

CONSULTATIVE WORKSHOP
ON GENDER-TRANSFORMATIVE
APPROACHES IN MAKANI

unicef 
JORDAN
for every child

GTA MAKANI REPORT

JORDAN RIVER FOUNDATION, 8–10 MAY 2023





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UNICEF Jordan's Makani ("my space" in Arabic) Programme aims to promote the wellbeing of the most vulnerable children and youth and support them in achieving their full potential - physical, cognitive, social, and emotional. Since 2015, the integrated Makani programme has offered multi-sectoral services by linking interventions in Education (Learning Support Services); Child Protection; Early Childhood Development; and Youth Empowerment, with a community-based approach.

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

ADAP	Adolescent Development and Participation	NAF	National Aid Fund
ALP	Accelerated Learning Programme	NCFA	National Council for Family Affairs
CP	Child Protection	NSPS	National Social Protection Strategy
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility	ODI	Overseas Development Institute
ECD	Early childhood development	PSEA	Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse
FGD	Focus Group Discussion	PSS	Psychosocial support
GAGE	Gender & Adolescence: Global Evidence	QRF	Quick Reaction Force
GBV	Gender-based violence	3RP	Regional Refugee Response Plan
GTA	Gender-Transformative Accelerator / Gender-Transformative Approach	SBC	Social and Behavioural Change
IEC	Information, Education and Communication	SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
IMAGES	International Men and Gender Equality Survey	SPP	Social Protection & Policy
IRC	International Rescue Committee	SRGBV	School-related gender-based violence
MCC	Makani Community Committee	ToC	Theory of Change
MENA	Middle East and North Africa	UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
MIS	Management Information System	UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
MoE	Jordanian Ministry of Education	VAC	Violence against children
MoSD	Jordanian Ministry of Social Development	VAW	Violence against women
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation	WASH	Water Sanitation & Hygiene



BACKGROUND

Gender-transformative approaches have become the cornerstone for gender-equality programming and advocacy work. The rationale for embracing a gender-transformative approach stems from global scepticism about established programmes: the perception – often borne out by experience – is that well-intentioned programmes are falling short in contributing to system-level and structural change and merely focus on [rhetoric](#). The launch of the global [Generation Equality Forum](#) in Paris in July 2021 was accompanied by a recognition of these concerns, underlining that insufficient investment in gender equality is limiting the progress of the goals established by the milestone Beijing Platform for Action (1995).¹ Recent literature in the public health field, for example, highlights missed opportunities where health systems might have seen transformational change, had it not been for existing gender biases, and a refusal to recognize a gendered dimension in matters at the heart of health systems.² Preoccupation with community-level norms has seen gender-related programming relegated to margins instead of forming the basis for fundamental systemic change. The question of scale (and the capacity to upscale beyond isolated small-scale initiatives) is an important strategy for transformational change, given the obvious need for systemic change and not just working with small poorly resourced programmes on the margins. The gender-transformative paradigm promotes systems level change and initiatives within health systems, but also beyond the health sector, extending to women’s livelihoods and financial independence, operating within the employment or financial arena,

positioned to effect changes in the structural aspects of gendered economic systems.

UNICEF’s third iteration of its [Gender Action Plan \(2022-2025\)](#) aims to foster this paradigm and seeks to articulate a [gender-transformative approach](#) – at minimum, gender-responsive approaches – to guide

“The process is showing it’s a really effective tool which brings together the teams across sectors so that we can look at it from different perspectives and then discuss how we can contribute to really addressing the root causes of gender inequality.”

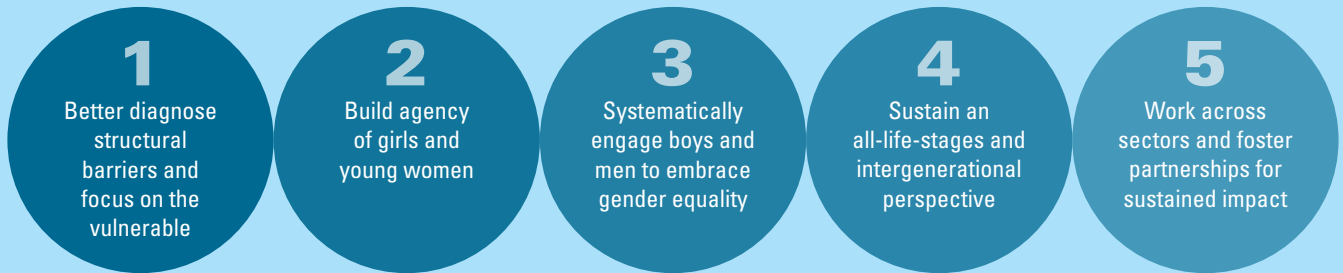
—Makani workshop participant

the planning, implementation and tracking of programme implementation. This framework is mirrored through the Jordan Gender Action Plan Framework (Annex 1 – JCO Gender Action Plan).

The UNICEF Jordan Country Office undertook a three-day consultative workshop (8–10 May 2023) within the framework of promoting gender-transformative approaches in the [Makani](#) programme. The rationale for the workshop was based on the programme’s [impact evaluation](#) findings, which highlighted the need for stronger opportunities to embed a gender-transformative lens into child protection, education and life skills,

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- 1 United Nations Population Fund and the United Nations Children’s Fund Global Programme to End Child Marriage, [‘A Synthesis Paper on the Gender-Transformative Accelerator’](#), UNFPA and UNICEF, New York, July 2022.
 - 2 Malhotra, Anju, [‘The Disconnect Between Gender-Transformative Language and Action in Global Health’](#), Think Piece Series 2021 – The Power of Evidence, United Nations University and the International Institute for Global Health (IIGH), Tokyo– Kuala Lumpur, 2021, DOI: 10.37941/RR/2021/3.

Makani and gender-transformative programming – where do we want to go and why?



and into community engagement strategies, amongst other initiatives. The evaluation also points to the need for gender-transformative approaches to alleviate discriminatory gender norms; to reduce restrictions in access to services, mobility, or other such freedoms or forms of agency; and to overcome barriers to girls' and boys' education and employment opportunities. Several pre-workshop consultations with key Makani implementing partners were held through a 17 April 2023 meeting on Gender-Transformative Programming through Makani. The Figure below provides a snapshot of the rationale for undertaking the GTA. These discussions and subsequent consultations established a consensus to focus on the following two priority areas: 1) **Adolescent Girls' Skills, Agency, and Empowerment** and 2) **Positive Parenting and Community Engagement with efforts to prevent Violence Against Children**

Objectives of the Consultative Workshop on Gender Transformative Approaches in Makani

- 1** Understand, contextualize, and internalize the potential application of gender transformative approaches in select Makani centres, based on an evidence-informed pre-consultation process.
- 2** Discuss, reflect, and undertake in-depth analysis on gender inequalities across all stages of life, but with a focus on adolescents and young people's empowerment (including skills programmes / pathways for young girls' employment), and efforts to prevent gender-based violence (VAW themes including VAC, etc.).
- 3** Discuss and agree on actions that will strengthen gender-transformative programming to address adolescent and youth empowerment.

and Women through a systems lens, including policy and legal reform.

The consultative workshop was facilitated through the application of the [Gender-Transformative Accelerator Tool | UNICEF](#) developed through the UNFPA-UNICEF Global Programme to End Child Marriage, which is one of the largest global joint programmes (having been run in seven countries through 2021–2022), as well as through Girls Not Brides³ (through national networks of CSOs in Nigeria and Mozambique). The GTA tool encourages critical reflection and awareness to understand how programmes can better address unequal distribution of resources between genders, to consider how roles and responsibilities are allocated between different genders, and to assess how legacy power structures secure higher status and privilege for some people. The GTA is founded on guidance to operationalize key gender concepts and frameworks. It presents an opportunity to bring a cross-sectoral group together to strengthen gender-transformative approaches within their programmes, to secure lasting changes for adolescent and young people for a meaningful impact. Inherent in the tool is a powerful interactive and evidence-based approach to reflection and analysis of existing programmes, identifying internal gender biases that obstruct efforts to improve young people's wellbeing and empowerment.

³ A global network of more than 1,600 civil society organizations from over 100 countries committed to ending child marriage and ensuring girls can reach their full potential.



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MAKANI PROGRAMME

UNICEF's Makani ("My Space" in Arabic) programme was established in 2015. It was initially designed to provide informal education and child protection services to Syrian refugees fleeing war in their home country. Today, it provides a wide range of age-appropriate services to vulnerable children, adolescents, and youth of any nationality – Jordanian, Palestinian, Syrian, Dom (a marginalised ethnic minority group) and any other nationalities living in host communities, formal refugee camps, and informal tented settlements. Toddlers and preschool children are offered learning readiness courses to help prepare them for starting school.

For school-aged children, centres offer learning support classes and community-based child protection support. For those in early adolescence, it provides courses in *transferable life skills*⁴ such as communication, critical thinking, and negotiation. In mid-adolescence, the courses on offer are expanded to include financial and computer skills and leadership opportunities. In 2022, the Skills Building programme expanded its framework to strengthen modules on leadership and gender, which explore topics to develop young peoples' leadership skills and to become influencers, leaders, and agents of change.

4 United Nations Children's Fund, 'Global framework on transferable skills', UNICEF, New York, November 2019.

Makani programme interventions address a broad range of needs across all life stages. For instance, the reduced frequency of incidents of violence against children has been seen as partly attributable to parent education sessions.⁵ Parents are offered courses on parenting and literacy skills; these can enhance positive outcomes for children by introducing positive, non-violent forms of discipline, as well as raising awareness on gender norms and gender-based violence. UNICEF has promoted investment in capacity building for key partner staff engaged in Preventing Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA), including work on protection cases, complaints procedures, and reporting sexual exploitation and abuse, as well on training to deal with cybercrime and online violence, with a special focus on girls.

Makani facilitators can also refer children and their families to other services as needed,⁶ building on an inter-agency referral pathway as required. Makani promotes links with the national social protection system. For instance, *Takaful* Plus aims to provide vulnerable Jordanian beneficiaries of National Aid Fund with additional services through Makani centres in host communities.

Similarly, improvements in student enrolment and student performance in schools were reported

by GAGE comparative data. One particularly encouraging outcome noted among Makani female adolescent participants is their ability to engage in sport, and to express themselves; they were also shown to have increased access to the internet, thereby enhancing their voice, agency and autonomy. A recent Makani analysis on building resilience also suggests that when Makani is combined with cash transfers (*Hajati*), this produces a positive impact on adolescents' foundational learning, access to information and personal development skills, and that it also gives them exposure to twenty-first century skills. Some health benefits, including increased mental wellbeing, have also been reported, with older male adolescents less likely to smoke, and adolescent girls having increased exposure to health messages.

In terms of data and evidence, Makani's gender-specific data is regularly collected through the Management Information System (MIS) Bayanati and is analysed and employed in the planning and execution of the programme. In addition, UNICEF undertook evidence-generation and Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) exercises to assess the impact of the programme, including the gender lens for improved programming in the future incorporating the findings of the study conducted by GAGE.

5 United Nations Children's Fund Jordan, '[Summative Impact Evaluation of the UNICEF Jordan Makani Programme](#)', UNICEF Jordan, Amman, May 2022.

6 Presler-Marshall, Elizabeth, Nicola Jones, Agnieszka Malachowska and Erin Oakley, '[UNICEF Jordan's Makani programme: supporting students, building resilience](#)', Policy Brief, Gender and Adolescence: Global Evidence, London 2022.

Makani programme interventions address a broad range of needs across all life stages. For instance, the reduced frequency of incidents of violence against children has been seen as partly attributable to parent education session.

GENDER INEQUALITY IN JORDAN

Research indicates persisting gendered inequalities in Jordan that exacerbate the marginalization of certain groups, including refugees, women and children, people with disabilities, and ethnic minorities. These inequalities show in the low participation of women in the formal labour market, the rise of violence among adolescents, the prevalence of child marriage, and the limited social mobility for girls and women.

Statistics show that children and young people (those under the age of 30 years old) comprise approximately 63 per cent of the country's population.⁷ Young people face age and gender-related risks, as 74.6 per cent of children (79 per cent of boys) have experienced at least one form of physical violence in their lifetime.⁸ [Research conducted by GAGE](#) shows that 63 per cent of boys and 26 per cent of girls in Jordan are subject to violence by their teachers. Boys face multi-layered pressure in relation to behavioural expectations, academic attainment, and future earnings potential.

Girls are faced with a different set of challenges. First, mobility and earnings potential are limited after the school years, as evidenced by the statistics which show that female labour-force participation accounts for only 14 per cent of the workforce.⁹ This undermines not only the



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potential economic contribution of women but also their empowerment and civic participation. Gender norms and perceptions about women's

7 UNICEF Jordan, 'Summative Impact Evaluation of the UNICEF Jordan Makani Programme'.

8 United Nations Children's Fund Jordan, 'National Study on Violence Against Children in Jordan 2019–2020', UNICEF Jordan, Amman, 2020.

9 Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH and United Nations Women, 'COVID-19 and Women's Labour Force Participation in Jordan: A Look into Women's Labour Force Participation through the Lens of the Pandemic', GIZ and UN Women, Amman, October 2022.

potential have an impact on girls' aspirations. According to [situational analysis published by UNICEF in 2021 on the status of girls and women in the MENA region](#), adolescent girls, and especially Syrian girls, have limited occupational aspirations. The analysis also shows that while many girls aged between 10 and 12-years old and boys aged 15–17 have higher goals for professional and academic attainment, they also admit that they doubt they will realize their aspirations. This understanding is shaped by their limited access to skills and knowledge, and adolescent girls often need more assistance (and are more reluctant to seek it) to develop different types of skills that could put to good use in the labour market, like digital and communication skills.

In Jordan as well as in other countries in the MENA region, the perception of a girl's honour is valued over her well-being, and this is used to justify restrictions on the social mobility of girls. [Research done by GAGE](#) indicates that older girls were 38 per cent less likely to leave home every day than older boys. Girls often have their mobility restricted to either school or the home. If boys do not go to school, they can move about in the community unrestrained and pursue other activities including work. [Further research conducted by GAGE](#) also highlighted that older unmarried girls were half as likely as boys of the same age to have a phone for their own use – 35 per cent of older girls compared to 73 per cent of boys of the same age.

Violence against women and children remains high. Twenty-one per cent of women between the ages of 15 and 49-years in Jordan have experienced physical or sexual violence during their lifetime.¹⁰ The COVID-19 pandemic saw an

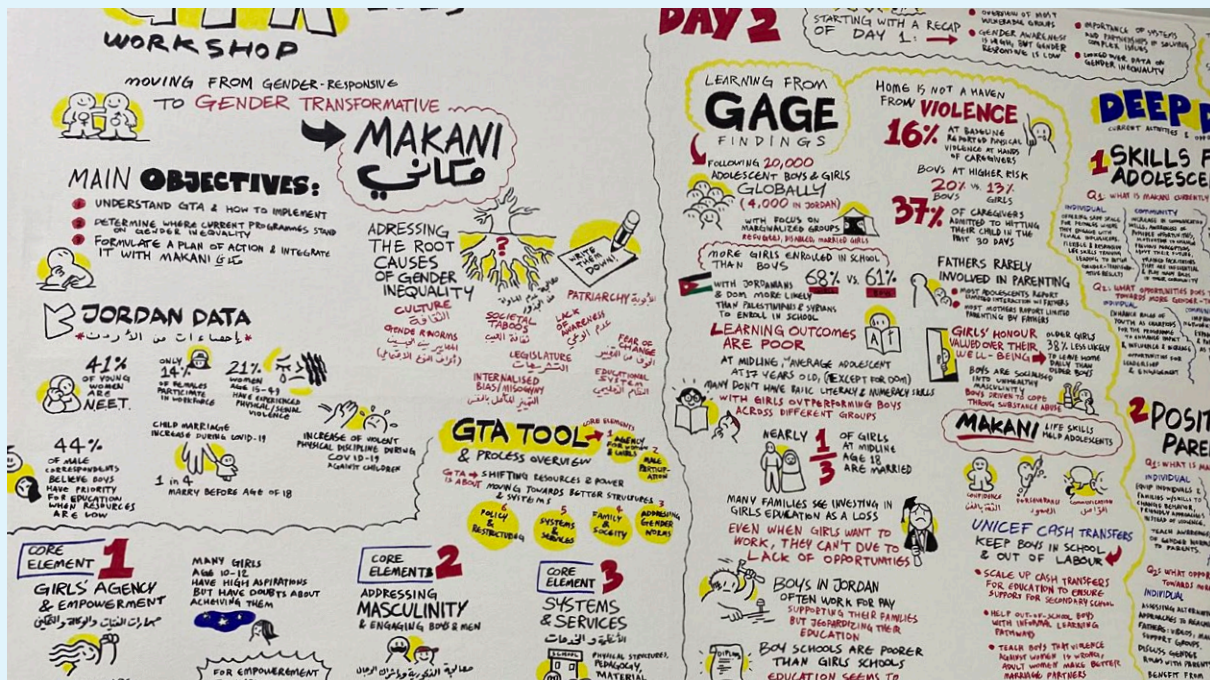
increase in child marriage, which shows how gendered inequalities are exacerbated by crises like the pandemic. While the median age of marriage is 22.9 years for Jordanian women, and 19.6 years for Syrians,¹¹ underage marriage rates in Jordan increased during the pandemic.

The report produced by the [International Men and Gender Equality Survey](#) (IMAGES) further supports these conclusions. Authored by the Center of Strategic Studies at the University of Jordan and the King Hussein Foundation in 2022, and sponsored by UN women, this report is especially revealing because it examines the status of gender equality in Jordan during and after the COVID-19 pandemic and it accounts for the Syrian refugee influx. Among its numerous findings, the report shows that men's views on gender roles are still generally framed by gender-inequitable family responsibilities, including for childcare and household chores.

Educated women, meanwhile, have more progressive ideas on most issues related to gender equality. The report also alludes to the issue of women's participation in paid labour and the fact that women face structural and social barriers, including unsafe work environments and a lack of reliable transportation. For adolescents and children, the report highlights the fact that Jordanian male adolescents enjoy more social freedoms than girls and the majority of the Syrian girls who were surveyed reported having different forms of restrictions on their mobility. The report highlights the prevalence of violence, and Syrian and Jordanian males reported increased levels of various forms of child abuse during the COVID-19 pandemic.

10 Jordan Government Department of Statistics and The DHS Program, '[Jordan Population and Family Health Survey 2017-18](#)', Jordan DoS and DHS, Amman–Rockville, MA, March 2019, p. 258.

11 *ibid.*



CORE ELEMENTS AND RANKING ON THE GENDER EQUITY CONTINUUM

The GTA involves a three-day consultative process, as follows:

DAY 1 Core elements of a gender-transformative approach: A collective assessment of programme interventions, while clarifying concepts, across the socio-ecological framework, through a consultative ranking process across the Gender Equity Continuum.

DAY 2 Deep dives into priority themes: In-depth reflection and analysis of barriers and bottlenecks, and an exploration of opportunities, based on a prioritization of programme priorities.

DAY 3 Road map of actions: Building on the second day, and based on a shortlist of actions, the roadmap involves the articulation of strategic actions along with details of the implementation time frame, support needed, and measures of success; responsibilities are defined and allocated among team members.

Understanding Gender-Transformative Approaches

Gender-transformative approaches aim to address the **root causes of gender inequality** and thereby promote **more equitable outcomes for children** in all their diversity.

As outlined in the [Gender Policy Action Plan Compendium](#) (ODI and UNICEF background paper), a transformative approach promotes gender equality by:

- fostering **critical examination of inequalities** and gender roles, norms, and dynamics
- recognizing and strengthening positive gender norms that support **equality and an enabling environment**
- promoting the **relative position of women, girls, and marginalized groups**
- **transforming the underlying social structures and policies that perpetuate and legitimize gender inequalities**

The Gender Equity Continuum

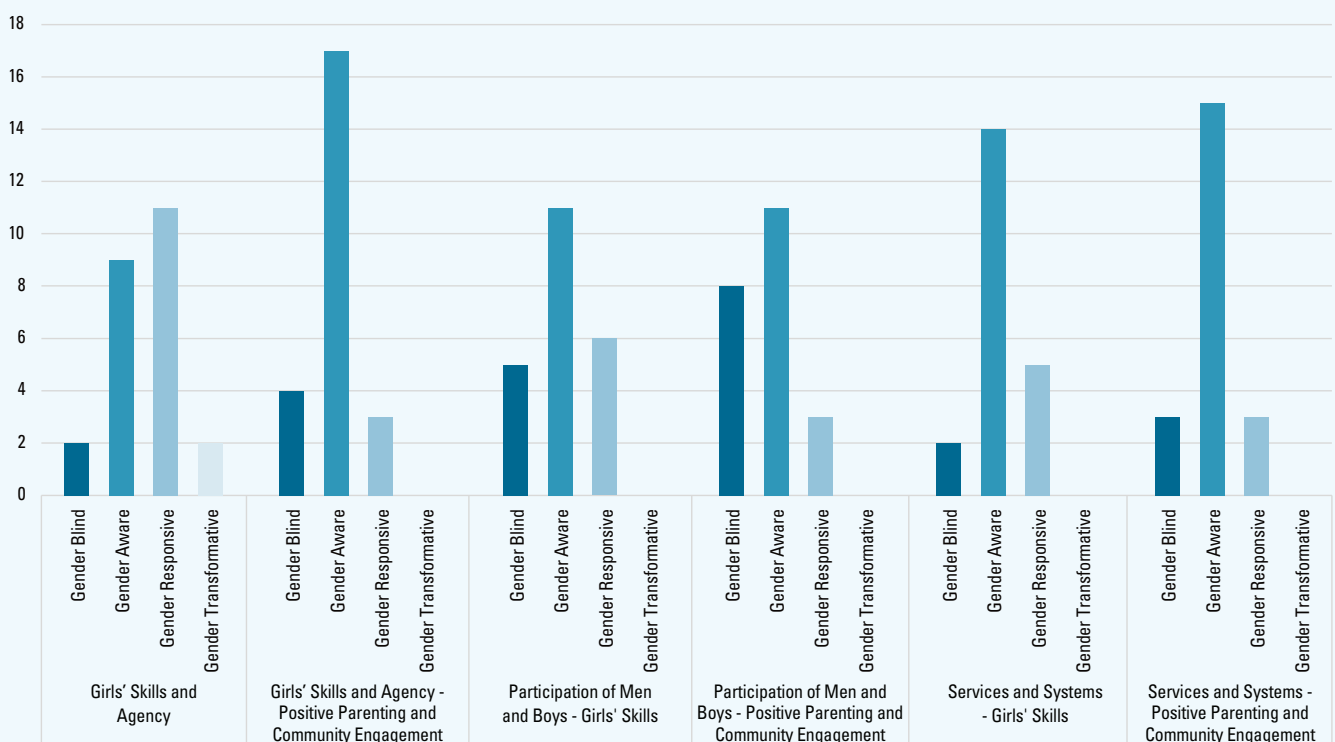


Core elements of a gender-transformative approach

The first day of interactive discussions involved reflections on Makani programme components across the socio-ecological framework. Participants discussed the adolescent and youth skills programmes, as well as the positive parenting models implemented by partners. The Gender Equity Continuum was used to rank programme interventions on the two themes.

Figure 1 below provides a snapshot of the ranking. Unsurprisingly, participants considered the adolescent and youth skills component as promising, with some ranking interventions as gender transformative. In contrast, male and boys' engagement programme components were ranked more on the left end of the gender continuum. Systems and services were largely ranked as 'gender aware', and a general reflection of interventions, indicative of gaps in gender transformative pathways.

Figure 1: Makani rankings on the Gender Equity Continuum



Girls’ skills and agency

The concept of agency involves freedom from coercion, violence, or the threat of violence, and requires access to education and information. In order for adolescent girls and other marginalized groups to exercise their agency, they need to understand their rights and autonomy; to receive support to build individual skills such as confidence, literacy, and decision-making; and to develop social skills, including communication, negotiation, assertiveness, and other professional and interpersonal skills to pursue further education, health, employment, and other ambitions.

Participants gave this core element the most progressive ranking on the Gender Equity Continuum. The majority of participants selected

Reflecting on Gender Transformative Change



‘gender responsive’, and two even ranked the Makani programme as ‘gender transformative’ for this category. All participants viewed the element as already ‘gender aware’ because it recognizes that adolescent boys and girls face different vulnerabilities that affect gender-equality outcomes. Girls face barriers to agency and

Core Elements of a Gender Transformative Approach - Ranking

ADOLESCENT GIRLS’ SKILLS, AGENCY AND EMPOWERMENT		PLEASE PROVIDE A BRIEF EXPLANATION FOR WHY YOU CHOSE THIS LEVEL.
ENTER AN X IN THE BOX ON THE RIGHT FOR THE OPTION THAT APPLIES; ONLY SELECT ONE OPTION.		
Gender-Blind	Programmes make choices for adolescent girls and focus on expanding their skills based on existing roles and life choices as defined by the social and gender norms in their context.	
Gender-Aware	Programmes aim to expand choices, skills and opportunities for adolescent girls and to address barriers to participation in education, the workforce, and community decision-making in the interest of marginalized adolescent girls. However, few investments are made to influence systems and communities in support of skilling and equipping adolescent girls in non-traditional roles, e.g., science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM).	
Gender-Responsive	Programmes work to expand choices, skills and opportunities for marginalized adolescent girls through promoting skills that are not usually associated with traditional gender roles, such as girls’ STEM education or boys’ caretaking, and to address barriers to participation in education, the workforce, and community decision-making for marginalized adolescent girls.	
Gender-Transformative	Programmes equip marginalized adolescent girls with social, health, cognitive and economic assets and promote autonomy and life choices. Programmes work actively to engage marginalized adolescent girls as change-makers at individual, community, and structural levels to challenge norms and restrictions. Programmes make tailored investments to rectify basic inequities between adolescent girls and boys, by removing barriers and expanding choices, and opportunities, and improving access to skill-building and comprehensive reproductive health education for all, including through tailored efforts to challenge norms and restrictions for adolescents.	



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exercising future aspirations. Boys, meanwhile, experience violence and the pressures associated with earning expectations – that they will contribute to their families’ upkeep and livelihood. Participants described parental and community support to enhance girls’ agency through skills programmes as ‘gender aware’.

The majority considered the element ‘gender responsive’ as Makani helps adolescents develop skills such as literacy, decision-making, negotiation, and confidence. They also noted that Makani’s impact goes beyond skills and empowerment, and expands adolescents’ access to resources, assets, and opportunities to increase agency and the ability to make strategic life choices.

Shifting towards more gender-transformative programming, participants suggested that more can be done to engage adolescent girls as change-makers to influence changes in traditions, restrictive norms, and life choices. They also suggested that systems and agencies should create an enabling environment that supports and respects their participation and voice in decision-making and supports investment in building their skills and the pursuit of meaningful improvements in their lives and well-being.

Creating employment opportunities and gender-responsive systems to enhance their access to resources will sustain and improve their skills and help them to realize their potential.

On the technical level, participants noted that the training and facilitation modules are satisfactory in the way they address gender, though there is some room for improvement to make them more gender transformative. That said, they noted that implementation varies depending on the capacity of the facilitators and the geographical region. They also suggested that module contents can be integrated into parent outreach, so that parents will encourage and support the skills development and empowerment of their daughters.

Participation of men and boys

Engaging men and boys in gender equality involves recognizing that harmful masculinities are the sanctioned ideals around primary gender roles that uphold patriarchal codes that value men over women, and that men are often socialized to maintain dominant, aggressive, and violent behaviours in order to be considered ‘real men’. As a result, men are pressured to meet expectations in relation to their earning abilities,

status, and power. Positive masculinities, by contrast, are norms and expressions that promote shared values, equality and freedoms among children, adolescents, and adults of all genders. These shared values can enhance work towards more equitable societies, recognizing that injustice can impact both genders.

For both themes under this core element, namely girls' skills and positive parenting as they relate to participation of men and boys, the majority of respondents selected 'gender aware', though the participation of men and boys also had the highest proportion of 'gender-blind' responses. Some participants expressed the view that, when gender is being addressed, the entire focus is often on women and girls, and the challenges that boys and men face are not considered. As noted earlier, boys experience high levels of violence in school from their peers and teachers; from teachers, in part because male teachers are not fully engaged or fully interested in the job as they view teaching as a less attractive career. Owing to their lack of interest, male teachers are sometimes resistant to training and professional development. As teaching is one of the few careers available for women, female teachers by contrast tend to take the job more seriously. It must be noted that Jordan has achieved major strides forward in improving its educational system, [but the last decade has seen major relapses that have affected the quality of public education, and violence has notably increased in schools](#). Participants also noted an inextricable link between violence against children and violence against women – where cycles of intergenerational violence are perpetuated.

The shift towards more gender-transformative programming in Makani can involve the renewal of teacher education programmes to include targeted and tailored training to address gender inequality and violence in public schools. This can include materials that explain the conceptual

Planting the seeds of gender equality

One 17-year-old Syrian boy explained that a female facilitator had transformed his understanding of gender relations:

“I had a different, wrong, perspective about kids and women, that we are men, we are better than them... We took this whole course about this thing, and how we can support equality between men and women since our rights are exactly the same.”

—Testimony from one of the young people who reported that they had been exposed to ideas about gender equality at Makani centres, contained in a September 2022 Policy Brief, GAGE and UNICEF

framework of equality and justice, the inequalities perpetuated by outdated gender-based social norms about women and men's labour and their roles in society, gender inequality and the normalization of violence, including shaming boys and not allowing them to express their feelings, and the negative impact of limiting girls' career and educational choices in the face of economic and social realities.

As early childhood education is a strength of the Makani programme, participants reflected on room for the further development and integration of gender-based improvements in this area. The programme, for example, can integrate more messages to encourage boys to express their emotions. In the better parenting programme, materials could highlight how beliefs and phrases like “boys don't cry” limit the types of emotion that boys are allowed to express. Stories where the father shares in domestic responsibilities and taking care of the children can also be highlighted, both in Makani activities and in the media more broadly.

A lack of fathers' engagement is still a significant barrier. Makani has had more success with involving mothers in their Early Childhood Development components than fathers. It can be

Multisectoral collaboration is essential to eliminate gender barriers and to increase access to education, skills-building, economic development, child and social protection, water and sanitation, healthcare (including reproductive health, mental health, nutrition, vaccination, and health sector responses to violence), and cash or in-kind transfers for the alleviation of poverty for all children and adolescents.

difficult to reach fathers because of their work schedules and commitments. Perceived gender norms (mainly that women are responsible for parenting) often make it difficult to directly discuss issues related to gender. Finding ways to reach fathers in the places where they socialize and involving them more in parenting and education is crucial to gender-transformative programming. Participants noted that the timing of some activities in the refugee camps can be adjusted to cater more directly to men and address topics such as participation in household work in addition to the employment and job training opportunities that can help provide a livelihood.

Services and systems

Multisectoral collaboration is essential to eliminate gender barriers and to increase access to education, skills-building, economic development, child and social protection, water and sanitation, health care (including reproductive health, mental health, nutrition, vaccination, and health sector responses to violence), and cash or in-kind transfers for the alleviation of poverty for all children and adolescents. Examples of ways to enhance systems and services and their response to the needs of adolescents and children include investment in positive outcomes for girls such as ‘cash-plus’ initiatives; building referrals and links to increase access to a holistic package of services; allocating budgets for gender-related activities and building the capacity of service providers to address internal biases and to improve the quality-of-service delivery. Most

respondents for the services and systems core element ranked them as ‘gender aware’, with a leaning towards ‘gender responsive’. Several participants explained that services and systems in both Makani and the national government are ‘gender responsive’, though they tend to be more beneficial to men, and more can be done to address the needs of young people. Programmes promoting girls’ access to information and services, for example, use existing pathways for access, but do not challenge existing norms, stigmas, or discrimination. Participants also noted that while sectors work to increase the availability of – and access to – services for all children and adolescents, they still lack tailored approaches to address gendered differences and barriers. At governance level, the National Makani Steering Committee is represented by both female and male members, with a view to ensuring a fair representation of perspectives.

The work towards more gender-transformative services and systems involves working with the government, non-governmental organizations, and the private sector. Work with the Social Development (MoSD) and ministries of Education (MoE) is crucial. Participants emphasized the importance of enhancing this work and noted that the MoSD is already involved in the development of links between Makani and social protection schemes among National Aid Fund beneficiaries; the MoSD has also started to address national measurement indicators in its National Social Protection Strategy 2019–25, though there is room for further progress in both these initiatives that could take them closer to being genuinely

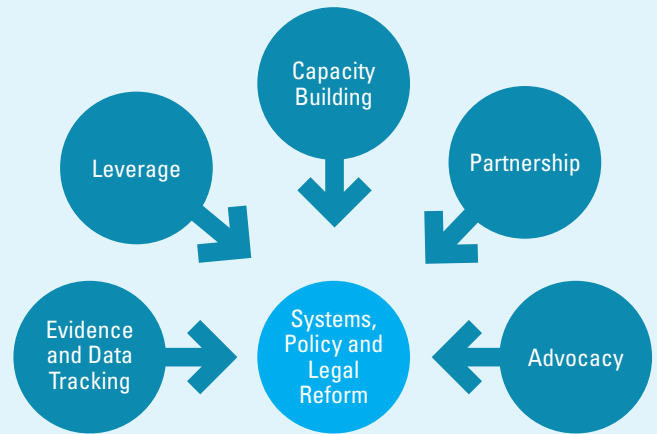
gender transformative. The MoSD “Better Parenting Programme” or *Baituna Al-Sa’eed* programme is ranked ‘gender sensitive’, as are the activities for care providers/parents at the Makani centres. Participants also noted the need for effectively formalizing referral networks and systems to connect girls and boys with service providers including those in the private sector, offering, e.g., vocational training, employment support, etc.

Participants also noted the importance of ensuring more links and referrals between education, health, and social protection systems, and complementary policies and legislations. It is also important to consider partnerships and links for existing services and their integration into efforts towards a gender-transformative approach.

In the words of one of the participants, “we need to think of the army of social workers who go out and see people where they are, outside of centres” – to underline the importance of optimally using outreach platforms by social workers to reach communities. Participants also highlighted the importance of more interdisciplinary work, mainly to bring together people from different departments and familiarize them with complementary training less available in their own fields.

Bias among service providers is another area in which participants would like to see more done to address. Previous activities have focused mostly on awareness-raising, rather than strengthening gender-responsive capacity, noting that the UNICEF’s adolescent-empowerment programming utilizes participatory research that supports young people to assess the quality of services and to overcome the stigma directed towards adolescent girls seeking health services.

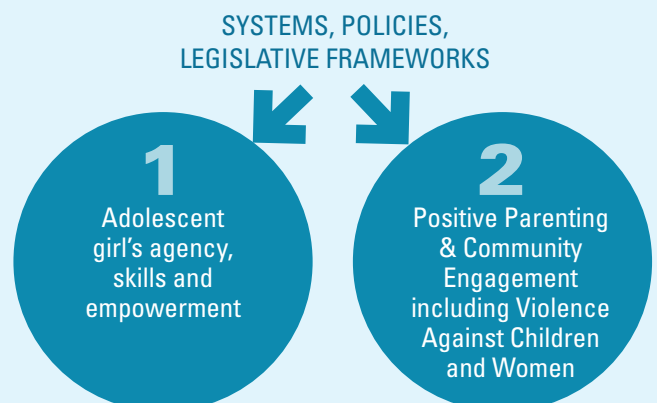
What else can we do with Systems in Jordan for gender transformative pathways?



Deep dive into priority themes

On Day 2, the team discussed the current obstacles, challenges, and opportunities in two priority areas: 1) **adolescent girl’s agency, skills, and empowerment**; and 2) **positive parenting and community engagement with efforts to prevent violence against children and women**, and a third area that emerged during the workshop, namely, 3) **systems, structures, policies, and partnerships**. These priority areas were selected based on a consultative process focusing on how these areas are strategic for Makani’s success in integrating a gender-transformative lens in its work. The narrative

Priority areas selected



outlined below for each of these priority areas details the obstacles and challenges involved.

AREA 1 Adolescent girl's agency, skills, and empowerment

Participants highlighted the fact that adolescent boys and girls face different vulnerabilities that affect gender-equality outcomes. Girls face barriers to exercise their agency and shape their future aspirations, while boys experience violence and the pressure to fulfil expectations of their earning capacities. To address this discrepancy, participants raised the issue of whether Makani facilitators' have the appropriate skills and training, citing the need to focus on gender components and integrating them into the life-skills facilitation curriculum. Some participants inquired about the extent to which facilitators themselves had embraced a gender-transformative approach and how they impart ideas about gender equality.

Makani provides a safe space for adolescents and engages them in learning and skills-building through different layers of support which follow an all-life-stages approach (e.g., CP, ECD, learning support services, adolescent skills building). But outside of Makani; as a physical space as well as for the students who graduate from it, the scope for its activity is limited. One of these 'outside' spaces is school. While Makani maintains a good relationship with the Ministry of Education, training for teachers and school counsellors on gender-responsive and gender-transformative approaches, especially in relation to violence, is not sufficient. Children and young people with disabilities, moreover, are underprovided for, and the facilitators are not trained to help severe cases of disability. Participants also cited the difficulty of finding a place for other issues related to adolescents' well-being, like gender-based violence, when the focus is more about skills and empowerment.

It was also considered important to recognize the crucial role played by the learning-support interventions provided by UNICEF, including accelerated learning, and reading recovery programmes. UNICEF's work on [Learning Bridges Impact Study | UNICEF Jordan](#) and contributions to learning was also discussed.

Community engagement and system strengthening can also help create an enabling environment that will encourage the skills development of adolescents and allow them to thrive. More can be done to formalize referral networks and systems to connect girls and boys with service providers, including those in the private sector offering, e.g., vocational training, employment support, social protection systems. Intersectoral collaboration will also enhance capacities to address violence in schools through the Education and Child Protection sectors, as will be discussed further in the third priority area discussion.

AREA 2 Positive parenting and community engagement with efforts to prevent violence against children and women

Discussing the positive parenting programme, participants unanimously agreed that fathers are not sufficiently engaged with Makani. There is a need to create strategies to engage fathers, including more content on gender-transformative messaging, while ensuring strengthened community engagement and links to national systems. Participants highlighted how fathers face issues that are related to the broader context of poverty and inequality that limits their participation in Makani, and that they need to be reached at different times (e.g., in the evenings) and in different spaces such as at mosques or coffee gathering places.

On a technical level, participants discussed how a gender-responsive approach can be

strengthened within Social and Behavioural Change (SBC) methodologies and how there is a need to integrate gender-transformative elements into the training modules. Participants added that there is a need to develop more effective community-based SBC strategies, such as IEC materials (through brochures, leaflets, etc.), and to utilize popular communication applications like WhatsApp. In relation to the curriculum, participants highlighted the lack of a standard national curriculum on Gender-Responsive Parenting. The current curriculum needs more focus on gender content, as only two modules currently address gender. Participants provided examples of what they think ought to be highlighted in the curricula, including positive as well as negative examples on gender roles and norms. They highlighted the need for more innovation in terms of messaging, content, and exercises. Participants also drew attention to other pedagogical issues, including unclear concepts and exercises that require more rounds of training for facilitators. More media coverage and social media could be used to increase outreach. Messaging and content can capitalize on positive examples from religious heritage, for example, with the curriculum potentially highlighting religious interpretations that uphold the values and leadership of women and tell these stories to children. Other ideas to increase community engagement and to reach more of the most vulnerable included proposals for house-to-house visits and teaming up with social workers.

AREA 3

Systems, structures, policies, and partnerships – cross-cutting through the two areas

Participants then discussed the relationship between the first two priority areas and the systems and services, including the available links with other sectors and stakeholders to improve referral systems and services. They highlighted that there is a need for partnerships

“I’m really happy with how the action points came out. Even for those who have not been at the workshop, the recommendations came out really clear. You look at the action points and think, yeah, these are the issues that we’ve been having. So, it’s really helpful to summarize the recommendations with concrete actions for moving forward.”

—Makani workshop participant

to build and formalize networks and referral links with different sectors, including employment, entrepreneurship, health care (including mental health care provision), and social protection. In terms of employment and livelihood pathways, the private sector, for example, can be a partner to connect young people to opportunities, services, and women-led networks. Currently, young people rely on personal networking, but there is a need to systematize the process to introduce them to service providers.

Participants highlighted the lack of an institutionalized referral system for health services, especially for mental health and social protection services. There is a need to strengthen reporting mechanisms for violence in schools and how it affects boys, in particular. This work needs to be linked to UNICEF’s work at the national level; for example, through the forthcoming work with partners on a costed national action plan on VAC, family violence and gender-based violence, as well, to the national MoE Gender Strategy. Stakeholders should view violence more holistically and tailor preventive measures as well as protective measures to address the problem. Participants highlighted the need to review current work with the Ministry of Education to strengthen the quality of training on gender-responsive and gender-transformative pedagogy and the sensitivities around addressing school-related violence and the availability of referral systems.

The MoSD has a gender department that provides an entry point for expanding partnerships with Makani through strengthening gender capacity and participation and enhancing their leadership role in the programme. The role of the MoSD and the NAF in ensuring sustained cash-support for adolescent well-being outcomes, including increased school attendance, reduced child labour, and ending child marriage was re-emphasized, as was the importance of 'cash-plus' for influencing social protection schemes.

Roadmap of actions

Based on the discussions around each priority area, participants suggested a set of actions to address these challenges, as follows:

AREA 1 Proposed actions

In the first area, participants agreed that there is a need for tailored approaches that will benefit both boys and girls, since they both experience vulnerabilities (the risk of violence, dropping out of school, and child marriage). As a safe space for adolescent girls (and boys), Makani offers opportunities to engage in learning and skills-building activities through different layers of support (e.g., protection, psychosocial support, learning support, etc.) and to see and learn from the female facilitators who act as mentors and role models. There is nevertheless room for strengthening gender focus in the life-skills facilitation curriculum and for creating better opportunities for an enabling environment at the community level. To achieve that, links with other sectors and stakeholders need to be formalized for a holistic approach

- Strengthen life-skills facilitation content and methodology, including existing learning support strategies (e.g., *Learning Bridges*),

which can benefit from more focus on gender-equality values.

- Ensure life skills content incorporates an empowerment lens, fostering young people as agents of change, and tailored to the different needs of boys and girls.
- Recognize that skills in themselves do not result in agency and empowerment.
- There is need to action:
 - a) messaging and content can capitalize on positive examples from religious heritage, for example, with the curriculum potentially highlighting religious interpretations that uphold values and teachings that promote leadership of women, and tell these stories to children .
 - b) more intersectoral collaboration for addressing violence in schools through Education and Child Protection sectors (see more in *systems strengthening* section # 3).

In the second priority area, participants agreed that while Makani centres deliver age-segmented positive parenting approaches, among others on violence-related themes through interactive methodologies, there is a need for more effective strategies, with a particular emphasis on engaging fathers, and more content on gender-transformative messaging. A key factor to achieve these objectives is to recognize young boys as future fathers with the potential to influence generational change. As part of the third area, linked to systems strengthening, the education system was also explored to recommend interventions for the prevention of violence in schools through a systems approach. Data and evidence generation, including knowledge management, was also discussed as foundational in strengthening Makani's theory of change, as well as for the tracking of more robust gender indicators.

Actions to achieve the proposed recommendations are categorized under the following:

AREA 2 Proposed actions

- Ensure **effective behaviour-change strategies (gender-transformative, interactive, innovative, etc.)**, with a particular emphasis on **engaging fathers and boys** through innovative approaches and 'good practices.
- **Increase the collaboration of national partners** to strengthen national curricula and measurement on gender-responsive and gender-transformative parenting via the national Parenting Taskforce, the MoE, the MoSD, IRC, Plan International, the Queen Rania Foundation and others.
- **Strengthen community-based committees** in support of adolescents' and young peoples' skills programmes especially for young girls and **their representation** in community-level decision-making.

AREA 3 Proposed actions with a systems-strengthening focus

- Advocate for **intentional** and deliberate gender-responsive and gender-transformative approaches in **national social protection systems** (MoSD, NAF), e.g., through 'cash-plus', household targeting approaches, and the review of laws and policies, etc.
- **Strengthen education systems for preventing VAC and for achieving gender-equality outcomes**: through student learning (e.g., RRP, ALP and Learning Bridges), **teacher-capacity** enhancement, **data analysis**, and influencing the national MoE **Gender**

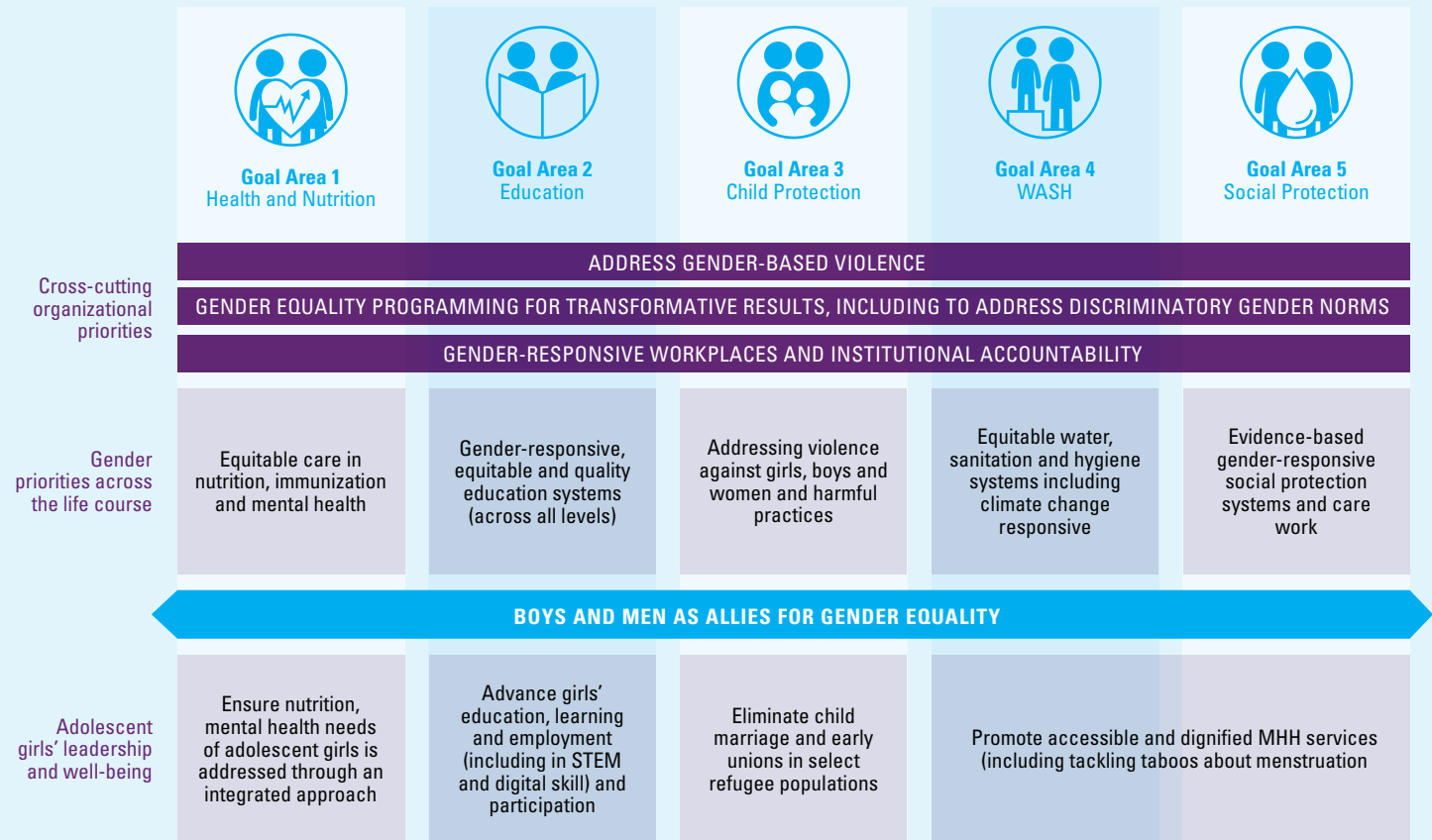
Strategy and forthcoming national costed plan on VAC, Family Violence and GBV.

- **Strengthen intersectoral collaboration between Education and Child Protection** to address SRGBV (school-related gender-based violence), especially boys' violence (e.g., through the MoE engagement with the Family Protection and Juvenile department).
- **Leverage partnerships** with government, the private sector and UN partners for supporting employment pathways for young people, with a focus on young women.
- **Update and institutionalize Makani models**: conceptual framework, standards, staffing, etc., including gender-based elements.
- Ensure **robust gender data and evidence for measurement and scale-up**, including planning and high-level outcome results reporting.

A detailed table is presented in Annex 2 in the Roadmap of Actions. Since the consultative workshop, the Social Protection and Gender Teams have convened an external validation meeting on 13 July 2023, involving internal and external partners.

Annex 1 – JCO Gender Action Plan

Jordan Gender Action Plan 2023–2027



Annex 2 – Roadmap of Actions

Adolescent Well-being: Adolescent boys and girls face different vulnerabilities that affect gender-equality outcomes e.g., girls’ face barriers to agency and exercising future aspirations, boys experience violence and livelihood earning expectations. There is room for strengthening the gender focus in the life-skills facilitation curriculum and reinforcing learning support, creating better opportunities, and formalizing links with other sectors and stakeholders for a holistic approach; also, to address internal gender bias across the board.

Cross-cutting themes: Reaching marginalized adolescent girls and boys facing intersectional vulnerability must be integrated into all sectoral interventions, e.g., children with disabilities, Doms, children in remote locations/school dropouts; mental health needs must also be effectively addressed

(A)	ACTION (B)	STEPS/PROCESS AND RESPONSIBLE TEAMS (C)	TIMEFRAME (D)
1	<p>Skills-building curricula content and application strengthened for gender-transformative and gender-empowerment outcomes (Individual level)</p> <p>Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Adolescent Empowerment Technical Note UNICEF ■ Life-skills technical note 2019 UNICEF ■ YL-TN45 Psychosocial Scales in the Young Lives Round 4 Survey younglives.org.uk ■ Skills4girls Partner Toolkit 2022: Unlocking the Potential of Adolescent Girls Skills4girls ■ Learning Bridges Impact Study UNICEF Jordan 	<p>Makani Level – SP Team with support from Education, Gender, and SBC teams</p> <p><i>[Content and Facilitation methodology with clear benchmarks including nationwide and individual-level efficacy and wellbeing outcomes]</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Strengthen the adolescent & youth life-skills curriculum through the <i>new piloted curricula</i> with gender-transformative content and an empowerment lens, fostering young people as agents of change, and understanding the different needs of boys and girls. 2. Capacity building of facilitators on the new pilot curriculum. 3. Reinforce the existing learning-support component of Makani from an equity lens. 4. Link the Education diagnostic assessment findings and analysis to inform targeting and as baseline data. Review measures to include indicators such as self-efficacy and others based on tested global tools and frameworks. 	December 2023
2	<p>Effective community-level gender-transformative SBC strategies implemented including participatory engagement of communities in programme design, implementation, and a feedback mechanism (Community level)</p>	<p>Makani Level – SP Team with support from Gender and SBC Teams</p> <p><i>[Content and Facilitation methodology with clear measures for tracking the training of Makani Community Committees (MCCs) on gender equality; Youth representation in MCCs; Community Feedback Survey; integration of SBC Gender-focused approaches].</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Strengthen the capacities of Community Committees (currently focusing on Protection and Education issues) to also promote and engage in young peoples’ skills-building through a gender transformative lens. 2. Strengthen advocacy capacity of youth representatives in Makani to support peers and other young people in gender-transformative approaches. 3. Strengthen effective, gender-responsive and gender-transformative, interactive / two-way communication and participatory SBC approaches (including facilitation modality/ platforms/selection of influencers, etc.) building on FGDs, helpline, gatekeepers, media, etc. 	Mid-2024

(A)	ACTION (B)	STEPS/PROCESS AND RESPONSIBLE TEAMS (C)	TIMEFRAME (D)
3	<p>3.1. Coordinated Systems and Policies to support gender-transformative pathways with the Private sector (Systems, policies, structures, partnership)</p> <p>Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Economic Modernization vision jordanvision.jo ■ Mashreq Gender Facility worldbank.org 	<p>Outside Makani Team – ADAP Lead together with SP Makani and Gender Teams</p> <p><i>[Partnership/Link-Building with clear measures to track transition from learning to earning]</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Foster and leverage partnerships that can support employment pathways (e.g., vocational education, career guidance, internships), CSR strategies, e.g., Etihad Bank, OASIS500. 2. Engaging other organizations such as the World Bank on wider policy issues, e.g., tax incentives for childcare provision, Economic Modernization Vision, centres of excellence like the King Abdullah Center for Excellence – ‘incubators for youth and social innovation’. 3. Leverage funding from the private sector for effective messaging and communication, e.g., Telecom on incentivizing parents for COVID immunization. 	Mid-2024
	<p>3.2. Coordinated Systems and Policies to support gender-transformative pathways with the National Social Protection sector (Systems, policies, structures, partnership)</p> <p>Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ National Social Protection Strategy 2019–2025 socialprotection.org ■ Measuring GBV Risk Mitigation Interventions in Humanitarian Settings UNICEF 	<p>Outside Makani Team – SPP Lead with Gender and ADAP Teams</p> <p><i>[Partnership/Link-Building with clear measures linked to the National Social Protection Strategy’s M&E Framework]</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review NAF and MoSD engagement on cash transfer and ‘cash-plus’, including: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Compliance issues on labelled social assistance, e.g., school attendance, preventing child marriage outcomes. b) Sufficient cash grants to cover opportunity costs for boys’ labour. c) Strengthening advocacy messaging and the acceptance of complementary / ‘cash-plus’ (including ‘gender-plus’) services. 2. Strengthening measures / indicators to be tracked in the national framework, e.g., NSP M&E Framework being reviewed. 3. Review relevant policies, laws, and structural issues linked to creating an enabling environment for young women’s employment pathways, e.g., through supporting the Care agenda, an integral component of the NSP (see new initiatives on the Labour Force Agenda with ADAP / SP / Gender Teams). 	Mid-2024 for at least 2 of the 3 action areas
	<p><i>(Follow closely the implications of the current Social Protection Law on several initiatives and institutions, e.g., Civil Service Bureau.)</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Capitalize on the MoSD’s Gender Directorate and gender focal points structure to implement Makani’s gender-transformative approach 	September 2023

Positive Parenting: Makani centres deliver age-segmented positive-parenting approaches, on themes including those related to violence, through interactive methodologies including practical techniques. There is a need for more effective strategies, with particular emphasis on engaging fathers, and more content on gender transformative messaging, while ensuring strengthened community engagement and linkages to national systems. The recognition of young boys as future fathers with the potential to influence generational change is crucial. Internal gender bias across the board must also be addressed.

(A)	ACTION (B)	STEPS/PROCESS AND RESPONSIBLE TEAMS (C)	TIMEFRAME (D)
1	<p>Enhance father's engagement (Male engagement and community level)</p> <p>Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Gender-Transformative Parenting Pilot: Final Report and Lessons Learnt, February 2023 UNICEF ■ Resource Package and Training Modules for Promoting Gender-Transformative Parenting UNICEF 	<p>Makani Level – CP Lead with SP, SBC, and Gender Teams <i>[Content and Facilitation methodology with robust measures to track attendance of male trainees]</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review alternative / innovative approaches to voluntary attendance for fathers' engagement, highlighting the benefits of attendance. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Reviewing working hours to accommodate fathers, as well facilitators' schedules (e.g., gatherings in Mosques, tribal courts, at local community events). b) Review good practice programming, e.g., Plan International's approach to remote modalities or learning from the MoE/MoSD institutionalized parenting programme. c) Assess approaches to support mothers' outreach to their spouse and / or mixed groups. d) Review targeted capacity-building of male social workers / general government staff as a useful entry point (volunteerism is important). e) Train more male facilitators to solicit fathers' engagement. f) Review experiences of fathers' peer groups for mutual support. g) Promote 'what works' with media / interpersonal communication tools. 	October 2023
2	<p>Strengthen content / facilitation methodologies on gender modules (Individual and community levels)</p>	<p>Outside Makani Team – CP Lead with SP, Gender and SBC Teams <i>[Partnership/Links-Building]</i> <i>[Content and Facilitation methodology with clear measures to track integration of gender modules, PSS / self-care for parents in the parenting programme]</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review and adapt good practice parenting modules, e.g., integrating gender-transformative elements (only 2 modules on gender) including facilitation modality / platforms / approaches to address marginalized communities, e.g., use of role models/community-based peer-to-peer approach and parenting champions / healthy messages / animations mindful of families with children with disabilities and content e.g., PSS and self-care modules for parents. 	October 2023
	<p>Systems / Policy Reform (Systems, policies, structures, partnership)</p>	<p>Outside Makani Team – CP Lead with SP, Gender, and SBC Teams <i>[Partnership/Link-Building – with clear outcomes of developing and endorsing National standards of parenting programmes in Jordan]</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Actively engage in the national Parenting Taskforce, to better harmonize / exchange / coordinate and advocate on parenting. 2. Coordinate on standardizing modules under the Parenting Taskforce (NCFA leadership), together with other international and national organizations such as IRC, Plan International, the Queen Rania Foundation, the MoSD, the MoE, etc. 3. Coordinate with NCFA on the development and endorsement of national standards and indicators for parenting programmes in Jordan to better track / measure / assess the implementation of policy / strategy commitments. 	December 2024

(A)	ACTION (B)	STEPS/PROCESS AND RESPONSIBLE TEAMS (C)	TIMEFRAME (D)
3.	<p>Strengthen effective engagement of the Education system to reduce VAC in schools and communities</p> <p>Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ ODI Report 2021 UNICEF ■ Ma'an Evaluation Report UNICEF <p>(See also Safe School Environment councils working on VAC)</p>	<p>Outside Makani Team – Education Lead with SP and Gender Teams</p> <p><i>[Partnership/Linkage-Building]</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Strengthen parents' committees in schools on issues relating to violence against children through innovative learning platforms, e.g., possibly through Padlet? 2. Review the MoE's role as active national stakeholder on protection and GBV with trained staff, institutionalized programmes and training sessions, legal mechanisms, SOPs, and regulations. <i>CP component with all its training sessions is part of the teachers' professional development training within the MoE.</i> 3. Review UNICEF's (national) capacity-building work for teachers on dealing with VAC / CP / GBV while recommending the integration of gender-related issues such as bullying, school-dropout, self-harm, assertiveness (girls) into in-service teachers' professional development training, e.g., <i>Teachers for the Future</i> under pilot in Makani centres. 4. Build capacity of counsellors who have an important role in schools, including tracking school-related violence. 5. Strengthen reporting mechanisms and consequences for perpetuating violence <i>[review current Protection tracking systems and lessons from evaluated programmes, e.g., Ma'an and also current VAC reporting and accountability system in schools, e.g., with Family Protection and Juvenile department on student surveys/complaint mechanisms].</i> 6. Link current review of the MoE Gender Strategy and forthcoming National Costed Plan on VAC, Family Violence and GBV to actions. 	TBD with partners
4.	<p>Gender-based evidence generation, including knowledge management</p> <p>Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Makani Standards Operating Procedures (SOPs) 2019 UNICEF ■ Gender-equality indicators in 'cash-plus' (Innocenti) 	<p>Makani and Scale Up – SP and Gender Teams</p> <p><i>[Data/Evidence Generation]</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review and update Makani SOP (including conceptual framework) with gender responsive / transformative elements for harmonized design, implementation, and M&E framework. 2. Review and integrate gender indicators in the revision of the Makani ToC and M&E. 3. Integrate gender measures into the Makani Impact Evaluation indicators. 4. Integrate gender into the Makani knowledge-management strategy to promote learning and exchange on gender-responsive / gender-transformative approaches internally and externally. 5. Integrate gender into evidence generation on 'Makani models' for scale up, e.g., through cost-effective and sustainability studies, potentially including Pilots. 	2024

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