

JORDAN COUNTRY STUDY OF DISADVANTAGED CHILDREN

The National Council for Family Affairs
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Overview

*“To defend our weakest and raise our poorest is a moral obligation....
In Jordan, we are acting on that responsibility to create a better life
for our people...not just for tomorrow’s generations, but for today’s as
well,
” Her Majesty Queen Rania Al Abdullah.^a*

Introduction to the Country Study

Jordan was among the core set of countries that participated in the preparation of a World Bank Regional Children Strategy Paper with a focus on disadvantaged children. The aim of this effort was three fold (i) assess the status of disadvantaged children in the MENA region, including the identification of the key risk factors that impact their status; (ii) review current policies and programs (both public and private) for disadvantaged children in the region and assess their strengths and weaknesses and identify gaps, and (iii) recommend policies and programs to improve the well-being of disadvantaged children in the region.

This first part of the report of the Jordan Country Study provides a qualitative and quantitative description of the current situation of the disadvantaged children in Jordan. It was conducted by Dr.Curt Rhodes,Tania Hissei,Haytham Mihyar,and james Van Cleave from Questscope. ***The second part of the report*** was a review of the current policies and programs for disadvantaged children in Jordan. It was carried out by Dr.Dina Al-Khawaja.***The third part of the report*** provides a policy framework as well as policy recommendations for the different categories of the disadvantaged children in the country. It was mainly based on the findings of the pervious reports. Dr. Musa Shteivi from the University of Jordan conducted the third part. The first two parts were conducted by mid-2003, and the third part was finalized in May of this year. All parts of the study were carried out in close cooperation and consultation with the national Council of Family Affairs, the World Bank, and other key participants.

^a “Queen receives medal for promoting cross-cultural dialogue, addresses importance of Conservation,” *Jordan Times*, October 21, 2002.

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Part One

The Current Situation of the Disadvantaged Children in Jordan

Introduction.

A critical function of this part of report is to shed light on the significant number of children who are vulnerable but who are not visible in regular reports on disadvantaged children. How many are there? What types of disadvantages do they experience? What conditions make them vulnerable to disadvantages?

These children do not fit into the systems that serve the majority of children in Jordan. A qualitative and quantitative description of the magnitude of the situation will demonstrate the need for action outside of the usual organizations and channels of services to children. Equipped with this qualitative and quantitative description, organizations at the local municipal level will be able to take actions to offer appropriate, specialized support for children who are vulnerable to disadvantages but who are largely invisible for current service provision. Such support for these children will enable them to participate more fully in mainstream social benefits.

It is important to acknowledge the value of relevant information derived from existing studies and background work carried out by various United Nations and non-governmental organizations. Data provided by cooperating organizations and individuals proved a rich and fertile source of information. This information greatly assisted in the ability to identify, characterize, and quantify numbers of children whose vulnerability is heightened due to their invisibility to policy makers.

Sections 1 and 2 provide descriptions and commentary on categories of disadvantaged children and sources of vulnerability – sources that put children at risk of living with pronounced disadvantages both in childhood and as adults. Sections 3 and 4 contain detailed analysis of research data or findings within categories of disadvantaged children and sources of vulnerability. These findings provide essential support for Sections 1 and 2 by substantiating the descriptions and commentary in those earlier sections.

Before entering into the main sections of the report, it will be useful to reflect on the concept and reality of **vulnerability**. The concept of vulnerability used in Risk & Vulnerability Assessments in the World Bank stems from the notion that certain groups in society are more vulnerable to shocks that threaten their livelihood and survival. Other groups are so vulnerable that they live in a chronic state of impoverishment where their livelihood remains in a constant state of risk. Various approaches to the management of social risk lead to particular policies aimed at reducing the impact of key risks and breaking inter-generational cycles of poverty and vulnerability.

An approach developed within the World Bank based on a loose definition of vulnerability is oriented around these factors: risk of consumption poverty; malnutrition; and low educational or health outcomes. This approach starts with an investigation of the sources of vulnerability

(prevalent and or catastrophic risks and shocks), contrasts these with the available risk management instruments, and finally identifies gaps in access to and efficiency of such instruments. This information may then be used to identify an array of optimal interventions to address a particular risk, and to plan the costs, priorities, sequence, and oversight for these interventions.

Identifying and characterizing sources of vulnerabilities for disadvantaged children involves two objectives: (1) a definition and description of the source itself (e.g., abuse); and (2) a determination of the expected prevalence of the source of vulnerability (e.g., projected numbers of abused children in a population). In identifying and characterizing sources of vulnerabilities and the risks or disadvantages they pose to children, it is vital to keep in mind the following reality. **To be disadvantaged as a child includes both the harmful effects of the disadvantage and being “invisible” to the usual systems of support and assistance available to the majority of children.** Being invisible to or outside of the regular systems of support and assistance, a child is far less likely to overcome his or her disadvantages and enjoy the benefits of full participation in a developing society.

Ideally, the assessment of risk and vulnerability requires data on specific risks and shocks that affect an individual child, and the child’s ability to compensate for or overcome those shocks. Such data are typically not available, especially in developing countries, thus making disadvantaged children largely invisible to researchers and service providers. This problem with availability of data complicates the assessment effort, for explicit information on risks and shocks is crucial in understanding and responding to the sources of vulnerability and their effects. In view of all of this, it should be noted that, for the purposes of the assessment, data obtained from existing studies and statistical reports were analyzed with two purposes in mind: (1) to identify where possible the number of “missing” children to provide an estimation of the magnitude of the vulnerability for which data do not exist; (b) and to describe the situations of the children who were “counted” in order to create as rich a picture as possible of their circumstances in relation to each source of vulnerability.

In the material that follows, sources of vulnerabilities are treated as individual factors, and the magnitude of affected children is estimated in relation to particular sources of vulnerability. Nevertheless, it should be kept in mind that children at risk of being disadvantaged are usually at risk from more than one source – often several sources – of vulnerability. Hence, the overall effect of vulnerability and risk will be more devastating to a disadvantaged child and more resistant to remedial action than can be judged by looking at a single factor. The tangle of factors that make a child vulnerable to disadvantages compounds both the child’s situation and the challenges in providing support and assistance to him or her.

Background Information on Jordan

In the past decade, Jordan has experienced a rapidly increasing rate of social and economic change as it develops into a modern, urbanized society. Characteristics of these changes include a high percentage of youth in the population and an unprecedented movement from rural to urban living. In 2001, half of all Jordanians were under 19 years of age. And 80% of the population lived in urban areas by the mid 1990’s as compared to 80% in rural areas in the 1960’s.^a Since 1997, annual GDP growth in Jordan has been on average 3.2 %, but the Jordanian population has also grown at an average of 3.1% annually. This indicates that poverty in terms of percentage has most likely not changed, but poverty in terms of numbers of poor has

^a *Children and Youth: A Situational Analysis*, M. Hasan, Study Commissioned by GUVS, Amman, Jordan, 1997.

probably increased due to high population growth.^a In addition, 60% of all unemployed people are below the age of 25.^b

Based on projected per capita economic growth, poverty levels in Jordan will probably increase gradually over the next two years, and could stabilize in five years. Jordan's efforts to globalize and undertake structural adjustment will continue to challenge welfare policies. Reduced public spending combined with low growth will increase poverty, which is already aggravated by high – albeit declining – population growth. Increased economic growth combined with adequate policies for economic diversification may reduce poverty significantly in the longer term, but this will probably not happen in the coming few years.^c

Jordan's high population growth rate may present the single biggest obstacle to fulfilling children's and women's rights in the decade ahead. Nearly two-thirds of Jordan's population is 24 years of age or less. Jordan ranks 8th out of 161 countries with regard to the youthfulness of its population.^d Jordan's population crossed the threshold of 5 million inhabitants in 2000, with a population of 5,182,000 in 2001, having doubled since 1980. The population 18 years or under is about 2,300,000; and the total population is expected to double to 10 million within two decades.^e

More children now live in larger urban areas than ever before. And more children share in public services (schools, medical care, etc.) than ever before. More children depend on both family income *and* access to resources and opportunities than ever before. Determining the numbers of children vulnerable to risk and identifying areas of significant disadvantage are more important than ever before. With this information, priorities can be established and policies and programs enacted that will prevent any Jordanian children from “falling through the cracks” as Jordan modernizes, urbanizes, and improves future prospects for all its citizens. In addition, alongside current systems that serve the needs of the majority of children, a wider variety of organizations can be enlisted to employ innovative approaches to meet the needs of children at risk.

In view of current and projected socio-economic conditions in Jordan, a critical objective in this study then is to examine existing data and reported figures to identify those numbers of children (0-18) affected by vulnerabilities who are not readily visible through the usual way data is presented and understood. The data are analyzed to illuminate the realities of children in each category of disadvantage and source of vulnerability so their circumstances and their numbers evoke a moral urgency in policy considerations. The key to this analysis is to identify non-participating children – that is, those children who are “invisible” because of their numerical absence from reports that are routinely designed to reflect accomplishments rather than assessments of who is being served and who is not.

There are few studies and little data on disadvantaged children in Jordan. The increasing impact of sources of vulnerabilities and numbers of disadvantaged children is in large part due to the rapid economic and social development of Jordan in the past decade and an increase in population after the Gulf War. The urgent need to address this relatively recent demographic phenomenon – that is, increasing numbers of disadvantaged children in a growing population of children – is a newly emerging arena for research, policy formulation, and programmatic action.

^a *Poverty Alleviation for a Stronger Jordan*, MSD, 2002.

^b *Jordan Human Development Report, 2000*: quoted (p.15) in *Jordanian Youth: Their lives and views*, UNICEF 2002

^c *The Situation of Children, Youth & Women in Jordan*, UNICEF, 2002

^d *Jordan Human Development Report, 2000*: quoted (p.15) in *Jordanian Youth: Their lives and views*, UNICEF 2002

^e *The Situation of Children, Youth & Women in Jordan*, UNICEF, 2002

1.0 Categories of Disadvantaged Children

Children are put at a disadvantage with respect to their personal development and participation in the benefits of Jordanian society in a number of ways. This section provides an overview of types or categories of disadvantaged situations in which many children live. Again it should be noted that, while many experience more than one type of disadvantage, life circumstances that disadvantage or impede the development of children can be categorized into the following individual types.

1.1 Working Children

The category of working children, or children engaged in economic activity, is a broad concept that encompasses many kinds of productive activity by children. This includes work in the informal sector, as well as unpaid and illegal work. At the extreme is child labor as defined by the International Labor Organization. In this study, “working children” refers to children ages 5-16 who work instead of attending school, or who attend school to some extent *and* also work. This statistical connection between being in school or being at work is natural. The majority of children between ages 5 and 16 are either in school or at work, or in some combination of school and work, during the day. Long hours in school mean few or no hours at work. Long hours at work mean few or no hours in school.

There are many children between ages 5 and 16 in Jordan who work in addition to attending school, or who work in place of attending school. In a recent study by UNICEF, 34% of ever working youths reported starting work before 15 years of age, with some beginning as early as 6 years of age.^a A review of numbers of dropouts over a period of 10 years (1990 -1999) indicated that 46,000 children, all under the age of 16 in 1999, dropped out of school. Estimating the number of children who drop out from grades 1 through 10 provides a baseline measure for establishing the potential magnitude of “missing or invisible” children who *may* be working and not attending school and for whom more research instruments should be designed to identify and characterize them. Nevertheless, based on current research and studies, estimates by the International Labor Organization (ILO) in MENA indicate that tens of thousands of children in Jordan – perhaps more than 290,000 – fit the category of “working children.” Those children who combine work with schooling or work instead of attending school. They work in auto and mechanical repair, carpentry, cleaning and moving, blacksmithing, agriculture, and more. These facts are of great concern for several reasons. Children who work significant numbers of hours are at risk of injury, impaired health and development, exploitation, and inadequate education. Although the ratio of male to female children is apparently greater in the overall number of working children, the ratio of female to male working children is higher in the agricultural sector.

1.2 Juvenile Delinquency

At present the age of legal responsibility in Jordan is 7 years. A proposed change in juvenile law increases the age to 12 years, and it is expected that the new law will be enacted soon. Children 7 years of age and older can be arrested by the police and related authorities (although arrests are usually made from age 12) for a variety of activities deemed illegal or anti-social under Jordanian law. These include violence, drug-related activities, theft, panhandling, and

^a *Jordanian Youth: Their lives and views, UNICEF 2002, page 59.*

more. Children who fit into the category of “juvenile delinquency” are obviously those who engage in prohibited activities and are arrested and processed in the juvenile justice system. But even those who are detained and released – and so do not actually count as juvenile delinquents – are affected by their experience and set apart from children who have no such experience. Figures indicate that for the three-year period, 1999 to 2001, around 30,000 young people (15% repeat offenders) came into contact with police and juvenile authorities, with a noticeable increase in arrests in the last two years of that period. Ages of those arrested ranged from under 12 to 18.

Delinquency is a category that actually is the result or symptom of a wide variety of risk factors that affect vulnerable and unprotected children, for whatever reason. At the same time, it should be noted that children whose circumstances and actions have brought them to the attention of law enforcement authorities – either through arrest and processing, or through detention and release – constitute a group who are at risk of further problems and increased difficulties in their lives. Identifying the numbers of these children and characterizing the reasons for their interaction with the law will provide a picture of this group of disadvantaged children and will provide a basis to develop further initiatives to reduce and prevent juvenile delinquency and its consequences for young offenders and society.

1.3 Disabilities

The WHO-World Bank estimates that the prevalence of disabilities within any population is 10%. The majority of disabilities, 75%, is mild and is most likely to be found in children in schools or of school age. Moderate disabilities, 20%, are treated in specialized institutions, community-based rehabilitation programs, in schools, or in homes. Severe disabilities, 5%, are treated in specialized institutions.

Quality of life for people with disabilities – mental, physical, relational, and economic – is an ever-present issue. Any disability influences the mental and physical development of a child, and even his or her social status, to some extent. The more severe the disability, the more challenging it is for a child to develop well as an individual and participate as fully as possible in society. And given the severity of certain disabilities, some children will be in need of comprehensive, long-term care and support for their entire lives.

What are the magnitude and prevalence of children with disabilities in Jordan? Governmental and non-governmental organizations in Jordan have a significant history of service to disabled children and their families. This can make data collection a very complex exercise. With many organizations providing services, development of an accurate survey of all that is being done and all who are being served is quite multifaceted. However, using well-established percentages for estimating the prevalence of disabilities, it can be projected that there are more than 230,000 children in Jordan – or around 10% of the young population – with disabilities of varying severity. Types of disabilities include Attention Deficit Disorder, Down’s syndrome, autism, mental retardation, spina bifida, cerebral palsy, hearing and vision impairments, and more.

At the same time, comparison of numbers of children who actually receive assistance with the projected numbers of disabled children will point to the magnitude of unserved children who require some form of diagnosis and/or assistance. In fact, while a number of organizations do serve thousands of children with disabilities, it is the case that the vast majority of children (most likely composed primarily of those with mild and moderate disabilities) – around 218,000, or 92% - receive little or no specific services to support and assist them.

This magnitude of this number presents a profound challenge to the current ability of governmental and non-governmental organizations to serve these children who need assistance in preschool years and in schools and specialized institutions.

1.4 Orphans

The category of orphans covers children without living fathers, children who have been abandoned, or children who have birth certificates without parents' names. It is likely that the number of orphans recorded in public or private institutions significantly understates the actual number of orphans, as many do not reside in institutions. This is because cultural attitudes and religious traditions in Jordan create an atmosphere in which most children who are orphans are cared for in extended family networks. Moreover, the government is in general reducing its role with orphans to rely more on the non-governmental sector.

The magnitude for this category of disadvantaged children then consists of those children who are institutionalized plus an estimation of those children who receive support from non-governmental organizations as orphans living in extended families (i.e., at the community level, within families, rather than in institutions).

In this context, according to recent data it is estimated that about 20,000 children receive some form of assistance as orphans. Despite care in either institutions or extended family or community networks, such children are often at risk from pervasive and long-lasting poverty and its consequences (such as inadequate healthcare, schooling, and more).

1.5 Refugees

In one sense, children who are refugees in Jordan do not necessarily represent a distinct category of disadvantaged children. While there are many who are technically refugees in Jordan – especially of Palestinian background – the government of Jordan rightly takes pride in its treatment of refugees and their children. All Jordanian and Palestinian-background Jordanians are considered as Jordanians by the government and society. All of these children are eligible for the same public services. Hence, from a Jordanian perspective, merely being of Palestinian or non-Jordanian descent does not disadvantage a child.

At the same time, various organizations do provide special consideration for Palestinians and certain other groups in Jordan to be refugees in the technical sense, and so those organizations provide services to adults and children. For example, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) counts about 1.7 million refugees in Jordan, of whom about 644,000 are children. UNRWA provides health, relief, and social services to eligible refugees, including the offer of ten years of schooling to refugee children.

Moreover, many children who are technically considered refugees certainly suffer some of the disadvantages described above, such as juvenile delinquency or physical and mental disabilities. Their sense of identity as refugee children may complicate or intensify their experience of those disabilities. Support and assistance for them must account for any experience they have of living in a society which they or their parents may not fully feel is their own, as well as any specific disadvantage or disadvantages they endure.

1.6 Street Children

As with refugee children, those who may be identified as “street children” do not necessarily represent a specific category of disadvantage. “Street children” usually have a home in which to sleep, but their lives are formed in the streets, often with gangs as their surrogate families. Coping strategies of these children include belonging to street gangs in which violence (sexual and physical) by older, larger, or more aggressive children maintains a kind of social structure that both threatens the individual and ensures survival through belonging to a larger group (a “surrogate family”). In addition, violence, especially sexual violence, is embedded in social relations with adults. One group of young boys was able to sell T-shirts for income only after permitting sexual acts by the owner of the goods. The experience of life in the streets results from and exposes them to multiple adversities that undermine the humanity of the vulnerable child. As such, they are affected by a number of genuine risks: early, unprotected sexual experiences; violence and neglect at the hands of adults and peers; substance abuse; pressure to earn income; adverse encounters with the law; and lack of schooling.

Males make up the majority of (visible) street children, or children affected by the risks listed above. But females often face the same risks as males in addition to extreme isolation from others as a source of help and encouragement. The Directorate for Family Protection in the Department of Public Security has recently identified specific influences that affect the lives of girls and young women who have to provide for their families when their fathers or significant providers of livelihood are absent (through death, imprisonment, etc.).

Unfortunately, it is not possible to analyze with certainty the effect of multiple factors that result in a disadvantaged “street child” because many of the vulnerabilities that afflict them are poorly defined and knowledge gaps exist that require more research and social understanding.

Consequently, the numbers of “street children” in Jordan are not discretely identifiable from the magnitude and characteristics of working children, delinquents, orphans, children in poverty, abused children or dropouts from the school system in this current review of existing studies and information.

2.0 Sources of Vulnerability

What conditions place children at risk of being disadvantaged? This section of the report surveys various circumstances that adversely affect a child’s present and future quality of life. Such conditions constitute sources of children’s vulnerability to ending up in lives stunted in terms of physical and mental health, economic opportunity, and appropriate participation in the social tapestry of human existence.

As with the discussion of disadvantages, this overview treats various sources of vulnerability as distinct factors in a child’s life. This is useful for identifying specific circumstances and their effects. Yet it is important to keep in mind that affected children often experience a combination of these factors. A child’s experience of multiple factors or sources of vulnerability compounds the potential for adverse effects on him or her and requires remedial responses that address the full range of a child’s needs.

2.1 Poverty

Considered as a distinct category or source of vulnerability, poverty is one of the most significant contributors to and indicators of adversity for children. Moreover, when families are unable to meet the basic needs of their children, those children are at greater risk from all other sources of vulnerability. Little or no cross-linked data exist that determine and describe the

numbers of children in poverty who face multiple sources of vulnerability (e.g., the poverty background of children who drop out of school, or who suffer physical or mental disabilities, or sexual abuse, etc.). Nevertheless, considering poverty alone, the numbers of children who live below the poverty line point to the magnitude of poverty as a source of vulnerability.

Children are over-represented in poverty and under-served by safety net mechanisms and State assistance. 13% of Jordanians of all ages are below any poverty line, but 16% of all Jordanian children are below any poverty line, because poor families tend to have more children.

From general data on poverty it is possible to draw a profile of a child in Jordan. He or she has a one-in-three chance to be poor, and has 75% likelihood to be poor in an urban area. He or she will very likely have more than 7 brothers and sisters, and have about a 10% chance of getting assistance from any source.

With this in mind, it should be noted that, despite economic growth in Jordan in recent years, poverty keeps a large number of children in Jordan below an adequate standard of living. And for many children, the severity of the poverty in which they live is far below the established minimum for an adequate standard of living (or, the poverty line).

Estimates of the number of children in poverty in Jordan vary considerably, from between 393,000 to 900,000 – with 900,000 being the more likely estimate. Of these numbers of children, estimates are that only 6% to 14%, respectively, receive any assistance to ameliorate and improve their standard of living, despite efforts by governmental and non-governmental organizations. Hence, poverty impairs the development of hundreds of thousands of Jordanian children as individuals, and as participants in and contributors to society. The magnitude and prevalence of children in poverty goes beyond the current resources and capacities of social organizations in Jordan and poses considerable challenges for the future of Jordanian society.

2.2 Neglect and Violence (abuse)

Neglect and violence towards children, and violence by children, clearly put children at risk. Unfortunately, data on children who are abused or who abuse are difficult to obtain. On the one hand, data on children who are victims are limited to those who appear for treatment and/or intervention. Hence, the magnitude of this vulnerability for children cannot be completely assessed, except to recognize that the numbers of children exposed to violence and neglect are considerably under-reported and therefore under-estimated at present.

On the other hand, data on children who are abusers come chiefly from information on the number of offenders who are juveniles. Such data can provide an initial awareness of children who are perpetrators of violent acts, an awareness that may ultimately lead to creation of programs for prevention of violence by juveniles as well as by adults towards juveniles. Current data indicate that same-gender sexual abuse is the highest percentage of abuse of juveniles by adults (67%) and of abuse by juveniles of adults or other children (88%).

In this context, estimates of the magnitude and prevalence of neglect and violence among Jordanian children can be made only for Amman and are based on two resources: data collection by the Family Protection Division (of the Department of Public Security) for Amman; and international estimates for rates of neglect and violence in populations. Assuming under-reporting by 50%, this twofold approach indicates about 2,900 children suffered from severe neglect and violence in Amman alone over a four-year period from 1988 to 2001 (a rate of 1.2 per thousand, when compared to a standard international rate of 4 per thousand). That number likely does not account to any significant degree for the numbers of children who suffered mild to moderate neglect and violence in the same period.

Increasing inter-organizational cooperation between governmental and non-governmental organizations such as the Jordan River Society, the Ministry of Social Development and the Directorate of Family Protection in the Department of Public Security as well as forensic centers throughout Jordan will ensure that assessment/identification of problems, treatment for victims and prevention efforts will grow and increase in coverage and effect.

2.3 Substance Abuse

The number of juveniles arrested for drug abuse for illegal drugs in Jordan is comparatively negligible, but the prevalence of drug abuse cannot be inferred by arrest data alone. In addition, half of the children interviewed in Ministry of Social Development/Social Defense “treatment” institutions indicated a history of abuse of cheap, volatile substances, like glue and paint thinner. Abuse of volatile substances is not illegal, but it is a phenomenon that has serious consequences for the health of children.

Hence, while the use of illegal drugs by juveniles may still be at low levels, the picture for abuse of volatile substances may be quite different. For example, it is a reasonable estimate that more than 3000 children currently in the juvenile system likely have experience with sniffing glue and paint thinner, with eating shoe polish, and with other dangerous substances. This estimate of magnitude and prevalence does not even include the population of children who are not involved in the juvenile system. Therefore, the situation requires action to delineate the extent of the problem, to identify those children most at risk, and to design programs to prevent such abuse.

In a recently inaugurated, innovative program for drug treatment, the Anti-Narcotics Directorate of the Department of Public Security encourages voluntary action by substance abusers to get help. This position of openness and decriminalization of substance abuse will make it possible for treatment to be extended to a wide variety of individuals who may have problems with addiction or pre-addiction.

2.4 Adolescent Marriage and Broken Families

Divorce and family breakup have a profoundly traumatic impact on the life-outcome of a child. These family catastrophes undermine a child’s sense of stability, trust, and even self-esteem; and in their aftermath, they often lead to social and economic hardship in a child’s living situation. Of particular concern is the magnitude of marriage and divorce of females under the age of 19. Marriage and divorce for a young woman who is still an adolescent lead to increased vulnerability. She and her children find themselves at greater risk of poverty, physical and mental health problems, neglect and abuse, educational failure, and more.

While precise numbers of children affected by divorce cannot be determined in relation to the age of the mother, it can be noted that there were nearly 70,000 marriages of females between the ages of 15 and 19 during the five-year period from 1997 to 2001 – an average of about 14,000 per year. Over the same five-year time frame, the cumulative number of divorces of adolescent females was about 6,700 – almost 10% of the total marriages. Even though these women are children in a certain sense, they are likely to have a child to raise due to the marriage. In this case – females married and divorced as adolescents – children end up raising children.

2.5 Educational Failure

For children aged 6-15, one of the greatest sources of vulnerability they face is non-participation in the educational system, either through non-enrollment or dropout from the system. In the basic educational cycle in Jordan, grades 1-10 are mandatory and correspond roughly with the ages 6 to 15 years. The numbers of children who are not educated through the 10th grade signify the magnitude of educational vulnerability in the basic educational cycle.

The failure of numbers of Jordanian children to complete school through grade 10 (the basic, mandatory educational cycle) provides one very important index of the magnitude of vulnerable children. The ideal is that every child should receive an education at least through grade 10 (up to age 16), especially as education is an essential foundation for the well being and development of individuals and society. Males and females are equally likely to be enrolled in school at first grade. However, a significant percentage of children do not complete school through grade 10, with significant increases in dropout rate from grades 3 and 4 for both males and females. Males are also more likely to dropout than females.

From various research studies of enrollment and dropout rates for Jordanian children over a ten-year period (the number of years of mandatory schooling), estimates of total numbers of dropouts range from around 85,000 to 94,000. This is a significant number in a population the size of Jordan. Those children who do not complete their education are at risk of low-paid employment, begging, violence and abuse, panhandling, getting in trouble with authorities, and abusing substances. They are faced with a very truncated set of social and economic opportunities for their future.

Also, the numbers of children who complete grade 10 but do not continue their formal education through grade 12 provide an additional indicator of vulnerability, since they are not eligible to sit for the high school diploma exam (*Tawjihi* exam). Children who complete the 10th grade (and those that attend 11th and/or 12th grade) can register to obtain certification in vocational schools, instead of completing secondary academic education. But not completing grade 12 will limit their future life options, especially in a country that depends on a highly educated workforce as a key to national economic development.

In view of all of this, the numbers of children who drop out of the educational system provide a visible indication of an *invisible* subpopulation of children who are at risk but about whom very little is known at this time. That is, the number of children not participating in the basic cycle of the educational system provides a reference figure for identification of "invisible or missing children" from age 6 to age 15. These are children who are present in the general population but who do not participate in education because they may be working, or residing in juvenile care facilities, or otherwise living completely outside the educational system. As indicated above, children who experience educational failure *and* who are essentially invisible to regular support systems face even greater risk of lives impaired by social and economic adversities.

3.0 Data Analysis: Categories of Disadvantaged Children

3.1 Working Children

Those children who work during the period of their lives when they are or should be enrolled in basic education (ages 6-15+) are of great concern. There is little published information in Jordan on working children below the age of 15. Preliminary results from a study on the

magnitude and characterization of the problem of working children in Jordan,^a indicate that for 42,000 working children, males outnumber females (in rural areas working children tend to be females, and in urban areas, males.)

Working children, or children at work in economic activity, is a broad concept that encompasses most productive activity by children, including unpaid and illegal work as well as work in the informal sector. It is not, however, the same as child labor which needs to be eliminated as per the ILO Minimum Age Convention, 1973, and the ILO Worst Forms of Child Labor Convention, 1999.^b For the purposes of this study, the term “working children” includes children ages 5-16 who have either dropped out of school and work instead of attending school, or who may attend school (at least intermittently) and also work. The Ministry of Labor specifies that children under the age of 18 may not work, with the exception that children ages 16-18 may work with the permission of their parents. However no children under 18 may work in hazardous or dangerous work.

In order to establish a likely figure for research and planning purposes, the numbers of dropouts from the basic educational cycle 1990 through 1999 (using the standard dropout rate (0.89%) of the Ministry of Education 1990 cohort analysis) provided an estimate of magnitude of children from whose numbers “working dropouts” will come. The 46,064 children who dropped out from 1990 to 1999 were all 16 years of age or less in 2000 (Figure 1). This figure would indicate that the numbers of working children could well be in the tens of thousands.

Figure 1: Number of Dropouts 16 and under by Cohort by Year

Totals	1499	1742	1961	2230	3022	4042	5265	6901	8870	10532	46064	
Cohort 1999											1812	
Cohort 1998									1760	209		
Cohort 1997								1705	202	204		
Cohort 1996							1610	191	192	277		
Cohort 1995						1639	195	196	282	802		
Cohort 1994					1640	195	196	282	803	1070		
Cohort 1993				1595	189	190	274	780	1040	1265		
Cohort 1992			1596	190	191	275	781	1041	1266	1554		
Cohort 1991		1564	186	187	269	766	1020	1241	1532	1871		
Cohort 1990	1499	178	179	258	733	977	1189	1465	1793	1468		
		90-91	91-92	92-93	93-94	94-95	95-96	96-97	97-98	98-99	99-00	Total

Source: MOE Data: Annual Educational Statistical Reports 1981-2000; Data for the Reference Year (1990) from MOE table for Calculating the Efficiency of the Educational System in the Kingdom

There are very little national data on children less than 15 years of age who are working. The study designs of the Department of Statistics begin data collection on working children at 15 years of age. However, one study of 2539 children supervised by the Ministry of Labor (MOL) indicated that 558 children below the age of 15 were working children, or 22% of the children

^a Child Labor in Jordan: Cultural and Economic Perspectives, Dr. Mohammed Tarawneh, Center for Strategic Studies, University of Jordan, to be published 2002.

^b Every Child Counts: New Global Estimates on Child Labor, International Labor Office, Geneva, April 2002.

included in the study.^a The findings of the report are not generalizable to the entire population of children in Jordan, as they were based on data collected in a non-representative sample of children. In a recent study by UNICEF, for those children aged 10-14, 5.5% were currently employed, 1.4% were unemployed, and 4.7% had work experience but were unemployed, indicating that 11.6% of children had work/employment experience at those ages. For those children 15-19, 43.3% of them had work/employment experience.^b

ILO estimates of percentages of working children for the Middle East and North Africa (in 2000) indicate that 15% of children ages 5-14 are economically active. For ages 10-14, 19.6% are economically active, and for ages 15-17, 31.8% are economically active.^c When these percentages are turned into figures for Jordan, there could be 292,130 children working in Jordan, of which 186,900 would be 14 years of age or under (Figure 2).

Age Group	% of Children in Population	# of Children in the Population*	% of Working Children MENA**	Estimated # of Working Children in Jordan
5 to 9	12.9%	648,202	10.8%	70,006
10 to 14	11.9%	597,800	19.6%	117,169
Sub-total 5 to 14	24.8%	1,246,002	15.0%	186,900
15 to 17	6.6%	330,912	31.8%	105,230
Total 5 to 17	31.4%	1,576,914	18.5%	292,130

* Population figures based on projections by Dr. Issa Al Masarweh, Senior Researcher, The POLICY Project, using the DemProj Module in the SPECTRUM Policy Manuals developed by the Futures Group, Ltd

** Every Child Counts: New Global Estimates on Child Labor, International Labor Office, Geneva, April 2002. Pages 17 & 18

The MOL report further indicated that most working children belong to large-size families, with more than 7 members. Department of Statistics figures record that 30% of Jordanian households exceed 7 members,^d indicating that the potential number of working children in Jordan may be larger than previously expected.

The same MOL report states that half of the working children dropped out of school to help support their families. The estimate of 46,064 children (ages 6 to 15+) who did not attend school (many of whom will be working children), would indicate that more research needs to be undertaken to determine who and where these children are. This figure does not include those children who are working and may also be attending school during their basic education years. Figures of those children who work and attend school may very likely increase the numbers of children working from 6-15+ years of age.

^a A Report on the Status of Child Labor in Jordan, 2001, M. Shahateet & N. Dabdub, Ministry of Labor

^b Jordanian Youth: Their lives and views, UNICEF 2002, page 53.

^c Every Child Counts: New Global Estimates on Child Labor, International Labor Office, Geneva, April 2002.

^d p. 35, Household Expenditure & Income Survey, 1997, published 1999, DOS.

Additional Observations

The size of the population of children 15-19 years old in 2001 was 551,000 children. Of these, 13% were economically active, or 71,000 children (67,000 males and 4,000 females).^a

The best currently available descriptive data come from the Annual Report of Employment and Unemployment Survey 2001 produced by the Department of Statistics. Official statistics are available only for children 15 to 19 years of age. Individuals were considered employed if they had worked at least one hour during the reference period. A number of observations can be made about the quality of life of working children 15-19 years old.

Most of those who were employed work more than 1 full-time job, as 41% worked between 51 and 70 hours per week and an additional 12% worked more than 71 hours per week. However, these long hours did not translate into substantial earnings. 71% of youth earned less than \$140 (JD100) per month, with the remaining youth (28%) earning between \$140 to \$280 (JD100 to JD199). The percentage of females earning less than \$140 (JD100) was greater at 79%.

In the UNICEF study on Jordanian youth, an average of 52 hours of work per week resulted in a monthly income of \$40 (JD29) for 10-14 year olds and \$104 (JD74) for 15-19 year olds.^b In addition, that study reports that one of out seven youths works for no compensation, which affects particularly work boys less than 15 years of age. These boys are often exposed to dangerous and uncomfortable work environments in which they perform exhausting or boring work.

The Child Labor Unit (Ministry of Labor) reported that most working children work in strenuous jobs: 41% in auto repair or mechanical fields, 10% in carpentry, 16% as cleaners and movers, 11% as blacksmiths.^c Wages were estimated to be between JD 1.00 and JD 1.50 per day.

Efforts to eliminate labor by children have been limited by a lack of information about the existence and extent of working children. At the current time, magnitude cannot be assessed and characterization of working children, especially those under the age of 15, is difficult.

3.2 Juvenile Delinquency

Children who pass through the juvenile legal system enter through direct contact with the Social Defense Directorate (SDD) in the Ministry of Social Development or through arrest by Police in the Department of Public Security (DPS). (Jordan currently sets the age of legal responsibility and therefore potential arrest at seven years. In the new juvenile code, currently applied but not yet approved, the age of legal responsibility is set at 12.) The SDD provides residential care for children whose families are broken/dysfunctional, those without known parentage, or those with a parent/guardian in prison. These children are wards of the State, "non-offenders" in the juvenile system. The SDD also picks up children as vendors and/or beggars at stoplights and in public places, anywhere a juvenile engages in "panhandling" behavior.

After being arrested, children (a.) may be remanded to the custody of the family through the courts (supervised through SDD program for behavior modification and allowed to continue in school, etc.); (b.) may be released after being cleared of charges through police investigation, or

^a Annual Report of Employment and Unemployment Survey, 2001, DOS

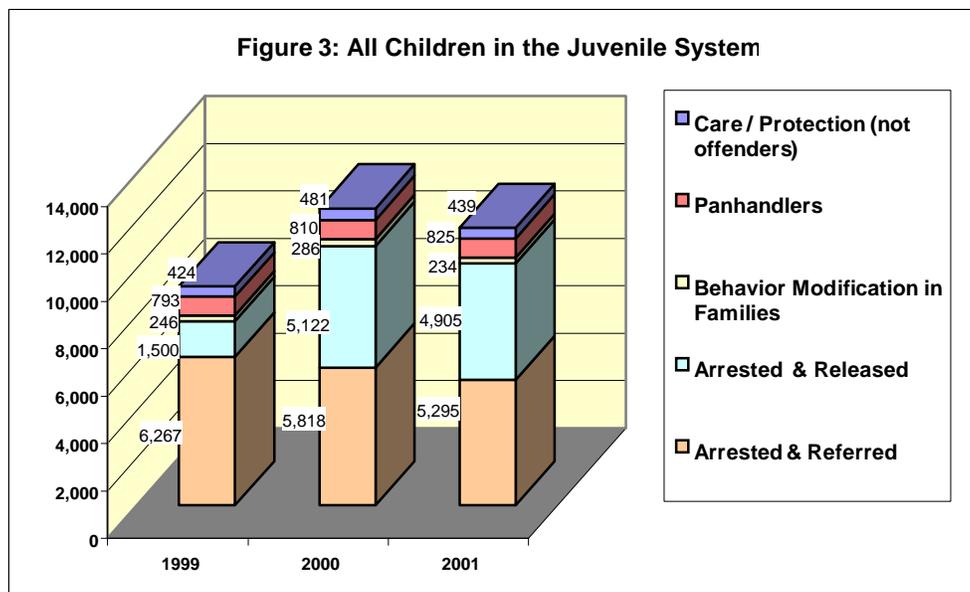
^b Jordanian Youth: Their lives and views, UNICEF 2002, page 54.

^c Reported in "The Situation of Children, Youth & Women in Jordan." 14 July 2002. UNICEF. Chapter 6, p. 4.

put under charge of the governorates, usually because of the anti-social nature of offenses that are not illegal; or (c.) may be referred temporarily to SDD and then may be placed by courts in SDD institutions for offenders.

All children with experience of any kind with either SDD or DPS constitute the magnitude of children affected by the juvenile system. Even if a child is detained and released, this experience with the legal authorities becomes a formative experience for the child that sets his or her experience apart from life experiences of other children.

Figure 3 displays the changes in numbers of children in each category for the years 1999, 2000, 2001. For children who were arrested and released, the numbers greatly increased in 2000 and 2001. This may be due to increased vigilance and concern for youth by the DPS (increase in detection), or to increasing numbers of offences by children towards whom the DPS does not consider further action (leniency after detection). The numbers in SDD juvenile centers decreased slightly since 1999. However, if the total number of offences is actually increasing, then directing children back into the community/family should be accompanied by an understanding of the issues of these children and the most effective means of assisting them and their families at the level of the community, i.e., outside of corrective institutions.



Those children arrested and referred to the Social Defense Directorate for institutional custody constituted 52% of all children in the juvenile system for the three-year period 1999-2001 (Figure 4). In addition, those children arrested and released (either into custody of others or released without further charges) constituted 34.5% of all children passing through the juvenile system in the same three-year period. If interventions for 34.5% of all children affected by the juvenile system take place outside of established institutional frameworks, it becomes very important to characterize who the “offenders” were, what their offenses were, and what is being done for them.

Figure 4: All Children in the Juvenile System					
Year	1999	2000	2001	3 Years	
				Totals	%
SOCIAL DEFENSE (SDD)					
Care / Protection (not offenders)	424	481	439	1,344	4.0%
Panhandlers	793	810	825	2,428	7.3%
PUBLIC SECURITY (DPS)					
Detained & Referred for Behavior Modification (Families)*	246	286	234	766	2.3%
Arrested & Released	1,500	5,122	4,905	11,527	34.5%
Arrested & Referred	6,267	5,818	5,295	17,380	52.0%
Total Children in Juvenile System	9,230	12,517	11,698	33,445	
3 year average 11,148					

* Some of these numbers may also be included in categories of "arrested & released" or "arrested & referred"

When 3-year totals for arrested children (28,907 - released and referred) are viewed, the majority of them (76%) are between the ages of 15-18 and almost one-quarter (24%) are below age 15 (Figure 5).

15-20% of all juvenile arrests are arrests of repeat offenders, indicating that 80 – 85 % of all arrests are new offenders, based on a 1999 UNICEF study.^a

Figure 5: Juvenile Arrests and Age Ranges								
Category	1999		2000		2001		3 Years	
	Number	s	Number	s	Number	s	Number	s
Arrested & Released	1,500		5,122		4,905		11,527	
Arrested & Referred	6,267		5,818		5,295		17,380	
Totals	7,767		10,940		10,200		28,907	
Age breakdowns		%		%		%		%
under 12	400	5%	582	5%	899	9%	1,881	7%
12 to 14	1,217	16%	1,539	14%	2,202	22%	4,958	17%
15 to 18	6,150	79%	8,819	81%	7,099	70%	22,068	76%
Totals	7,767		10,940		10,200		28,907	
3 year average 9,636								

^a Child Protection Project in Jordan: Part 1, A Situation Analysis Report, Basil Al-Bustany, Nadia Takriti, Widad Adas for UNICEF, 2000.

Background data for juveniles arrested and referred to MSD were viewed according to student or economically active status (Figure 6). In MSD data, any arrested child who was enrolled in school for any period of time in the previous year was classified as a student. Economically active students were those who did not fit in the student category, and who were working or not employed (i.e., they had once worked).

The percentage of arrested children who attended school for some period was 59%, compared with 41% economically active. The total number of economically active children in this age range of children in the general population will be considerably less than the total number of children in school in the general population. Consequently, the numbers of children arrested who attend/attended school will be a smaller rate per thousand than the rate per thousand of children arrested who are economically active (because the denominator will be smaller for economically active children). Thus first-level preventive interventions to affect the situation of children who are at risk of arrest should be directed towards children who are already working.

Figure 6: Background of Juveniles (less than 12 to age 18) Arrested & Referred to MSD

	1999		2000		2001		3 Years	
		%		%		%	Totals	Ave.
IN SCHOOL	3,475	55.4	3,430	59.0%	3,272	61.8%	10,177	58.6%
ECONOMICALLY ACTIVE	2,738	43.7	2,376	40.8%	1,995	37.7%	7,109	40.9%
Working/Employed*	1,470		1,269		1,116		3,855	
Not employed	1,268		1,107		879		3,254	
OTHER	54	0.9%	12	0.2%	28	0.5%	94	0.5%
Totals	6,267		5,818		5,295		17,380	

* Service, agriculture, carpenters, artisan-crafts
MSD Annual Reports for 1999, 2000. For 2001, MSD unpublished data

Juvenile crimes were classified as life threatening offenses, drug-related offenses and other offenses. Life-threatening offenses included murder, attempted murder, causing death and sexual assault. 3.4% of all juvenile crimes over the three-year period 1999-2001 were life-threatening crimes.

Drug-related offenses made up only 1.1% of all juvenile crimes, a figure which does not include volatile substance abusers.

Other offenses made up 95.6% of all juvenile crimes, including theft, fighting/causing harm, and misconduct which made up three quarters of this classification.

The nature of the majority of the offenses would indicate that holistic, social interventions at the community level; involving cooperation between SDD, DPS and community-based organizations (formal or informal) will most likely be a very effective basis for preventive action.

Additional observation:

Over the three-year period 1999 to 2001, crimes involving juveniles made up an average of 11% of all crimes. In 1999, 8.7%; in 2000, 12.6%; and in 2001, 12.0%.

3.3 Disabilities

In Jordan, governmental and non-governmental organizations have a rich and complex history of service to disabled individuals and their families. Institutional care, community-based rehabilitation programs, direct government assistance, and an active volunteer sector all play vital roles in care of the disabled and special education. Schools and training institutes continue to develop programs that increase the depth and quality of coverage for slow learners and other mildly disabled individuals who are often in mainstream schools.

The high level of development of services in this sector increases the difficulty of capturing a moderately accurate picture of what is going on. In a few words, many different players are doing many things at many levels.

In order to assess magnitude related to current levels of coverage of disabled children, the disability prevalence of 10% in any given population proposed by the World Bank and WHO was taken as the framework within which data about this sector would be interpreted. This percentage agrees with the estimate of the National Demographic Committee (NDC) that the incidence of disability is slightly over 10%.^a

According to the classification in the World Bank/WHO framework, 75% of all projected disabilities are mild, 20% are moderate and 5% are severe. All of those individuals with mild disabilities and half of those with moderate disabilities will most likely be found in schools. All of those with severe disabilities and approximately half of those with moderate disabilities will require special schooling and/or specialized care in institutions.

In Jordan, the application of those ratios for expected numbers of children with mild, moderate and severe disability to the population of 0-18 year-olds (2,375,222) results in projections of 178,141 children with mild disabilities, 47,504 with moderate disabilities and 11,876 with severe disabilities, for an expected magnitude of 237,522 children with disabilities (Figure 7).

Categories and Prevalence of Disabilities

Types of disabilities treated at specialized centers for children in Jordan include:

1. Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD);
2. Down's syndrome;
3. Autism;
4. Mental Retardation (mild, moderate, severe, profound);
5. Spina Bifida;
6. Muscular Atrophy;
7. Cerebral Palsy;
8. Hearing Impairment;
9. Visual Impairment.^b

^a A study of Disabled Care Centers in Jordan, 2001, UNICEF

^b A study of Disabled Care Centers in Jordan, 2001, UNICEF

The official Ministry of Social Development estimates of the total number of all disabled persons in Jordan classified according to type of disability is 11.1%.^a Some categories of reporting may have overlapped, resulting in reporting more than 10% disability.

Mental Retardation:	2.5%
Hearing Impairment:	1.0%
Speech Impairment:	2.5%
Visual Impairment:	0.5%
Physical Disability:	1.0%
Physical Disturbance:	1.0%
Multiple Disabilities:	1.6%
Other Disabilities:	1.0%
Total:	11.1%

The categories and percentages for children differ from that of the total population. The Department of Disability Affairs reports the following disability prevalence for children.^b Again, some categories of reporting may have overlapped, resulting in more than 10% disability.

Mental Disability:	2.3%
Hearing Impairment:	0.6%
Speech Impairment:	3.5%
Visual Impairment:	0.1%
Physical Disability:	0.5%
Physical Disturbance:	1.0%
Multiple Disabilities:	0.6%
Emotional Disturbances:	1.0%
Learning Disabilities:	3.0%
Total:	12.6%

Factors Contributing to Disability

Studies specifically addressing the medical etiology of disability in Jordan are limited. A retrospective study of mentally retarded children aged 2-9 years in one institution in Amman indicated that mental retardation was related to two main factors: sequelae from high prenatal morbidity or meningitis in infancy and a high degree of intermarriage.^c Prenatal factors accounted for 25% and postnatal factors for 24% of the background to mental retardation.

Regarding contributory factors to general health: Iodine deficiency disorder decreased from 38% of Jordanian school children in 1993 to 33.5% in 2000.^c The percentage of anemia among children in the age group 8-10 is 19.6%.^d Vitamin A deficiency in less advantaged areas of Jordan is 20%.^e And indices of nutritional status for children 0-5 are as follows: 1.9% severely malnourished, 7.8% chronically malnourished, and low-weight for age, 5%.^f

^a *A study of Disabled Care Centers in Jordan, 2001, UNICEF*

^b *Discussion with the Head of the Department of Disability Affairs, MSD, August 2002.*

^c *The situation of Jordanian Children & Women: A rights-based analysis, 1997, UNICEF*

^c *Impact Assessment of Iodine Deficiency Disorder Among Jordanian Children, UNICEF & Ministry of Health, 2000*

^d *Study conducted by the Ministries of Education and Planning in less advantaged areas in Jordan in 1999.*

^e *Study conducted by the Ministries of Education and Planning in less advantaged areas in Jordan in 1999.*

^f *Demographic & Health Surveys (DHS), 1997*

Coverage Levels

Two primary sources of data provide information on current coverage levels: The Ministry of Social Development and UNICEF.

The Ministry of Social Development (Department of Disability Affairs) records that 16,519 children are currently being served (2001 data). This number of children includes all categories of disability (mild, moderate and severe) and all ages of children (0-18). The structure of service provision and statistical reporting allows comparison of this figure with only the total expected disabled (237,522). The figure of 16,519 also includes individuals served within communities (community-based rehabilitation – CBR) along with institutionalized individuals. With this in mind, 7.0% of all categories of disabled children are currently being served.

The UNICEF report (A Study of Disabled Care Centers in Jordan, April 2001) indicated that 8,918 children were served in institutions for a coverage rate of 3.78%. It is notable that in these institutions, 60% of those served were males and 40% females, reflecting a possible gender bias towards males and against females for treatment in institutions.

The projected number of disabled children aged 5-18 expected to be found in mainstream schools with mild (100%) and moderate disabilities (50% of all moderate disabilities) was 136,383. Currently 2,000 children are served in “resource rooms” in schools, or 1.5% of all expected disabled children in schools. Adding the numbers of children served in institutions and communities (MSD figure) and the numbers of children served in schools (MOE figure), the total of all children served is 18,719 or 7.94% of all disabled children.

The expected numbers of disabled children under school age (0-5's) is 66,290. There are no figures available that provide estimates of current coverage of that age group.

The magnitude of children in all classes of disability (mild, moderate & severe) is 237,522 with coverage provided to 18,719, indicating that 218,803 or 92% of Jordanian children with expected disabilities are not currently served. The greatest percentage of these will most likely be mild to moderate disabilities, the majority of which will be found in schools (136,383).

For future planning and action, two likely priorities for emphasis should be (a) identifying disabled children under 5 in order to increase coverage of services to them (early detection) and (b) expanding programs in schools to identify and provide assistance to children with mild to moderate disabilities. Mapping numbers of children (by gender & age) served by governorate against expected numbers of disabled children in each governorate (mild, moderate & severe) would provide an indication of the magnitude of unserved children in each governorate.

Figure 7: Expected Prevalence Rate & percent served of Disabled Children in Jordan
10.0% Disability Prevalence in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan (MSD estimate)

Total population of children*		Expected #'s of children	World Bank Classification **		
Age Range	Population Size in the year 2001		Mild	Moderate	Severe
			75%	20%	5%
0 to 18	2,375,222	237,522	178,142	47,504	11,876

	Served Children
MSD year 2000 (Dept. for Disability Affairs)	16,519
Percent served to expected: institutions & communities	6.95%

UNICEF report ***	8,918	Gender Ratio	60% Males
Percent served to expected: institutions	3.78%		40% Females

Population Distributed by less than 5 & 5+ years old*		Expected #'s of children	World Bank Classification ***		
Age Range	Population Size		Mild	Moderate	Severe
			75%	20%	5%
0 to less than 5	662,900	66,290	49,718	13,258	3,315
5 to 18	1,604,507	160,451	120,338	32,090	8,023

Expected Disabled in Schools	
Mild Disabilities	120,338
Moderate Disabilities (50% all Moderate)	16,045
Total	136,383
Children served in resource rooms****	2,000
% of children served	1.5%

*Population figures based on projections by Dr. Issa Al Masarweh, Senior Researcher, The POLICY Project, using the DemProj Module in the SPECTRUM Policy Manuals developed by the Futures Group, Ltd.

** Education, Poverty & Disability in Developing Countries: Technical Note 21 June 2001, www1.worldbank.org/sp/

*** A Study of Disabled Care Centers in Jordan, April 2001, UNICEF

**** Ministry of Education Figures

3.4 Orphans

Cultural attitudes and religious traditions create an atmosphere in which most children who are orphans (usually meaning without a living father) are apparently cared for in extended family networks. As an example, the number of children officially placed in foster homes over a period of 8 years (from 1972 to 2000) was only 442 children (218 females and 224 males). Numbers of children who are served by public and private institutions and private voluntary organizations are currently the primary source of information on this subpopulation of children.

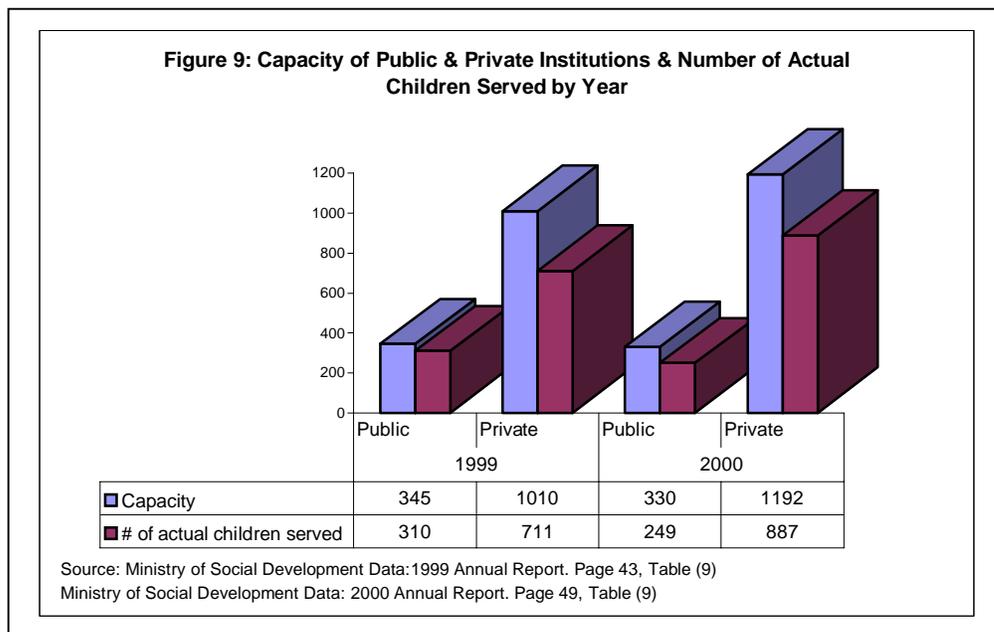
Several Islamic, charitable, non-governmental organizations and the national Zakaat Fund of the Ministry of Awqaf (Islamic Charities) also provide assistance to orphan children that live in extended family situations (Figure 8) In addition to financial assistance, services include coverage of medical and educational expenses, counseling for children, and capacity building for youth, as well as training sessions for mothers on parenting issues. Clothes, blankets and food parcels are distributed to orphans on special occasions. Although some organizations follow-up on orphans' academic performance and health status, others limit their services to monthly financial assistance. An individual child may be assisted by more than one NGO.

Figure 8: Organizations Serving Orphans within Families		
Definition: Any children without living fathers		
Service Area: Kingdom wide, without geographical breakdowns		
Organization	Age Group	# of beneficiaries*
Human Appeal International	0-18, mostly below 12 years	3,241
Int'l Islamic Relief Organization	0-18 years	11,000
Worldwide Islamic Charitable Organization	1 month to 14 years	1,000
Islamic Relief Agency (ISRA)	1 day to 16 years	1,000
The Zaka Fund of Ministry of Awqaf (Islamic Charities)	0-18 years	4,000
General Union of Voluntary Societies/small, local organizations under MSD	0-18 years	<i>not available **</i>
TOTALS		20,241

* Numbers of beneficiaries may be duplicated in some cases

** Numbers of very small, community-based organizations provide services to small numbers of orphans. These local organizations do not provide annual reports based on numbers of beneficiaries.

Figure 9 illustrates that the capacity of public institutions for orphans has slightly decreased from 1999 to 2000, while at the same time private institutions have increased their capacity to care for orphans in residential facilities. This reflects a general trend for the government to reduce its role with orphans in relying more on the non-governmental sectors. Capacity to serve orphans exceeds numbers of orphans in both years. In 2000, 1136 places for orphans were filled out of 1522 available places in public and private institutions, or 75% of capacity.



Care of orphans takes place primarily at the community-level, within families. It is not possible to establish magnitude data for this group of disadvantaged children without survey data that identify numbers of dependent orphans and their characteristics.

One concern that arises from these data is the ratio of those family members dependent on an individual wage earner. In a survey sample of employed and unemployed individuals (sample size 180,576), 36,703 individuals over the age of 15 were employed, and 143,873 were unemployed, for a ratio of 4 unemployed dependents for each employed worker.^a

If dependency ratios are higher among the poor, and if inadequate income rather than unemployment is a determinant of poverty, then the hidden burden of care for orphans will increase the refractoriness of alleviating poverty among those who live under existing poverty lines.

3.5 Refugees

As indicated in the section on categories of disadvantaged children, official status as a refugee does not intrinsically represent a distinct category of disadvantage. In extensive and significant ways, Jordanian government and society treat individuals of Palestinian-background in Jordan

^a Annual Report of Employment and Unemployment Survey, pages 40,43, 2001, DOS

as Jordanians. Hence, children of Palestinian or other non-Jordanian descent are not necessarily disadvantaged simply by their classification as refugees.

With that in mind, according to recent data, there are 1.7 million refugees registered with the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) in Jordan.^a Of these refugees, 293,200 live in ten official Palestinian refugee camps. Four of these camps were set up on the east bank of the Jordan River after the 1948 Arab-Israeli war, and six were established after the 1967 Arab-Israeli war. Additionally, there are neighborhoods in Amman, Zarqa, and Madaba that are considered refugee camps by the Jordanian government, as well as communities that are considered unofficial refugee camps by UNRWA. The status of refugee identity in Jordan is for many a long-standing, quasi-permanent situation.

This quasi-permanent situation is manifested in the developing nature of habitations and communities for refugees. In the wake of the 1948 war, around 100,000 refugees crossed the Jordan River and took initial shelter in temporary camps, mosques, schools, towns, and villages. International organizations – especially the International Committee of the Red Cross – provided emergency assistance until 1950 when UNRWA started its operations. Refugees lived in tents until the late 1950s. Then UNRWA began replacing the tents with more durable dwellings for refugees. Growth was compounded when more people fled into Jordan following the 1967 war: around 140,000 refugees and 280,000 citizens of the West Bank took shelter in the Jordan Valley.

Many of the camps have become neighborhoods alongside Jordanian communities. Now, with three and even four generations of refugees in Jordan, the camps are highly congested and overcrowded. Much has been done by refugees themselves and the Jordanian government to provide adequate infrastructure for refugee communities. Yet the congestion and overcrowding present significant challenges for quality of life for all who live in the refugee camps. These challenges include high unemployment, limited supplies of clean water, inadequate drainage/sanitary systems, and high rates of non-communicable diseases (such as diabetes, hypertension, cardiovascular diseases, and cancer). Birth rates are high, and intervals between births are short, thus affecting women's health. Diarrhea and intestinal parasites, particularly affecting children, are prevalent. All of these conditions increase the vulnerability of refugee children.

There are 644,000 children (under the age of 18) with official refugee status in Jordan (Figure 10). UNRWA provides ten years of basic-education schooling for 136,000 boys and girls out of this group, and about 63,000 of them attend UNRWA schools inside the camps. In addition, eight centers for learning difficulties serve children with refugee status, and there are 23 primary care facilities, 21 women's program centers and 10 community rehabilitation centers.

^a Information on refugees comes principally from data collected and reported by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency. For UNRWA data, consult this site: <http://www.un.org/unrwa/refugees/jordan.html>.

Figure 10: Age structure of refugee-status Palestinian Children in Jordan

Age	Male	Female	Total
0	11,985	11,092	23,077
1	14,967	14,354	29,321
2	16,644	15,795	32,439
3	17,475	16,802	34,277
4	18,599	17,748	36,347
5	18,908	18,219	37,127
6	20,417	19,722	40,139
7	21,323	20,402	41,725
8	21,148	20,124	41,272
9	20,581	19,832	40,413
10	19,882	18,947	38,829
11	19,502	18,383	37,885
12	18,205	17,337	35,542
13	18,518	17,858	36,376
14	18,026	17,650	35,676
15	17,716	17,403	35,119
16	17,462	16,895	34,357
17	17,469	17,000	34,469
Total	328,827	315,563	644,390

The dropout rate of refugee-status Palestinian children from UNRWA elementary schools is 0.78% (Figure 11). This percentage parallels the dropout rate of 0.81% for all Jordanian children calculated by the Ministry of Education (including those children with refugee status) for the basic cycle of education (elementary + preparatory). The higher rate of dropout from preparatory schools, 2.9%, may indicate that factors associated with being in the camps affect the ability or willingness of these children to stay in school.

**Figure 11: SELECTED EDUCATIONAL DATA AND EDUCATIONAL INDICATORS
IN UNRWA ELEMENTARY & PREPARATORY SCHOOLS, 1998-1999**

Selected Indicators	Jordan	West Bank	Gaza Strip	Lebanon	Syria	Total
Elementary Schools						
No. of Schools	70	29	121	36	60	316
No. of Class Sections	2,111	959	2,437	747	977	7,231
No. of Pupils per Teacher	35.9	36	43.7	34.5	41.3	39.1
No. of Pupils per Class Section	41.2	39.2	49.8	40.9	44.4	44.2
Dropout Rate (%)	0.78%	0.51%	0.50%	1.17%	0.59%	0.66%
Repetition Rate (%)	1.6%	2.8%	3.7%	8.9%	4.9%	3.6
Preparatory Schools						
No. of Schools	128	69	47	37	50	647
No. of Class Sections	1,329	395	785	239	474	3,222
No. of Pupils per Teacher	30.4	23.4	29	24.7	31.9	28.8
No. of Pupils per Class Section	40.8	36.2	49	37	45	42.7
Dropout Rate (%)	2.9%	4.3%	3.1%	3.6%	4.3%	3.4%
Repetition Rate (%)	3.2%	3.2%	5.5%	9.7%	9.9%	5.4%

Source: UNRWA Jordan, available online at www.unrwa.org

Note: The repetition rate is determined by the host government's Ministry of Education at each Field.

From Figure 11 above, it may also be noted that Palestinian children with refugee status apparently fare as well or better than their counterparts in other locations/countries in the region, at least when dropout rates are compared.

Figure 12, below, provides some indication of the numbers of refugee children in basic education (elementary + preparatory level), secondary education, and vocational, technical and teacher training. Enrollment figures of refugee pupils in government and private schools are believed to be incomplete, since refugee pupils lack incentives to report their status as refugees in non-UNRWA schools. At the elementary level, 30.4% of all Palestinian refugee children are educated in Jordan; at the preparatory level, 39.1%. Overall, at least 33.3% of all Palestinian children with refugee status are educated in Jordan: in UNRWA schools, government schools or private schools.

Figure 12: TOTAL REFUGEE PUPIL ENROLMENT DISTRIBUTED BY LEVEL OF EDUCATION AND SCHOOL AUTHORITY, 1998-1999

School Authority	Jordan	W. Bank	Gaza	Lebanon	Syria	Total	Jordan %
Elementary Level							
UNRWA School	86,931	37,634	121,395	30,540	43,398	319,898	
Government School	38,180	19,859	13,247	2,459	10,789	84,534	
Private School	2,616	5,106	1,237	4,302	3,102	16,363	
Sub-total	127,727	62,599	135,879	37,301	57,289	420,795	30.4%
Preparatory Level							
UNRWA School	54,283	14,310	38,497	8,905	21,456	137,451	
Government School	25,928	15,775	17,046	1,638	3,021	63,408	
Private School	1,347	1,201	294	4,601	173	7,616	
Sub-total	81,558	31,286	55,837	15,144	24,650	208,475	39.1%
Secondary Level							
UNRWA School	0	0	0	1,367	0	1,367	
Government School	2,943	6,212	170,286	116	6,644	186,201	
Private School	488	458	223	840	385	2,394	
Sub-total	3,431	6,670	170,509	2,323	7,029	189,962	1.8%
Vocational and Technical Education							
No. of Trainees							
UNRWA Institutes	1,255	1,154	844	607	795	4,655	
Private Institutes	0	25	0	21	0	46	
Total	1,255	1,179	844	628	795	4,701	26.7%
Teacher Training in UNRWA Institutes							
No. of Students							
Pre-service	377	508	0	103	0	988	
In-service	814	108	62	118	79	1,181	
Total	1,191	616	62	221	79	2,169	54.9%
University Scholarships Provided by UNRWA							
Various Universities	216	129	206	106	209	866	24.9%

Source: UNRWA, Jordan. Available online at www.unrwa.org

In addition to education, UNRWA provides health, relief, and social services to eligible refugees. It is estimated that more than two thirds of the total refugee population – that is, upwards of 1,122,000 people – receive some sort of UNRWA health care services, which are focused on mothers and children.

3.6 Street Children

In the recent past, the term “street children” in Jordan referred mainly to “panhandling” children, those cleaning windshields and selling gum at traffic lights or loitering in public squares and shopping areas, also attempting to sell trinkets or ask for money. In the mid to late 1990’s the numbers of children involved in those activities and in scavenging for garbage became a socially visible phenomenon, and the Ministry of Social Development, International NGO’s and national NGO’s sought to identify and address the problem.

In a set of joint studies undertaken from 1995-1998 with UNICEF, Questscope, the Housing and Urban Development Corporation and the Ministry of Social Development, street children were identified as those disadvantaged children whose lives are formed primarily by experience in the streets, even though they may have a house to return to for sleeping. They were characterized by the presence of risk factors affecting their lives, making the likely outcome of their lives different from that of children in the mainstream of Jordanian society. The rights they have for nurture and opportunity for personal growth are curtailed when these risk factors affect them as children. The presence of any single risk factor is an index of disadvantage in a child's life. However, the existence of one factor usually indicates that other risk factors are also present, which creates a complex interaction in the life of the child and in his or her interaction with individuals and institutions that should have been protective and nurturing.

Risk factors include: (1) exposure to early and inappropriate sexual behavior/acts; (2) experience of physical violence; (3) school dropout or inadequate attendance; (4) enculturation into "street gangs" as a kind of surrogate family; (5) abuse of substances, especially volatile substances such as glue and organic solvents; (6) working (often in place of attending school) as a source of livelihood to his or her family; (7) affected by dysfunctional and/or broken families; (8) experience with juvenile authorities-in trouble with the law; and (9) indifference or rejection by communities and lack of access to assistance of any kind.

The lower estimates for disadvantaged children range from those who pass through the juvenile system (10,000 per year, from Figures 4 and 5) to those who have dropped out of school (4,600 per year, from Figure 1). Those children who live in poverty (range from 393,000 to 900,000 from Figure 14) may, at least in part, represent the higher range of estimation, especially since risk factors are apparently not independent of each other. Risk factors may likely be a syndrome or set of factors that represent a social phenomenon of disadvantage, affecting a sizeable number of children (who are a high percentage of the Jordanian population) in a difficult economic period.

In future studies on disadvantaged children; linkage between risk factors (i.e., the connections within and between vulnerabilities and disadvantage categories) should be established to gain a holistic understanding of a child at risk.

4.0 Data Analysis: Sources of Vulnerability that Lead to Disadvantaged Children

4.1 Poverty

Poverty hinders a large number of children from an adequate standard of living, which in turn severely prevents them from reaching their full potential. Despite economic growth, a high percentage of population growth rate continues to contribute to poverty.

Poverty in the General Population

According to MSD and DOS, in 1987, 18% of Jordanian households were estimated to be living in poverty. A decade later, in 1997, the household rate was 23%. As of 1997, there were an estimated 1.5 million Jordanians living in poverty, 1 million of which were living in Amman and Irbid. Because poor families tend to be larger, the proportion of the population living in poverty has increased from 28% in 1992 to 31% in 1997.^a

^a *The Situation of Children, Youth & Women in Jordan, UNICEF, 2002*

Poverty in Jordan has a high correlation with two variables, household size and education level of household heads. The likelihood of a household being poor dramatically increases from 4% for a family with 1 to 2 children to 46% for a family with more than 7 children. Poverty is inversely correlated with the education level of heads of household. The more educated the parents, the less likely they are to be poor. On average, 19% of families headed by illiterate parents are poor. This figure steadily declines as education increases to 2% of households headed by holders of a university degree.^a

Poverty is characterized by rural/urban differences as well as discrepancies within urban areas. The incidence of income poverty is significantly higher in rural areas where 37% are poor compared to 29% in urban areas. But since 78% of the total population lives in urban areas, the number of urban poor is three times that of the rural poor. The highest poverty incidence is found in the largest cities and in urban areas in the 12 governorates.^b

In 2002, The Ministry of Social Development estimated that the percentage of Jordanians under the World Bank poverty line (JD 313.50 annual income *per capita*) was 11.7% of the total population of Jordan.^c The National Aid Fund currently serves 27% of this group, which translates to 3.16% of the total population. NAF does not serve 73% of this group under this poverty line, or 8.5% of the total population. In summary, NAF currently serves 3.16%, and does not serve 8.5% for a total of 11.7%, which is the percentage of Jordanians eligible for NAF assistance, based on the World Bank poverty line (Figure 13).

If the percentage of Jordanians below the World Bank poverty line is applied (11.7%), then NAF currently serves 163,718 individuals out of a total of 606,294, or 27% of those below poverty.

An additional poverty assessment completed by MSD and UNDP in 1999 indicated that 33% of Jordanians live below a “general” poverty line of JD 468 annual income *per capita*.

If the percentage of Jordanians below this general poverty line is applied (33%), then NAF currently serves 163,718 individuals out of a total of 1,710,060, or 9.6% of those below poverty.

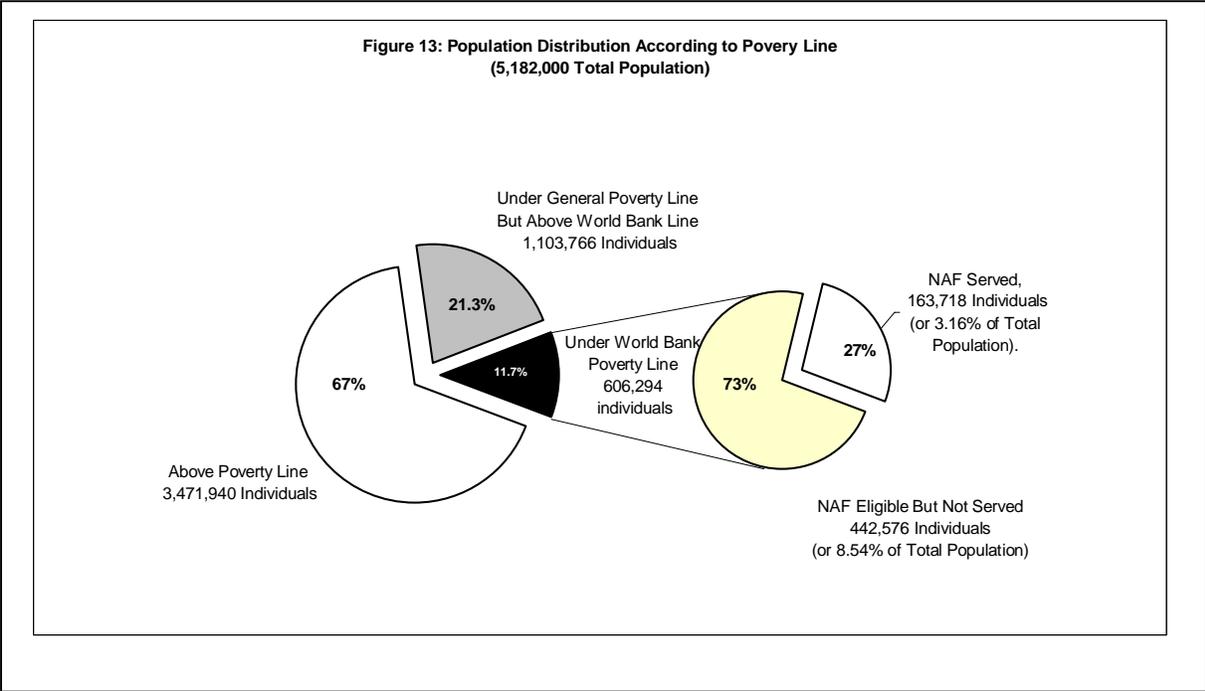
The National Aid Fund is the primary implementing agency for the Social Safety Net Program. There is no other major poverty alleviation program in the Kingdom.^d The criteria for NAF assistance includes: (a) households headed by widowed/divorced females, provided that no employable adult males are part of the household; (b) households that have disabled members, either totally or partially disabled; (c) households in which the categories are approved by the governing Board. NAF guidelines give priority to the aged, to disabled and to cases of hardship. Most of the very limited resources of the NAF are currently focused on the “poorest of the poor.” The NAF assists the poorest households of the poor by providing them with a monthly cash allowance scaled up to a maximum of JD 156.00 for a household of 6 children. After the 6th child, benefits do not increase. Additional assistance provided by NAF includes: (a) emergency aid; (b) cash assistance for care of disabled persons; (c) assistance for physical rehabilitation and loans; (d) wheat (bread) subsidy; and (e) health insurance.

^a *The Situation of Children, Youth & Women in Jordan, UNICEF, 2002*

^b *DOS Expenditure & Income Household Survey for 1997, quoted in The Situation of Children, Youth & Women in Jordan, UNICEF, 2002*

^c *Poverty Alleviation for a Stronger Jordan, MSD, May 2002*

^d *There are some NGO's who offer assistance to poor children, and much of this assistance is channeled to orphans (i.e., children without living fathers), reported on in a later section.*



Income figures for those under the General Poverty Line: JOD 468/person/year or JOD 39/person/month, for those under the World Bank Poverty Line: JOD 313.5/person/year or JOD 26/person/month.

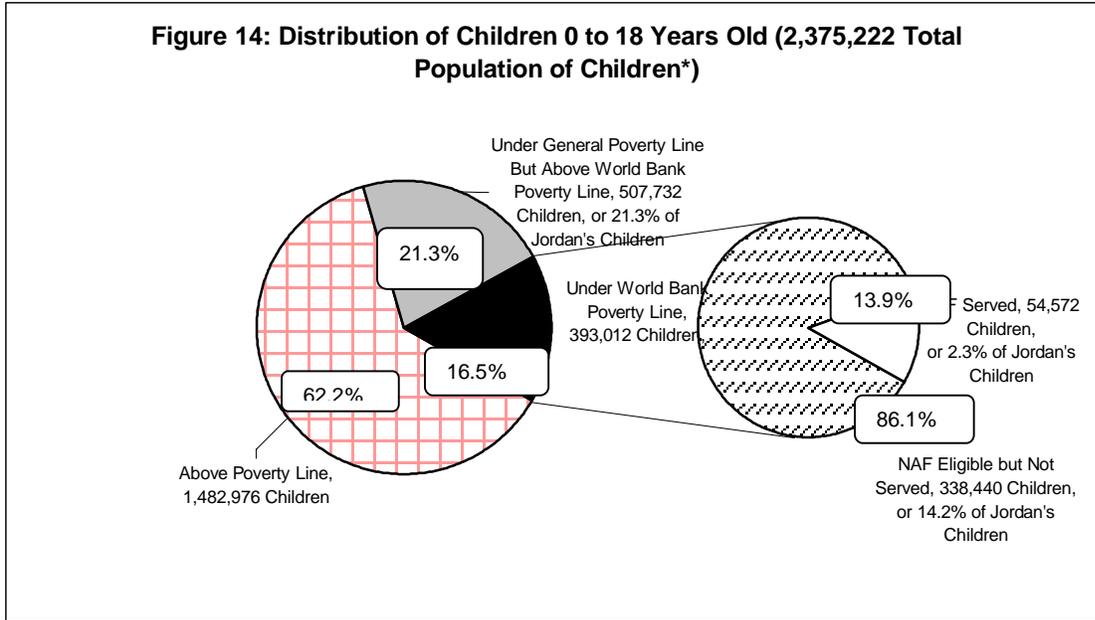
Assumptions and definitions

- a. 33% of Jordanians (1,710,060) live below a general poverty line of JD 468/person/year, based on the study *Measurement & Analysis of Poverty in Jordan* (MSD, DOS, DFID & UNDP) dated July 1999 (not yet endorsed);
- b. 11.7% of Jordanians (606,294) live below the World Bank poverty line of JD 313.50/person/year, based on MSD Study: *Poverty Alleviation for A Stronger Jordan*, May 2002;
- c. Therefore, 21.3% of Jordanians (1,103,766) live below the general poverty line and above the World Bank poverty line: these individuals are not served by the National Aid Fund;
- d. The National Aid Fund (NAF) served 163,718 individuals below the World Bank poverty line as reported for February 2002;
- e. The remaining population below the World Bank poverty line (442,576) is eligible but not served by NAF.

Poverty among children

When the numbers of children under poverty are estimated, a somewhat different picture emerges, Figure 14. The National Aid Fund currently serves 54,572 children, or 2.3% of Jordan’s population of children. These are the children at the level of the “poorest of the poor,” a category that includes the smallest number of poor children. Those children in households eligible for NAF assistance, but not currently being served (338,440) constitute 14.2% of Jordan’s population of children. Children are over-represented at this poverty level because the

number of the population of individuals eligible but not served by NAF (8.5% of the total population) includes more children at this income level than the average number of children in the general population.^a



*Based on 46% of 5,182,000, the Total Population of Jordan
Income figures for those under the General Poverty Line: JOD 468/person/year or JOD 39/person/month, for those under the World Bank Poverty Line: JOD 313.5/person/year or JOD 26/person/month.

Assumptions and Definitions

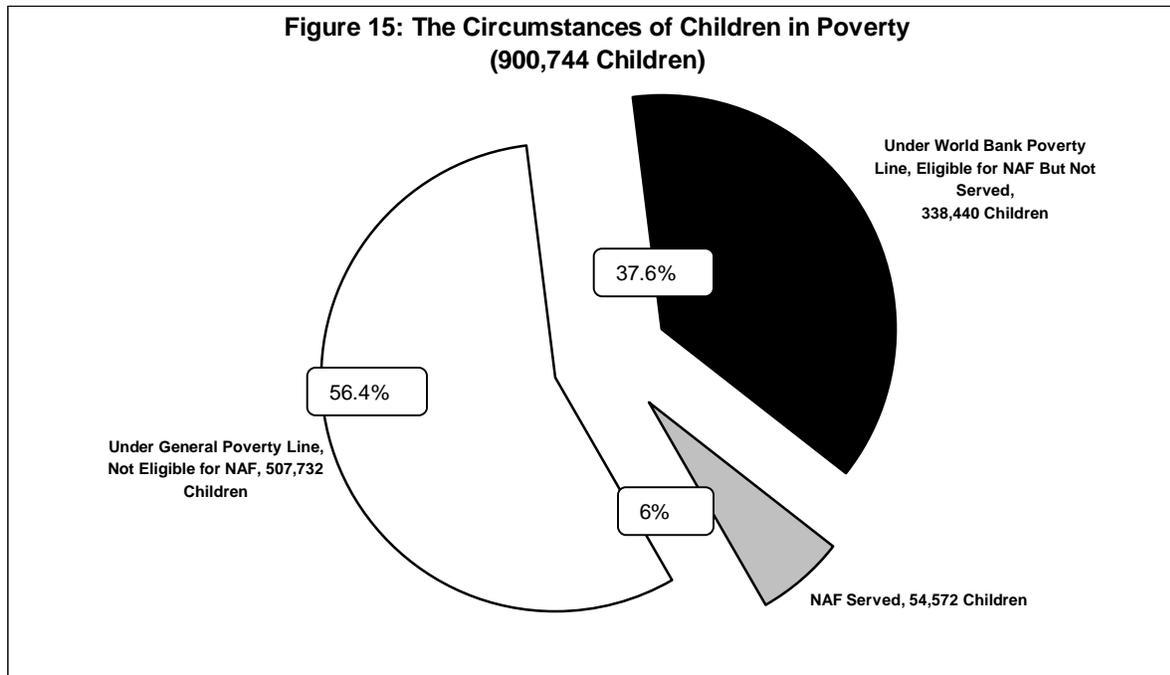
- Of the 163,718 individuals served by NAF, one third of this number is assumed to be children. This is based on an average family size of 3 served by NAF at the level of the poorest of the poor in which most families do not include children; consequently it is estimated that 54,572 children are served by NAF at this income level;
- Of the 442,576 individuals eligible but not served by NAF, the average family size is 8-9 individuals, of which it is estimated that the number of children is 6-7. Therefore, average number of children divided by average number of family members (6.5/8.5) results in 76.5% of this number as children, or 338,440 children.
- Of the 1,103,766 individuals under the general poverty line and above the World Bank poverty line, 46% (507,732) of these individuals are children (0-18), based on population projections by Dr. Issa Al Masarweh, Senior Researcher, the POLICY Project, using the DemProj Module in the SPECTRUM Policy Models developed by the Futures Group, In'tl.;
- The number of children above any poverty line (1,482,976) is the difference between the total population of children (2,383,720) minus the estimated numbers of children under the World Bank poverty line (393,012) and minus the numbers of children in the population below the general poverty line and above the World Bank poverty line (507,732).

^a Dr. Athel Al Jomard Head of Economic Studies Unit, Center for Strategic Studies, U of Jo.

In summary, NAF currently serves 2.3% of children, and does not serve 14.2% of children for a total of 16.5%. The percent of children below the World Bank poverty line is 16.5% compared to 11.7% of the total population served when individuals are counted without regard to age. Poor families have more children (and are not served by NAF), and the NAF currently serves only very poor families that have less than the number of children than the average number. **Children are underserved as well as being over-represented in poverty.**

If the percentage of the population according to the World Bank poverty line is applied (11.7%), the percentage of Jordanian children below this poverty line is 16.5%, and NAF currently serves 54,572 children out of a total of 393,012, or 13.9% of those below poverty.

If the percentage of the population according to the general poverty line is applied (33%), the percentage of Jordanian children below any poverty line is applied (37.8%), and NAF currently serves 54,572 children out of a total of 900,744 or 6% of those below poverty. The remaining children (93.9%) are not served (Figure 15).



Income figures for those under the General Poverty Line: JOD 468/person/year or JOD 39/person/month, for those under the World Bank Poverty Line: JOD 313.5/person/year or JOD 26/person/month.

The range of children in poverty is between 393,000 to 900,000 children, with 14% to 6% receiving any assistance, respectively. However, the higher estimate is the more likely estimate. Using the earlier data of DOS and MSD for 1997^a, of the total population (4,600,000), 31% (1,426,000) were estimated to be in poverty, and approximately 50% of the general population was less than 19, or 698,740 children. This way of arriving at projected numbers of children in poverty underestimates the number, again because poor families have more

^a *The Situation of Children, Youth & Women in Jordan, UNICEF, 2002*

children. But it does provide a way to triangulate information to arrive at some reasonable assumption of magnitude.

In conclusion, 67% of the general population of Jordan is above any poverty line, but only 62% of Jordan's children are above any poverty line. The difference between the two percentages is due to larger numbers of children (16.5%) under the World Bank poverty line than the general population numbers (11.7%).

There are little published data that characterize children in poverty that provide cross-linkage between poverty and educational failure, family background (education, income level, etc.), working status, health status, or delinquency status, for example. The characterization of juvenile poverty is approached through households, but a more helpful approach might be to collect information through child-centered orientation and to approach intervention through family-centered orientation.

Nevertheless, from general data on poverty it is possible to draw a profile of a child in Jordan. He or she has a one-in-three chance to be poor, and if a male, a one-in-three chance to be working for minimal compensation. He or she has 75% likelihood to be poor in an urban area. He or she will very likely have more than 7 brothers and sisters, and have about a 10% chance of getting assistance from any source.

Regardless of which poverty line is applied, the situation of children in poverty cross-linked to associated vulnerabilities is a priority issue for research, analysis and action.

4.2 Neglect and Violence (abuse)

The establishment of the Family Protection Unit (now the Family Protection Division – FPD) of the Department of Public Security in Amman in 1998 initiated a national response to abuse, violence, and neglect for all citizens, women, children and men. Data on children (juveniles) for this study were limited to that collected for Amman by the FPD.

Since 1998, 1478 individuals have been reported as victims to the FPD, 1203 (81.4%) of which were juveniles (children 18 or less) and 275 (18.6%) were adults (Figure 16). For all four years, the percentage of abused juveniles (children) did not appreciably vary from 80% of all cases.

The cases of abuse and victimization over this period of time were perpetrated by 1728 offenders, 420 (32.1%) of which were juveniles and 1308 (67.9%) were adults (Figure 17). For all four years, the percentage of abusers did not go below 20% of all cases.

This picture of juveniles either as abused or as abusers would indicate that the focus of future programs to alleviate and prevent abuse should be on children.

Figure 16: Comparison of Juvenile Victims to Adult Victims as Reported to the Family Protection Division, Amman

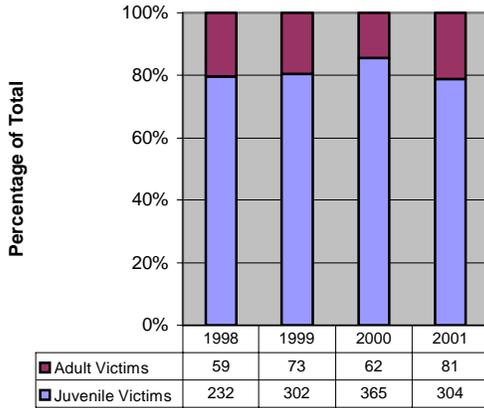
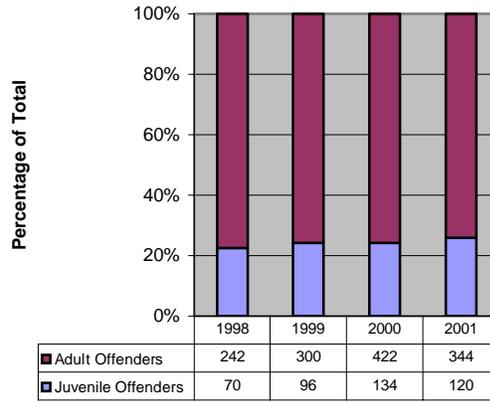


Figure 17: Comparison of Juvenile Offenders to Adult Offenders as Reported to the Family Protection Division, Amman



The internationally accepted rate of child abuse is 40 per ten thousand (4/1000) in any given national population. This rate is not currently applicable to Jordan because the Jordanian Penal Code defines abuse and neglect in ways that vary from the assumptions underlying the international rate.

The current level of reporting provides a prevalence rate of 6.1 per 10,000. (Figure 18) If it is assumed that cases have been under-reported by 50%, the prevalence rate is 12.2 per 10,000. If it is assumed that cases have been under reported by 90%, the prevalence rate is 61.0 per 10,000, which exceeds the international rate.

Figure 18: Expected Magnitude of Child Abuse

40 per ten thousand is the internationally projected prevalence rate of child abuse: mild, moderate, severe

	Year	1998	1999	2000	2001	4-year Prevalence
Population of Amman		1,809,777	1,864,400	1,917,340	1,971,750	1,971,750
Numbers of Individuals Abused*		5	50	0	0	0
Current rate per ten thousand		232	302	365	304	1,203
Assumption: 50% under-reported Rate per ten thousand		1.3	1.6	1.9	1.5	6.1
Assumption: 90% under-reported Rate per ten thousand		2.6	3.2	3.8	3.1	12.2
Assumption: 90% under-reported Rate per ten thousand		12.8	16.2	19.0	15.4	61.0

* From Cases reported to Family Protection Division in Amman - assumed classification: most severe cases

It is likely that only severe cases have been reported to the FPD, making it reasonable to assume 50% of all cases are under reported yielding the prevalence rate of 12.2 per 10,000 (1.2/1000), which is 30% of the expected rate of 40/10,000. The magnitude of severe abuse among Amman's children may likely range from the current 1202 Cases (6.1/10,000 rate) to 2,868 (12.2/10,000 rate), based on demographic projections for 0-18 year-olds in 2000 (Figure 19). The magnitude of cases of mild and moderate abuse cannot be currently projected for Jordan.

Figure 19: Estimates of the Number of Abused Children in Jordan

Total population for the year 2001	% of Reporting of Cases of Abused Children	Prevalence of Abuse Estimated for the Whole Population (for every 10,000 citizens)	# of Abused Children (Under 18s)
5,182,000	100%	6.1	3,161
	50%	12.2	6,322
	10%	61	31,610

Figure 19 above provides an estimate of the number of abused children in Jordan assuming that the ratios of prevalence of abuse are generalizable to the whole population. The figure of 6,322 most likely reflects those children who are most abused, if such cases are under-reported by 50%. The figure of 31,610 provides an estimate that may be high for all children who are abused and neglected, based on 90% under-reporting of all cases of severe abuse generalized to all categories of abuse. The appropriate prevalence rate for Jordan can only be verified through a national study of prevalence, and the development of definitions of abuse and neglect according to the Penal Code of Jordan.

National definitions of abuse at mild, moderate and severe levels should be defined prior to a national study to identify the prevalence of abuse at those 3 levels.

In a national-level study, cooperation among all professional fields should be highly encouraged in order to characterize abuse at the 3 levels, including social, medical, cultural, psychological and religious aspects.

Predisposing reasons for neglect may also include large family size (27% of married women aged 45-49 have 10 or more children)^a; unplanned births (37% unplanned in 1997, of which 17% were unwanted and 20% were “mistimed,” and inadequate birth spacing (less than two years from the previous birth).

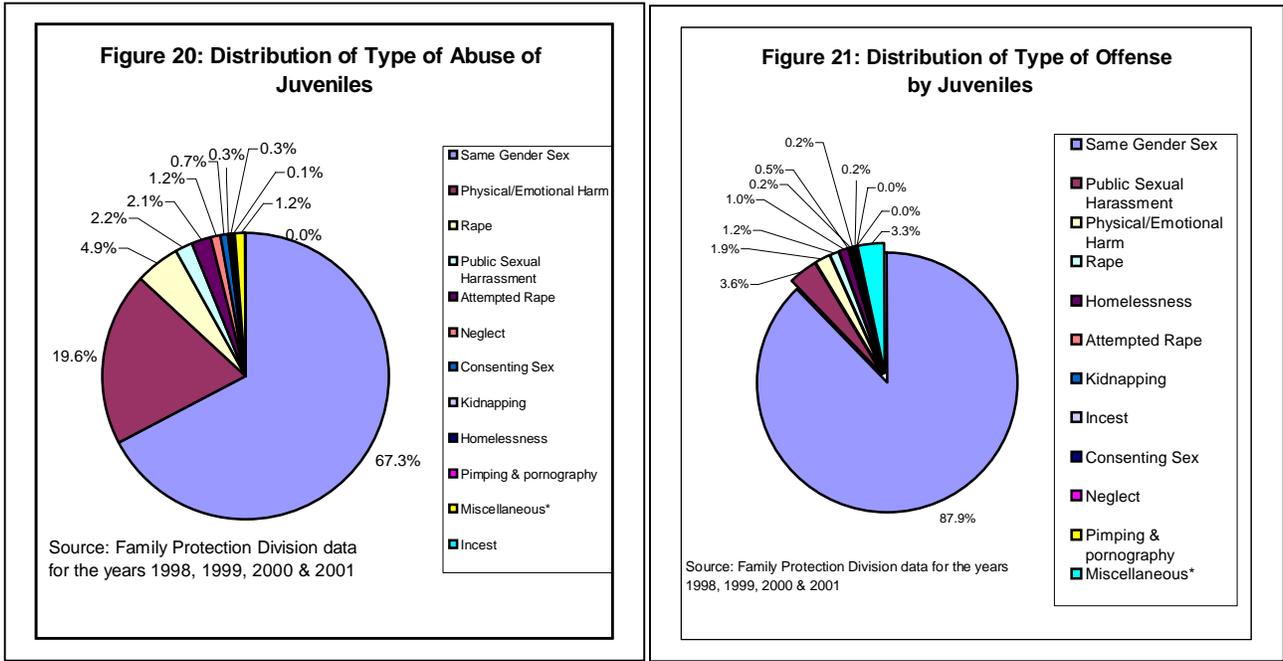
Characterization of Abuse

The number of reported victims abused over a period of 4 years was 1203 children. Figure 20 presents the type of abuse by percentage. The highest percentage of abuse of juveniles (children less than 18) was same-gender sexual relations (67.3%), followed by physical and emotional harm (19.6%) and rape (4.9%). Information on gender breakdown was available only for the total number of abused persons (juveniles and adults), consequently gender distribution among child-victims was not determined.

Figure 21 presents offenses by juveniles (children less than 18), either towards juvenile victims or adult victims. The highest percentage of abuse by juveniles was same-gender sexual relations (87.9%), followed by public sexual harassment (3.6%) and physical & emotional harm (1.9%).

The high percentage of same-gender sexual abuse by juveniles seems to indicate that interventions to reduce abuse by juveniles should focus on healthy development of sexuality within psychological, cultural and religious guidelines. And that specific risk factors in pre-adolescent and adolescent development should be identified and appropriate action taken.

^a Jordan Annual Fertility Survey (JAFS) 1997



4.3 Substance Abuse

Substance abuse among juveniles in Jordan is an unexplored area. Regarding the illegal use of “hard” drugs, data collected within the Anti-Narcotics Division of Public Security for conviction and arrest of juveniles/youth under 20 was as follows:

Year	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	5-year Total
Number of Convictions/ Arrests	28	21	26	29	51	159

These data suggest that use of illegal drugs by juveniles is still at low levels. However, arrest rates will not reflect user rates in the population. Participatory research with young people will be increasingly important to determine prevalence of use in Jordan before any definitive case can be put forward.

When volatile substance abuse (glue and paint thinner etc.) is considered, the picture may look very different. In 2001, an internal study by the Anti-Narcotics Division of Public Security was undertaken in 3 centers of the Social Defense Division (SDD). 122 children were interviewed and 63 (52%) had a history of abusing volatile substances. If this figure is generalizable to all the population of children in SDD centers (approximately 6000 children) then more than 3000 children in the juvenile system have experience with sniffing glue, paint-thinner, eating shoe polish, etc. Although these practices are not illegal, they are very dangerous. If 52% is generalizable to the population of children from backgrounds of poverty, low education, etc. then it takes on a different meaning.

Certainly volatile substance abuse has reached a higher level of public awareness recently than it ever had before. Anecdotally, more children are observed high on glue. But the reality of the situation has yet to be studied.

The prevalence of volatile substance abuse should be determined in subpopulations of children disadvantaged because of living in poverty, being out of school, working, and in juvenile detention centers. This would provide an estimate of magnitude and a means of determining the priority for action in this arena. In addition, drug histories of current addicts under treatment would provide information about how “hard” drug addicts came to their addiction, and if it included the use of “soft” drugs and volatile substances from a younger age.

4.4 Adolescent Marriage and Broken Families

Divorce and family breakup have an impact on the life-outcome of a child, particularly when the mother is less than 19, either at the time of marriage or divorce. The health of the mother and the child in adolescent pregnancy is at greater risk than if she marries and bears children at a later age. Early marriage also has an effect on educational and personal development of both mother and child. Marriage of a female during her school years almost always results in ending her educational experience.

No data are available on the numbers of children affected by divorce by the age of the mother. The rate of childbearing for married females (15-19) is 50 per thousand and 3.6% of all females 15-19 have either given birth or are currently pregnant, whether divorced or married.^a

In addition, the legal age for marriage of the bride is based on the Hijra calendar year, which means that females who are married at age 15 or 16 may be as young as 14 by the Georgian calendar year.

According to figures from the Department of Statistics Annual Reports, over the 5-year period 1997-2001, there were 69,953 marriages of females between 15-19 years old, an average of 13,991 per year (Figure 22). In this period of time, numbers of adolescent marriages increased (except for a slight decline in 1999). However, the percentage of marriages of adolescents to total marriages decreased steadily from 36.0% to 30.9% (Figure 24). For the 6-year period 1995-2000, 9% of Jordanian girls under the age of 19 were married.^a

Over the same period of time, the cumulative number of divorces of adolescent females was 6,705 (Figure 23). The percentage of adolescent divorce stayed relatively constant (Figure 25). Because divorce can take place after signing the marriage contract but before the consummation of the marriage, it is not possible to estimate how many adolescent women are likely to be pregnant or have a child when they are divorced.

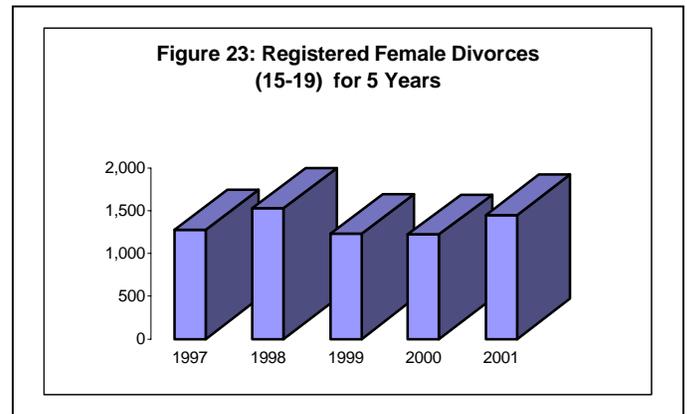
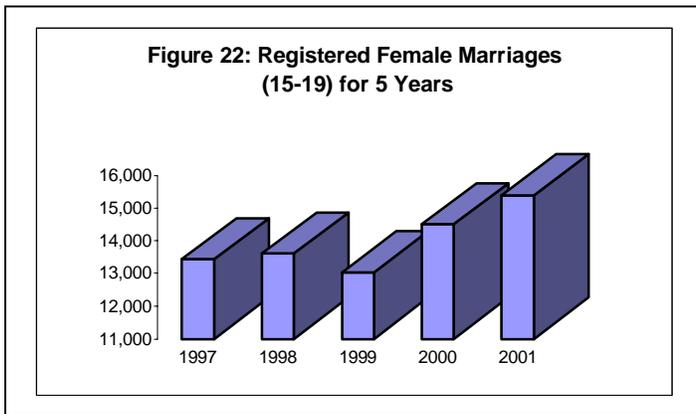
Women under the age of 19 who are married are likely to have a child to raise, even though they are also considered children. If they are divorced as adolescents, they may also have children to raise.

Adolescent fertility is a pressing health concern for girls because adolescents are at greater health risks during pregnancy than women in their twenties. Adolescents face greater

^a Jordan Annual Fertility Survey (JAFS), 2001
^a Jordanian Youth: Their lives and views, UNICEF 2002, page 17.

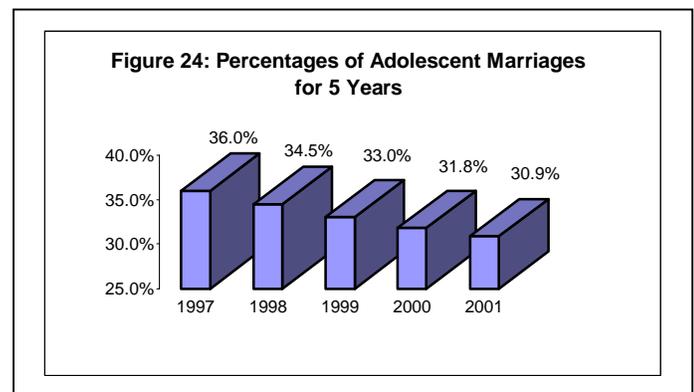
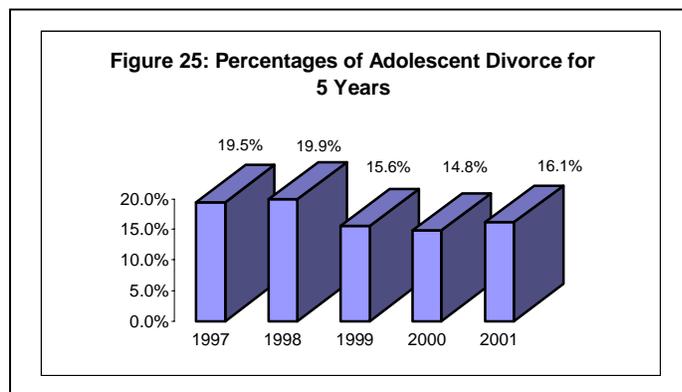
difficulties than their more mature counterparts because they are less prepared to handle the emotional responsibilities of motherhood.^a

The magnitude of females at risk due to adolescent marriage and possible pregnancy is approximately 14,000 per year, and the risk is increased for the 1,340 who are divorced each year as adolescents.^c The number of young women at risk is apparently increasing even though the percentage of marriages of adolescent females in the population is decreasing.



Department of Statistics: Annual Statistical Year Book 2001

Data table for Figure 20, 21	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	Total
Brides 15-19 years old	13,434	13,599	13,027	14,507	15,386	69,953
Female Divorces (15-19)	1,274	1,529	1,228	1,221	1,453	6,705



^a The Situation of Children, Youth and Women in Jordan, UNICEF, 2002
^c Annual Statistical Year Book, Department of Statistics, 2001

4.5 Educational Failure

Preschool 4-6 years of age

Although lack of pre-school experience has not been taken as vulnerability, the numbers of children who would benefit from preparation for school is an interesting figure. It would be expected that better preparation for school would likely help to reduce dropout, at least in the early years of schooling.

The care of young children has overwhelmingly been the function of the family in general and the mother in particular. The overall growth of this sector has not kept up with the growth of the basic educational cycle. The number of kindergartens increased from 545 in 1990/1991 to 1230 in 2000/2001. During the same time, enrollment increased from 23% of kindergarten age children to 28%. Boys' enrollment was slightly higher than girls' enrollment.^a

The number of children ages 4 to less than 6 in 2001 was 284,580.^b 83,777 children were enrolled in kindergarten (29%), indicating that 200,803 or 71% of these children would likely benefit from establishment of facilities for pre-school education.

School age: 6-15 years of age

Children who do not enroll in the educational system or who do not complete basic education (grades 1-10) are deprived of the positive, formative experiences of childhood that enable them to be prepared for successful participation in society as youth and adults.

Jordan has made commendable strides in providing basic education for all its children. But each year a relatively small number of children drop out of school before completing 10th grade. Children that fall permanently out of the educational system at the basic level are subject to exploitation, abuse and alienation as they try to find their way in life. Each year their numbers add up to figures that accumulate to become significant in Jordan's population of 5 million plus.

The fact that Jordan's educational system has such a low level of dropout makes it vital to know the numbers and characteristics of those children who do drop out. This information will then allow for design and implementation of other inputs and approaches from other organizations, including local municipalities, in roles that support and complement the Ministry of Education.

In considering educational non-participation in the basic cycle (grades 1-10), the numbers of non-participating children in each year over a period of 10 years were accumulated as an index of the magnitude of children who do not benefit from the educational system. Ten years was chosen as the period of time, because children who would have begun first grade will still be children when they would have completed 10th grade, i.e., the basic education cycle.

Geographic variation in enrollment rates is not significant, with the exception that the overall attendance rate and lowest rate for further study after basic education is in Zarqa governorate.^c

Numbers of children who end their education at 10th grade, or who enroll in secondary education but do not complete 12th grade provides an estimate of the magnitude of Jordanian

^a *The Situation of Children, Youth and Women in Jordan, UNICEF, 2002*

^b *Early Childhood Health & Education in Jordan: Status Report 2002, Save the Children*

^c *Jordanian Youth: Their lives and views, UNICEF 2002, page 31.*

children whose life circumstances will be different (more likely better) than those children who did not complete their basic education, but they still remain a concern in a Jordan that seeks a highly educated labor force for an economy that is increasingly becoming knowledge-based and technology driven.

Significance of educational data for understanding vulnerability and disadvantage

Numbers of children who do not complete basic or secondary education provide the only information from which to extrapolate the expected magnitude of working children who do not attend school. (There will also be other working children who attend school, at least intermittently.) There are no official data on working children under the age of 15, either in school or out of school, because all instruments and surveys (with few exceptions) have used age 15 as the cutoff age for collecting information.

In addition, Public Security officials can only estimate the magnitude of children made vulnerable through abusing substances on an anecdotal basis. But it is highly likely that children who do not attend school and who are also working children form a subpopulation of children with a high prevalence of substance abuse. Those children who pass through the juvenile system may also be more likely to have come from a subpopulation that does not regularly attend school. At the present time, data are not available that links the vulnerabilities of education failure, poverty, substance abuse, and neglect and violence to categories of disadvantaged children: working children or juvenile delinquents. The numbers of children who do not succeed in education provide the broad canvas upon which the picture of other vulnerabilities and disadvantages must be drawn at this time.

Non-enrollment in the basic cycle of education: children aged 5 - 8, grade 1:

The total population of 6-year-olds in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan in each of the 10 academic years from 1990-2000 was compared with the gross enrollment in first grade in each year in the same period (Figure 26). That percentage of children estimated to be disabled at age 6 (2.5%) was excluded from the total expected numbers to be enrolled. Over a ten-year period, 20,066 children were enrolled early or late for their expected age (6 years) in first grade, or 1.73% of all children for that period. Enrollment of children in 1st Grade in Jordan appears to be very successful, almost 100% coverage. Since the estimated numbers of children with disabilities may be a high estimate, then the percentage of children enrolling early, late or not at all may change only slightly.

Figure 26: Summary Table Children Enrolling in 1st Grade

Academic Year	90-91	91-92	92-93	93-94	94-95	95-96	96-97	97-98	98-99	99-00	Total
Population aged 6 years*	99,505	107,976	113,017	116,565	119,992	122,198	124,369	126,496	128,384	130,064	1,188,566
2.5% disability, i.e. not in school	2,488	2,699	2,825	2,914	3,000	3,055	3,109	3,162	3,210	3,252	29,714
Adjusted population	97,017	105,277	110,192	113,651	116,992	119,143	121,260	123,334	125,174	126,812	1,158,852
Gross Enrollment in 1st Grade**	107,328	112,010	114,280	114,180	117,441	117,387	115,868	122,073	125,986	132,365	1,178,918
Variance in 1st Grade Enrollment	-10,311	-6,733	-4,088	-529	-449	1,756	5,392	1,261	-812	-5,553	-20,066
% Variance in 1st Grade Enrollment	-10.63%	-6.40%	-3.71%	-0.47%	-0.38%	1.47%	4.45%	1.02%	-0.65%	-4.38%	-1.73%

* Population figures based on projections by Dr. Issa Al Masarweh, Senior Researcher, The POLICY Project, using the DemProj Module in the SPECTRUM Policy Manuals developed by the Futures Group, Ltd (Post 2nd Gulf War Population Projections)

** Ministry of Education: Annual Educational Statistical Reports (1990-2000)

Dropouts from the basic educational cycle: Children aged 6 - 15+, enrollment in grades 1-10.

The magnitude of children who enrolled in grade 1 but did not complete grade 10 was estimated in two ways: (1.) the figures associated with annual dropout rates (annual incidence percentages) for the basic cycle (grades 1-10) were “accumulated” over 10 years from 1990-2000; (2.) retrospective cohort analysis over the same 10-year period provided a precise assessment of total numbers of dropouts.

These children have been essentially invisible prior to this study. The important point to be made here is that each year (according to cumulative annual incidence percentages) approximately 8,500 children drop out of all grades, even though the annual dropout rate (annual incidence) was less than 1% (except in 1990-1991, the Gulf War year). And in every following year, approximately 8,500 more children drop out, increasing the number of children out of school. Over 10 years, the cumulative number of children who dropped out becomes significant, both in the lives of the children and in the ability for social and economic integration of these uneducated individuals into society.

Grade-Specific Dropout Rates by Gender

The ratio of percentage of male children to female children in the Jordanian population is about 51% to 49%. The enrollment in first grade for 10 years reflected this ratio. Males and females were therefore equally likely to be initially enrolled in school.

There was a significant increase in dropout rates for boys and girls from grade 4 to 9. There was also a significant difference in dropout rates between boys and girls, indicating that males were at greater risk for leaving school than females. Some social scientists surmise this is likely due to children taking on increased roles in family work or in working illegally, once they have achieved fundamental literacy.^a According to the Jordan Living Conditions Study (JLCS)^b the main reasons for dropping out of school between age 11 and 15 are financial pressures, poverty or a poor school environment. In a recent UNICEF study, the primary reason for dropout was cited as academic failure (30% of cases), followed by family poverty and the need to work (20% of cases.)^c

A question of interest was to determine between which grades the greatest difference in dropout rates occurred. For both males and females, the greatest increase in dropout rates occurred between grades 3 and 4 and between grades 4 and 5. These grades may represent the greatest jump in performance requirements for children as compared to their previous grades. Any number of other reasons could form the basis for further study of factors contributing to dropout at this critical period in the educational experience of a child. It is highly likely that preschool preparation of children coupled with early childhood educational improvements will reduce these ratios to prevent dropout in the early years of schooling. It also creates a place for a rich interaction between non-governmental organizations and municipal authorities with schools to help children gain an education that would otherwise be left out.

In addition, if dropout numbers/rates for each grade show significant differences, then policies could be envisioned and enacted and supporting activities initiated in cooperation with other organizations that could reduce the rate of dropout in critical years. Likewise, if dropout numbers/rates show significant gender differences, this information could provide valuable inputs for specific policies to keep males or females in school, or for special assistance outside the school environment. In other words, if educational vulnerability can be understood at grade level and by gender, then appropriate policies can be designed. The importance of reducing dropout at critical points in the educational life cycle of a child will increase as the population of Jordan doubles over the next 2 decades.

1. Cumulative Incidence Method (Annual Dropout rates)

Numbers of dropouts based on cumulative annual incidence rates of the Ministry of Education are illustrated in Figure 27. The total number of enrolled students in each year was multiplied by the dropout rate for each year of the basic cycle resulting in a total number of dropouts of 85,457. The total number of dropouts over the total number of pupil-years meant that 0.81% of all student enrollments over the 10 years did not result in completion of the basic cycle. The figure, 0.81% is also the average rate of dropout per year over the ten years.

Figure 27: Total Number of Dropouts for the Period 1990-2000

a The Situation of Children, Youth and Women in Jordan, UNICEF, 2002
b Jordanian Society: Living Conditions in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, FAFO, 1998
c Jordanian Youth: Their lives and views, UNICEF 2002, page 40.

According to MoE Annual Incidence (Dropout) Rates											
	1990-91	1991-92	1992-93	1993-94	1994-95	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-00*	Total**
Total	926,445	982,690	1,014,895	1,036,079	1,058,611	1,074,877	1,086,641	1,103,400	1,121,766	1,141,457	10,546,861
Dropout the Basic	1.28%	0.99%	0.74%	0.87%	0.81%	0.73%	0.73%	0.73%	0.66%	0.66%	0.81%
Calculated # Dropouts	11,858	9,729	7,510	9,014	8,575	7,847	7,932	8,055	7,404	7,534	85,457

Source: MOE Data: Annual Educational Statistical Reports for the Academic Years 1990-1991 to 1999-2000
** The Dropout Rate 1999-2000 was not available: The Figure Provided is an Estimate Based on 1998-1999 Dropout Rate.*
*** Total pupil years: all pupils in each year for 10 years.*

There are very limited data on the backgrounds of children who drop out, and only sketchy data exist for reasons of dropout. Collection of information on dropouts linked to other vulnerabilities would make it possible to assess the effect of multiple factors on the child.

3. Retrospective cohort analysis method

A retrospective cohort study by the Ministry of Education (MOE) for children enrolling in first grade in 1990 and completing 10th grade in 2000 provided a standard annual dropout rate of 0.89% at each grade level. The cohort study counted each student and re-included all repeaters unless and until they dropped out. Because of the large number of dropouts in first grade in 1990-1991, the year of the Gulf War, it may have slightly overestimated dropout rates. But when compared to the 10-year cumulative incidence dropout rate of 0.81%, it provided another reasonable estimate as an upper limit of magnitude. This standard rate of 0.89% was applied to all 10 cohorts of students in all 10 years of the study.

The number of dropouts over the 10-year cycle was 93,803 children. Each year the number of dropouts was based on the size of the cohort of enrolled children for each grade, derived from enrollment data from the MOE. The difference in magnitude (8,346) between the two methods, accumulation of incidence percentages, 85,457 children, and establishment of prevalence by cohort analysis, 93,803 children, is most likely accounted for due to the high numbers of dropouts in the year of the Gulf War included in the standard rate.

The range of magnitude in numbers of children that drop out throughout a 10-year period, 85,000-94,000, is significant in a population the size of Jordan. These uneducated children represent those children that may be found at stoplights, or working for low wages, or in trouble with legal authorities. When they become young adults their ability to be incorporated into a changing Jordanian economy will continue to be difficult for themselves and for the country. Further characterization of a wide range of indicators for this large number of vulnerable children is necessary to understand the interventions that will be appropriate for strategies to

reduce (prevent) and cope with this vulnerability. For example, children in the South of Jordan have the highest percentage of any children that do not complete basic education.^a Understanding the children who leave school before completing basic education may also lead to development of untraditional roles for a wider variety of organizations that may be able to improve the learning experiences of children.

Non-participation in the secondary education cycle, grades 11 and 12:

At the completion of grade 10, children may continue in secondary education, enroll in vocational training institutes or centers, join the labor force, or remain economically inactive.

Eight cohorts enrolled in the first grade in academic years 1981-82 to 1988-89 had completed grade 10 by the end of the academic year 1999-2000. The total enrollment at the beginning for all 8 cohorts was 722,883 children. The total graduating from 12th grade was 550,090 or 76% of all children who had begun first grade.

At the end of the basic cycle of education, 623,113 were eligible for secondary education. The number of children who completed secondary education was 550,090, indicating that 73,023 (11.72%) either did not enroll in or did not complete secondary education.

The important point to note is that almost one-quarter of all children who begin basic education do not complete 12th grade. The life outcomes for these children will be different from those who did complete secondary schooling. This is also an arena for rich cooperation between children, non-governmental organizations, municipality authorities and local school districts.

Vocational Training Enrollment and Dropout

Vocational training centers offer two programs for those youth who completed 10th grade or higher. Graduates from these 1- or 2- year programs obtain official certificates. Males enrolled in these programs at ages 16, 17 or 18 over a period of 10 years (1990-2000) totaled 48,972 individuals. Females of the same ages over the same period totaled 1,677 individuals.

The number of male dropouts over the 10-year period for all ages was 9,713, or 19.8% of all enrolled males. The number of female dropouts over the same period was 317, or 18.0% of all enrolled females.

50,000 children (16-18) enrolled in vocational training out of the 73,000 who completed grade 10 but did not complete secondary education. 20% (10,000) of these children (almost entirely male) attempted to succeed in the vocational stream of education but failed for various reasons. Males have a greater chance to complete their vocational training if they enroll at age 16 than if they enroll at age 17 or 18. A policy implication is that great emphasis should be placed on enrolling graduates from the basic education cycle as early as possible, i.e., at age 16. It also underlines the importance of analyzing the background of dropouts and their reasons for dropout at the three ages in order to reduce the vulnerability of educational failure. The Vocational Training Centers have identified that social, family, economic and health reasons are behind dropout rates of children.^b

^a *Jordanian Youth: Their lives and views, UNICEF 2002, page 38.*

^b *Study: Magnitude of dropouts, causes & recommendations for the Vocational Training Year 1999/2000.*

Attention to vocational training as an attractive pathway for disadvantaged youth to build careers could be quite significant. The highest employment rate among youth, in a current UNICEF study, was for those with vocational education and a diploma, although this group took the longest time to find suitable employment. Those youth with bachelor's degrees or with only secondary education had the lowest employment rate.^a

5.0 Conclusions

The standard of living, education, and care experienced by most Jordanian children is a remarkable accomplishment of the State of Jordan. At the same time, due to rapid development, urbanization and demographic change, there are unprecedented numbers of children who are significantly disadvantaged or who are at risk of becoming disadvantaged.

Categories of disadvantage include children who must work for family income, juveniles in trouble with the law (delinquents), those with physical and mental disabilities, orphans, refugees, and street children.

Tens of thousands of children – perhaps more than 290,000 in Jordan – fit the category of working children. Some work regularly for a few hours daily; some, for many hours daily. Others work irregularly – perhaps seasonally in agriculture. Children perform all kinds of work, including difficult and dangerous manual labor. Working children are at risk of injury, impaired health and development, exploitation, and inadequate education. The effects are often long-term, even life-long.

Thousands of Jordanian young people have come into contact with police and juvenile authorities, and that number appears to be on the increase in recent years. Juvenile delinquency is itself a category of disadvantage, as well as a result or symptom of other categories of disadvantage and risk factors. Whether arrested and processed for juvenile delinquency, or simply detained and released, young people who come into contact with the juvenile justice system are in trouble or are significantly affected by their experiences leading up to and including their encounter with authorities.

There are many types of disabilities, physical and mental, with a wide range of effects from mild to severe. Based on various estimates of prevalence in populations and some data available from organizations providing assistance in this area in Jordan, it is projected that more than 230,000 children in Jordan experience some form and degree of disability. In fact, many children experience more than one form of disability, with compound effects. The capacity of governmental and non-governmental organizations to provide comprehensive, effective, long-term support and assistance is seriously challenged by the extent and persistence of disabilities among children. Hence, for all children with disability, quality of life is an ever-present issue.

Orphans are categorized as children without living fathers, abandoned children, and illegitimate children (i.e., no parents listed on birth certificate). Because of cultural and religious traditions, many such children live in extended family and community networks. Official statistics on orphans in public or private institutions understate the numbers of Jordanian children who are orphans. Based on estimates of those who receive some official form of assistance from non-government organizations, there are thousands of orphans being cared for in communities. These children are at risk of pervasive and long-lasting poverty and its effects.

^a *Jordanian Youth: Their lives and views, UNICEF 2002, page 64.*

There are hundreds of thousands of children in Jordan whose families were or are refugees. Refugees and their children are accorded equality with Jordanians by the Jordanian government. Refugee status in itself is not a category of disadvantage from the perspective of Jordanian law and policy. Yet life in refugee camps and communities is fraught with many challenges due to overcrowding, unemployment, inadequate infrastructure, and more. Children in these camps and communities experience many conditions that genuinely disadvantage them or that put them at risk of being disadvantaged.

The situation is similar with street children. "Street children" often have a home in which to sleep at night, or a family to which they return. Still, the lives of such children are often formed by street culture, with gangs as surrogate families. They are exposed to numerous problems and disadvantages, such as sexual experiences, lack of health care, substance abuse, violence, exploitation, juvenile delinquency, and little or no education.

The categories of disadvantage are treated as separate and distinct, as if affected children could be neatly sorted into one category or another. In actuality, children are usually affected by more than one category. For example, young children who work, especially for long hours in certain types of work, may suffer physical impairments and even disabilities over time. To escape the realities of life or to survive, street children may resort to activities that bring them into contact with police and juvenile authorities, or get them going in life-endangering sexual behavior.

For many children it is a question of being at risk of falling into a disadvantaged state. That is, there are a variety of socio-economic conditions that put children at risk of being affected by one or more disadvantaged states. These conditions have been categorized into sources of vulnerability for children: poverty; neglect and violence (abuse); substance abuse; adolescent marriage and broken families; and educational failure.

It is clear, for example, that a significant percentage of Jordanian children live in poverty or on the margins of poverty. The over-representation of children in poverty requires concentrated attention and is a field for rich inter-agency and community cooperation.

Much more information is required to provide a clear picture of the etiology of juvenile crime, how it is dealt with institutionally, and how children's rights may be guarded while they are involved in providing solution pathways for authorities and provider systems. Substance abuse should be treated as a phenomenon to be investigated for its prevalence in the community of youth, as well as the development of means to assist children addicted to volatile substances to detoxify and develop healthy, self-confident life styles.

The same general viewpoint applies to issues of violence and neglect. Very little is known of the prevalence of violence and neglect towards children and much needs to be defined to start increasing both knowledge and practice in this arena.

Divorce and family breakup have profound effects on children in many psychological, social, and economic ways. Divorce and family breakup are of particular concern for adolescent mothers and their children. In that thousands of Jordanian females between the ages of 15 and 19 marry each year, and about 10% of those marriages end in divorce, it means that there are many female adolescents – who are themselves basically older children – taking care of younger children. The needs of such mothers and their children put them at significant risk of experiencing various and persistent adversities.

There are large numbers of children whose lives are decidedly disadvantaged because they drop out of school before reaching the mandatory level of basic education (10th grade), or they do not complete secondary education. Many of these children do not benefit from vocational education as an alternative to higher education. In addition, there are potentially large numbers of children who work and go to school, or who work and do not go to school at all. This situation requires further investigation. In both areas, education and under-age working, rich possibilities exist for non-governmental, municipal, and governmental cooperation to provide a variety of helpful options for children who cannot adjust to the system and for whom the system does not provide what they need.

An especially challenging reality cuts across and magnifies all categories of disadvantage and sources of vulnerability. That reality is that many children who are in need are in fact *invisible* to the individuals and organizations that might be able to address their needs with attention and care. That is, the most disadvantaged children, and the children most vulnerable to becoming disadvantaged, are largely *invisible to or outside of* the regular social systems for support and assistance. For them not to remain invisible (outside the scope of supportive policies and systems) the types, numbers, and needs of disadvantaged and vulnerable children must be acknowledged and accurately determined. It can be said that there are two gaps in knowledge of these children: that they exist (who they are) and what brought about the circumstances of their existence (what sets of factors predisposes them to and puts them at risk).

The models for design and collection of data should link information across specific areas of vulnerability and classes of disadvantage, and should include a means of analysis of multiple factors and their effects on children. It is a moral and social imperative to recognize, support, and assist these invisible children to improve their lives to the greatest extent possible.

Part Two

Review of Policies and Programs

Introduction

This report represents the second phase of the National Study of Disadvantaged Children this part focuses on the review of current programs and policies relevant to the situation of these categories of children; namely: Education, Health and Social Protection Services.

The first section of the report will address the general legislations that influences the situation of disadvantaged children -as part of the overall national context- and more particularly will refer to legislations that target these disadvantaged groups as one way of managing their vulnerability and dealing with the range of risks they are exposed to. The second section of the report focuses on policy initiatives and responses to accommodate the vulnerability and risks that these disadvantaged children are exposed to. The policy review will refer to education, health and housing policies and how they capture -within their framework- the rights and needs of disadvantaged groups. In addition, the policy review will highlight targeted policies that are in place or being planned to address root causes and/or various aspects influencing the situation of these categories of children at the family, school and community levels. The third section of the report briefly describes the main programs that are being undertaken or underway and will also refer to the key institutions (governmental, non-governmental and international) that are responsible for their implementation, management, coordination and/or follow up.

In doing so, the report will use a child rights lens to determine the main issues relevant to efficiency and effectiveness as measured by the integrative capacity of institutions and available mechanisms and linkages necessary for rights' enforcement and implementation. The report will shed light on the changing features in the situation of disadvantaged children from a policy perspective as is indicated by the political commitment, development of new legislations and legal amendments, institutional reforms and on the other hand, sociocultural dynamics and a growing social demand that has supported the recognition of these categories and the subsequent identification of gaps at different levels.

Methodology

The process of the situation assessment (Phase 1) encountered some difficulty in finding consistent data on the categories of disadvantaged children. As the assessment suggests, this sharply contrasts with the multitude of efforts targeting those categories by governmental and non-governmental agencies. Furthermore, the absence of gender- differentiated data represents another gap that does not currently allow for a clear distinction in the situation of boys and girls as members of the aforementioned categories nor does it facilitate the identification of gender imbalances that may be present. The latter is particularly evident in the type of data sets that are available on poverty which are more representative of family poverty as opposed to children poverty status. This ultimately affects the effectiveness of planning and programming. Finally, categories of vulnerable children seem to be vaguely distinguished due to interrelated reasons but also due to inadequate data representing the "invisible segment" of these categories of children.

The current review has not included- in the scope of its in-depth analysis- the ongoing work that is being undertaken in parallel studies to propose amendments and/ or draft legislations that are

not yet adopted. Reference, however, is made to this work where relevant. For purpose of this report, a series of interviews were conducted with a number of governmental and non-governmental institutions operating in the child protection sector. In addition, a number of studies, report and government strategies have been included as references (annex) to support the content of this report. Finally, this review has taken full consideration of the NCFA's work, since its establishment in 2001, and its present vision toward child protection.

I. LEGISLATIONS

CHILD PROTECTION

Jordan has ratified the Arab and International Conventions on the rights of the Child in 1984 and 1991 respectively. Jordan's ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Child was associated with reservations concerning articles (14, 20, 21). The reservation on Article (14) is based on its contradiction with the principles of Islamic Jurisprudence by giving the child the freedom to choose his religion while Article (20) concerns foster care for children. Jordan's reservation Article (21) relates to adoption, which is considered illegitimate in Islam.

Jordan also ratified ILO Conventions No. 138 concerning the Minimum Age for Admission to Employment and No. 182 concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labor. Furthermore, at the Millennium Summit, Jordan signed the two Optional Protocols adopted by the United Nations General Assembly dealing with the Sales of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography.

The Jordanian experience in child protection is characterized by a number of progressive steps that were taken in recent years to bring domestic law in line with the stipulations of the Convention and international guidelines for child protection. The World Bank study, which is currently being undertaken in cooperation with NCFA, to review national legislation and its compatibility with the provisions and principles of the Convention is an indicator of such activity in progress. The assessment is considering the promulgation of a Child Law as part of developing the legal machinery in support of a right-based approach. The process is being coordinated by the NCFA in cooperation with ministries and other stakeholders. The Draft Law includes a number of stipulations summarized as follows:

- 1- It stipulates the formation of a committee to supervise and protect the rights of children.
- 2- Rights protected in this Draft include the right to belong to a family, right to obtain aid to prove nationality, right to express views and opinions, right to health care, right to education, right to clean environment, right of safe food and nutrition, right to enjoy culture and leisure, and protection from car accidents and drugs.
- 3- The rights of children with special needs are also expressed in this Draft.
- 4- The draft law states the cases whereby a child can be separated from his parents and grants protection from exploitation in all its forms.
- 5- The Draft Law stipulates the formation of a special monetary fund to support children.
- 6- The Draft Law stipulates the issuance of an ordinance pertaining to procedures of investigation and interviewing children whether as offenders or victims.

However, The draft child law does not refer to the family, which may represent a challenge to its future implementation given the influence of family culture on a child's behavior and choices.

While a number of legislations include provisions that contribute to the legal umbrella for children at large, the following is a summary of those legal stipulations that may have a direct impact on the situation of disadvantaged categories of children. Where relevant, the impact on

a particular group will be referred to. More specifically, the distinction will be made between laws discussing working children, children with disabilities and orphans. The legal stipulations listed under Child Protection impact all groups of disadvantaged children as they refer to violence, substance abuse, children at risk (street) and juveniles. From a legal perspective, refugees do not represent a disadvantaged category since Jordanian laws grants a refugee the same rights as a Jordanian child. Hence they will not be discussed separately under this section.

CHILD LABOUR

- **The Jordanian Education Law No.3 of 1994 guarantees the right of basic education for all children.** According to this law, the age of free compulsory education was raised from nine to 10. As a result, the school drop-out rate from primary education does not exceed 0.8% according to official records of the Ministry of Education. On the other hand, **Law No.8 for the Year 1996 that is commonly referred to as the “Labor Law” raises the minimum age for work from 13 to 16 years**, thus closing the gap between the age of employment and the age of compulsory education.

GAPS/IMPEDIMENTS TO EFFECTIVE ENFORCEMENT

Despite government commitment and national efforts geared toward working children, a number of gaps undermine the government’s current efforts to respond effectively to the rights of disadvantaged children.

- The Education law does not include any clear statement that imposes upon parents the responsibility of sending their children to school as a means of enforcing compulsory education.
- The Labor Law does not provide any protection for children working in family enterprises, agricultural activities and as domestic labor, thereby excluding from adequate protection the informal sector where child labor in Jordan is concentrated, as well as excluding girls.
- The Labor Law No. 8 does not specify a minimum age for vocational training of children. Presently, this law implies that any juvenile over the age of seven years can undergo vocational training as an apprentice. There are no clear standards governing the type of apprenticeship nor are inspection mechanisms adequate to ensure that children are not exploited. The terms and types of apprenticeship need to be further defined both in legal amendments that are currently being proposed and in policy and program interventions that are being formulated within the national strategic framework.
- The labor law prohibits the employment of the juvenile who has not completed seventeen in hazardous, tiring or health jeopardizing jobs while the minimum age of employment as per the ILO agreement No. 138 is set at 18 years of age. Accordingly children between the age 17 – 18 do not enjoy legal protection from working hazards or exploitation in the working environment. The Ministry of Labor is currently considering raising the minimum age for any type of employment to 18; an amendment that is being coordinated with the Ministry of Education in order to also raise the age of compulsory education to 18^a. Furthermore, an assessment of national legislations was undertaken by the Ministry of Labor in cooperation with the ILO, has resulted in a number of

^a The information was based on an interview with officials at the Ministry of Education that was held on 28/5/2003

amendments that are being proposed to strengthen the legal tool kit and enforcement mechanisms.

- Implementation of the Labor law needs to be strengthened through operationalization procedures for inspection of working environment in non-registered enterprises in order to ensure that children are neither exploited nor exposed to harmful conditions.
- The special decree (1997) concerning hazardous and/or exploitative types of work only refers to physical effect on the child and does not mention the effect on the child's moral standards and manners.

CHILD PROTECTION

- **National legislation prohibit the sale or giving alcohol to a minor under the age of 18. Penalties are also applied on the sale of abuse of drugs**
- **Individuals who commit rape crimes where girls under the age of 15 are victims receive a death sentence.** The law however, condemns extramarital sex with a woman between the age 15- 18 sentencing the male offender to at least a 5-year term in hard labor prison.
- **The age of legal responsibility in national legislations has been raised from 7 to 12** marking an important step toward conformity with the age limit set in the CRC at 18 years. Juvenile delinquents are mostly arrested for theft and assault.
- **Article 62 of the Jordanian Penal Code allows fathers to discipline their children by using a norm-accepted level of force.** According to the National report that was submitted by the Kingdom to the Decade Review of the goals of the World Summit for Children, committees have been established also to review the Penal Code and introduce amendments to ensure the consistency of some of its stipulations with the CRC, which Jordan ratified.
- **The Juvenile Law no.11 of the year 2002 represents one of the main achievements in the field of child protection.** The law mandates judges the right to supervise and inspect juvenile centers affiliated with the Ministry of Social Development every 3 months. The law clearly distinguishes between categories of juvenile delinquents and those requiring protection and rehabilitation. The legal stipulations further classify three types of institutions to accommodate the different categories of children.
- **National Law establishing the Foundation of Orphans Funds Development and its amendments no.29 of the year 2002.**

GAPS/IMPEDIMENTS TO EFFECTIVE ENFORCMENT

- Current legislations do not address in any particular way substance abuse including glue, gasoline that do not fall under the "illegal category of substances".
- Jordanian legislations do not necessitate the legal representation of a child unless facing a death sentence. As such, children cases brought before juvenile courts do not necessarily involve child defense lawyers to present the case on their behalf. Child defense lawyers is a specialization which is not adequately represented on the child

protection scene and indeed represents a gap in resource skills required to ensure child protection and effective enforcement of laws

- “The norm-accepted level of force” referred to in the Penal Code is not clearly defined. Hence discipline may be applied using different degrees and/or forms of violence that fall beyond legal questioning.
- The mechanisms for supervision and inspection of juvenile centers by judges are not fully operational.
- In the case of children exposed to violence, physical and sexual abuse, the present legal provisions do not accept a child’s initial testimony/report of the abuse, in which case charges against the offenders are dropped due to legal processing procedures. Efforts are underway to endorse a new system that qualifies a child’s testimony recorded by video and hence ensure additional legal protection to children from abuse.
- Criminal proceedings may be brought against children 12 years of age. The age for legal responsibility set by the CRC is 18.
- The role of mayors (governors) in enforcing legislations relevant to child protection needs to be further developed. Despite the legal mandate assigned to governors by laws, the majority of governors rely on ongoing programs/initiatives that are implemented by central ministries and non-governmental agencies. Their direct interventions are confined to cases where children are exposed to violence and others where the family needs to be contacted to send their children to school.
- At present, juvenile delinquents are kept in the same institution with children requiring rehabilitation and protection; a practice that requires further assessment. According to the views of many experts and professionals in the field, this is likely to impede protection efforts and may induce a negative influence on children.
- The law also includes reference to school discipline instructions, which influence the pattern of interaction with students rendering it more punitive than reformist in nature.
- The current penalty for a family member accused of exercising a form of child abuse is imprisonment; a situation that can lead to further tension within the family and subsequent deterioration in the situation of the child experiencing the abuse. The consideration of social penalties (community service) may offer a more constructive alternative to punitive action in such cases.
- The capacity of parole officers sometimes represents a constraint to the proper assessment of child’s case by the court in situations where a court ruling on custody transferal is being made. The Ministry of Social Development is currently assessing the training and skill development needs of these officers to ensure the appropriateness of decisions made with the best interest of the child.
- With respect to orphans, the system of foster family care, though introduced in the Jordanian society, is still challenged by the legal reservations setting the criteria for eligible families.

CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

- **The Care of the Disabled Law N. 12 of 1993, spells out the rights of people with special needs to social integration, education and rehabilitation.** Law 12 created the National Council for the Care of the Disabled at the Ministerial Level.

GAPS/IMPEDIMENTS TO ENFORCEMENT

- While the law represents an advanced step in recognizing the rights of disabled, the scope of its implementation necessitates an integrated framework that regulates the

roles and responsibilities of concerned government entities, non-governmental organizations and communities. In the absence of such a framework, the legal stipulations of the law are not being effectively enforced.

II. INSTITUTIONS/PROGRAMS

Several government and non-government organizations are active in the childhood sector. International organizations are referred to within their respective roles as partners supporting governmental and/or non-governmental initiatives. Given the broad range of support that these organizations extend to the development sector at large, a brief reference will be made to key agencies and initiatives targeting disadvantaged children.

GOVERNMENT INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

The key ministries that have a direct mandate in the field of child protection are the Ministries of Social Development, Labor, Health, Education, Justice, Planning and Awqaf as well as the Public Security Department to which the Family Protection Unit is affiliated. In particular, the Directorate of Social Defense and the Child Labor Unit at the Ministries of Social Development and Labor respectively play a prominent role in supporting juvenile delinquents, working children, children at risk and those exposed to violence. Other ministries such as the Ministry of Environment and the Higher Council for Youth also contribute to the childhood agenda. The National Council for Family Affairs is assigned the mandate of coordinating government efforts in the childhood sector, establishing partnerships with other non-governmental entities and the private sector and mobilizing resources to support the child protection agenda. The Ministry of Social Development and the NCFA represent the National Focal Point for the International Committee for the Rights of the Child and hence share the responsibility of preparing the national reports to the committee as well as coordinating and representing the national position on children rights.

The integrative capacity of government to address the complex and intertwined issues relating to the situation of disadvantaged children and their families is challenged by the current system of civil service. Weak coordination on the one hand and overlapping roles and responsibilities on the other hand are currently being examined within the scope of number of processes aimed at formulating integrated policies and strategies that involve stakeholder ministries and other entities. Staff incentives and performance evaluation may contribute to raising the standards of performance and enhance the effectiveness of cooperation and partnerships between the various ministries and the non-governmental sector. As is being currently demonstrated by the Ministry of Social Development and a number of other institutions undergoing reforms and process changes, these steps are likely to generate the type of institutional mechanisms that would enhance coordination and resource efficiency.

For the categories of **children exposed to violence and abuse, working children, as well as children with disabilities**, the institutional roles and functional gaps will be discussed in terms of the special departments and/or institutionalized programs that have been designed specifically to target their needs. With respect to **orphans and children at risk**, the relevant institutional roles and functional gaps will be discussed within the scope of the program-based operational frameworks that are managed and/ or coordinated by the Ministry of Social Development and the National Council for Family Affairs; which also target other disadvantaged groups. Finally the main institution dealing with **Refugees** is UNRWA and a brief summary of its role and operational gaps will be discussed under “International Organizations”.

1. CHILDREN EXPOSED TO VIOLENCE: FAMILY PROTECTION UNIT (FPU) – MINISTRY OF INTERIOR

In 1997, the establishment of the Family Protection Unit represented a significant milestone in the field of child protection against physical and sexual abuse. Although FPU is an official police unit, yet it is designed to deal only with child assault cases. The unit is currently operating only in Amman, and focuses on sexual offences for all age groups at the national level. The FPU is the main institution responsible for reporting cases of violence. The ministry of Social Development is also another key institution that supports legal enforcement entities (police and courts) if and when cases of abuse are reported. The most prominent NGOs working in collaboration with FPU are the Jordan River Foundation, the Jordanian Women Union and the Family Awareness and Advocacy Center; both of which manage hotline services.

MAIN PROGRAMS

The Family Protection Program^a -which is jointly implemented by FPU with the Department for International Development (DFID)- started in Amman in 2000 and is being currently extended to achieve nationwide coverage. The sociological variations based on geographic considerations are being taken into consideration in the design of these programs. Furthermore, quality standards are being set to assess program output and staff performance.

In addition, a number of training programs are being implemented to ensure that police officers are equipped with the necessary skills to interact with categories of children in conflict with the law or those who have experienced different forms of violence and/or abuse.

PROGRAMMING GAPS/SHORTCOMINGS

- Duplication of efforts as a result of the absence of a national framework for evaluation and mechanisms for institutional coordination is a constraint that currently faces the implementation of several programs. The constraint is being currently discussed within the process of defining the national framework for child protection that is being coordinated by the NCFA and includes a number of stakeholder organizations representing the governmental and non-governmental sectors. One of the main outputs of the process is the definition of clear roles and responsibilities of the various institutions currently active in the child protection sector.
- The capacity of police officers to undertake social responsibilities within the scope of child-related responsibilities is not adequate.
- The role of NGOs and their potential capacity to support government efforts have not been fully exploited in dealing with juveniles and children at risk.
- Limited professional capacity that is available at the operational level as well as the awareness gap that exists within the community.
- The social and cultural influence on the legal system may present an obstacle to legal proceedings of the so-called crimes of honor^b.

^a Based on interview with the director of the Family Protection Program at the Public Security Directorate.

^b “Multisectoral approach toward child and family protection” a paper presented by Ms. Lara Hussein, NCFA

- The majority of existing programs target the mother hence limiting their scope in addressing the incidence of child abuse in the family environment, schools, streets and the work place.
- The weak emphasis given to preventive programs represents another operational challenge and precipitates the tendency for services to be duplicated, overlapping and weakly coordinated.
- Gaps in information and data relevant to child abuse represent a constraint to effective planning and follow up.

2.CHILD LABOUR

MINISTRY OF LABOUR- CHILD LABOUR UNIT

This is a newly established Unit that is currently implementing a series of institutional and capacity development interventions in close cooperation with the IPEC/ILO program (2001-2005). The program aims at:

- Strengthening the CLU through training of staff, in-depth analysis of data, documentation center.
- Finalization of a strategy paper on elimination of child labor.
- Establishing a National Committee to coordinate child labor activities, and a permanent committee on child labor.

MINISTRY OF LABOUR: INSPECTION DIVISION

The division represented by -21 labour offices and 79 inspectors - is mandated to perform inspections covering all registered institutions employing more than 5 workers. The inspection program covers a wide range of issues including occupational safety and health, as well as labour issues (guest workers, women, children).

THE ORGANIZATION FOR VOCATIONAL TRAINING^a aims at providing the Jordanian labor market with skilled labor as well as undertaking vocational testing for all workers. In its 2003 work plan, the organization adopts a number of strategic lines of action that reflect its commitment to enhancing the productivity of the labor force and supporting the small and medium enterprises in the fields of occupational safety and health.

PROGRAMMING GAPS/SHORTCOMINGS

A number of important gaps exist which affect the adequacy and efficiency of service delivery:

- Current inspection practices performed by the MOL are not adequate in terms of their periodicity, technical scope, outreach and quality of reporting.
- Weak coordination between key governmental entities (i.e. MOL, MOSD and MOE) due to the absence of institutional mechanisms.
- Most NGOs working on child labor are still new and their outreach and beneficiaries are limited as yet.

^a Annual report/plan of the Organization for Vocation Training, 2003

- Due to data limitations, it is difficult to assess the magnitude of the problem and accordingly subsequent interventions may not yield the desired outcome.

3. CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

The Government passed legislation in 1993 requiring future public buildings to accommodate the needs of the disabled and the retrofitting of existing public buildings, but implementation has been slow. Since 1993 the Special Education Department of the Ministry of Social Development has enrolled approximately 10,000 mentally and physically disabled persons in public and private sector training courses. It has placed approximately 400 disabled persons in public and private sector jobs. The law requires that 2 percent of the available jobs be reserved for the physically disabled. Private organizations and members of the royal family actively promote programs to protect and promote the interests of the disabled. Jordan participates in the Special Olympics with the active encouragement of the royal family.

The key ministries involved in targeting children with disabilities are: the Ministries of Social Development, Health and Education. Different types of centers provide services to children with disabilities. Government canter have been established by the Ministry of Social Development (28) and the Ministry of Health (2). At present there are 15 private centers for disabilities across Jordan. Other canter operating on a non-profit basis include those that have been established by the Government of Saudi Arabia and the Swedish Organization for Individual Relief in 1968. In addition, national NGO centers have been created by professional societies (27) that are members of the GUVS as well as those that have been created by others that are not members of GUVS. Finally, a number of village and association centers have been established by extended family networks to provide care for their own children who in some cases have acquired official registration and licensing. On the other hand, the national Aid Fund extends direct financial aid in the form of a monthly allowance to disabled children in care centers.

MINISTRY OF HEALTH: The Center for Early Detection of Disabilities

The center was established in 1990 as a result of the collaboration between the Ministries of Health and Social Development. The center undertakes neonatal screening for the 150, 000 newly born/year focusing on early detection of hypothyroidism and phenylketonurea. The center has also introduced early detection of disability as an integral component of the periodic examination of school students.

The public health insurance system extends free rehabilitation services through its hospitals and centers to all children who have registered their disabilities. On the other hand, the center is currently planning a national registry for children with disabilities as well as investigating the feasibility of extending its outreach to different parts of the Kingdom. A communication program is also being implemented to raise awareness on early detection of disabilities as well as to promote health practices. As a preventive measure, a system is currently under design to perform pre-marital health examination for couples.

At present, 60—80%^a of the population receives one form of medical insurance that is offered either by the government or the private sector. The Ministry of Health is currently planning a number of projects in cooperation with USAID and other international organizations to extend the health insurance coverage to all Jordanians and introduce the necessary legal reforms that would support its preventive and curative plans.

PROGRAMMING GAPS/SHORTCOMINGS

^a

- There is a need to establish early detection centers given that there are only two centers operating in Jordan; one in Amman and another is in El Karak.
- The absence of reliable data and information on the number of children suffering disabilities represents a constraint to effective resource planning.
- The approach adopted by the Ministry of Health is based on purely medical principles whether preventive, curative or rehabilitating. Psychological rehabilitation, counseling and support to families are components that are currently underrepresented in the design of ongoing programs.
- Weak mechanisms linking the Ministry of Health and other programs servicing children with disabilities from an operational perspective.
- The current classification of centers/disabilities presents a challenge to families and -to lesser extent-practitioners. Conditions of multiple disabilities in the same child is usually associated with a degree of confusion regarding the listing of the child and the classification of centers that are equipped to provide him/her with the appropriate care. According to the UNICEF study, MOSD c
- Categorizes ADD, Autism and Down's syndrome as mental challenges, whereas spina bifida, muscular atrophy and cerebral palsy are most often grouped together under "physical hindrances and/or handicaps". The majority of centers are classified under the basic or main disability they treat whereas in most instances they offer treatment for more than one disability particularly those that tend to manifest as associated conditions. This explains the discrepancy between the MOSD's classification of centers and that to which the UNICEF study has included in its report.
- Cerebral palsy represents a significant problem given the current prevalence rate of 4/1000 i.e. 100 cases/year. The absence of specialized centers for this particular type of disability affects the quality of care that is currently being provided to suffering children^a. Currently, physiotherapy is available to these patients through non-governmental organizations whose capacity to sustain and provide services are challenged by limited resources and the relatively large size of this category of children.
- Despite efforts targeting disabilities and their recognition as a disadvantaged group requiring special attention, limited financial and skilled human resources represent main challenges in providing high quality and sustainable care to the disabled.
- Gaps in public awareness represent an additional challenge in terms of the level of knowledge of service outlets and type of care that children with disabilities require.
- Certain sociocultural reactions to children with disabilities also impede efforts directed to their integration within society. Psychological and counseling support extended to the family of the disabled child is inadequate to ensure the mainstreaming of a disabled child in their family, school and community environment.

^a Based on an interview with officials at the Ministry of Health

- The success that has been so far achieved in implementing a number of community-based rehabilitation programs across Jordan has not been effectively disseminated.

THE NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR CARE OF THE DISABLED

The Council is presided upon by the Minister of Social Affairs as Chairman and is composed of high level representatives of 7 ministries as members in addition to senior representatives of Armed Forces, the Jordanian Hashemite Fund for Human development (JOHUD), the General Union for Voluntary Services (GUVS), Special Education at MOSD and privately owned centers. Additional members on behalf of families of the disables, three representatives with disabilities, Jordan University, the Secretary of the Council from MOSD, Council of Ministers among others that are chosen based on their concern^a.

PROGRAMMING GAPS/SHORTCOMINGS

- The Council has not yet formulated an effectively integrated operational framework for targeting the needs of children with disabilities based on ongoing programs that are administered by the MoH, MoSD on the one hand, and NGOs on the other hand.
- Capacity resources specialized in supporting children with disabilities
- Government spending on this particular category of children is mainstreamed within the national health budget allocated for overall health insurance. Hence, resources available to respond to the growing demand on services is not met by sufficient financial resources.

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

As a key stakeholder in the child protection field, the Ministry of Social Development is currently undergoing a series of policy and administrative reforms that would shift its focus toward a program-based approach to enhance its capacity and response - from an effectiveness and efficiency perspective- to the needs of disadvantaged categories of children. As such, the Ministry has streamlined its operation into a number of key programs some of which target disadvantaged groups. Among these are:

- Program for Care of Juveniles in conflict with the law
- Program for Juveniles in need for protection and rehabilitation
- Program to monitor behavior

The role of the Ministry in addressing orphans, children at risk, juveniles are discussed below in light of the new directorates (5) that have been established as a result of the reform process. The program gaps and shortcomings are being presented as the basis of the ongoing reforms. Their identification has been based on interviews with the MoSD officials:

MoSD-Directorate of Family and Social Security

The directorate will address the categories of disadvantaged children in a coordinated manner that reflects an integrated vision. The vision is based on a clear recognition of the following gaps and a political commitment that is backing up the ongoing reforms.

PROGRAM GAPS/SHORTCOMINGS

- Weak capacity of staff supervising institutionalized children.
- Lack of staff motivation to undertake their responsibilities in an effective manner.

^a Study on Care Centers for Children with Disabilities in Jordan, UNICEF, 2000

- Childcare curricula are often lacking recreational and skill development aspects.
- Child participation and interaction is weak
- Limited space available for a growing number of children requiring institutionalized care
- Shortage in household equipment and furniture supplies at the institutions
- Vague definitions of targeted groups and the absence of standardized criteria defining eligibility for assistance and institutional care.
- Absence of quality assessment criteria to monitor performance and service delivery
- The psychological needs of the child are not adequately accommodated in the design and delivery of services
- Insufficient numbers of (probation) parole officers
- Capacity of parole officers in terms of handling children requires further assessment
- Detention centers and procedures for children at risk are currently the same as those applied to juvenile delinquents
- Inadequate extension and family counseling services.
- Weak coordination and cooperation with NGO experiences.

THE NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR FAMILY AFFAIRS

The NCFA was established in 2001 as an umbrella organization and a national coordinating body in the field of human development in Jordan. and has the following responsibilities as stipulated in Law number (27). These responsibilities include:

- Working on enabling families to effectively participate in life with particular emphasis on issues relating to women, children and youth.
- Monitors and follows up on the efforts and endeavors that will lead toward achieving the goals of international laws and conventions relating to issues of family, women, children and youth and which have been ratified by the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.
- Participating in the development of legislation and the formulation of policies to ensure that the needs, security, and stability of a family are observed.

The Council's work consists of eight sectors relating to the protection of family and its members. The NCFA provides the national umbrella for the National Family Protection Project (NFPP), which aims at formulating a national framework for family protection. The project is closely implemented with the Family Protection Unit. The intended framework draws on Human Rights principles and involves in its formulation process a multitude of stakeholders representing governmental and non-governmental institutions.

The NFPP will determine mechanisms that are necessary to support institutional coordination, which currently relies on the good personal relations between different operational teams as opposed to being part of the formal institutional processes. The NFPP will also clarify the roles and responsibilities for organizations with respect to their mandate in child protection to minimize overlap and optimize resource efficiency.

While disadvantaged categories of children represent the main focus for the NCFA's scope of work, the NCFA is taking a family-based approach toward addressing their vulnerability and range of risks they are exposed to. In doing so, the NCFA relies on dialogue channels with line ministries and NGOs as well as seeking the establishment of effective institutional mechanism to ensure adequate integration and coordination of efforts targeting these children and their families.

The main programs that have been implemented by the NCFA during 2001/2002 included the development of a comprehensive database including updated information on the Jordanian family and a comprehensive program on Early Childhood Development. The NCFA undertook quantitative research on the Jordanian family to determine priorities and issues of concern. On the other hand, the NCFA in cooperation with the World Bank carried out an assessment on Jordanian Legislations having a direct impact on the family and enforcement mechanisms as the basis for the NCFA's role in proposing legal amendments and enhancing the implementation of laws with national partners. Finally, the NCFA carried out a review of all national strategies and policies that are relevant to the family and its members.

NON-GOVERNMENTAL INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

The Jordanian NGO sector has witnessed a growing number of NGOs in recent years that have adopted various elements of the child protection agenda. In many ways, NGOs working in different parts of Jordan represent important links to target groups and their interventions have contributed significantly to the identification of problems and the demonstration of best practices.

Many NGOs have participated in the formulation of plans and programs and though the principles of partnerships between NGOs and government entities are not legally stipulated, there are a number of successful demonstrations of such partnerships. Among the most active NGOs in the child protection sector are: the Jordan River Foundation, the Noor AlHussein Foundation, the JOHUD, Questoscope, National Union of Jordanian Women, among others. Annex (1) includes a list of key programmes targeting disadvantaged groups that are being undertaken by NGOs in Jordan.

The MoSD is undertaking an assessment of how the role of NGOs can be further developed through legal amendments among others. The vision, to this end, focuses on the transition from a charity approach to a development approach, a shift to clearly formulated partnerships with the government sector and systems to ensure appropriate evaluation and networking of NGO experiences.

PROGRAMMING GAPS/SHORTCOMINGS

- NGOs working in the field of poverty reduction are typically concentrated in rural and remote areas with limited presence in urban areas despite the fact that two thirds of the poor live in the cities according to estimates. Among the reasons cited for the limited presence of NGOs in cities is the fact that extreme poverty during the 1980s was concentrated in rural areas. The relative difficulty in re-establishing an identity for the NGOs within urban communities in addition to their limited financial resources is likely to have impeded any plans to relocate or reconsider their geographic focus.
- The multitude of non-governmental organizations operating in the child protection sector and development at large does not necessarily entail a rich diversity in the kind of services they offer or programs they administer. Rather, the NGO sector in Jordan tends to be highly competitive over a limited supply of resources. In the absence of an effectively coordinated agenda for the sector, efforts are often duplicated and in many occasions inefficiencies are encountered.
- The absence of mechanisms linking government interventions with NGOs experience represents a constraint to effective programming and networking.

- The lack of differentiation of roles and specialization among NGOs creates room for overlap and duplication in certain fields and in others represents a deficiency in development and advocacy interventions.
- The majority of NGOs operate on charity principles as opposed to adopting a developmental approach to addressing their scope of work. This creates a certain degree of dependency by the beneficiaries and jeopardizes the sustainability of initiatives
- With respect to juveniles and children at risk, there seems to be minimal intervention by NGOs despite the potentially significant contributions that they can make to rehabilitation and psychological counseling.
- High dependency on donor funds which may jeopardize the sustainability of programs and interventions.

INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

A number of international organizations extend technical and financial support to the child protection sector. The majority of programs are geared toward sectoral development and supporting NGOs. In the absence of a nationally coordinated framework for disadvantaged children, donor-supported initiatives are traditionally in line with the objectives of individual donor organizations. The majority of initiatives are channeled through NGOs or demonstration projects confined to a limited geographic scope. Little attention has been paid to evaluate these programs in terms of their ability to be replicated at the national level. The higher proportion of these programs in the social development sector focus on capacity building initiatives and interventions targeting women's economic and social empowerment. More recently, organizations such as DFID, World Bank, USAID, CIDA, ILO, and UNICEF have included -within the scope of their assistance- programs and strategies that have been formulated by key governmental institutions such as those targeting categories of disadvantaged children.

UNRWA and Refugees

UNRWA does not specifically track the number of refugees in Jordan who have Jordanian citizenship, which it considers irrelevant to its mandate. In general, Palestinian refugees with Jordanian citizenship have the same rights as other Jordanian citizens. UNRWA's weakened financial state continues to strain the agency's ability to assist the increasing number of refugees in Jordan.

In Jordan, Urea's financial difficulties had the greatest impact on education and health. Although the number of students enrolled in UNRWA schools declined for the seventh straight year (by 1.7 percent during the 2000-2001 reporting year), UNRWA schools continued to suffer from overcrowding, inferior facilities, and lack of extracurricular activities for students. Almost all UNRWA schools in Jordan operated on double shifts. The decline in enrollment resulted, in part, from students transferring from UNRWA schools to Jordanian government schools, which generally had more experienced teachers, smaller student-teacher ratios, shorter school weeks, and better facilities.

UNRWA health care was similarly strained. Budget constraints forced the agency to end individual subsidies for treatment at private hospitals in 1996, a measure that remained in place in 2001. UNRWA referred patients to government hospitals for secondary care during 2001, but was only able to cover a portion of the costs, leaving the remainder to be assumed by the individual refugees in need of treatment. During 2001, however, UNRWA was able to continue

its funding for women with high-risk pregnancies. More generally, Urea's weakened financial state prevented the agency from keeping pace with the demand for refugee health services. In refugee camps, UNRWA has set up 9 community rehabilitation centers for children with disabilities.

In part because of Urea's severe and prolonged budget deficit, the Jordanian government has increased its share of the costs of caring for refugees in recent years. During Urea's 2000-2001 reporting year, Jordan spent \$392.1 million on behalf of Palestinian refugees and displaced persons, five times more than UNRWA spent on refugee services in Jordan during 2001.

According to UNRWA figures for 2001, 990 UNHCR-recognized refugees were in Jordan, 868 of whom came from Iraq. During the year, 4,605 asylum seekers filed claims with UNHCR, the overwhelming majority, 4,095, from Iraq. Although Jordan is not a signatory to the UN Refugee Convention, the government signed a memorandum of understanding with UNHCR in April 1998 concerning the treatment of asylum seekers and refugees. According to the memorandum, Jordan agrees to admit asylum seekers, including undocumented entrants, and respect UNHCR's refugee status determinations. The memorandum also adopts the refugee definition contained in the UN Refugee Convention and forbids the *refoulement*—forced return—of refugees and asylum seekers.

Neither the Jordanian government nor UNHCR considers Jordan to be a permanent country of asylum. Therefore, resettlement outside the region is the only durable solution for the overwhelming majority of UNHCR-recognized refugees in Jordan. Although it normally takes 10 to 12 months to resettle refugees from the time UNHCR approves their applications, the Jordanian government limits to six months the period that refugees may legally remain in Jordan and does not renew identification documents after the first six months have elapsed. The government generally tolerates the presence of refugees after their documents lapse; however, refugees without valid identification tended to be more vulnerable to a variety of protection problems during the year.

III. POLICIES

POVERTY REDUCTION POLICIES

Poverty alleviation is a priority that has been recognized by government and addressed through a number of poverty reduction programs. Social protection policies and mechanisms will be analyzed as they contribute to the reduction of poverty and mitigate the individual family vulnerability.

Poverty is one of Jordan's economic major challenges due to many factors relevant to family size, slow economic growth, and progressive migration from rural to urban areas. The economic recession that Jordan experienced in the 80s had its toll on the poverty profile of the country as a result of high inflation and unemployment rates reaching 26% and 18% respectively. The impact of the Second Gulf War on the situation in Jordan was severe as a result of the influx of 300,000 returnees over a short period of time. Declining social, economic and environmental conditions necessitated a series of economic reforms. In the meantime, the percentage of population living under the poverty line rose from 16% in 1987 to 23% in 1997 according to DOS data. The average population growth is 3.6% (Annual Fertility Survey, 2000). In addition, Jordan hosts the largest population of Palestinian refugees accounting for one third of the total population. This prompted Jordan to implement a number of safety net programs including the National Aid Fund, The Development and Employment Fund, and the Social Security Program. Such measures collectively led to a decline in poverty rates to 11.7% in 1997. More recently, the government launched the 3-year Governorates Development Program with a total cost of 480 Jordanian Dinar.

The Jordanian government's commitment supported by a strong political will to address the impact of poverty was expressed in the reduction targets included in its 5 year economic and social plan (1997 – 2003) to less than 15% and 5% of overall and extreme poverty rates. However, the prominent feature of poverty reduction programs that are implemented by the government is that of a charitable nature in contrast to the more sustainable development based approach. The majority of programs can be characterized by their focus on the impact of poverty as opposed to the causes and hence their tendency to be supply-driven. **One of the gaps of such a policy approach is the dependency it creates among the vulnerable poor and their limited capacity to empower these human resources in such a way that could benefit their livelihoods both economically and socially.**

The current programs to assist the poor fall into three main categories. The first provides direct assistance, the second represents investments in the physical and social infrastructure, and the third category of programs; are geared toward supporting income generation activities.

Government direct assistance to the poor is provided through four main programs: (1) the National Assistance Fund; (2) medical care exemptions; (3) food coupons and subsidies, and; (4) the Development and Employment Fund. Prior to the newly established Social Productivity Program (SPP), there was no clear coordinated governmental policy to alleviate poverty.

The National Aid Fund (NAF) is the primary governmental mechanism providing direct assistance to the poor through the finance of income-generating projects with an interest-free loan repayment period reaching up to 10 years. The NAF provides monthly cash transfers to the unemployable poor and to households without a source of income. In addition to recurrent cash

transfers, NAF also provides loans for self-employment, as well as provides access to subsidized health care for poor households. The total budget of NAF increased from about JD 7.4 million in 1992 to about JD 18 million in 1998, of which 79 percent is disbursed in cash transfers (NAF, 1998).

The Semi-governmental Zakat Fund and various other Jordanian and international non-governmental organizations provide financial aid to poor families and loans for income-generating activities.

The Development and Employment Fund (DEF) extends soft loans to support the implementation of small-scale projects that would further generate job opportunities hence reducing poverty. DEF also gives loans indirectly through the Jordanian Hashemite Fund for Social Development, the Agricultural Credit Corporation, the General Union of Voluntary Societies, and the Noor al-Hussein Foundation. The Noor al-Hussein Foundation also provides interest-free loans. In addition, the Jordanian Hashemite Fund for Social Development plays a leading role in promoting social and economic development in rural areas.

One of the most powerful mechanisms that is being used to alleviate the impact of poverty is **the Jordanian family culture and tribal links** which particularly accommodated the vulnerability of orphans and older members of the family. The traditional structure of the Jordanian family is closely knit which facilitates the support of family members from becoming homeless, as well increasing women participation in development. However, this family model is slowly disintegrating and newly established families are choosing the core family model, which is becoming more visible on the Jordanian social scene across all sectors.

Furthermore, **the Social Security Corporation**, represents a mechanism that aims to improve and expand the scale of protection it provides to all members of the community in many ways through the provision of basic income security, as a result of old age and invalidity, work injury, disability and death. An important theme in the work of the Corporation is to ensure its responsiveness to changes in the economic situation impacting poverty and its compatibility with other ongoing efforts targeting poverty reduction.

Ongoing efforts to improve the physical environment and services for the poor in refugee settlements are implemented through UNRWA, the Department of Palestinian Affairs (DPA), and the Housing and Urban Development Corporation (HUDC). However, funding through these mechanisms has been geared towards maintaining services rather than investing in capital improvements. Over 80 percent of the UNRWA's budget was spent on education and health services over the past few years. An additional 10 percent is being used to operate training centers for women, rehabilitation centers for the disabled, a program of food aid and other relief interventions targeting the extreme poor, in addition to a small self-support program for income generation. DPA also provides some similar services. The HUDC and the Housing Bank have been the main sources of upgrading plans and funds for squatter settlements, assisting over half of the inhabitants in 13 settlements.

Despite these significant efforts, little information is available regarding the coverage of poverty alleviation programs and their capacity -in financial and human resource terms- to accommodate the increasing number of poor families in the country. The Ministry of Social Development statistics indicate that only 40% of poor families received some form of assistance during 1995. **Among the reasons cited for ineffectiveness in reaching out to the poor is the weak coordination between governmental and non-governmental organizations that results in duplication of support efforts targeting some families and certain locations.**

Family vulnerability has been the focus of a number of poverty reduction policies mostly in the health sector and cash transfer programs. However, there are clear gaps in the delivery systems and the programming modes of these policies that affect their access and outreach to the marginalized poor. Addressing family vulnerability requires a clear understanding of household dynamics that are directly and indirectly affected by its economic situation and the sociocultural environment influencing the decisions of the poor. Illiteracy at the family level is an index of family vulnerability, which needs to be more adequately captured in social protection policies. The literacy level of both parents can enhance the government efforts in influencing the sociocultural environment impeding a child access to education and opportunities that may further develop his/her opportunities in life. Particularly so, given the linkages between child labor, school drop-outs and street children. Family stability is another index of family vulnerability that is not clearly addressed within an integrated national policy framework. Moreover, the survival of certain traditions and customs sometimes constitutes an obstacle to the implementation of the Convention and national legislations, particularly with regard to the equality between boys and girls.

CHILD PROTECTION POLICIES

The National Plan of Action for Children 1993 – 2000 was launched as an expression of the will and commitment of the Government of Jordan toward guaranteeing all children civil, social, economic, cultural, educational, political rights. Jordan achieved significant progress towards the achievement of most of the goals for the year 2000 that were identified in the Plan of Action for Implementing the World Declaration on the Survival, Protection and Development of Children in the 1990s. The progress was acknowledged by the Committee on the Rights of the Child as well as other international bodies working in Jordan.

However, some of the issues that are being discussed within the report represent new areas for the government's child protection agenda, for example street culture, school drop outs, and non-traditional forms of violence, and indeed the momentum that is being triggered by ongoing legal reviews, policy development, institutional reforms represent an opportunity to capture the dynamics of the root causes, the symptoms and the outcome influencing the situation of disadvantaged categories. As identified -by a number of reports and many of the experts and policy makers interviewed for purpose of this report- there are areas of overlap and gaps in service delivery and current systems that need to be better addressed.

For many years Jordan has given priority to the issue of child and family protection. In recent years, the government has embarked upon a number of processes and initiatives that are based on mutli-sectoral and multidisciplinary approaches to address the various dimensions of child and family protection. The strategic objective of child protection policies in Jordan is to realize overall social security. Efforts led by Her Majesty Queen Rania Al Abdullah in this field represent significant benchmarks in the child protection field in terms of their highly responsive nature to the complexity of the problems and their tendency to require the collaboration of more than one entity in addressing them.

One of the clear demonstrations of such policy responses is the Child Safety program that was launched in 1998, by the Jordan River Foundation in close collaboration with the Ministry of Social Development and the Public Security Directorate. The project served as an institutional framework for addressing the immediate needs for protecting children at risk of abuse as well as launching a long-term campaign to raise public awareness on violence against children. In 2000, the program established the Child Safety Center "Dar El Amman" to offer protection and

rehabilitation services to abused and neglected children aged 6 - 12 as well as provide family counseling.

The National Team for Family Safety that was established in 2000 represents another form of support to women and children protection from domestic violence and abuse. The team aims at coordinating a national policy framework for the prevention, management and treatment of cases of abuse. The National Team for Early Childhood Development (ECD) -chaired by Her Majesty Queen Rania Al Abdullah- was also established in 2000 to put together a national strategy for ECD in Jordan. Both teams were later institutionalized and are at present part of the National Council for Family Affairs that was established by law in 2001.

In 2003, the NCFA together with the World Health Organization prepared a National Strategy for Family Protection against domestic violence. The strategy relies on a dual approach aiming on the one hand at the protection of individual family members and on the other hand extending protection to the family as a single unit. The strategy is based on a number of operational principles that aim at the following^a:

- § Surveying legislations, studies and strategies that are relevant to family protection and relying on indicators, information and data available to design and implement programs and services.
- § Supporting coordination and integration of efforts between the strategy and other strategic and policy interventions targeting the family
- § Assessing the dynamics of the family as a unit through the identification of new variables influencing family conditions and designing plans accordingly
- § Assessing the needs of family protection across all sectors of society (high and low income families)
- § Developing the communication and sociocultural tools to mobilize the support of public opinion
- § Establishing organizations in the field of family protection to ensure the sustainability of services and the development of human and institutional capacity.
- § Supporting regional cooperation and networking with similar programs across the Arab region

Current policies are focused on the child and to a lesser extent targeting the family, which represent the main link between child and society. While the situation assessment strongly suggest that child vulnerability is an outcome of family vulnerability, the current policy review will draw upon the same link in terms of the assessment of the policy framework and the analysis of programs. The following represent 4 main gaps in current policies targeting disadvantaged children:

- There is a need for the NCFA, together with the Ministry of Planning and other entities, to ensure that programs currently targeting disadvantaged categories of children are effectively coordinated.
- There is also a need to recognize that targeting a particular category of disadvantaged children represents an entry point to targeting disadvantaged families that may host within its members more than one of the categories under discussion. Hence, the need to establish mechanisms for program coordination and institutional networking in addition to the ongoing cooperation that is taking place.

^a “Towards a National Strategy for Family Protection against Domestic Violence”, NCFA and WHO, 2003

- There is also a need to further evaluate the efficiency of program resources in an effort to reduce duplication and effective targeting.
- The inputs- that advances in the telecommunication sector have contributed to the inter-generational relations- represent a communication gap constraining the relationship between family members. Furthermore, the gap has been widened as a result of the transforming family model; from an extended family network to the core family structure.

GAPS in POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

- As child protection policies are translated in strategies and programs, it is important to note the inclusion of certain features in the design of these interventions in order to realize overall social security for the Jordanian child. These are:
- The need to incorporate early detection of delinquent behavior is critical and should be more adequately reinforced in the educational system.
- Parenting skills do not represent a major feature of programs currently being implemented in the field of child protection.
- The role of communication, though increasing, needs to be further developed to instill within the family environment the principles of sound behavior and child rights.
- The current approach that is sought by the majority of interventions positions the child at the recipient end and allows him/her minimal interaction. In many ways, these programs represent a mechanism that targets the child-during an initial phase- for rehabilitation and/or protection with minimal attention paid to his/her needs for protection during mainstreaming within societal norms at a later phase. The nature of protection required for the mainstreaming phase differs from that required during the initial phase and requires further study and assessment.
- The scale of outreach across the country remains limited and the social reaction to such initiatives does not reflect a full recognition of society of such negative patterns of behaviour as a matter of priority.
- Gender-based violence expresses itself as a serious social problem in Jordan. Rates of sexual abuse has reached 11% of total crimes reported in 1995, while crimes of honour rates have reached 23% since 1986, constituting 29% of total murder crimes committed in this period.

HEALTH POLICIES

The public sector in Jordan is the main provider of primary health and hospital care for the poor. The Jordanian government has invested in the establishment of a network of primary health care centers and hospitals; which marks a strong commitment toward enduring health standards for all Jordanians. It is estimated that 97% of the Jordanian population has access to health care as a result of an increased public expenditure on health care in the mid 1990s that reached 9%^a. However, a study undertaken by ESCWA in 2000 warns against the burden of costs of providing health care to the poor in the long run and recommended interventions to increase service efficiency and targeting.

Despite the progress achieved in children's health services, the health system in Jordan does not provide for adequate health care for disabled children, only 2.5% of disabled children in Jordan (105 thousand cases) benefit from government health care services. The majority of children with disabilities receive medical care at specialized centers and facilities that are managed by non-governmental organizations.

Nevertheless, health problems do not manifest themselves as an immediate priority concern in the Jordanian context due to the progressive development in the health care systems in Jordan over the past decade. Nevertheless, it may be worthwhile to examine further the features of the health care delivery systems at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels that specifically tailor to the needs of children with disabilities and other disadvantaged categories. Gaps in health awareness and education at the community level have been identified as concerns in a number of reports. It is likely that the increase in population over the next few years may require a more rigorous approach toward addressing these gaps particularly among categories of disadvantaged children and their families as a result of the poverty situation and its changing dynamics. In 2001, the National Council for the Welfare of Disabled Persons prepared a proposal to establish a national registry of those suffering disabilities^b.

GAPS in POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

- § Constraints in implementing national health coverage policies may appear as a result of increasing population figures which will place a high demand on services and professional skills currently available.
- § The role that the NGO sector is currently playing in providing services for children with disabilities is challenged by the limited and highly competed for resources that is being relied upon (donations and/or donor assistance). This may eventually impact the quality, type and range of service that this offered by these NGOs.
- § The experience of community-based rehabilitation is still limited despite its potential success.

EDUCATION POLICIES

^a Partnerships for Health Sector Reform 2000, Jordan National Health Accounts, ABT, USAID

^b Project Proposal Titled: National Registry of Disabled Persons” prepared by the Technical Committee of the National Registry Unit chaired by HRH Prince Ra’ad Bin Zaid, The National Council for the Welfare of the Disabled Persons, November 2001

The overall objective of education policies is to ensure nationwide enrollment of Jordanian children at schools. Despite budgetary constraints encountered during the 1980s and early 90s, public spending on education reached 16.3% by the mid 1990s. Officials interviewed indicate that this percentage is currently higher. Schools are established in all parts of Jordan.

At present, public schools represent the main outlet for providing free compulsory education for all categories of children including those with mild and moderate disabilities. Juveniles placed under arrest are redirected after rehabilitation to public schools. Programs targeting children at risk aim at their redirection back to schools. The management of a number of NGOs and specialized schools for the disabled have been recently transferred from the Ministry of Social Development to the Ministry of Education to mainstream their services within the Ministry of Education's jurisdiction in a more effective manner.

Several initiatives aimed at capacity development of teachers and child psychologists have been implemented in cooperation with a number of organizations including the British Council, DFID and UNICEF among others. Furthermore, there is clearly a shift in education policy that is attempting to influence the role of the child from the traditional "passive recipient" to assume a more proactive position in the learning process through enhancing his/her knowledge and communication skills and rendering the school environment more attractive. This policy shift has proven particularly effective in reducing the number of school drop-outs as measured by the number of students enrolled at the beginning of every school year. Additional incentives that have been successfully applied to realize high enrolment rates include the meal program and the supplementary vitamin initiative.

The Education Reform for the Knowledge Economy (ERFKE) project was jointly prepared by the Ministry of Education and the World Bank. The project represents a landmark initiative translating the vision of His Majesty King Abdullah II to modernize the economy and society through the application of information and communications technology. This vision includes a number of priorities emerged from the Vision Forum for the Future of Education in Jordan that was held in 2002 where 4 broad initiatives were identified on the reform agenda. These are:

- Lifelong learning
- Responsiveness to the economy
- Access to information and communication technology
- Quality Learning

The ERFKE aims at introducing major reforms within the education sector that cover education and training from early childhood to higher education and advanced vocational and professional training. According to the project document^a, ERFK includes 4 main components that aim at achieving a better learning outcome through reflecting the reorientation of education policy objectives, curriculum development, enhancement of education practices and programs, supporting the quality of the learning environment and promoting learning readiness through early childhood education.

In the field of early childhood development, the Ministry of Education is assuming its mandate to license and supervise all kindergartens (KG). For many years, the private sector was the major provider of KG education. Over the past 4 years^b, the number of KGs established by the Ministry of Education -as part of existing schools- have reached 145 most of which are located

^aDocument titled : "Education Reform for Knowledge Economy" ERFKE project – An integrated project proposal submitted to the World Bank by the Development Cooperation Unit of the Ministry of Education, December 2002

^b This information is based on two interviews with officials at the Ministry of Education held in May 2003

in remote communities. The Ministry is pursuing its plans to increase the number of KGs and is also preparing a new curriculum for early childhood development in collaboration with the World Bank. In addition, teachers are being trained to develop the necessary skills for dealing and interacting with children. Currently 28.6% of the KG-age population is enrolled in private establishments in contrast with 0.8% who are enrolled in public schools.

The number of schools reached 4588 schools by the end of 2000 representing a significant milestone in the education infrastructure. The number of students reached 1.4 million during the same year accounting for a 12% increase compared to 1995 figures. Although the overall rates of school drop-outs appear low in Jordan (0.86% for all classes in 2003), drop-out rates vary significantly by region signifying regional disparities that are not being effectively addressed by national policies. Currently, there are 735 educational supervisors in various Directorates of the Ministry of Education. Counseling services are available in one third of the public schools.

Yet despite high enrolment rates in basic education system and the relatively low drop out rates compared to other countries in the region, there is clearly a number of influences that can further contribute to the increase in the number of school drop outs over the coming years. Education policies do not reflect a clear vision toward quality enhancement of schools and /or curricula. Two facts that have been cited among the main reasons for drop out; second to poverty. In determining the link between working children and school drop outs, the MOL report makes a clear distinction between the economic reasons for child labor and the reasons for dropping out of school to join the working force due to non-economic incentives which further confirms the need to address quality. The report further reveals the need to study the relevance of curricula to career perceptions by students.

On the other hand, the Ministry of Education implements a number of non-formal programs for providing educational services for school drop-outs. In addition to the academic stream, non-formal educational programs are included within vocational training stream that is made up of training and rehabilitation programs supervised by semi-governmental and voluntary organizations. The division of non-formal education is planning a pilot project to organize weekend camps for children below 16 who are working at selected industrial sites. The aim of the project is to develop academic and vocational skills as well as engage the children in extra-curricular activities.

The programs of vocational education underwent a promising degree of progress, which still falls short of fulfilling both; the demand for quality and access. Enrolment rates in vocational education programs increased from 17% and 13% in 1995 to 43% and 23% in 2000 for males and females respectively. The number of vocational education centers and institutes reached 35 by the end of 2000. The illiteracy rate for age categories of 15 years and above decreased from 22.5% to 11% during the same period.

Vocational skills are clearly an area that needs to be further examined within the context of social support and education policies in light of the high demand that has been expressed by school drop outs to acquire such skills to earn a living as a result of the challenging socio-economic conditions lower income segments of the society.

A good example of delivering vocational skills to youth is the INJAZ program, which is being implemented by Save the children in cooperation with a number of ministries, private sector and organizations and is financed by USAID. The 5-year program targets Jordanian youth between 14 – 24 years old in order to enhance their skills as qualified employees or entrepreneurs. The program works to address impediments to entry into the market place faced by youth as well as

building the capacity of youth centers to support the enabling environment for alternative career choices and opportunity to develop skills.

Another programs “El Sadiq” or the FRIEND that is implemented by Questoscope focuses on disadvantaged children who are not accepted within society’s traditional norms. Such a group includes school drop-outs, juvenile delinquents, children under difficult circumstances of poverty and/or family instability, children who are exposed to sexual exploitation, drug addiction. The target age group for the program is 10 – 18. The program has been piloted and relies on the mobilization of community volunteers, psychological experts as well as governmental and non-governmental organizations in a coordinated effort to create a more favorable environment for these children where they can reinforce their roles as respected members of society, access their rights and overcome their individual problems.

GAPS in POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

- § The weak complementarities between the educational and vocational training policies represent a constraint toward adequately offering children alternatives compatible with their academic and technical skills.

- § School teachers do not receive adequate training on gender related dimensions of their work. Their attitudes and teaching practices frequently served to reinforce gender stereotypes and traditional gender roles.

Furthermore, there is a general need to update school curricula to reflect both up to date pedagogy and contemporary issues and to become more flexible and responsive to individual learning abilities and interests. Existing course content frequently lacks development coherence stressing theoretical learning at the expense of practical application of knowledge. An analysis of curriculum contents in Jordan undertaken by UNCIEF indicates widespread gender stereotyping with women portrayed almost exclusively in their traditional roles as mothers and homemakers. In recognition of these problems, curriculum reform efforts are ongoing. In Jordan all textbooks and school curricula have been completely revamped within the framework of the 1989 - 1998 national education reform program and the process of introducing them to classrooms across the kingdom is well advanced.

HOUSING POLICIES

Jordan witnessed a number of forced migrations, the latest of which was the one that followed the Second Gulf War, which led to the sudden return of more than 300.000 citizens. In addition to that, the natural population growth rates are considered some of the highest rates in the world. This contributed to additional pressure on infrastructure and increasing demand on housing units. The crisis was exacerbated due to the concentration of the population growth in a number of cities as in Amman and Zarqa. As a response, the government adopted a number of measures to provide the appropriate infrastructure and implement a number of housing projects as well as encouraging the participation of the private sector in providing housing services through incentives. As a result, the numbers of homeless among poor segments of the society remains low but threatens to increase over the next decade as a result of the rapid population growth rates and the continued migration to urban areas.

CROSS-SECTORAL GAPS IN IMPLEMENTATION of CURRENT POLICIES

The absence of a national poverty reduction strategy that effectively links and coordinates ongoing initiatives contributes to inefficiencies in addressing poverty and its root causes. This is more clearly demonstrated by the following gaps in implementing poverty reduction policies.

- § Government efforts so far have succeeded in identifying the broad context of policy interventions required to enhance the situation of disadvantaged children both; directly and indirectly. The former approach is clear in the earlier overview presented on the roles of institutions and the policies that are being sought to realize child protection. The latter approach relied on poverty reduction programs that are currently targeting families and may not necessarily address the particular needs of disadvantaged categories of children.
- § The poverty reduction context suffers constraints manifesting in the traditional roles and responsibilities of institutions with their tendency to confine the scope of their impact in a sectoral manner as opposed to interdisciplinary, multisectoral approaches that are required to address the complex and intertwined problems contributing to the situation of disadvantaged children. In determining these areas requiring cross-sectoral coordination, the importance of mechanisms for monitoring, follow up and periodic evaluation should not be undermined. In the Jordanian context, such functions are not yet fully institutionalized.
- § Furthermore, the Conventions of the Rights of the Child (CRC) places a great emphasis on a number of rights, the majority of which, are expressed by Jordanian legislations and policies. However, certain gaps have been highlighted by the NCFA's assessment on legislations and this review which need to be bridged to enhance their compatibility and responsiveness to the commitment made by Jordan to the CRC.
- § The participation of children seems rather weak in the implementation of policies. Particularly with disadvantaged categories, it is critical that dialogue and communication channels allow these children to express their needs and become more actively involved in processes whereby these needs are being translated in programs and interventions.
- § The case of working children offers a good demonstration of how governmental and non-governmental entities were mobilized to formulate a national strategy for child labor. While a certain degree of ownership has been guaranteed through the participation of the representatives of these ministries and non-governmental organizations in the strategic formulation process, the process is challenged by an equal degree of vagueness as to the priority ranking of interventions identified as well as the institutional and resource backing required for its implementation.
- § Supplementing existing policies with a preventive dimension in the long term and a fast track dimension in the short term should equip the government with the necessary tools to address priorities and monitor the situation of these categories of children and their families.
- § In assessing policy interventions targeting the poor and categories of disadvantaged children, it is useful to distinguish between two types of targeting: direct targeting and characteristics targeting. Direct targeting makes a clear distinction between the poor and non-poor based on a household identity. The same is used to distinguish categories of disadvantaged children from those who are not. Accordingly interventions can be

selective in terms of their implementation and access. This form of targeting is highly dependant on the ability of government to identify the vulnerable disadvantaged poor. The problem with direct targeting is that the screen required for such identification is expensive and difficult to construct.

§ If providing assistance directly to the vulnerable poor is not feasible, intervening on the basis of the characteristics of the vulnerable disadvantaged poor may be required i.e. characteristic targeting. For instance the poor are concentrated in regions or districts, the provision of public services to those areas could be increased. However characteristic targeting has two potential shortcomings? First some non-poor households may possess the same characteristics of the poor and hence receive benefits (leakage drawback). Second not all poor households may possess the characteristic necessary to qualify them as beneficiaries of the intervention and hence they are not reached (undercover age drawback). For example, due to its eligibility criteria, it is estimated that the NAF reaches 23% of the poor. Shortcomings in the fund operation relate to the following:

- Exclusion of the working poor
 - Reduction of benefits Dinar-for-Dinar when beneficiaries earn income i.e. representing a work disincentive for some, and
 - Over-assistance to the smallest households at the expense of the larger households.
-
- The success of the characteristic targeting depends on the ability of the program designers to minimize these leakages. The design should reverse and minimize inefficiencies that may manifest during the period of adjustment. Accurate identification of the key characteristics of the poor and feasible policies that could change them requires competent and timely research.
 - The review of poverty reduction efforts in Jordan over the past years reveals attempts to introduce a mixed approach combining both direct and characteristics targeting with higher emphasis of the latter. However, certain issues continue to impede such efforts and underpin the perpetuation of poverty across generations.
 - The centralization, weak coordination and institutional capacity in both governmental and non-governmental sectors represent major drawbacks to the implementation of poverty reduction policies. Coordination has been repeatedly emphasized as a prerequisite for the success of poverty reduction programs.
 - Weak coordination has had its impact on the capacity of donors to design programs that are effectively responsive to national priorities and their efforts to coordinate objectives and programs to maximize the use of resources.
 - The poor are effectively excluded from institutional processes at all levels; a situation that refers to ineffective organization of advocacy and may jeopardize the appropriateness of initiatives with particular needs of targeted groups. Local ownership of poverty reduction programs has not been adequately demonstrated.

GAPS in IMPLEMENTING POLICIES TARGETING DISADVANTAGED CATEGORIES OF CHILDREN

The Jordanian population is a young society where children below 15 years of age represent about 40% of the country's population. Addressing disadvantaged children within the wider context of early childhood development and the development of parenting skills raises concern about the mechanisms that are in place to deliver such services and the available programs that translate the clear political commitment to this end.

The mainstreaming of rights based principles in national policies is challenged by gaps in existing legislations that represent inconsistencies with the articles of the Convention of the Rights of the Child. Furthermore, the implementation of rights-based principles is challenged by the capacity available at the institutional and community level adequate to ensure that such principles are effectively integrated in targeting disadvantaged children.

Finally, the compatibility of certain sociocultural trends with the government vision to enforce a right-based approach represents a significant challenge particularly as relating to the special needs and vulnerability aspects of disadvantaged children. This is particularly evident with respect to children with disabilities, patterns of domestic violence and physical abuse as well as children employed by the informal sector in hazardous occupations. The following section provides a brief analysis of the gaps as they relate to different categories of disadvantaged children.

CHILDREN AT RISK/JUVENILES

- Increasing numbers of children on the streets, particularly in urban centers such as Amman, Zarqa and Irbid, have become a concern for institutions and professionals working in the child protection sector. Begging is an offence, and accordingly children who are picked up for this crime risk court proceedings, or placement in detention or orphanages.
- Jordanian legislations and policy relating to this category of children remains primarily punitive. These children are viewed as law offenders and threats to social order and are treated as such. Emphasis is placed on legal sanctions against them through the court system while preventive and rehabilitative measures are inadequate. Few NGOs/non-governmental centers have set up programs to support the needs of these children.
- This category of children is currently excluded from benefits to the poor accrued through social safety nets and poverty reduction programs. Moreover the institutional mandate of ministries concerned in the childhood sector does not fully address the range of services that that can mitigate the vulnerability of those children.
- The absence of a national strategy or a clear national framework to address the problem is partly due to its insignificant magnitude at present. However, their rising number on the streets, particularly in cities as a result of increasing poverty signifies a progressive magnitude that requires more effective measure to limit the problem.
- The links between this category of children (who in most instances are school drop outs) with family vulnerability and quality of education have not yet been adequately established at the policy and operational levels. Minimal resources have been earmarked to address the vulnerability of this disadvantaged group through non-punitive measures.

CHILD LABOUR

- Child labor is a product of interwoven multiple factors that do not necessarily fall within the mandate of one entity and cannot be borne by government alone. Although the Ministry of Labor has the primary responsibility for dealing with child labor, intersectoral cooperation (labor, social development, education, planning and youth) and collaboration among governmental and non-governmental organizations has been initiated by the Ministry as an attempt to better integrate efforts to this end.
- A recent study on Child Labor commissioned by the IPEC confirms the poor educational attainment and vocational training of working children aged 13-15 with a majority engaged in craft, trade and elementary occupations.
- Employment surveys conducted in Jordan between 1961 and 1994 are believed to have under-estimated statistics on the prevalence of child labor as households typically are reluctant to acknowledge that they have children working illegally. Moreover, employment surveys do not take into account children who are working in the informal sector, such as children engaged in domestic help, family enterprises, and farming activities.
- The Ministry of Labor is very concerned with studying the phenomenon of child labor and has just completed a field study to examine the prevalence of child labor and to study conditions under which children are working. The Ministry is aware of the need to increase the number of labor inspectors (total 69) and to strengthen mechanisms of inspection and enforcement of the current labor law with regards to child labor. Better coordination is needed between labor inspectors and school counselors and between labor inspectors and social workers for effective prevention and regulation of child labor.
- In 2001, the Ministry of Labor established a child labor unit in collaboration with the ILO program for the implementation of IPEC with a view to prevention and rehabilitation of child labor. The process for the strategy formulation reflects a fair understanding of the range of stakeholders that need to be involved in addressing the problem. However, the participation of the working children and their families in attempting to understand the root causes could have contributed to a priority ranking of interventions required that the strategy does not clearly express. The rights-based approach that is implicitly referred to in the various policies included in the strategy is vaguely described and attempts to its definition do not appear beyond the legislative framework included in the strategy.
- Although the explicit goal of all strategic lines of action identified by the Ministry of Labor is the elimination of child labor, there is likely to be a segment that remains marginalized due to a number of reasons. These lines of action do not clearly indicate alternatives that could ultimately influence the decision of the child to join the labor market. Secondly, the scattered nature of the informal small and microenterprise sector, which accommodates working children may represent a challenge to processes that fail to accommodate within their design an outreach component targeting the sector and a more significant role for NGOs and community-based initiatives based on an evaluated response of these entities to the phenomenon of child labor. Protection of working children from economic and/or other forms of exploitation is a priority in the assessment prepared by the Ministry of Labor. The SME sector seems to be the main employer for working children. According to the study 88% of the children are currently working at

establishments that employ 5 workers or less and 94% of children work at establishments whose workers are fewer than 10.

- The policy dialogue that has been initiated to date by the Ministry has indeed raised awareness among policy and decision makers to the significance of the problem and the need to seek an integrated framework for addressing it. This is evidenced by the set of policies that have been identified by the strategy which include:
 - § Economic
 - § Legal
 - § Educational and Training
 - § Social
 - § Information and Religious
 - § Health and Family Planning
 - § Scientific Research
- The further identification of MoL as a focal point for coordinating governmental and non-governmental efforts is another positive step. Yet the process is challenged by the institutional and resource capacity that is required to back up its implementation for which there is no clear indication in the strategy report. Moreover, the extent to which this strategy has been communicated and mainstreamed in national economic and social plans is undetermined which poses a risk to this ambitious plan in realizing its objectives.
- An additional challenge that is not clearly addressed in the strategy is the means/mechanisms through which these policy interventions will be communicated, executed and evaluated at the community /local level. This raises the question of institutional capacity at the local level and furthermore the degree of empowerment of these institutions to undertake these interventions in a timely and effective manner. The mechanisms referred to in the strategy represent a series of interventions that need to be further elaborated upon within a clearly coordinated national framework describing the roles and responsibilities of institutions, time bound targets and operational mechanisms and means necessary for its realization.

CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

- Accurate statistics on disabilities in Jordan are difficult to obtain because families with disabled members are reluctant to acknowledge the disability, especially if the disabled person is a female.
- Institutional care and rehabilitation reach very few in Jordan as only 2.5 percent of the estimated 105,000 disabled children receive specialized service. This is partly due to the lack of available services, and partly to the high cost of care. Over 37 percent of disabled people come from households with a monthly income of less than JD 50, and hence cannot afford specialized services tailored to their needs.
- Different types of disability are given priority in terms of service availability and access. Mental disabilities receive the highest coverage (6.3 %), followed by cerebral palsy patients (5.1%), those suffering hearing impairments (4.5 %), those with multiple disabilities (1.8%), those suffering visual impairments (0.9 %), and finally those suffering physical disabilities (0.3 %).

- There are almost no services available to children with learning disabilities or behavioral disorders, and those services that are available tend to limit treatment to children aged six to fourteen.
- Education and care services extended to those suffering disabilities during early childhood are inadequate.
- Many special education teachers have no specialized pre-service training.
- Limited progress has been made through community-based rehabilitation (CBR).
- Government policy in this regard mainly adopts a medical perspective to addressing the vulnerability and special needs of children with disabilities.

CONCLUSION

Assessing and managing the vulnerability of disadvantaged children is among the primary functions of a child care system which interacts with a set of subsystems such as legal enforcement and compliance mechanisms, social services including health, education and infrastructure, protection facilities and social security. In addition, they are regulated by interdependent legislations, administrative norms and financial flows.

The preceding review considered the linkages between these subsystems and their subsequent relevance to the question of political will and social demand as relating to the situation of disadvantaged children. Social demand touches upon issues of public attitude and available outlets for participation in improving livelihood conditions for this vulnerable group.

Within this context, the final section of this report attempts to provide an objective analysis of the existing policies in terms of conditions for disadvantaged children and their families on the one hand, and on the other hand, decision-making processes and the existing governmental and non-governmental institutional framework. The main points revealed by the analysis are:

- The balance between governmental and non-governmental inputs to the situation of disadvantaged children is difficult to draw in concise terms of complementarily and a coordinated response to the needs and rights of disadvantaged children. However, the participation of NGOs in a number of policy formulation processes gives an indicator of the government commitment to supporting advocacy and grassroots initiatives and their recognition of their role in implementing the child protection agenda. Moreover, the nature of the relationship between the governmental and non-governmental sectors expresses a national vision towards partnerships that does not necessarily distinguish between national and international NGOs. The organization of the NGO sector and its development requires a closer understanding of its dynamics and a process to enhance its coordination and capacity development
- While quantitative research on each category of disadvantaged children seems pertinent, equally important is the need to use available assessments as a qualitative baseline that can define fast track interventions at a policy/program level.
- The national framework for child protection represents a scene that is highly visible and dynamic yet weakly coordinated. Furthermore, the absence of monitoring and evaluation processes from institutional functions presents a challenge to progress in addressing child vulnerability, defining risk and assessing risk mitigation and control interventions.

- The weak participation of families in planning children initiatives is evident through the absence of mechanisms for dialogue with the poor. The fact that children drop out of schools to join the labor market indicates a pressing need for a child and their family to discuss the reasons underlying such a decision. The current interaction with categories of disadvantaged children and their families is a one-way process that positions them at the periphery of decisions that directly impact their lives.
- Many of the NGO initiatives tend to rely on similar approaches that can sometimes overlap. The weak response of NGOs to new challenges that the urbanization of poverty introduces is indicative of their limited capacity to diversify their experiences and their traditional approach toward addressing changing vulnerability of the poor.
- Furthermore, in assessing NGO experiences there does not seem to be wide scale attempt to link beneficiaries in a proactive role toward disseminating their own experiences and supporting others. Questoscope has successfully demonstrated this approach and there is a clearly a need for its wider dissemination.
- The maintenance of a regular financial flow to the child protection sector and its development needs seems to be jeopardized by insufficient resources both human and financial. There is an urgent need to consider investments to the development of a skilled human resource base with the qualifications necessary to implement national plans.
- Mechanisms linking government and non-government initiatives exist at an operational level and tend to rely on the participation in committees and meetings. However, there does not seem to be sufficient evidence on the degree of institutionalization of such mechanisms to ensure effective partnerships between governmental and non-governmental entities.
- The transition from needs-based approach to a rights-based approach cannot rely on the existing institutional framework alone. The burden of such a transition is currently shouldered by the NCFA and a few ministries (Labor, Social Development, Education and Health). The role of local authorities in this regard is almost lacking and requires further assessment to determine capacity needs both in terms of human resources and infrastructure required to address the special needs of disadvantaged categories of children in low income urban areas and Bedouin communities.
- The focus that the government has assigned to child labor, violence and early childhood development serve as sound demonstrations for addressing the vulnerability of a disadvantaged category of children through a national strategic framework. The complexity that the child labor situation reveals and the interrelatedness of quality of education, family socio-economic status and law enforcement mechanisms highlights the need to tackle those issues simultaneously, using a non-conventional approach and in an integrated manner to ensure effectiveness of the plan.
- The situation of girl's -though not strictly a disadvantaged group- reflects a number of gender biases that cannot be resolved only through legislations. Unfortunately programs targeting women focus on their economic and to a lesser degree social empowerment and do not emphasize the need to overcome negative traditions and violence practices against girls. Girls need to become more visible on children agendas. Other gender considerations such as violence among boys need to be also considered.

- Children with disabilities face a number of serious challenges that start at the family level. Despite their documented success, community-based rehabilitation programs do not represent a priority in the national policy framework. There is a heavy reliance on NGOs to cater for the special needs of this disadvantaged group and their efforts fall short of fulfilling the psychological and rehabilitation needs of this category of children.
- The national institutional framework needs to be further consolidated and based on a clear assignment of roles, responsibilities among governmental and non-governmental institutions. The sustainability and replicability potential of many of the ongoing initiatives can be further enhanced through a consolidated national vision that builds on lessons learnt and best practices.
- As the Jordanian population grows, there is likely to be changes in social and cultural trends that may influence the vulnerability of disadvantaged groups. The coping capacity of society to respond to such changes is currently limited as is indicated by many observers. There is clearly a need to raise the awareness on early childhood development, parenting skills as well as abusive and negative patterns of behavior.
- At present education policies rely on formal education programs that may not cater for the special needs and interests of categories of disadvantaged children. Alternative education programs have not been effectively demonstrated on a wide scale to manage school drop-outs or eliminate gender disparities within the formal education systems. Moreover, the shortage in educational program targeting children with disabilities reduces their opportunity to develop their skills and enhance their roles in society.
- The concept of child protection within the Jordanian context needs to be redefined to capture right-based principles. The school environment, as well as the quality of education, has been reported among the reasons underlying school drop outs. National educational policies have focused on expanding the infrastructure and personnel with little attention being paid to these two important features of the educational system.
- Finally the role played by media and communication channels needs to be assessed and developed to support policies and programs in the child protection sector. An example of such tradition is domestic violence. The role of social communication programs and that of community leaders needs to be further enhanced to address these issues.

Part Three

Policy Framework and Recommendations

Introduction

This part represents the third phase of the National Study of Disadvantaged Children, which focuses on the future through a set of policy and program recommendations to improve the well-being of the disadvantaged children in the country.

The discussion is divided into three parts: the first part will be an analytical discussion of some of the key issues or conclusions about the situation of the disadvantaged children and the current policies and programs that deal with the disadvantaged children in Jordan. The second part will discuss and develop a policy framework for dealing with the issues and problems of the disadvantaged children. The third will develop a set of recommendations for future policies and programs.

1. Analytical Discussion:

The previous two parts of the strategic paper demonstrate very clearly two major points. First, that the disadvantaged children is an emerging problem that is expanding in terms of size, scope, and depth. There is also a lack of adequate knowledge and information about many of the categories of children under discussion that indicate a very weak knowledge base about disadvantaged children, which is a major deficit for planning policies and programs that address the issue pertinent to this group. Furthermore, there is also little knowledge about the effectiveness of the current programs in dealing with their problems. However, the available information does point out that the disadvantaged children in Jordan are a problem that needs immediate attention. Second, the studies also reveal that the government and the non-governmental sector have responded to this problem in a variety of ways and through different programs. This implies that there is a high level of awareness about the need to tackle this problem. It is also obvious that the current response does not match up with the challenges presented by these groups.

Before introducing the policy framework and the policy recommendations in the second and third parts, it is important to highlight the main issues or factors that might have contributed to the emergence of this problem or the issue that needs to be focused on in the future.

1.1 Poverty and Disadvantaged Children

Poverty seems to be one of the major factors that affect all groups of disadvantaged children. It is a major cause of school drop out, child labor, violence against children, delinquency, and street children. It might not be a major cause of disability, but it's an aggravating factor. The increase and widespread of poverty in the last 13 years in Jordan has magnified the problems of disadvantaged children. The failure of poverty alleviation policies and programs to reduce poverty and address these needs of these groups has been a major factor in this issue; poverty has a multiplying effect or impact on disadvantaged children or to say the least it's a major risk factor.

1.2 Poor Educational Management

Educational achievement has been the benchmark of social development in Jordan in the last 30 years. In any measure taken, primary education is compulsory and free and schools are almost everywhere. The primary school enrolment is very high for both males and females. However, it is evident that the educational system has grown in a way that made it less responsive to the disadvantaged children. The most obvious case is the growing percentage of school dropouts that is considered to be the cause of many problems of the disadvantaged children. The educational system is very centralized on the level of formal education and has not considered any other form of education. The quality of education in public schools has deteriorated and has been less attractive to students. Therefore, the educational system became inflexible and not responsive to the needs of disadvantaged children in different areas of the country. This resulted in the poor management of the educational system, which became a major factor in contributing to the emergence and continuation of the problem of the disadvantaged children in the country. However, the Ministry of Education is embarking in a very ambitious reform program of the educational system that addresses many of the current shortcomings of the current situation. The Educational Reform for Knowledge Economy (ERKE) aims at improving the quality and access to education, improving school environments, and developing IT as a major educational tool. The reform program does not have special programs for disadvantaged children, but it is believed that its overall impact will be positive.

1.3 Poor legislative Protection

Although Jordan has much legislation that aim at the protection of children, many of these laws are inadequate and unable to respond to the diversity and complexity of the needs of the disadvantaged children. Additionally, Jordan has not been able to develop its laws in accordance with international treaties or conventions that has already been signed or has failed to ratify these conventions. Of particular interest here is the Rights of the Child Convention (CRC). In other aspects or dimensions even when laws exist, there is lack or a weak enforcement of these laws. The result has been a weak legislative environment with ability poor to provide protection of disadvantaged children. This is applies to many aspects of children lives, but particularly the case in the areas of education, violence against children, disability, and delinquency.

1.4 Breakdown of the Family.

The Jordanian society is in the midst of major social transformations. These transformations are far reaching in their impact and affect all aspects of social structure. The family is one of the major insinuations that are being affected by these changes. The shifts from rural to urban and from the extended to the nuclear family type, and the rise of poverty have exerted great pressure on the family structure and value system. The pressure and strain has added to the burdens of the family and is contributing to the break up of the family. The increasing rates of divorce and violence within the family are clear examples of the fact that the family institution is in trouble. The breakdown of the family is also considered to be a major risk and source of the problems of the disadvantaged children. The current programs and polices are mainly targeting the children as individuals within families and not targeting children as members of these families.

2. Policy Framework.

Moving forward towards the development of policies and programs that deal with disadvantaged children in Jordan requires the development and adoption of a multi-dimensional, multi-field and an integrated policy framework that aims at creating an

enabling environment that can work effectively towards solving the problems of disadvantaged children in Jordan. The policy framework should be considered as a strategic framework that provides guidelines for policy and program development in the country. It should take the following issues into consideration.

- 2.1 Policies and programs designed for disadvantaged children have to be based on knowledge of the size, characteristics, and causes of the different disadvantaged categories. Quantitative and qualitative data must be gathered and analyzed periodically on the different categories of disadvantaged children. Research results should form the basis of policy and program development in this area. The knowledge base about disadvantaged children is very weak and inadequate for the development of future policies.
- 2.2 To effectively deal with disadvantaged children legal reform of the laws and regulations dealing with disadvantaged children must be a priority of the national agenda. Legal reform does not automatically imply changing the existing laws. For certain laws change is required, but reform should go beyond changing laws and regulations. The reform agenda should also aim at harmonizing the existing laws by streamlining of the various existing laws to avoid contradictions and duplications. Reforming the legal structure also should reach the court system (Judges, lawyers, and courts), to make them aware and more responsive to the needs and rights of disadvantaged children. Also, reform of the legal system should introduce support services such as psychological and social support. In this regards, the move to children's rights approach should be the strategic goal and guiding principle for any future reform of the legal system.
- 2.3 Although a considerable level of coordination and cooperation between different government agencies and between government and NGOs does exist, but the level of coordination and cooperation is not adequate in its present form. Coordination and cooperation between the different parties involved should be a major feature of new strategy for the disadvantaged children. It should move from mere coordination and cooperation to partnership relations. It also should take place at all levels: planning, design, monitoring and evaluation. Also the coordination implies integrating programs that deal with different categories of disadvantaged children because of the linkages and connections that exist between these different categories in reality.
- 2.4 A looking forward strategy should tackle the issue of governance. At present, most policies and programs are centralized at the level of planning and implementation. Also, most institutions are concentrated in the large cities and mainly in Amman. In order to be more responsive to the needs of the disadvantaged children, decentralization of programs and activities must warrant a serious consideration in the future. Local authorities and NGOs have not been involved in the efforts of (policies, programs) targeting the disadvantaged children. This matter could be addressed through the full design and implementation of projects locally and in each governorate. This can be achieved through two approaches: firstly, by increasing the outreach and the activities of organizations located in Amman, and secondly by strengthening the local organizations or by providing the support for the creation of new organizations. The latter approach seems to be more appropriate since it provides the opportunity for more participation of children and youth in the local projects and creates a sense of ownership for the programs and its objectives and

therefore makes more sustainable. The current governorate development program provides an excellent opportunity for addressing the disadvantaged children issues.

- 2.5 Since poverty is considered to be a major risk for disadvantaged children, poverty alleviation is an essential long-term strategy and investment for dealing with disadvantaged children. There are many poverty alleviation programs that are directed at disadvantaged children, but most of them deal with the symptoms rather than the causes. What is needed in the future is to create pro-poor policies that not only provides assistance to the poor but also creates an enabling environment for them.
- 2.6 Future strategy for disadvantaged children must go beyond the curative approach that dominates the current existing policies and programs. Future policies should focus on the three types of policies that should be linked in reality. The first type of policies, which represents a long-term investment in children, is the preventive set of policies. Here the focus is on targeting the causes of the problems. The second type is the curative policies that aim at treating or alleviating or meeting the needs of disadvantaged children. The third set of policies and programs should aim at the rehabilitation and the integration of children in their families, communities, and the larger society. Integrating these types in specific programs is an important step in the policy change.
- 2.7 Future policies should not only target disadvantaged children alone, but should also take into consideration the families of disadvantaged children. There is no need to overemphasize the role of the families in dealing with the disadvantaged children at all levels of the problem. Targeting families aims at creating the proper social environment for them. Policies and programs that only target disadvantaged children have limited chances of success in comparison to policies and programs that incorporate the family in these efforts. Targeting children and families together will more effective.
- 2.8 The research indicated the need for organizational development in government and non- government sectors. This issue is reflected in the programming processes, fund raising activities and furthermore, the documentation of experiences and approaches. Training programs on participatory approaches to ensure maximum participation of children in all phases of the project should be conducted in addition to baseline surveys and impact assessment approaches, which are the tools for measuring performance and achievements. Children participation in design should be considered as an indicator to project success. The development of the organizational capacity of organizations working in the field of disadvantaged children should a key priority issue for future policies.
- 2.9 Most organizations working with youth in Jordan operate in at least two sectors. While multiple interests of organizations increase the size and outreach of services, it hinders the accumulation of specialized experiences and hence the maturity of programming. It is essential for organizations to build specialties in the different sectors. This will enhance the quality of services, and therefore improve the relations between the organizations and the communities they serve. This in turn will encourage communities to deal with these organizations as recognized references in the arenas of their specialties, and subsequently, organizations can earn community

support that provides momentum for advocacy in Jordan. Within the same context, the research indicates the need for a serious review of programming strategies in the sectors of education. Recreation and participation, where needs of distinct target groups are studied and comprehensive programs are designed with the participation of youth.

- 2.10 Private sector and media are emerging to be major players in the development process in Jordan. Youth and children are the private sector's largest segment of human resources and consumers, they also comprises media's major audience. Therefore mobilization of the private sector and the media towards the disadvantaged children and youth interests and issues is quite essential. The few attempts of media and private sector mobilization could be studied and used as a demonstration for such approach.
- 2.11 Future policies should aim at creating partnership relations with higher educational institutions. Universities have a wide geographical coverage and the academic and research infrastructure, and the human resources in different fields of or areas. Partnership in establishing centers of excellence for conducting research and training and capacity building is essential for future policies.
- 2.12 Working with disadvantaged children involves many ethical issues. Therefore, the development of codes of ethics and standards or guidelines for dealing with disadvantaged children is a priority. Codes of ethics should be developed both at the level of staff and organizations. The development of ethical standards will be an important step for the protection of children's rights.
- 2.13 For the future policies dealing with disadvantaged children, it is important and essential to seek partnership with international organizations working in the field of disadvantaged children to benefit from their expertise and experience in this area.
- 2.14 In the current policy environment, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programs is very weak. Monitoring and evaluation of programs implementation has to be an integral part for the future policies in these areas. It should be built in the program design and be part of the program cycle as well.
- 2.15 Future policies should pay attention to the development of skills and expertise of the staff working with disadvantaged children. Working with disadvantaged children has to be made attractive and rewarding for those involved. Developing the skills of professionals is very important for the success of programs. Incentives and rewards for staff is a key to upgrade the capacity of staff in this field. It is also important to institutionalize the profession of social workers working in this area.
- 2.16 Develop a national research agenda for the disadvantaged children based on the priorities of this category.

3. Policy Recommendations

In this last section of the report, a set of policy recommendations and or options is presented. These recommendations build on the already existing policies, but at the same time attempts to go beyond the current policy approaches already in place. The first part of

the study identified seven categories of the disadvantaged children. The policy recommendations are organized along only five categories. The refugee's category has not been included because it does not represent a disadvantaged category as such, but it might have all the categories of the disadvantaged categories. Also refugee's children are the beneficiaries of many already existing programs and there are no barriers for them to benefit from future programs and activities. So the recommendations set forward for these categories could apply to the refugee's children. Also the recommendations for the category of the street children have been incorporated in the child labor and juvenile delinquents categories because of the applicability of these recommendations to this category. Finally, these set of recommendations advanced in this section should be taken in light of the policy framework discussed in the previous section when moving to the planning stage. Most of the points raised in the policy framework are applicable to a degree or another to all categories of the disadvantaged children. Finally, future policies should be gender sensitive and attend to the special needs of the girl child.

1. Child Labor and Street Children.

- 1.1 To make cash transfer policy that is already exist and implemented through various cash transfer programs conditional on sending school dropouts back to school. The conditionality of cash transfer could be extended to other areas such as health.
- 1.2 Provide subsidies to poor families that are prone to having working children so they can afford their children's schooling. Subsistence can be in the form of income subsidies and/ or nutritional supplements.
- 1.3 Improve the quality and availability of schooling by investing in education so as to increase the value of education both to children and parents.
- 1.4 Introduce more flexible school schedules and more relevant curricula. This should be done according to the needs of communities (rural, pastoral...etc).
- 1.5 Introduce more innovative methods that supplement the formal educational systems. These methods include informal and non- formal education, the use of ICT as a teaching tool, the use of peer education, and the use mentoring teaching methods.
- 1.6 Strengthen the involvement of the local community stakeholders such as parents, local NGOs, and local authorities (municipalities) in support of instruction and any other program targeting children.
- 1.7 Develop mechanisms that supplement labor laws in the following areas: enforcement of compulsory education, and protection of children working in the informal sector (family enterprises. etc).
- 1.8 Establish linkages between ministries involved in child labor (ministries of labor, social development, education and health to maximize efficiency and coordination and to avoid contradictions and duplications.
- 1.9 Develop the capacity of both the government institutions and NGOs working in the issues of child labor.
- 1.10 Develop the vocational training programs to make it more responsive to the needs of the disadvantaged children and to the labor market as well.
- 1.11 Strengthen the knowledge base through studies about child labor (size, causes) and studies to evaluate the effectiveness of current programs and policies; current knowledge is not adequate for effective programming.
- 1.12 Strengthen the inspection mechanisms of the Ministry of Labor and expand it to cover the informal sector and family businesses. Dropouts do not only come from poor families but also from income earning families.
- 1.13 Amend the law in order to specify the types of work (other than dangerous work) that should be prohibited for children to do. Also, extend the responsibility of violating the child labor law to individuals and institutions that hire children.

2. Children Exposed to Violence:

- 2.1 Reform the laws that deal with child protection to conform with CRC and to deligitimize the use of force disciplining children of particular interest and importance is article 62 of the Jordanian penal code.
- 2.2 Establish family courts and child defense specialization, and remove all obstacles to fair representation and trials for children.
- 2.3 Strengthen the capacity of the family protection programs specially to enable officers to undertake responsibilities within the scope of child related responsibilities.
- 2.4 Develop the professional capacity of the NGOs working in this sector at the operational level.
- 2.5 Shift the focus of programs from children and mothers only towards the family unit as an essential step towards better child protection.
- 2.6 Extend child protection programs (specially violence against children) to the violence that occurs in the society at large and especially to violence schools and in the street.
- 2.7 Supplement the curative programs with preventive protection programs that target the family as whole and that are community based.
- 2.8 Develop awareness programs to deligitimize the social and cultural acceptance of violence specially violence against the women and the girl child.
- 2.9 Expand the programs that are directed at t at the family to develop the capacity of the parents and the NGOs in the early childhood education.
- 2.10 Examine the patterns of socialization at the societal and at the school curriculum level and modernize it in congruence with the rights of the children.
- 2.11 Conduct studies on child abuse nationwide to determine the prevalence types, causes and arenas of violence for more effective programs.
- 2.12 To conduct evaluation studies of the existing programs at the operational and beneficiary levels.
- 2.13 Expand and generalize the children shelters into other parts of Amman and into the rest of the country.
- 2.14 Develop the school curriculum to incorporate the children rights.
- 2.15 Establish or help the establishment of community-based family counseling centers.
- 2.16 Strengthen the capacity of institutions providing care for abused children by introducing the multi-disciplinary (legal, psychological, and social) care.
- 2.17 Contemplate the establishment of family courts that handle abused cases of children.
- 2.18 Develop awareness programs for those working in the government agencies relevant to the abused children about children rights.

3. Children with Disabilities.

- 3.1 Expand the establishment of the early disabilities detection centers into the rest of the country.
- 3.2 Develop and expand the medical approach at the preventive, curative, and rehabilitation levels into the psychological rehabilitation, counseling and support to families and to make it an integral component of the current and existing programs.
- 3.3 Establish a multi- disciplinary national center for the study of disabilities in the country.
- 3.4 Develop an integrated framework of implementation that regulates the roles and responsibilities of concerned government entities, non-governmental organizations and

communities in order to effectively enforce the legal stipulations of the disabled law N.12 of 1993.

- 3.5 Launch a national awareness programs/campaigns to increase the awareness of the public about the rights of disabled children to educational and health services that is available for them.
- 3.6 Enhance the cooperation between the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Social Development to admit children with simple and mild disabilities that are capable to learn into schools at all levels regardless of the matching between their age and the class level.
- 3.7 Develop training programs for teachers working in the different programs serving disabled children at all educational levels.
- 3.8 Develop flexible school curriculum to make it more responsive to the needs of disabled children.
- 3.9 Develop inspection and monitoring mechanism to ensure the compliance of different actors (organizations) with social and educational requirements (including laws and regulations) in their activities dealing with disabled children
- 3.10 Conduct needs assessment studies for all the disabled categories to establish priorities for provision of and develop tools for assessment and evaluation. This should also include diagnostic tools and management of care provided to the disabled.

4. Juvenile Delinquents.

- 4.1 Develop the legislations dealing with troubled children by expanding the juvenile due process rights.
- 4.2 Develop the juvenile court system to make it highly accountable with flexible procedures, individualized sentences, with a range of intermediate sanctions, and rehabilitative services.
- 4.3 Develop innovative court models that extend to the range of youth crimes such as felony courts, drug courts, and others.
- 4.4 Develop rehabilitation programs for juvenile's delinquents that are community based in addition to the already existing institutions based rehabilitations programs currently in place.
- 4.5 Develop an alternative and supplementary punishment methods of offenders such as community-based services.
- 4.6 Develop crime prevention programs such as youth development programs that are community based.
- 4.7 Develop programs to assist communities in identifying youth risk factors that are related to criminals.
- 4.8 Develop the capacity and awareness of all of these working with juveniles at all organizational levels as well as at all stages of process.
- 4.9 Decriminalize children working in the street.
- 4.10 Amend the law dealing with substance abuse to include items such as glue and gasoline, which fall under the legal category of "substance abuse".
- 4.11 Amend the law in order to allow the legal representation of the delinquent child and to allow child defense lawyers to represent the case of delinquents on behalf of the child.
- 4.12 Develop the mechanisms for supervision and inspection of the juvenile centers by judges as stipulated by the law.
- 4.13 Develop separate institution for the juvenile delinquents and the children who need protection and rehabilitation. The two categories should not be kept in the same institutions and interaction between them should not be allowed.

5. Orphans.

- 5.1 Enhance and develop community based programs.
- 5.2 Develop counseling and psychological programs for orphans at all stages.
- 5.3 Develop the organizational capacity in foster homes in order to create a suitable living and learning environment for institutionalized orphans.
- 5.4 Gradually develop care and protection programs that comply with CRC.
- 5.5 Develop alternative forms of providing care to the institutional care, which should be a final and temporary resort.
- 5.6 Strengthen the coordination between organizations that offer assistance and streamline efforts and programs.
- 5.7 Develop social and economic empowerment program for orphans.
- 5.8 Develop advocacy and awareness programs to de-stigmatize this category of children.
- 5.9 Develop and implement collaborative monitoring and evaluation frameworks to measure progress including indicators, survey instruments, and special studies.
- 5.10 Rethink the adoption policy and examine innovative ways of family adoptions.

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