

Jordan

Update on the context and situation of children

In 2023, Jordan was home to around 11.5 million people, over 90 per cent[1] of whom resided in urban areas. The country has one of the youngest demographic structures among the middle-income countries of the Arab region, with children under 18 years representing 40 per cent, and young people (aged 15-24 years) accounting for 20 per cent of the total population.[2] The Jordan Population and Family Health Survey (Demographic Health Survey - DHS, 2023) preliminary results indicated that 16 per cent of the population aged five years or more had at least one functional difficulty related to a disability, of which six per cent were children 5-17 years old and 1.6 per cent of children had severe difficulties.

Jordan ranks second highest globally by the number of refugees per capita. Around 730,000 refugees are registered with UNHCR, predominantly from Syria and living outside camps[3]; and over 2.5 million Palestinian refugees are registered with UNRWA, most of them holding Jordanian citizenship. Although 3,500 refugees have returned to Syria in 2023. A camp survey conducted in early 2023, indicated that 97 per cent of refugees do not intend to return to Syria in the next 12 months[4].

With a national income per capita of USD 4,260, Jordan is now classified as a lower-middle-income economy [5], which depends mainly on services, tourism, remittances, and foreign aid. Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth over the last decade has been sluggish, rarely over 2.5 per cent[6] and the country has been highly vulnerable to external shocks, including the increase in oil prices, the impact of COVID-19 pandemic and global and regional conflicts. By the third quarter of 2023, the unemployment rate in Jordan was approximately 22 per cent of the workforce (31.7 per cent among women), still higher than the pre-COVID-19 levels (19 per cent in 2019)[7]. An external debt (equivalent to 93 per cent of the GDP in 2023[8]) and limited fiscal space constrained the resources available for social services and social protection policies.

The available data on monetary poverty illustrated that in 2017-18 around 16 per cent of the Jordanian population was living under the national poverty line, while a regional study in 2023 indicated that around 14 per cent of children in Jordan were living in multidimensional poverty[9]. The Government of Jordan has put in some poverty relief measures with one in five Jordanian children receiving cash benefit from the government in 2021[10].

The monetary poverty headcount ratio in early 2023, reached 45 per cent among refugees living in camps and 62 per cent in host communities, likely impacted by the growing cost of living and the reduction in humanitarian aid[11].

The DHS (2023) preliminary findings showed improvement in some of the child survival indicators. Under-five mortality declined from 19 to 15 child deaths per 1,000 live births between 2018 and 2023 while three and two percentage points decline were observed for infant and neonatal mortality rates, respectively. There was an increase in basic childhood vaccination for children aged 12-23 months with the rate of zero-dose children dropping from seven per cent (DHS 2017-2018) to one per cent (2023).

A growing burden of micronutrient deficiency, obesity and poor feeding practices in Jordan is also evident, disproportionately affecting females[12]. Stunting among under-five children slightly increased from 7.7 to 8.3 per cent with 11.8 per cent among the lowest quintiles between 2012 and 2023. Overweight among under-five children doubled from 4.4 to 8.8 per cent while the proportion of

exclusively breastfed declined from 26 to 24 per cent during the same period. Jordan is off track in meeting most of its national and Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) health targets.

Jordan has made significant strides in increasing the enrolment in basic education of both Jordanians and non-Jordanians but inequities in access to education remain. 92 per cent of Jordanians compared to only 41 per cent of Syrian adolescents have completed basic education (Grade 10)[13]. Analysis showed that being a refugee and having a disability status were predictors of school dropout.

Jordan had one of the longest COVID-19 related school closures in the world and this continues to impact student's attendance and learning. The Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) results conducted in 2022 and published this year illustrated that students in Jordan had a lower average in mathematics, reading and science than in 2018. Jordan scored lower than their peers in the Economic Co-operation and Development Countries list.

Despite strides made in amending legislation to prevent violence against children, physical violence remains high and is closely intertwined with domestic violence.[14] PISA (2022) results for Jordan showed that 11 per cent of students aged 15 years reported not feeling safe in their classroom at school and that 25 per cent of girls and 37 per cent of boys reported being the victim of bullying at school at least a few times a month. In 2023, child marriage rates published by the Supreme Judge Department were 9.1 per cent, showing a decrease for the third year since 2020 when it was 10.5 per cent. Child labour increased from an estimated 76,000 to 100,000 between 2016 and 2022[15].

Children in Jordan faced significant challenges related to the combined impact of water scarcity and climate change. Vulnerable populations in Jordan, especially those residing in refugee camps, faced heightened risks and increased vulnerabilities due to steadily declining groundwater levels. The recently published National Water Strategy of Jordan[16] stated that, as of 2021, the average total renewable freshwater resources available was about 680 million cubic meters which is equivalent to only 61m³ per person per year for all purposes and this amount is forecasted to drop to 35 cubic meters by 2040. The global threshold for classifying water scarcity is 500m³ per person per year, highlighting the challenge for Jordan.

[1] https://dosweb.dos.gov.jo/DataBank/Population/Population_Estimares/PopulationEstimates.pdf

[2] <https://dosweb.dos.gov.jo/>

[3] <https://data.unhcr.org/en/country/jor>

[4] <https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/100851>

[5] <https://blogs.worldbank.org/opendata/new-world-bank-group-country-classifications-income-level-fy24>

[6] <https://www.imf.org/en/Publications/WEO/weo-database/2023/October>

[7] https://dosweb.dos.gov.jo/databank/news/unemployment/2023/unemp_Q3_2023_en.pdf

[8] <https://www.imf.org/en/Publications/WEO/weo-database/2023/October>

[9] <https://www.unescwa.org/publications/second-arab-multidimensional-poverty-report>

[10] https://www.ilo.org/beirut/media-centre/news/WCMS_908328/lang--en/index.htm

[11] <https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/99518>

[12] <https://dhsprogram.com/pubs/pdf/PR151/PR151.pdf>

[13] <https://www.unicef.org/jordan/media/5501/file/OSC-Report-EN.pdf>

[14]

https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/ILAB/child_labor_reports/tda2021/2021_TDA_Big_Book.pdf

[15] Ibid.

[16] https://www.mwi.gov.jo/EBV4.0/Root_Storage/AR/EB_Ticker/National_Water_Strategy_2023-2040_Summary-English_-ver2.pdf

Major contributions and drivers of results

Goal Area 1: Every child survives and thrives

In 2023, UNICEF financially and technically supported the improved vaccine coverage of Hexa/DTP3 and measles with 107 and 103 per cent, respectively, the highest in three years. Vaccine effectiveness and safety were enhanced through supply of prequalified cold chain equipment (300 electric fridges, 50 solar direct drive fridges, five walk in cold rooms) thus addressing 62 per cent of the cold chain needs in the country. In addition, digital monitoring technologies (Remote Temperature Monitoring Tags) were introduced in all vaccine storage points and during transportation.

UNICEF supported the Ministry of Health (MOH) led integrated immunization selective campaign to respond to measles outbreak in August/September by strengthening Routine Immunization (RI). This resulted in 93,110 (50 per cent female) children being reached with measles vaccines. This campaign boosted RI coverage to its highest levels in three years (pre pandemic) and identified 22,475 (48 per cent female) zero-dose children who received their first ever vaccine. UNICEF supported the strengthening of the country's preparedness for a polio outbreak and the use of the novel OPV2 vaccine if a Circulating Vaccine Derived Polio Virus 2 (cVDPV) outbreak occurs.

The uptake of the Second Year of Life (2YL) course vaccines - Measles, Mumps and Rubella (MMR) - has improved in 2023 with 13 out of 14 health directorates in the country achieving above 90 per cent for both doses of MMR1 and MMR2 with a drop-out rate of two per cent.

UNICEF supported the MOH to roll out the Health Management Information System (HMIS). The support included providing 500 computers/desktops and 50 laptops to 500 health centres and training of 1,287 (95 per cent female) health workers and 28 data focal points on the use of this HMIS resulting in 80 per cent of the health facilities being able to timely report on maternal and child health indicators.

UNICEF supported its implementing partner to offer life-saving paediatric health services in Azraq camp leading to 33,124 consultations in hospitals and clinics as well as 1,203 cases receiving secondary level inpatient care. A total of 494 new admissions (282 children with moderate acute malnutrition, 38 children with severe acute malnutrition and 174 pregnant and lactating women) received treatment through the community management of acute malnutrition programme in Azraq and Zaatari camps. In 2023, 20,251 mothers of children 0-23 months (newly delivered mothers, mothers experiencing breastfeeding complications and mothers of infants who completed their sixth month) adopted positive infant and young child feeding practices following individual and group counselling.

UNICEF supported 20 health workers from the MOH and 20 counsellors from the Ministry of Education (MOE) to expand their technical capacity to respond and manage mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS), with focus on children and adolescents.

Goal Area 2: Every child learns

UNICEF contributed to transforming the Jordan education system through innovative teacher professional development, the use of data for learning, and a focus on school leadership. In 2023, UNICEF data and expertise informed the design of the MOE's National Remedial Education Strategy, including gendered analysis of data from the MOE-UNICEF National Diagnostic Assessment (NDA) which, in 2022, assessed the learning of 800,000 children in maths and Arabic from Grade four to 11. E-dashboards for all 47 camp schools – as well as 50 schools in the host community - have been prepared utilizing the results of the NDA as well as data on children with disability (camps only) to support planning, and training provided.

UNICEF implemented various programs to enable improvement in children's learning. The MOE-UNICEF Learning Bridges program was used nationally as a blended learning resource in 67 per cent of MOE schools with core curricula content in Arabic, maths, English and science. A reading recovery intervention for 3,200 children enrolled in Grade five and six and non-formal education (NFE) students (50 per cent female) has been implemented in 23 schools and 26 NFE centres in refugee camps. The in-school program targeted adolescents who did not have mastery of reading at a Grade three level. Results were promising with over 70 per cent of students scoring at least 70 per cent in their end-of-year assessment. Over 16,000 students from Grade one to Grade nine regularly attended accelerated maths and Arabic classes in Makani Community Centres with 78 per cent demonstrating progress.

UNICEF is working with the MOE to advocate and build capacity for refugee inclusion in national systems. UNICEF contributed to improved access to quality education for over 36,700 Syrian refugee students in camps through interventions to support regular attendance of vulnerable children. Attendance increased by eight per cent between the second semester of 2021/22 and 2022/23. UNICEF provided mentoring and coaching to 47 camp school principals in both Azraq and Za'atari camps, to improve the design and implementation of school development plans.

UNICEF supported school operations in 51 schools (in Azraq, Za'atari, and Emirati Jordanian Camps) and 19 Kindergarten (KG2) centres reaching 36,700 students, including deployment of 1,351 Syrian Volunteers (45 per cent female). This included provision of school security, cleaning and maintenance services, infrastructure, and equipment. In the host community, 435 Syrian Volunteers (60 per cent female) supported 435 MOE schools, providing a bridge between the schools and the refugee community reaching over 250,600 students (50 per cent female).

UNICEF supported disability-inclusive education through enabling schools to provide individualized support for children with disabilities, as well as tackling stigma and discrimination. UNICEF supported the enrolment and retention of 1,372 children with disabilities (44 per cent female) in refugee camps. This included the needs-based provision of rehabilitation services and assistive devices, whilst also developing the capacity of teachers, supervisors, and Directorates to provide and support differentiated learning in the classroom. Transportation was provided to 519 (50 per cent female) vulnerable children to reach their school, including the children with disabilities.

UNICEF has supported early learning through the opening of three new KG2 centres in Azraq camp and early grade reading support for 3,400 students from KG2 in Azraq and Za'atari camps. UNICEF also supported outreach efforts for out-of-school adolescents in refugee camps, with 580 children (52 per cent female) newly enrolled in non-formal education.

Adolescents and youth development

In 2023, UNICEF focused on two programme areas: Learning to Earning and Meaningful Engagement of Young People. A total of 535 young people (76 per cent female) were provided with career guidance helping them navigate the local labour market, 595 young people (53 per cent female) were provided with accredited, demand driven Technical and Vocational Education Training (TVET), and 2,006 young people (72 per cent female) with digital skills training for freelancers and creative careers. This training equipped vulnerable young people who were often deprived of such opportunities with job search, 21st century and technical skills that are in high demand on the market.

UNICEF implementing partners in the Learning to Earning TVET and on the job training programmes matched 724 graduates (46 per cent female) with suitable job opportunities in high-demand sectors such as gig economy, hospitality, hybrid car maintenance, Heating, Ventilation and Air Condition, and fashion design to name a few sectors. These job opportunities have enabled the youth to become

productive members of society and generate income to support for their families' needs. In addition, 892 young people (51 per cent female) received entrepreneurship support, both technical and financial. This resulted in the opening of micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) and home-based businesses (HBBs) and led to the creation of income generating opportunities across the country, including most remote and vulnerable areas.

Considering the additional difficulties and barriers faced by young people residing in Za'atari and Azraq refugee camps, UNICEF provided them with safe space for learning, skills development and training opportunities, as well as broader mentoring and mental health support, which were meant to improve their lives inside the camps and increase their chances to prosper in life. A total of 3,675 young people (48 per cent female) accessed UNICEF interventions delivered in the three youth centres in the two camps. This included career guidance, support with Grade 12 exam preparation, training in leadership opportunities, Social Innovation and TVET. Young people also accessed online courses offered by the University of the People, as well as practiced the skills taught in the youth centres through volunteering opportunities and implemented youth led actions in their communities.

UNICEF sustained young people's meaningful engagement in civic and community action through multiple initiatives delivered in both Azraq and Za'atari refugee camps and in host communities. This included training 37,887 young people (56 per cent female) in life skills which resulted in improved self-confidence, sense of belonging and community engagement among young participants, especially young women, thereby potentially contributing to violence reduction. The training led to the launch of 783 youth led actions which benefited local communities and aimed to change in-grained gender and social norms.

UNICEF initiatives encouraged 37,448 young people (58 per cent female) to access volunteering opportunities in the areas of climate, health or education through the Nahno[1] national platform. UNICEF also provided 7,114 young people (63 per cent female) with training on social innovation, to encourage them to find creative solutions to community needs. This resulted in the planning, designing and implementation of 285 social ventures in 2023.

Goal Area 3: Every child is protected from violence and exploitation

UNICEF supported the Government of Jordan in the development of the recently adopted Strategy on Juvenile Justice (2024–2028) including the drafting of a roadmap for monitoring the implementation of the Child Rights Law (2022) and the National Child Labour Strategy (2023–2030).

The Ministry of Social Development (MOSD) remained committed to reducing the number of children living in institutional care and being deprived of parental care. Through UNICEF's technical support to the MOSD, 379 children (44 per cent female) were reunified with their biological families as a result of conducting the best interest assessment of these children. Additionally, UNICEF's technical support contributed to the National Steering Committee for Alternative Care being created, and 69 children (52 per cent female) being connected with families as part of an alternative care programme.

In close cooperation with the MOSD and local partners, UNICEF provided technical and financial support for 17 MOSD multidisciplinary team members (speech therapists, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, and special education teachers) to support five new "Early Intervention Centres" and five existing "Early Intervention Centers" across the country. As a result, 446 children with disabilities (41 per cent female) from birth up to the age of six, along with their parents, benefited from the early intervention services.

In 2023, UNICEF continued the implementation of the parenting programme in hard-to-reach areas benefiting 27,384 parents and caregivers (98 per cent female) through a 12-week programme on

parenting and child-rearing practices for children aged 0-9 and 10-18. As a result, approximately 56,000 children (50 per cent female) benefited indirectly from these programmes tailored for their parents.

UNICEF initiated child protection capacity building programme for social workers, educators, health service providers, and law enforcement workers covering the areas such as child protection, gender-based violence case management, and social and behavioral change. In total, approximately 2,046 child protection personnel (45 per cent female) benefited from these trainings.

In addition, UNICEF trained 384 Civil Society Organization (CSO) personnel on child safeguarding and Protection against Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA). These efforts included ensuring that the CSO's had clear guidelines and standard operating procedures to strengthen their responses to any sexual exploitation and abuse allegations that may be brought to their attention by their staff or beneficiaries.

The Tracking System for Family Violence (TSFV), an automated case management system for family violence cases, was established with financial and technical support from UNICEF to carry out a pilot phase with the MOSD, MOE and MOH in East Amman during 2023. The pilot showed results in mitigating risks, enhancing key functions of the child protection entities in reporting, gathering feedback, facilitating necessary adjustments, and helped in enhancing the likelihood of successful implementation of the digital system at a broader scale.

Goal Area 4: Every child lives in safe and clean environment

UNICEF continued to extend essential water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) support to the most vulnerable children and their families in refugee camps and underserved communities. The program addressed immediate WASH needs whilst also prioritizing long-term development goals. UNICEF maintained its primary priority on delivering crucial water and sanitation services in Syrian refugee camps (Za'atari, Azraq and Garden) and Rukban settlement where residents rely entirely on water and solid waste services provided by UNICEF. Concurrently, efforts were made to increase resilience and support mitigation of climate change risks, foster sustainability, and promote social cohesion. This involved active engagement of children and youth, particularly females, encouraging behavioral shifts within communities.

UNICEF sustained its strategic partnership with the Government of Jordan and key stakeholders, enhancing WASH sector capacities and supporting the WASH enabling environment. Responsibilities included co-leading, together with Ministry of Water and Irrigation (MOWI), the humanitarian WASH sector working group, by providing critical coordination and support role to stakeholders across the sector as well as assisting the MOWI in developing the Jordan Response Plan (JRP) 2024-2026. Additionally, UNICEF strengthened its role in integrating climate-resilient WASH services at both community and institutional levels. This encompassed supporting the Ministry of Health (MOH) in the finalization of the national baseline on WASH conditions in health care facilities.

Throughout 2023, UNICEF actively contributed to evidence generation, updating vulnerability maps related to the Water stress in the country and conducting capacity assessments for Climate Resilient Water and Sanitation Safety and Security Planning.

Through direct implementation and support, UNICEF ensured continuous provision of safe water services to over 130,000 people and sanitation and wastewater services to over 123,000 people in Syrian Refugee Camps. Additionally, over 31,000 vulnerable people whose lives are being impacted by climate change have benefited from increased level of water supply services in areas most at need, including in Southern Jordan. The commitment to delivering life-saving WASH services in Syrian refugee camps and most vulnerable communities continued throughout 2023, in collaboration with the

MOWI, the Water Authority of Jordan (WAJ), and relevant utilities. These efforts aligned with UNICEF's core commitments for humanitarian action and the goal of progressing toward universal access to sustainable services, in line with the Sustainable Development Goals.

UNICEF's efforts contributed to uphold high hygiene standards and promote water conservation behaviors among 55,700 people living in refugee camps and other vulnerable communities. Active community engagement, particularly through women, and strategic social cohesion and climate awareness on WASH reached 32,000 people in camps and targeted vulnerable communities. The emphasis remained on inclusive community-level interventions involving both beneficiaries and stakeholders. The roll out of Climate Action Clubs in 24 schools and 23 Makani centers contributed to raising awareness on climate change and environmental priorities among 6,285 children (63 per cent girls).

Goal Area 5: Every child has an equitable chance in life

The reform of the social protection sector in Jordan is advancing steadily through effective collaboration among national institutions and development partners.

In 2023, within the framework of the National Social Protection Strategy (NSPS) 2019-25, UNICEF supported the capacity strengthening of the Implementation Support Unit (ISU). The ISU is responsible for overseeing and coordinating the implementation of the NSPS. This support aimed to accelerate the advancement of the strategy and promote increased harmonization with concurrent economic and administrative reforms.

Concurrently, UNICEF played a leading role in supporting the NSPS 2026-2030 development process. The work will involve drawing on best practices from the current strategies and global examples while addressing gaps and challenges, with a specific focus on strengthening preparedness and shock-responsive elements, as well as child-sensitivity and gender responsiveness of the programmes. The advanced draft of the Social Protection Reflection Report, prepared by UNICEF, informed the elaboration of the roadmap for the NSPS update.

In relation to the social assistance pillar of the NSPS, notable advancements related to the unification of the cash assistance programmes of the National Aid Fund (NAF) were achieved with emphasis on gender equality and shock-responsive elements. Through UNICEF's technical support in the areas of targeting, digitization and communication, NAF successfully covered 216,000 households (including 470,994 children).

Complementing nationally led social protection programs and ensuring the inclusion of vulnerable children regardless of nationality, UNICEF sustained its child cash program, Hajati, reaching over 10,000 children with monthly assistance in the first half of 2023, including nine per cent of children with disabilities. Due to funding constraints, the program reduced its coverage by 44 per cent in the second half of the year.

During 2023, 127,000 vulnerable children, adolescents, youth and their caregivers were provided integrated social protection services through the Makani programme's 136 centres in refugee camps and host communities. These services included parenting sessions for caregivers, early childhood development sessions for young children, learning support services for children with low education achievements, community-based child protection interventions, skill-building training for adolescents and youth, and volunteering opportunities.

During 2023, the Skills Building curriculum within the Makani programme was strengthened with a stronger gender component. Service pre- and post-assessments of various components of the programme showed notable improvements in children's and adolescent's learning and skills. For

example, 94 per cent of children attending the learning support services showed significant improvements in literacy and numeracy.

Through the collaboration between MOSD, NAF and UNICEF, over 21,000 vulnerable Jordanian children whose families are receiving the NAF cash assistance were linked with Makani services. These children were provided access to learning and skill-building opportunities as part of an integrated social protection package.

In the area of evidence and data on children in Jordan, the Department of Statistics released the preliminary findings of the Jordan DHS (2023) with technical and financial support from UNICEF and other development partners. The evidence from the DHS contributed to updating a wide set of indicators on the situation of children in Jordan, notably in the domains of survival, health and nutrition, while also enhancing information related to the Sustainable Development Goals.

[1] Nahno.org

UN Collaboration and Other Partnerships

UNICEF maintained strong partnerships with the government, civil society organizations, the private sector, UNICEF national committees, key bilateral and multilateral donors to strengthen national systems for promoting the realization of child rights in Jordan.

In 2023, UNICEF continued its collaboration with IFC, ILO, UNHCR and World Bank under the Dutch funded PROSPECTS programme. The collaboration with ILO focused on advancing the implementation of the Job Search Clubs methodology through career guidance. Through funding from the European Union, UNICEF collaborated with ILO and UNHCR on both the social protection reform and employment components. Other key collaborative initiatives included partnership with WFP on the Youth Innovation in Food Security programme; UNDP on participatory action research, social innovation and UNV on volunteering.

UNICEF partnered with WHO on strengthening WASH in health care facilities and training of school counsellors and health care workers on mental health and psychosocial support. UNICEF worked closely with the MOH, the Jordan Centres for Disease Control (JCDC), WHO, EMPHNET, UNFPA, WFP, UNDP, IOM and the World bank to strengthen primary health care service delivery systems. UNICEF continued to strengthen its partnerships with key Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE) stakeholders such as MOH, WHO, JCDC and both International and National NGOs throughout its response to a measles outbreak and the promotion of routine immunization.

UNICEF continued to partner with the MOE in advancing education reforms for all children in Jordan and in supporting learning recovery efforts post the COVID-19 pandemic. Funded through PROSPECTS, UNICEF collaborated with the MOE in designing the Schools Teaching for Learning Recovery pilot in 50 schools across six Field Directorates and in the process, leveraging USD \$2 million in funding from the Accelerated Access Initiative multi-donor trust fund. UNICEF is collaborating with the Queen Rania Centre for Technology, MOE and the Ministry of Digital Economy and Entrepreneurship (MODEE) in the design of an e-assessment system that will support schools to track student progress in maths and reading. A scoping study has been completed and work will continue in 2024.

UNICEF partnered with the Ministry of Youth and the MODEE to implement Learning Bridges Clubs in 18 community centres, benefitting 1,008 children (70 per cent female). The clubs provide vulnerable

children with a safe space and support for learning.

UNICEF continued to co-chair the Education Sector Working Group with Norwegian Refugee Council and acted as Secretariat for the Jordan Response Plan Education Chapter. By closely working with parents on joint advocacy to support the access and learning of vulnerable children in Jordan, the MOE has agreed to enroll Syrian and non-Syrian refugees in schools without documentation.

UNICEF collaborated closely with the National Council for Family Affairs to advocate for the rights of children in the development of National Juvenile Justice Standards and National Child Labour Strategy. In addition, UNICEF convened a consultative workshop with 26 women led Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) to build their capacity on gender and results-based management, linked to gender-based violence and skills building and employment initiatives.

As the co-chair of the Humanitarian WASH Sector Working Group, UNICEF maintained and reinforced partnerships with WASH sector partners, the Inter-Sector Working Group, and other relevant Sector Working Groups. UNICEF actively participated in the Water Sector Donors meeting, led by the German Embassy, where essential needs and priorities within the humanitarian WASH sector were highlighted. Additionally, UNICEF engaged with GIZ, the World Bank, the Dutch Embassy, and other stakeholders to align existing initiatives in support of the Government of Jordan in the WASH sector.

UNICEF continued to strengthen its collaboration with the MOWI, MOH, MOE, WAJ, Yarmouk and Aqaba Water Companies, and the Department of Palestinian Affairs to support provision of critical WASH services to most vulnerable communities. Moreover, a new interagency program with UN-Habitat, funded by the Adaptation Fund, was initiated to build community resilience and adaptation in response to water scarcity associated with effects of climate change.

In 2023, UNICEF worked with the World Bank, WFP, FAO, and UNHCR to provide assistance to national social protection systems. Furthermore, UNICEF advocated for and contributed to the establishment of the High Steering Committee at the ministerial level to lead the update the National Social Protection Strategy.

The Financial Inclusion Coordination Group established in 2023 was co-chaired by UNICEF and Care International and involved other UN, INGOs, and national entities. The joint review of the National Financial Inclusion Strategy is ongoing between the Central Bank of Jordan and the Group.

UNICEF played a leading role in bringing together a wide array of public and private sector actors to strengthen initiatives for the most vulnerable youth. These actors along with UNICEF, provided technical assistance in strengthening the National Volunteering Framework through evidence generation and strategy development and supported the further expansion of the Crown Prince National Volunteering Award platform.

Partnership with the private sector continued in 2023. Approximately 669 businesses were engaged in 2023, with 268 private sector companies providing volunteering and training opportunities on the Nahno platform, while another 401 supported young people in their transition into adulthood through mentoring and job opportunities. Bank Al Etihad continued to provide financial commitment for youth engagement in climate action.

UNICEF also collaborated with the Business Partner and Professional Women's organization (BPWA), together with the World Economic Forum, to initiate coordinated actions on the Gender Parity Accelerator, together with the private sector; OASIS500, an early stage investor and accelerator, Crown Prince Foundation, Bank Al Etihad, HIKMA, a leading global pharmaceutical company, all under the auspices of Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation (MOPIC).

UNICEF continued to collaborate with various UN agencies and NGO partners to support the

Jordanian National Commission for Women's (JNCW) Gender Equality outcomes. The recently established gender advisory group, which UNICEF actively participated in, is conducting a gender analysis study whose results will be available in 2024.

UNICEF supported the UN harmonized PSEA capacity assessment approach along with other UN agencies to assess implementing partners organizational PSEA capacities utilizing the common UN approach.

Lessons Learned and Innovations

As part of clean energy drive, the solarization of primary health care centres in remote areas through the introduction of spacious direct drive solar fridges led to improved safety and potency of vaccines in rural areas affected by erratic electricity supply from the main grid. This also helped as an indirect cost saving measure due to the reduction in the cost of electricity bills.

UNICEF's partnering with the MOH and its work on routine immunization led to over 22,475 zero-dose children being reached with vaccinations through the deployment of mobile vaccination teams. Notably, facility-based micro-planning was conducted which was crucial for identifying unimmunized children, and generated demand in underperforming directorates and districts. The micro-planning exercise not only deepened the understanding of inequities and their drivers in the country but also benefited from strong field support at the directorate level. This comprehensive approach facilitated precise targeting of the most challenging-to-reach and highly vulnerable children within the Dom communities, including those children living in tented settlements and transient populations who perennially missed.

Two thirds of schools in Jordan with Grades four to 10 implemented Learning Bridges (LB) during the 2022/2023 academic year. The LB project was a creative way to embed climate education, sustainable development and digital skills into student's learning. LB was profiled at the MENA Climate Week at a high-level session on Greening Education ahead of COP28, in recognition of the components of sustainable development and climate education. The MOE was nominated as a champion country in the global UNESCO-UNICEF Digital Learning Gateways initiative and a key element was related to the recognition of the use of LB as curriculum linked national blended learning program.

Parental engagement was also recognized as a key component of increasing children's retention and learning. UNICEF designed an online tool and materials, which in addition to face-to-face meetings, has been used to connect facilitators and parents using PADLET (online noticeboards) as a platform. These tools and engagement with parents are being piloted in 23 schools as part of the Reading Recovery program in the refugee camps.

UNICEF utilized various innovative digital tools and platforms to improve school management and the use of data for learning in Jordan. This included the use of Mubakkir, a digital application to track student progress in reading, as well as the use of PADLETS (online noticeboard) to support teacher professional development, and to provide access to blended learning materials through Learning Bridges program. E-dashboards were developed to support education leaders to analyse and use data on learning and attendance across 42 Directorates and 97 schools.

UNICEF designed various innovative teacher professional development courses reaching over 14,900 teachers (75 per cent female). The course, Teachers of the Future, was developed to support teachers and school leaders improve their pedagogical knowledge, and focuses on classroom practice, how to be effective when teaching online or using blended teaching approach and is meant to improve the

outcomes of students by enhancing classroom practice. The Teachers of the Future course was accredited by the MOE and will be supported for roll out in 2024.

Despite continuous efforts and commitment of the Government of Jordan, the existing capacity of government institutions to deliver effective, quality child protection prevention and response services still needs to be strengthened. The MOSD's efforts, supported by UNICEF, highlighted the criticality of strengthening the social service workforce (SSW) and to prioritize this issue is well acknowledged by all social and justice sector ministries. The SSW mapping exercise conducted in 2023 will provide the baseline for future investments in the development of an accredited social service workforce training programme.

The prevailing water scarcity situation in Jordan continued to affect the availability of water to the most vulnerable populations and impacted the operation of the water supply systems in refugee camps. Water sources within Za'atari camp were insufficient to meet the full demand, especially during peak summer. This led to nearly one-third of the camp's water being transported from external sources, primarily by trucking. Furthermore, groundwater levels have been steadily declining, and it is anticipated that this will lead to a further reduction in the production capacity of boreholes in the coming years, posing a risk to the population within the camp that is entirely dependent on these services. To address this challenge, UNICEF is working with MWI and WAJ to increase the availability of water outside the camp that would benefit the most vulnerable populations in host communities and the refugee camp.

The steady decline in humanitarian funding over recent years, further exacerbated by their short-term durations, jeopardizes the continuity and effectiveness of services that are crucial for vulnerable communities. To ensure the sustained provision of humanitarian services, there is a pressing need for increased and more stable funding mechanisms that enable long-term collaborations with the private sector, fostering resilience and enhancing the overall impact of humanitarian efforts, including through investment into strengthening national infrastructure and capacity.

The utilization of Bayanati, the real-time monitoring system of Makani and Hajati, along with technological solutions such as ARC GIS and Survey123, generated evidence-based data. This data was used during a rationalization and prioritization exercise for the Makani programme, leading to cost efficiencies while minimizing the negative impact on the most vulnerable children enrolled in the programme.

Furthermore, the incorporation of complaints and feedback mechanisms through various channels, including the UNICEF helpline, two-way communication via RapidPro, and community feedback channels, has enabled programmes to respond to emerging needs through a consultative process that actively engages and incorporates community feedback.

The adoption of Gender Transformative Approaches (GTA), a globally tested tool implemented through a consultative process involving implementing partners and community representatives, has facilitated contextualized learning and the development of a roadmap for the implementation of gender transformative approaches in Makani centers.

The adolescents and youth sectoral review meeting revealed the need to strengthen referral pathways between interventions for partners to directly engage with each other and have a community of practice to share experiences, make referrals and offer more opportunities for young people.