old included four samples

» Sample of Schools at the National Level: **3,281 children** from public, private and UNRWA schools from different governorates and nationalities. It is a randomized sample that is representative at the Kingdom level.

» Sample of Schools in Syrian Camps: **296 children** from Za'atari and Azraq Camps. It is a randomized sample that is representative at the level of Syrian Refugee Camps.

» Care and Protection Centres Sample: **126 children**. It is an exploratory, non-representative sample, whose questions revolved around their experiences of being exposed to violence during their lifetime and their answers did not measure their exposure to violence within care and protection centres.

» Sample of Children with Disabilities: **134 children**. It is an exploratory and non-representative sample.

Second:

Youth Survey 18-24 Years

» Sample of **1,118 young men and women** in the 18-24 age range. It is a randomized cluster sample representative at the national level.

Third:
Survey of Family Caregivers

» Caregivers sample at the national level:1,563 participants.

» Caregivers sample in Syrian Camps: 143 participants.

In each household, one child was randomly selected as the "Focal" child, that is, the child for whom the questions were asked, with caregivers. For example, in the question of certain behaviours, the questions were formulated to the caregivers as follows: "In the last 12 months, have you shaken { name of the focal child} strongly?". This was done in order to distinguish between male and female, children younger and older. We listed all of the children for whom the respondent was a caregiver and then randomly selected the "Focal" child. At least 8 out of 10 respondents were the mother of a focused child.

Fourth:
Focus Groups

It included 34 focus groups with children and caregivers from the participants in the samples above and with a total number of 248 participants.

Fifth:
In-depth interviews

They included 23 in-depth interviews with specialists, insiders and activists in the field of child protection nominated by national authorities from all relevant bodies.

Methodological Design

The study was designed through a participatory and coordinated approach with all relevant entities. Under the guidance of an Advisory Group of the study, the research methodology, tools and sample selections were developed, and interviews and consultations with concerned stakeholders were conducted to ensure alignment of the methodology with the local context.

The survey questions were based on the **Child Abuse Screening Tools** that were issued by **the International Society for the Prevention of Child Abuse & Neglect (ISPCAN) (International Society for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect, Official Website);[5]** which are tools of high quality and reliability, and have been adopted and imple-mented in many countries, as well as in national surveys in this field, including the **2007 Survey** carried out by (**UNICEF**) in Jordan.

The questionnaire was divided into two main sections, the first of which is short and direct questions about demographic, social and family economic characteristics, and the second of which - the largest section- includes a comprehensive set of questions about various types of violence.

The study included a pilot survey on a small sample in Amman and Irbid, with the aim of testing and improving the tools where needed and testing the random cluster sample selection mechanism. Similarly, the pilot survey included the development and implementation of specific support procedures for any of the participants who had previously experienced or witnessed violence. This experimental sample has played a significant role in making some improvements and thus adopting the final version of the tools and the sample.

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[5] The International Society for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect. (Official Website). ISPCAN Child Abuse Screening Tools (ICAST). Recovered from IPSCAN.org: https://www.ispcan.org/learn/icast-abuse-screening-tools/?v=402f03a963ba

THE TIME FRAME FOR DATA COLLECTION

Data was collected during the time period from January to October of 2019.

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ETHICAL STANDARDS

The study followed UNICEF ethical standards in research, evaluation, data collection and analysis, as well as the guidelines and standards of the International Society for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect.

Approval from UNICEF Institutional Review Board was sought in order to ensure and uphold the rights and safety of participants through-out the process, including in the design and implementation of methodology and tools.

DATA QUALITY, ACCURACY & RELIABILITY COEFFICIENT

All data has been processed and reviewed for completeness, accuracy and reliability. The assigned field supervisor was tasked with the selection of questionnaires that were completed randomly from each region participated in the sample and reviewing them to ensure the coefficient of accuracy, reliability, completeness and address any gaps or shortcomings discovered. The quality assurance process involved sending field researchers on additional visits to collect and update any incomplete, unclear or seemingly incorrect information.

At the technical level, data was collected using the **Open Data Kit (ODK) Software** and analysis using the **Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) Software (Version 26)**, and all results were calculated using sample weights to be representative of the population at the national level. An accuracy factor of (**0.05**) (**P-Value**) was used to calculate reliability and prepare all the charts included in this report, i.e. a reliability factor of **95%**. Given the composite nature of the participating sample, the (**SPSS**) Complex Samples Package for such samples was used to calculate potential estimated margins of error.

For qualitative study data, including focus groups and in-depth interviews, the analysis was done using the **Nvivo Qualitative Data Analysis Computer Software**; which specializes in supporting the analysis of such data, and using **Live Coding**; which systematically reviews data to identify and verify topics and patterns associated with the research objectives.

Study Limitations

The limitations of the study must be taken into account when reviewing, interpreting, deducing or disseminating the results. The study encountered limitations associated with:

» The nature of the subject itself as a subject that affects many aspects of the per-sonal, psychological, emotional, societal and familial complexities, and the difficulty or sensitivity of talking about it and discussing it, especially for those who have been exposed to such practices or have experienced them, whether as perpetrators, survivors, victims or witnesses.

» Biases based on the " Expectations of broader social desire or favoured idealism", which affects how participants respond to certain questions in accordance with their assumptions of the researcher's or society's expectations rather than based on their own experience.

» Naturally existing factors in such studies that are very difficult, if not impossible, to completely neutralize, meaning that the results are at best a mitigating reflection of an existing violence, from a frequency, form, pattern and impact stand point, especially in the qualitative aspect.

» Memory bias apropos the retrospective questions that are included in the survey, including those addressed to young people in the 18-24 age group.

» The lack of statistical frameworks for the selection of a systematic and random sample of children and caregivers in care and protection centers and among children with disabilities, thus relying on the sample collected through schools, specifically for secondary school children, especially Syrians, and this limits the possibility of generalizing the results of these two sub-samples and the ability to compare in these two sub-categories in particular.

» Reliance on the school sample greatly limits the ability to obtain information on specific forms of violence against children, including child labour and early marriage, as children affected by such violations are often outside the educational system. However, these two particular forms of violence are recommended to be examined through ad-hoc and in-depth studies of their dimensions, forms and particularities, and there are already a number of extensive studies in this respect on Jordan, whether by **UNICEF**, the Higher Population Council (**HPC**), the General Statistics Service (**GSS**), the National Council for Family Affairs (**NCFA**) and others.

» While recognizing the above-mentioned factors and determinants, those do not diminish the importance of the results of this study, especially since it remains the most close-to-reality available picture.

Key Results of the Study

Physical Violence:

Prevalence of Physical Violence

74.6%

of children in the national sample aged 8-17 years have experienced at least one form of physical violence in their lifetime (79.2% among males versus 69.7% among females).

69.9%

69.9% of children in the sample of Syrian Camps aged 8-17 years have experienced at least one form of physical violence in their lifetime (76.5% among males versus 62.1% among females).

55.2%

of children with disabilities in the 8-17 years age group have experienced at least one form of physical violence in their lifetime (58.0% among males versus 52.3% among females).

The rate of violence perpetrated by family caregivers peaked in the 9-14 age range, with lower rates being recorded in younger and older age ranges.

Family Caregivers Use Physical Violence with Children as a Disciplinary Measure

73.9%

of family caregivers in the national sample engaged in violence as a disciplinary method for children under the age of 18 years at least once in their lives.

63.6%

of the family caregivers in the sample of Syrian Camps engaged in violence as a disciplinary method for children under the age of 18 years at least once in their lives.

Forms of Physical Violence Against Children

The most common forms of physical violence perpetrated against children in the age group 8-17 years in the national sample were as follow[6]:

Slapping on the face or back of the head (22.9%), kicking (20.8%), hair-pulling (19.9%), ear-twisting (18.9%), and pinching (14.2%).

The most common forms of physical violence perpetrated on children aged 8-17 years in the sample of Syrian Camps were as follow:

Slapping on the face or back of the head (24.4%), repeated beating with a tool or fist (severe beating) (18.9%), ear-twisting (16.8%), beating body parts other than buttocks with with a tool (e.g. stick, broom, crutch or belt] (17.5%), and hair-pulling (14.9%).

Perpetrators of Physical Violence Against Children[7]

Perpetrators of physical violence against children in the 8-17 years age group in the national sample were as follow:

47.1% of interviewed children reported being physically harmed by parents, 44.1% by siblings, 39.6% by peers, and 27.4% by teachers.

Perpetrators of physical violence against children in the 8-17 years age group in the sample of Syrian Camps were as follow:

41.8% of interviewed children reported being physically harmed by parents, 43.9% by siblings, 36.5% by peers, and 39.5% by teachers.

Justification and Motives of Family Caregivers for Practicing Physical Violence

Hypothetical justifications from family caregivers for the use of physical violence with children in the national sample were as follow:

67.7% justified violence in case something is stolen from others, 56.9% in case something is stolen at school, 55.4% in case children leave the house without their parents' knowledge, and 55% in case children put themselves in a dangerous position that could put them in harm's way.

Hypothetical justifications from family caregivers for the use of physical violence with children in the sample of Syrian Camps were as follow:

72.4% justified violence in case anysomething is stolen from others, 63.5% in case something is stolen at school, 58.9% in case children leave the house without their parents' knowledge, and 47.5% in case the children put themselves in a dangerous position that could put them in harm's way.

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[6] Noting that one child can be victim of more than one of these forms of violence.

[7] Noting that child respondents could be victims of violence from more than one per-petrator.

Position of Family Caregivers on the Use of Positive Discipline Methods

Attitudes of family caregivers about the use of positive discipline methods with their children in the national sample were as follow:

91.0% of family caregivers stated that the child should be explained as to why what he/she did is wrong, 81.0% stated that the child should be rewarded for behaving well, and 73.0% stated that the child should be given something to do to occupy themselves with so that he/she would cease or change their behavior.

Attitudes of family caregivers about the use of positive discipline methods with their children in the sample of Syrian Camps were as follow:

85.0% of family caregivers stated that the child should be explained to as to why what he/she did is wrong, 71.0% stated that the child should be rewarded for behaving well, and 61.0% stated that the child should be given something to do to occupy themselves with so that he/she would cease or change their behavior.

Attitude of Family Caregivers to Physical Violence

Family caregivers' attitudes regarding the effectiveness of corporal punishment in the national sample were as follow:

60.0% of family caregivers responded that corporal punishment is never effective, 24.2% is rarely effective, 15.2% is most often effective and 0.7% is always effective.

Family caregivers' attitudes regarding the effectiveness of corporal punishment in the sample of Syrian Camps were as follow:

68.3% of family caregivers responded that corporal punishment is never effective, 19.6% is rarely effective, 10.9% is most often effective and 1.2% is always effective.

Psychological Violence:

Prevalence of Psychological Violence

58.3%

of children in the national sample aged 8-17 have experienced at least one form of psychological violence in their lifetime (57.2% among males versus 59.6% among females).

58.0%

of children in the sample of Syrian Camps aged 8-17 have experienced at least one form of psychological violence in their lifetime (63.0% among males versus 51.0% among females).

51.5%

of children with disabilities in the 8-17 age group have experienced at least one form of psychological violence in their lifetime (55.1% among males versus 47.7% among females).

Family Caregivers Use Psychological Violence with Children as a Disciplinary Measure

65.2%

of family caregivers in the national sample engaged in psychological violence as a disciplinary method for children under the age of 18 at least once in their lives.

54.3%

of family caregivers in the sample of Syrian Camps engaged in psychological violence as a disciplinary method for children under the age of 18 at least once in their lives.

Perpetrators of Psychological Violence Against Children[8]

Perpetrators of psychological violence against children in the 8-17 years age group in the national sample were as follow:

27.9% of interviewed children reported psychological violence perpetrated by parents, 37.1% by siblings, 67.2% by peers, and 5.7% by teachers.

Perpetrators of psychological violence against children in the 8-17 years age group in the sample of Syrian Camps were as follow:

19.8% of interviewed children reported psychological violence perpetrated by parents, 32.4% by siblings, 77.1% by peers, and 12.7% by teachers.

Forms of Psychological Violence Against Children[9]

The most common forms of psychological violence among children aged 8-17 years in the national sample were as follow:

Screaming or shouting out loud (40.0%), swearing or cursing (26.0%), insulting by calling names (e.g. "stupid", "lazy" or similar negative adjectives) (22.7%), refusing to talk to the child for a long time (21.8%), and blaming the child for bad things that happened in life independently of the child's action or behavior (19.7%).

The most common forms of psychological violence among children aged 8-17 years in the sample of Syrian Camps were as follow:

Screaming or shouting out loud (32.0%), swearing or cursing (33.0%), insulting by calling names (e.g. "stupid", "lazy" or similar negative adjectives) (27.0%), refusing to talk to the child for a long time (22.0%), threatening the child that he/she will fail or have his/her marks deducted from their academic score (by teachers) (21.0%).

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[8] Noting that child respondents could be victims of violence from more than one perpetrator.

[9] Noting that one child can be victim of more than one of these forms of violence.

Neglect

Forms of Neglect, according to child respondents

According to child respondents, the most common forms of neglect among children aged 8-17 years in the national sample were as follow:

Harm or injury to the child due to the absence of supervision from an adult (16.2%), offering a cigarette or other smoking material to the child (9.1%), the feeling of not being cared for by the child (8.3%), treatment of the child in such a way as to make him/her feel worthless (8.2%).

According to child respondents, the most common forms of neglect among children aged 8-17 years in the sample of Syrian Camps were as follow:

Harm or injury to the child due to lack of supervision from an adult (25.0%), treating the child in such a way as to make him/her feel worthless (7.9%), getting the child to feel that he/she is not important (7.6%), the feeling of not being cared for by the child (7.5%).

Forms of Neglect, according to family caregivers

According to family caregivers, the most common forms of neglect among children under (18) years of age at least once in their lives in the national sample were as follow:

Harm or injury to the child due to lack of supervision from an adult (9.4%), failure of the child to receive treatment during his/her illness (5.5%), lack of a safe residing place for the child (2.5%).

According to family caregivers, the rates of the most common forms of neglect among children under (18) years of age at least once in their lives in the national sample were as follow:

Failure to receive treatment during illness of the child (7.0%), lack of a safe residing place for the child (6.0%), injury or harm to the child due to lack of supervision from an adult (5.9%).

Sexual Violence

Forms of Sexual Violence Against Children

27.3%

24.0%

of children in the national sample in the 8-17 years age group have experienced at least one form of sexual violence in their lifetime (31.2% among males versus 23.2% among females).

The forms of sexual violence experienced by children at least once in their lifetime were as follow:

» Forcing a child to watch a sex video or look at a sexual image (4.8% - 5.8% of males and 3.7% of females).

» Forcing a child to look at their private parts (genitalia) or wanting to look at the child's private parts (1.1% - 0.6% of males and 1.6% of females).

» Touching the private parts of a child in a sexual manner or asking the child to touch the private parts (2.8% - 2.0% of males and 3.7% of females).

» Taking pictures or making an indecent video for a child (1.0% - 1.5% of males and 0.7% of females).

» Using, or releasing obscene, shameful, or indecent speech in front of a child (24.2% - 29.1% of males and 18.8% of females).

of the children in the sample of Syrian Camps in the age group of 8-17 years have experienced at least one form of sexual violence in their lifetime (29.7% among males versus 17.3% among females).

The forms of sexual violence experienced by children at least once in their lifetime were as follow:

» Forcing a child watch a sex video or look at a sexual image (4.2% - 5.3% of males and 3.0% of females).

» Forcing a child look at their private parts or wanting to look at the private parts of the child (0.6% - 1.1% of males and 0% of females).

» Touching the private parts in a sexual manner or asking a child to touch private parts (1.0% - 1.1% of males and 0.8% of females).

» Using or releasing obscene, shameful, or indecent speech in front of a child (22.4% - 27.9% of males and 15.8% of females).

1.0% of family caregivers in the national sample and 0.6% of family caregivers in the Syrian Camp sample reported that their children had been sexually touched by an adult in the 12 months prior to the study.

Online Violence (Cyberbullying)

Prevalence of Online Violence (Cyberbullying)

13.2%

of children in the national sample aged 8-17 years have experienced at least one form of cyber violence in their lifetime (11.0% among males versus 15.5% among females).

5.1%

of children in the sample of Syrian Camps in the 8-17 year age group have experienced at least one form of online violence in their lifetime (9.5% among males versus 0.0% among females).

Children's Knowledge of the Meaning or Existence of Online Violence

34.0% of the children in the national sample in the age group of 8-17 years know the meaning or the existence of online Violence, and 27.5% of the children in the sample of Syrian Camps.

Caregivers Being Aware of their Children Being Exposed to Online Violence

31.0% of the caregivers in the national sample and 8.3% of the sample of Syrian Camps are aware of the meaning or existence of cyber violence.

Forms of Online Cyber Violence Against Children

The rates of the most common forms of cyber violence against children in the age group of 8-17 years according to the statements of children using the internet were as follow:

Harassment by sending abusive messages and comments to the child or threats (41.4%), encouraging the child to harm themselves (18.7%), stealing the child's electronic accounts (12.4%), insulting the child in online public spaces (10.7%), harassment by fake accounts (8.1%), posting and sending inappropriate content from the child's account without his/her knowledge (7.7%), or that the child receives sexual content on their electronic accounts (6.6%).

Children's Knowledge of Reporting Channels & Supporting Programs

The rates of knowledge of children in the age group 8-17 years about the service providers to which they can turn for help in the national sample were as follow:

The rates of knowledge of children in the age group 8-17 years about the service providers to which they can turn for help in the Syrian Camps Sample were as follow:

61.5% Police, 27.2% Family Protection Department, and 10.1% Public Security Cybercrime Unit.

56.2% Police, 20.4% Department of Family Protection, and 17.5% United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).

This field study showed that children in Jordan still face the risk of violence everywhere, including in spaces meant to be safe such as home and school. This is exacerbated by the persistence of a culture of justifying violence among some, especially as a disciplinary tool.

The recommendations of this study are based on the INSPIRE: Seven Strategies to end violence against children[10] framework that has proven effective in reducing violence against children, and as per the following:

IMPLEMENTATION & ENFORCEMENT OF LAWS

» Promulgating the Children's Rights Act as a special law, which contains all the necessary legislative elements to protect children from all forms of violence and to guarantee their rights and well-being.

» Expanding the legal and procedural concept of violence, including the development of legislation to include neglect as a type of violence against children.

» Repealing the legal provision allowing the personal right of the perpetrator of violence to be waived.

» Ensuring the presence of lawyers and judges specialized in dealing with issues of domestic violence and violence against children, and the existence of specialized courts for trying cases of violence against children and domestic violence.

» Strengthening and developing monitoring frameworks and mechanisms to ensure enforcement of child protection laws and promote accountability.

NORMS & VALUES

» Carrying out further in-depth studies on prevailing norms and values relating to violence against children to understand the social and cultural context of violence against children as a key entry point for changing societal acceptance or justification of violence against children.

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[10] The World Health Organization. (2016). Seven Strategies to End Violence Against Children (INSPIRE). World Health Organization and Pan American Health Organization. Available on: https://www.unicef.org/media/66876/file/INSPIRE-SevenStrategies.pdf.

» Adopting a more participatory and less centralized approach to awareness-raising, focusing in particular on influencers and on enhancing local communities' participation in the fight against violence, including:

- Promoting the concepts of care, protection and social responsibility.
- The importance of involving men, youth and children in managing change for misconceptions regarding the acceptance and justification of violence against children.
- The importance of involving religious institutions in managing change for misconceptions regarding the acceptance and justification of violence against children.
- Enhancing the role of the media in combating violence and cultural contexts that justify or accept it, and encouraging the adoption of a nationally accredited media work ethics in the circulation of child violence issues.
- Working to change attitudes to promote and ensure non-tolerance for violence against children, and reporting cases of violence to the competent au-thorities.

» Developing prevention and awareness programs and ensuring that their coverage is balanced in different governorates and for different segments of the population.

CREATING SAFE ENVIRONMENTS

» Addressing issues of violence from the point of view of an integrated and comprehensive family system and not focusing on child violence only. (Existence of support programmes for children who are the subject of violence and their families).

» Training medical and educational personnel on mechanisms identify cases of violence and emphasizing the importance of early detection and early reporting.

» Providing specialized courses and modules on violence against children within the curricula of relevant vocational and university education programs.

» Mobilizing further support and attention to alternative foster family programs, family care frameworks and societal role in providing care.

» Institutionalizing the Ma'An "Together" Program towards a safe school environment and disseminating it to all schools to protect children from violence in schools, including from bullying and all other forms of violence, and providing safe play areas and spaces for children in all governorates and regions.

» Ensuring a balanced coverage of all above-mentioned recommended interventions in the different governorates and targeting different population groups, especially the poorest and most marginalized groups.

» Conducting a specialized study on cyberbullying and online sexual harassment with a view to propose innovative solutions and develop a national plan to respond to this urgent issue, particularly in the context of the on-going Coronavirus Pandemic.

SUPPORT FOR PARENTS & CAREGIVERS

» Implementing programs to promote positive parenting and gender equality within the family and paying special attention to violence between siblings.

» Developing specific programmes to support and protect mothers, especially mothers at risk of violence themselves, to strengthen their role in protecting children.

» Developing specific programmes for fathers on their role in protecting children and in educating their male peers, and to address any negative image of any violence against any child, no matter how minor or inconsequential it may seem.

» Empowering families financially and emotionally, and improving the economic, social, and educational conditions of the poorest families and in the poorest regions, as a way to reduce children's exposure to violence.

» Promoting positive concepts and alternatives to disciplinary methods and strengthening them, whether in the media, Friday sermons, workshops or training courses.

» Raising the awareness of service providers, about the types and availability of services, and about the importance of the regular monitoring and evaluation of such services.

» Conducting home visits and periodic monitoring and follow-up on cases of violence against children, and training more service providers on protection procedures and identificaiton of cases of violence.

IMPROVING INCOME & STRENGTHENING THE ECONOMIC SITUATION

» Supporting the continuation and expansion of existing national assistance and social protection policies, and linking to the extent possible - social support and violence protection programmes on one hand, and economic support and material and livelihood assistance programmes, on the other hand.

» Economic empowerment and provision of financial support to vulnerable households, particularly for families with children exposed to early marriage and/or child labour..

» Conducting in-depth studies on livelihoods and vulnerability assessments, with a fo-cus on linkages with children's vulnerability to violence.

» Targeting densely populated and poorer areas in the Kingdom with comprehensive development programs and initiatives

RESPONSE & SUPPORT SERVICES

» Assessing the current capacity and the effectiveness of the response and support provided to children by different service providers .

» The continuous development of multi-sectoral response and support pro-grammes for survivors of violence, as well as rehabilitation programmes for perpetrators.

» Creating a national database that includes all providers and services provided, which should be updated continuously.

» Developing monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to ensure the quality of ser-vices provided to cases of violence against children, and the importance of providing therapeutic and psychological services to children and their families.

» Reviewing existing procedures and instructions and updating them according to the latest developments.

» Monitoring compliance with national care centres' accreditation standards and developing them where necessary.

» The importance of the existence of a national accreditation for personnel involved in violence against children and rehabilitation programmes (accreditation for individuals and institutions).

» Investing in training and allocating the necessary human resources at the service providers centres and institutions.

» Allocating more financial resources within the general budget to implement child protection programmes and ensure their sustainability

» Coordinating international funding frameworks to be more sustainable and tailored to local needs and contexts and their priorities.

» Updating monitoring systems and investing in electronic systems to ensure the quality and effectiveness of services provided.

» Providing integrated and comprehensive protection services at centres where all services are available to the victims of violence and their families.

EDUCATION & LIFE SKILLS

» Empowering parents and children with the necessary knowledge about their rights and responsibilities, including violence in all of its forms, mechanisms for seeking help, and protection of those who report incidents of violence.

» Carrying out electronic literacy courses and training of caregivers on digital skills and media.

» Supporting teenagers (females and males) to design and lead peer-based programs in schools and communities to prevent bullying and harassment.

» Raising the awareness and training of managers, counsellors, and school staff to create a safe and friendly school environment.

» Including in school curricula more education on concepts, aspects and consequences of violence and gender.

In addition to the recommendations of this study, in accordance with the **Seven Strategies Package to End Violence Against Children (INSPIRE)[11]**, the following recommendations were extrapolated and added given their importance in strengthening the protection system at the national level.

MULTISECTORAL ACTIONS & CO-ORDINATION

» Strengthening institutional commitment to and combating violence against children as a national and institutional priority.

» Adopting the matrix of priorities for strengthening the family protection system at the national level as one of the documentary pillars of the strategy to reduce violence against children.

» Enhancing co-operation and co-ordination frameworks, foremost among which is the model of the National Team for Family Protection.

» Enlisting the support of local decision-makers to urge the government to allocate more resources in the general budget and not to fully rely on external funding and international organizations.

» Executing regular studies of all relevant programs to assess the impact and determine their effectiveness and work priorities.

» Continued monitoring and evaluation through the improvement of the periodic data analysis, dissemination and use in informing public policies and responsive services and support, particularly in identifying the groups most vulnerable and the methods most effective in eliminating violence.

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[11] Ibid

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