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Economic & Social Council

BUDGET BRIEF 2019 PUBLIC EDUCATION SECTOR IN JORDAN

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Sectoral Budget Briefs are a collaboration between Jordan's Economic and Social Council (ESC) and UNICEF Jordan guided by Dr. Mustafa Hamarneh (President of ESC), Tanya Chapuisat (UNICEF Representative in Jordan), and Ettie Higgins (UNICEF Deputy Representative in Jordan).

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OBJECTIVE

UNICEF is collaborating with Jordan's Economic and Social Council (ESC) to develop regular annual budget briefs for social sectors in Jordan. The education budget brief provides analysis of public educational expenditures as defined in the official functional classification in the annual national budget law, and as reflected in public finance documents and data. According to standard practice, budget briefs are guided by the Government's definition of public education in terms of institutions, budget allocations, and key policies and targets. Budget briefs are meant to be conducted regularly in line with the annual budgetary process to analyse and monitor allocation in the current fiscal year and to draw observations and trends based on past spending and existing data. Given this scope, briefs are not designed to thoroughly assess the impact of public investment on sector outcomes, nor to estimate budgetary allocations required to achieve certain targets. These activities would require the use of other public expenditure analysis tools and more time, resources, and investment in original data collection.

Budget briefs provide regular analysis that can be used to inform the scope of wider public-expenditure analysis exercises. The analysis does not include international aid to the education sector, nor off-budget support that is not integrated in the public budgeting system. While international support has been essential to the achievement of sector results, especially related to the Syrian crisis, assessing impact and linkages with existing government allocations is beyond the scope of this brief. Such analysis would require detailed data collection taking into consideration the use of different budgeting and reporting systems.

The education budget brief aims at increasing knowledge of the budgetary issues linked to sector performance through an examination of the following: 1) Jordan's Public Education Sector, including a definition and overview of the sector; 2) Key Policy Documents and Targets; 3) Sector Performance, highlighting key statistics and learning assessment data; 4) Analysis of the Ministry of Education's Spending, including budget credibility and execution (the relationship between budget allocations and actual expenditures and the capacity to spend available funds); 5) Equity of Education and Public Expenditure, and its contribution to helping to achieve SDGs; 6) Budget Performance Information, and 7) Financing the Education Sector. Focus is given to an analysis of the impact of budgeting decisions on equity, particularly for vulnerable groups, and on Jordan's progress toward the SDGs. Finally, in Section 8) key findings and recommendations are shared that may lead to improved alignment of budget decisions with strategic priorities.

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01 JORDAN'S PUBLIC EDUCATION SECTOR

Education System, Sector Institutions and Size

- The Ministry of Education (MoE) and Ministry of Higher Education (MoHE) are the main institutions that govern the provision of public education at all school levels. Other public providers include the Ministry of Defence (through the Directorate of Military Education and Culture), and the UNRWA.

- The Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Institution and the Accreditation and Quality Assurance Commission for Higher Education Institution are independent governments units (IGUs). Prior to 2019, their budgets were detailed in the Budget Law for Government Units separately from the general budget. The Ministry of Social Development is responsible for the licensing and supervising of nurseries, and its budget is part of public social protection expenditures.

- Jordan's publicly funded formal education system consists of three sections: Kindergarten (KG2 – age 5), Compulsory Basic Education (Grades 1 to 10 – ages 6 to 15), and Secondary Education (Grades 11 and 12 – ages 16 to 17) Secondary school is split into two streams: academic and vocational education. Students who pass Tawjihi (the national secondary exam) are eligible to move on to higher education.

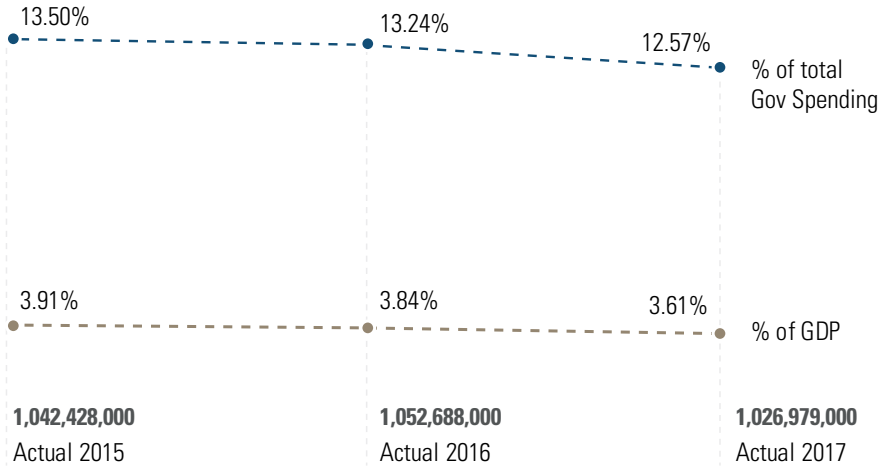
- According to the official functional classification of the budget, the total estimated budget for the education sector for 2019 is 1.16 billion JOD, **12.54 per cent of the estimated total government expenditure**[1]. The budget allocated to the Ministry of Education represents **more than 84 per cent** of the estimated total public expenditure on education. The remaining allocations include education expenditures by the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research (9.1 per cent), Ministry of Defence and Ministry of Finance. Until 2018, the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation had regular budget allocations to support Basic Education (capital expenditures for construction of school facilities).

- Expenditures on public education as a percentage of both GDP and total government spending has decreased in recent years. Based on actual spending figures for 2017, Jordan's public expenditure on education was **3.61 per cent of GDP** compared to 3.91 per cent in 2015. Jordan's public spending on education is lower than the MENA average of around 4.75 per cent of GDP (WB EdStats) and below most regional countries including Egypt, Tunisia, and Morocco (IMF PER 2018).[2]

- The majority of Jordan's education expenditures covers running costs, largely salaries, including nominal increases in the budget that responds to demand and growth in population. The detailed functional classification illustrates that current expenditure represents more than 90 per cent of the total education expenditure.

1. For consistency, the analysis throughout the document is based on General Budget Law for 2019 and actual spending for 2017. GDP figures and the inflation index are based on Jordan Central Bank Data (base year=2010).
2. IMF (2018), Public Expenditure Review and Rationalization: Issue and Reform Options.

Figure 1: Public Spending On Education (2015-2017)

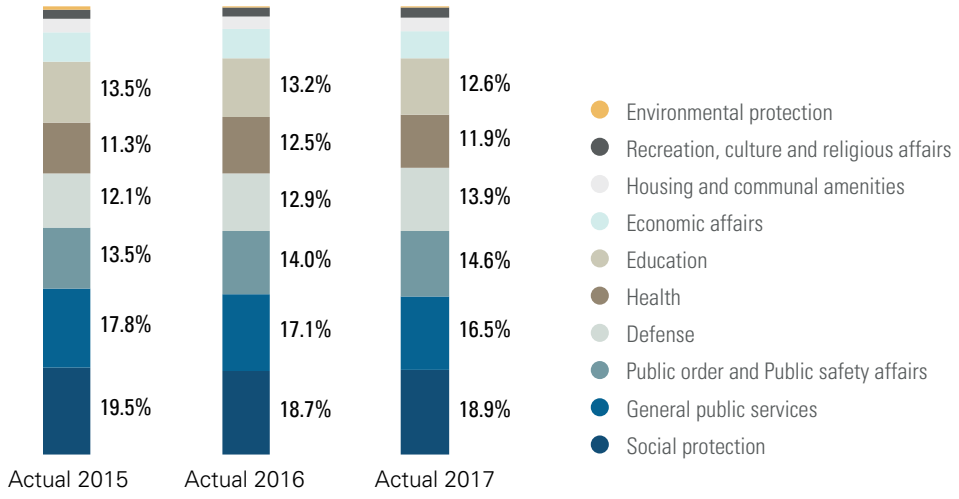


Source: UNICEF calculation, based on General Budget Laws 2019 and Jordan Central Bank sources

- International benchmarks recommend allocating 4–6 per cent of GDP to education, equivalent to 15–20 per cent of public expenditure[3]. However, the level of education expenditure alone does not guarantee better education outcomes; the efficiency and effectiveness of public spending is equally, if not more important. This will be examined in the subsequent sections.

- The size and priority of public spending on education (as compared to other sectors) **has not changed in recent years.** The following sectors receive allocations as a percentage of total government expenditures: Social Protection (mainly for pensions), Public Service, Public Safety, and Defence.

Figure 2: Sector Priority in Government Expenditure per Functional Classification (2015-2017)



Source: UNICEF staff calculation based on General Budget Laws 2019

3. The Education 2030 Framework for Action: Incheon Declaration for the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 4

02 KEY POLICY DOCUMENTS AND TARGETS

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- Jordan has committed to achieve Sustainable Development Goal Four (SDG 4), which aims to ensure "inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all" with outcome targets in the following areas: universal primary and secondary education, Early Childhood Development (ECD), technical/vocational and higher education, skills for decent work, gender equality and inclusion, universal youth literacy, Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) and global citizenship .

- Policy frameworks to achieve the national goals for the education sector include the following:

» Jordan Vision 2025
» Human Resource Development Strategy (HRD) 2016–2025
» The National Strategy for Higher Education and Scientific Research (2007–2012)[4]
» Jordan National Social Protection Strategy (2019–2025), Executive Development Programme (EDP) 2018–2020
» Government Priorities' Action Plan (2019–2020)
» Jordan Response Plan (JRP) 2018–2022, and
» The Education Strategic Plan (ESP 2018–2022) by the Ministry of Education.

- The ESP (2018–2022) was established to guide the development of the education sector in line **with the broader national strategies (objectives).**

4. This is the most recent specific sector strategy for higher education, apart from the HRD 2016–2025.

- **Key Policy Initiatives in 2019:**

» The Government announced its ambition to universalize kindergarten (KG2) by September 2020.

» Government planning prioritized teachers' motivation and the development of their capacity through the introduction of clearly articulated policies on professional development, a career pathway and teacher evaluation.

Education Sector five-year strategic plan objectives:

- **Early Childhood Education and Development:** To increase access to quality education for children (both male and female) in early childhood and to increase their readiness to learn for life.

- **Access and Equity:** To ensure access and equity to achieve justice for both male and female sexes by raising the enrolment rate in schools and absorbing all age groups into education for all residents in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.

- **System Strengthening:** To promote the educational system for innovation and excellence, based on effective educational policies, proven effective in achieving the priorities of the Jordanian education sector.

- **Quality:** To improve the quality of education and promote citizenship.

- **Human Resource:** To provide, develop and sustain qualified human resources for the educational system.

03 SECTOR PERFORMANCE

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The MoE and its sector partners have directed resources in order to improve equitable access to quality learning at all school levels. Outlined below is an overview of key sector performance, identifying notable achievements and remaining challenges.

ACCESS TO EDUCATION

- Jordan has achieved substantial progress in promoting access to education with an estimated 1.37 million students enrolled in the formal cycle (KG2 to Grade 12) as of 2017/2018. The net enrolment rate (NER) for Basic Education is nearly universal at 94.7 per cent compared to 71.2 per cent for secondary education. Similar trends show the net attendance ratios (NAR) for the two education cycles at 95.6 per cent and 70.7 per cent respectively.[5] Overall, these rates are lower for Syrian refugees and higher for girls, especially at the secondary level (differentials based on gender, regions and nationality will be examined further in the Equity section). The survival rate to Grade 6 is 95.5 percent for 2017; the Grade 6 to Grade 7 transition rate is 98 per cent based on 2018 data (UNESCO Institute of Statistics).

- Enrolment is comparatively lower in early childhood education; official MoE data indicates that the NER for pre-primary education (aged 4–5 years) is 36.5 per cent overall for the academic year 2017/2018. For children aged five years (KG2), MoE data shows net enrolment of 61.4 per cent as of 2017/2018. However, a KG mapping study completed in August 2018 that surveyed more

5. Indicators in this section (unless otherwise specified) are based on the MoE Statistical Book 2017/2018, MoE ESP 2018–2022, DHS survey 2017/2018, and the Department of Statistics' "Jordan in Figures for 2017."

than 10,000 families in Jordan,[6] found that the enrolment rate was relatively high at 84 per cent, and that there is significant additional KG2 provision coming from other unrecognized sources (not officially licensed or registered).

- Secondary vocational enrolment as a share of total secondary enrolment has declined over the years to a 13.5 per cent low in 2017, with females underrepresented (57 per cent males to 43 per cent females) and some programmes/courses of study made available only in male schools (Jordan National Social Protection Strategy, NSPS 2019–2025).

- In 2017/2018, Jordan had pupil-teacher ratio (PTR) of 15.9 which is aligned with international ratios, but there is significant variation across schools. A low PTR can be associated with higher quality education, but this has not been the case in Jordan. The World Bank (2016) found that pass rates for the Grade 12 leaving exam were not associated with school size, class size, or pupil-teacher ratio.[7]

- The education system faces two distinct challenges in providing access to education: the phenomenon of very small schools in rural areas (often in rented buildings); and overcrowded classrooms in urban settings (WB, 2016). Pressure on the public education system has increased in the past few years due to the need to integrate Syrian refugees. There has also been a significant transfer of students from private to public schools for socio-economic reasons.[8] In response the Government has adopted approaches to increase efficiency, such as clustering schools with a low student population and double shifting in congested schools.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

- **Teacher Training**: Jordan has around 80,000 public in-service teachers, the majority of whom have undertaken induction training or in-service training. A small percentage have completed the more intensive pre-service professional diploma supported by the MoE. The MoE has prioritized the professional development of teachers, with the goal of licensing 50 per cent of public-school teachers against the National Professional Teaching Standards by 2022.[9] This plan and target are currently under discussion and subject to change.

- The Jordan Human Capital Index is 0.56 (out of 1), signifying that a worker of the next generation in Jordan will only achieve 56 per cent of the productivity expectation of an adult with complete education and full health; this corresponds to the MENA average, but is slightly below average for upper–middle income countries and the median for all countries (WB-HCI, 2018). According the same index (HCI 2018), the average Jordanian child today is expected to obtain 11.6 years of schooling, but only acquire 7.6 years in terms of the quality of learning, measured by current learning conditions (quality-adjusted years of learning).

- **Student Performance:** Jordan participates in various international student assessments, including PISA and TIMSS. In TIMSS (2015), Jordan was amongst the lowest performing countries, ranking 36th out of 39 countries for Maths, and 32nd out of 39 countries for Science. On other hand, Jordan achieved a significant improvement in PISA results in Science between 2012 and 2018.[10] While performance has improved, results are still significantly below the OCED averages. For the national secondary examination, the pass rate was 43.8 per cent in 2017/2018. Overall, results from different assessments continues to show inequities in student outcomes based on gender, socio-economic status, region, and nationality.

- **Spending on education has shown no correlation with learning outcomes:** Compared to other countries with similar per capita expenditure (per primary and lower secondary students), and considering PISA scores in 2015, Jordan is significantly underperforming in the delivery of improved learning outcomes against current expenditure level (IMF, 2018).

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6. KG Data for Decision-Making Study conducted by RTI, UNICEF, and the MOE, and supported by USAID and DFID
7. WB (2016): Jordan Education Sector Public Expenditure Review.
8. In 2019/2020, around 30,000 students moved from private to public education (Al-Rai newspaper, August 2019, citing MoE officials).
9. ACER (2018): Analysis and Mapping of In-Service Teacher Training Programmes to Jordan's National Standards for the Professional Development of Teachers
10. OCED PISA 2018 Country note on Jordan: https://www.oecd.org/pisa/publications/PISA2018_CN_JOR.pdf

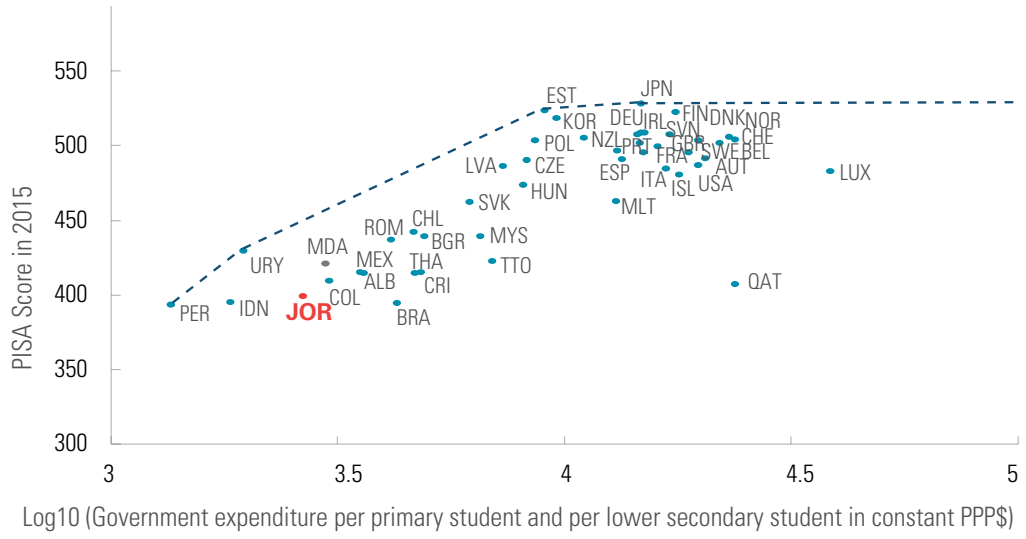
- While progress has been made in the quality of learning in some areas, **Jordan did not reach the 2017 targets for many of the KPIs set out in Jordan's Vision 2025 for the Education Sector.**

Table 1: Progress toward Education KPIs in Jordan Vision 2025

Indicator	2014 Baseline	2017 Target	2017 Result	2025 Target
Enrolment rates in preschool education	60.1 %	75%	59%	90%
Total enrolment rate in vocational education	13.12%	20%	13.5 %	40%
(TIMSS)	**Science** 449* **Maths** 406*	**Science:** 469 **Maths:** 426	**Science:** 426*** **Maths:** 386***	**Science:** 509 **Maths:** 466
(PISA)	**Science:** 409** **Maths:** 386** **Reading:** 399**	**Science:** 424 **Maths:** 401 **Reading:** 414	**Science:** 429**** **Maths:** 400**** **Reading:** 419****	**Science:** 454 **Maths:** 431 **Reading:** 444

Sources: Jordan 2025, MOE budget 2019, TIMSS and PISA.
* (results as of 2011) ** (results as of 2012) *** (results as of 2015) **** (results as of 2018)

Figure 3: Public Spending and Student Performance



Source: IMF PER 2018

04 ANALYSIS OF THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION'S SPENDING

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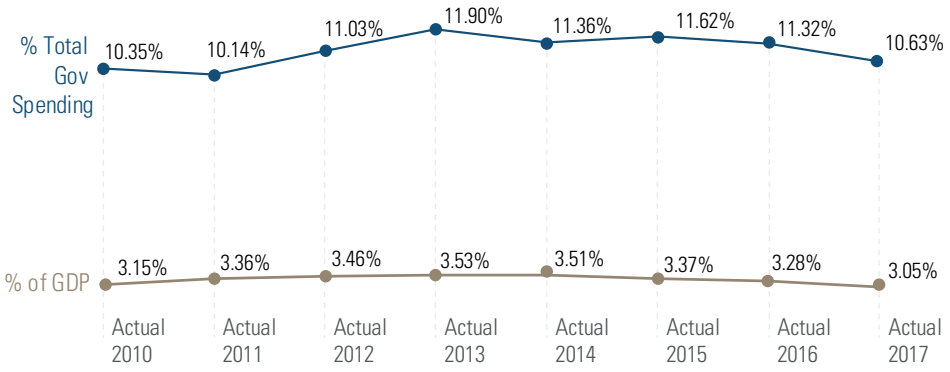
Composition and Trends: This section will primarily focus on the Ministry of Education as the main entity responsible for providing public education with a budget that corresponds to 84 per cent of the educational expenditure as per the functional classification.

- The Ministry of Education's expenditure has grown, in real terms, from JOD 591 million in 2010 to JOD 728 million in 2017 (base year = 2010). However, **the MoE expenditure as a percentage of GDP and total government expenditure has been decreasing overall since 2013.**

Figure 4: Ministry of Education Expenditure (2010-2017)



Source: UNICEF staff calculation based on General Budget Laws and Jordan Central Bank Data

Expenditure as a percentage of GDP in 2017 has fallen below the pre-Syrian crisis levels seen in 2010.

- 77 per cent of the total education expenditures are spent on Basic Education, amounting to JOD 757 million. A further 13.6 per cent is spent on Secondary Education and 3 per cent on Vocational Education. The 'Others' category in Figure 5 includes Kindergarten Education, Special Education, Social & Sports Activities and Literacy & Adult Education. **Combined, these programmes account for 1 per cent of expenditure.**

- The Education Strategic Plan (2018–2022) includes the objective of providing alternative education pathways to children who have dropped out of school. The MoE currently supports a number of non-formal education programmes, including home schooling, and the catch-up and drop-out programmes. These are not fully reflected in the MoE's budget as they are largely supported by other partners and donors. To achieve the ESP goal of providing all children with learning opportunities, further investments by government will be needed.

- Current expenditures represented more than 95 per cent of **the MoE's actual spending in 2017,** with the remaining amount spent on capital expenditures. **The wage bill amounted to 93 per cent of the MoE's current expenditure or 88.6 per cent of total MoE expenditures.** According to the UNICEF Global Budget Brief Guideline (2017), **spending on personnel costs exceeding 80 per cent of total expenditure may represent an inefficient use of resources** as it leaves an inadequate amount for the non-salary current spending, as well as the capital expenditures needed, to improve the quality of education. Further increases in the wage bill will be observed in 2020, given the recent agreement between the teachers' union and the government to introduce a pay rise on the basic salary for every teacher (linked to years of service/seniority, rather than performance).

Figure 5: MOE Expenditure by Programme (Estimated 2019)

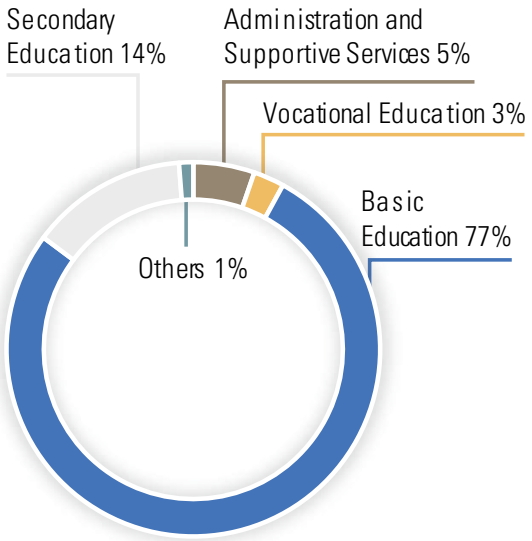
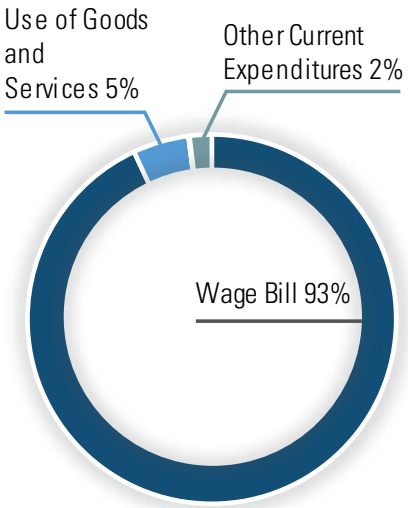


Figure 6: MOE Expenditure per Economic Classification (Actual 2017)



- **Child Allocations:** Providing an account of child allocations – expenditures benefiting children – has been a requirement since 2012, as a result of national advocacy by UNICEF and partners. Table (24) in the main budget law shows child allocations in the budgets of key ministries, especially those related to social sectors. The mapping of child allocations indicates that the MoE's budget is almost entirely allocated to children (JOD 979,823,000 out of JOD 980,393,000 estimated for 2019). **While a significant amount of public spending is categorised as child allocations, this does not mean it is responsive to the needs of children**. To maximize benefits for children, budgets should be targeted to improve equity, inclusion and students' learning outcomes.

- **Budget Credibility and Execution:** The Ministry of Education has a high budget execution rate averaging 98.4 per cent between 2013 and 2017, which demonstrates a strong capacity for fiscal planning. The MoE's budget execution was 3.2 per cent higher than the overall government figure. This high execution rate is partly attributable to MoE's budget being predominately spent on personnel costs, which tend to be predictable compared to capital expenditures. There was almost no difference between the estimated and actual spending on the wage bill for 2017.

Table 2: MOE Budget Execution Rate (2013-2017)

Ministry of Education Year	Budgeted (JOD)	Actual	MOE Budget Execution Rate	Total Gov Budget Execution Rate	MOE Relative Budget Execution Performance
2013	866,882,000	842,489,254.00	97.2%	94.9%	2.3%
2014	903,529,000	892,020,807.00	98.7%	97%	1.7%
2015	910,171,000	897,320,690.00	98.6%	98.1%	0.5%
2016	914,286,000	899,684,895.00	98.4%	93.6%	4.8%
2017	874,287,643	868,491,596.00	99.3%	92.7%	6.6%
Average			**98.4%**	**95.3%**	**3.2%**

Source: UNICEF staff calculation based on General Budget Laws 2013-2019

05 EQUITY OF EDUCATION AND PUBLIC EXPENDITURE

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The Government of Jordan aims 'to ensure access and equality to achieve justice for both sexes by raising the enrolment rate in schools and absorbing all age groups in education for all residents in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan' (ESP, p.144). Towards this goal, the Education Section Plan (2018–2022) identifies various strategies to improve equity in education.

- **Regional Equity**

» Overall, around 67 per cent of the total student population is enrolled in public schools, and **the Government remains the largest provider of education services in rural areas and Governorates with a low population density**. The MoE operates more than 80 per cent of schools in Mafraq and Tafila, compared to only 35.9 per cent of the schools in the capital. Providing education in geographically dispersed areas with low population density requires higher current expenditure per capita, driven by the smaller class sizes and lower pupil-teacher ratios in these smaller governorates.

» Education capital expenditure totals per governorate are relatively small, ranging from **JOD 3 million to JOD 12 million**, based on estimated figures for 2018; this is a continuation of similar trends and amounts over recent years. Given the high student population in larger governorates, and the small differences in capital expenditures allocated for each governorate,

smaller governorates tend to receive higher capital expenditure per student. If spending and education data was disaggregated at the district level, this would enable further analysis which would be useful for planning and policy making.

» **The higher per capita spending and smaller PTR ratios in smaller governorates do not translate into better education outcomes.** In 2015, it was reported that in 69 high schools (out of 134) in the Badih region of Mafraq, no student was able to pass the national secondary examination.[11] Although regional disparities in learning outcomes could be partly related to the level and nature of education spending, it should also be seen in terms of the larger developmental gap between rural and urban areas (and between Amman and the rest of governorates). As an example, HIES 2018 data shows that the average annual family spending on education in Mafraq, Tafila, and Ma'an is significantly lower than other regions in Jordan. Jordan has established a new decentralization process to address this gap between Amman and the rest of the governorates, but the process is still in its infancy stages with reported coordination problems and the inability of Governorate Councils to implement as planned (i.e., spend the allocated budget) for agreed developmental projects. Capacity building and better utilization of data are needed to ensure efficient project design and implementation at the Governorate level

» **The MoE has several assistance programmes targeting different groups and regions including:**

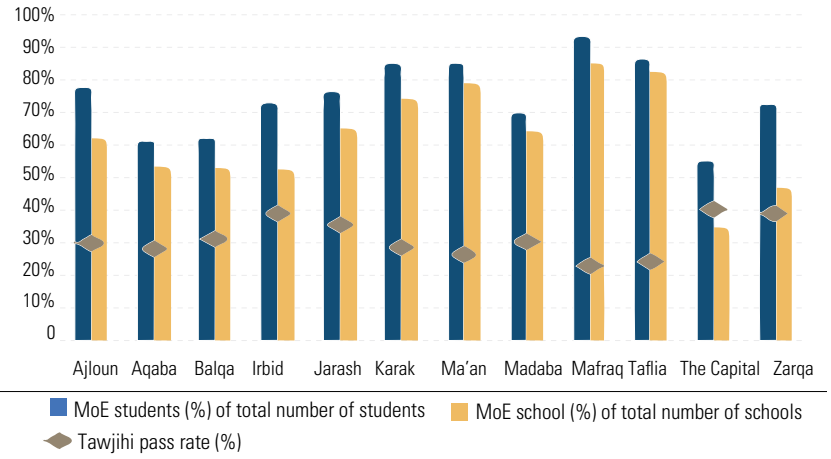
a. The "school nutrition" initiative (JOD 3 million to JOD 4.4 million annually, based on actual spending from 2015–2017), under the stated goal of the Basic Education programme, aims to "improve the health, nutrition and conditions for government school students in poor areas."

b. The MoE also provides transportation support for students with disabilities and for talented students (budget item under the Special Education Project), and students living at locations distant from their schools (Basic Education).

c. Other types of support include the waiving of fees and the provision of free books for certain student groups. There is a fee waiver for Basic Education for all Jordanian children, with donor support providing fee waivers for Syrians.

More information is required to assess the cost effectiveness of these types of programmes, including how they contribute to equity.

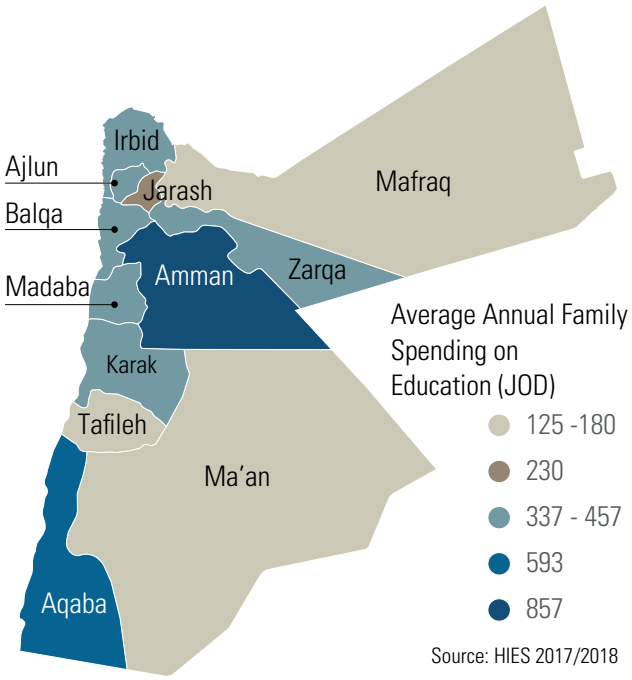
Figure 7: Tawjihi Pass Rates and Regional Disparity



Source: MOE Statistical Book 2016/2017

11. Al-Ghad newspaper (July 25, 2015) citing the Director of the Mafraq Education Directorates.

Figure 8: Average Annual Family Spending on Education by Governorate



Source: HIES 2017/2018

- **Gender Equity**

» The Global Gender Gap Report for 2018 shows that Jordan's best performance is in the category of gender equality in educational attainment, ranking 45th globally with a score of 0.998/1 (almost complete gender parity). However, in other components, including economic participation, political engagement, and health, Jordan ranks much lower (144th, 129th, and 102nd respectively out of 149 countries).

» Females have enrolment rates similar to males in pre-primary and basic education, but lower enrolment in vocational education. At secondary level, males are falling behind, with only 68 per cent enrolled compared to 82 per cent of girls. The National Child Labour Survey of 2016[12] showed that there were 75,982 children aged between 5–17 engaged in economic activities, 88 per cent of whom are male.

» **Females have better learning and overall development outcomes,** as reflected in international test scores and the HCI index. In the "Tawjihi' national examination, females performed consistently better than males in all fields of study, with higher pass rates throughout the years between 2008–2018 (MoE Statistical Book 2017/2018).

» While females are doing better than males in education and health outcomes, this is not **translated into employment and labour-force participation**. Jordan is ranked 144th out of 149 countries for female labour-force participation, one of the lowest ranking scores in MENA and globally. While the importance of women's economic empowerment is recognized from a rights-based approach, as outlined in international conventions and SDGs, the lack of females in the workforce also represents a lost opportunity, not just for women and their families, but for Jordan's overall economic development.

- **Equity for Students with Disabilities**

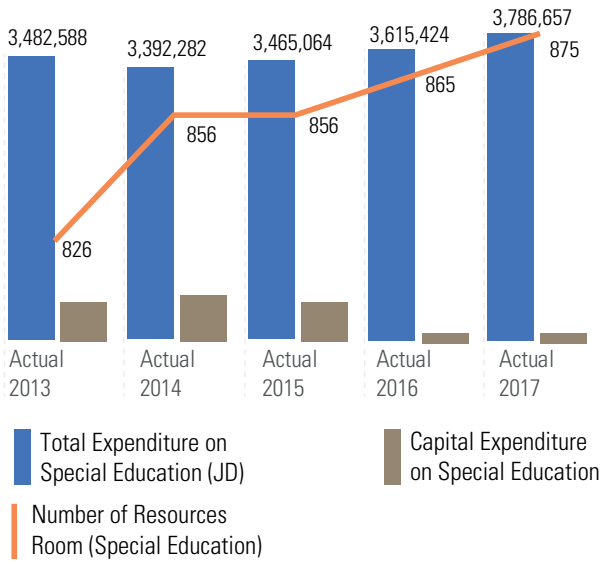
» In 2018, 2,390 students with disabilities (SWDs) were enrolled in MoE schools. In addition, the MoE partners with UNICEF and other actors to identify and support 85 schools in the integration and provision of inclusive education for SWDs in different governorates and in the Syrian refugee camps. The budget allocated for SWDs is part of the Special Education programme, which also supports a number of schools for talented students. Actual programme spending was around JOD 3.8 million, mostly allocated to personnel costs (JOD 3 million) with a declining capital expenditure trend to a low figure of around JOD 119,000 for 2017.

» The programme's estimated budget for 2019 and indicative figures for upcoming years do not show any anticipated changes in priorities or spending patterns. As it stands, in terms of components and allocated budgets, the programme is not adequately responsive to the needs of SWDs in the provision of inclusive education for all, as outlined in the recent "Inclusive Education Strategy" developed by MoE in coordination with the Higher Council for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and education stakeholders from the public and private sectors. The strategy detailed many challenges, including: the lack of capacity to provide a holistic approach for

12. National Child Labour Survey 2016 of Jordan by Center of Strategic Studies in Collaboration with ILO, Ministry of Labour, and Department of Statistics.

inclusive education from teaching to evaluation; the lack of resources to provide assistive technologies and environmental accessibility in most of schools; a lack of engagement by the private sector and private schools; the need to change social norms; difficulties in accessing ECD and KG (opportunities for early intervention). Hence, the implementation of the strategy will require the support and collaboration of many stakeholders to ensure SWDs' access to equity and quality education.

Figure 9: Expenditure on Special Education (2013-2017)



Source :UNICEF staff Calculation based on General Budget Laws

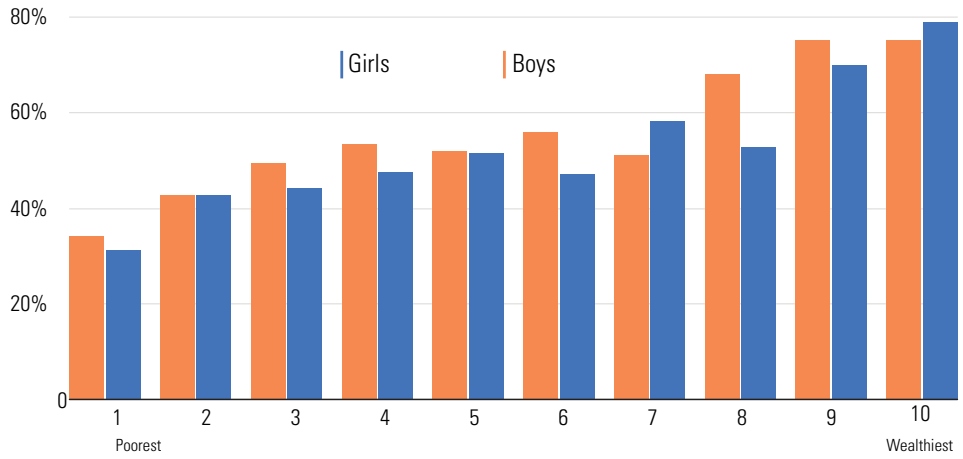
- **Equity in Pre-Primary Education**

» The importance of Early Childhood Education (ECE) for future development outcomes has been stressed in numerous studies, with positive implications for society and the country as a whole.

» Nationally, significant progress is being made to increase pre-primary enrolment. However, DHS data for 2017/2018 show regional disparities in access to early education programmes and resources. For example, 22 per cent of children under the age of 5 years have access to books in their homes in Amman, compared to only 7 per cent in Tafila. HIES data for 2017/2018 underlines the inequity that persists in terms of access to ECE, based on poverty levels (consumption-based measures) between the poorest decile and wealthiest deciles of the Jordanian population.

» The MoE had a budget allocation for expanding access to KG2 education with **actual spending of around JOD 4.4 million in 2017.** The spending pattern has primarily two components: current expenditures, mainly related to teaching students (personnel costs), and capital expenditures mainly related to adding new classrooms. To meet the ambition of universalizing access to KG2, the government will need to improve access for the poorest children, and to prioritize areas that lack KG2 services, whilst also investing in the quality of service provided.

Figure 10: Enrollment in Early Childhood Education



Source: HIES 2017/2018

- **Equity for non-Jordanians**

» Jordan has facilitated the integration of refugee children into its education system through public schools, UNRWA schools, and/or through non-formal education. Syrian refugees can access education through Ministry of Education schools in camp or host-community schools (including single shift and double shift schools) or through accredited non-formal education

» There are also high numbers of school-aged children in Jordan from countries other than Syria, including 17,520 Iraqis, 1,486 Yemenis, 758 Sudanese, 190 Somalis, and 529 from other nationalities.[13] These groups of students are usually required to submit more documentation compared to Syrians. Requirements have occasionally been waived by the MoE, but this is subject to change from one year to the next.[14] Additional support should be provided to non-Syrian refugees to ensure their access to quality education and development opportunities.

» Even prior to the Jordan Compact (2016) which pledged that every Syrian refugee child would be in school by 2016/2017, the government had been working to provide universal education to Syrian refugee children mainly by expanding the use of double shift schools (ODI, 2018). There are 136,437 Syrian refugee students in public school (as of the first semester of 2019/2020, according to MoE data). Despite places being available, 36 per cent are not enrolled in any form of education (UNICEF estimates – NLG Brussels report, March 2019). Reasons include: transportation and education-related costs, bullying and safety concerns, early marriage (for girls), and child engagement in economic activities (mainly for boys).

» The donor-funded initiative 'Accelerating Access to Quality Formal Education for Syrian Refugees' (AAI 2016–2019), along with other external support, has supported the MoE to include Syrian refugees in the national education system, in both camps and host communities. Financial and technical support has enabled the opening of additional double shift schools, covering infrastructure development, maintenance, operational costs, school materials, teacher training, as well as salaries for contract teachers and administrative staff. Future international support will need to recognize barriers to access beyond registration and the availability of spaces and bring a renewed focus to the quality of education and wider system reforms under the ESP 2018–2022.

» Under the AAI initiative, donors have contributed more than JOD 140 million over three years (2016–2018), through on and off-budget modalities (pooled funds and earmarked funds). Whilst Syrian students are included in the public education system, the majority of funding to support their inclusion is not integrated into the official Government budget lines or budget performance indicators.

» Given the likelihood of declining international support in coming years, education partners will need to continue to work with the Government to improve the resilience of the public education system, recognizing that families may not return to Syria in the near future.

Working Towards the SDGs:

While the existing data are not designed in a way that supports the calculation of specific SDG indicators – especially with the focus on the education-related goal (SDG4) of quality and inclusion – it is clear that Jordan is doing well in term of access to education. But still improvements have to be made with regard to ensuring equitable access at the sub-national level and for students with disabilities and vulnerable groups. Recognizing quality as a cross-cutting issue for all levels and groups, and given the recent progress in PISA scores, priority should be given to address boys' lower performance and that of vulnerable groups including Syrian refugees in camp settings and students in disadvantaged areas.

13. UNHCR Statistical Yearbooks

14. Johnston et al (2019): Realizing the rights of asylum seekers and refugees in Jordan from countries other than Syria

06 BUDGET PERFORMANCE INFORMATION AND RESULTS FOR CHILDREN

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- Since 2009, the annual budget law presented non-financial performance information in the form of indicators attached to the line ministries' programmes. This was part of the move by Government to basic results-oriented budgeting (ROB) and other overall public financial management reforms.

- As part of the "Child Friendly Budgeting" programme, UNICEF and partner, the National Council of Family Affairs (NCFA), initiated a collaboration in 2012 with the General Budget Department (GBD) and line ministries. A key purpose was to review budget law performance information and to accentuate the visibility of results for children. This process revealed the need for additional capacity building in results-oriented monitoring and evaluation.

- While progress has been made, challenges remain owing to the lack of an overarching monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system and reporting structures to support planning and accountability. Greater alignment is needed between GBD, line ministries and field directorates. At present, performance information is owned by individual government ministries and departments, and independent government units, which provide self-evaluations on indicator values in the course of the annual budget preparations. With the lack of functional M&E structures, the non-alignment between budgeting designs (based largely on historical trends and ceilings) and performance targets becomes more apparent. This mismatch is further reinforced by the ongoing need for budgeting designs to be updated to reflect current costing and development goals.

- In general, Jordan's move towards an ROB system has not been accompanied by the required parallel development of M&E structures that would enable public budgeting to be responsive in terms of addressing needs and serving overall development goals. There is therefore a need for a systematic assessment of the budget-related decision-making process, and of accounting, monitoring, reporting and evaluation systems. Specific to the Ministry of Education, further review of the budget performance indicators is needed to reflect equity of education, and progress toward SDG4 and strategic objectives in the Education Strategic Plan 2018–2022.

07 FINANCING THE EDUCATION SECTOR

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- Public education is free and compulsory for the basic cycle, with minimal funds raised from fees at other education levels. Overall, government revenues from different sources are pooled by the Treasury and then distributed to government entities based on their budgetary ceilings. Budgeting for the MoE has been completed based on historical trends, with similar programmes and budgetary ceilings in place from one year to the next. This limits the ability to develop a result-oriented budget that is responsive to the needs of students.

- With regard to external support, US$2.4 billion were endorsed as the fund required by the Jordan Response Plan (JRP) for the Syria Crisis for the year 2019. As of November 2019, only 21 per cent of the fund was secured, with the largest share made available to the education sector (US$104 million out of the US$220 million required).

- Off-budget support by partners contributing to the education sector plan is not recorded as part of public spending. A recent mapping of donor support as of 2019 identified around US$1.6 billion committed to the education sector for the years 2014–2023,[15] through grants, loans and technical assistance. Given the lack of detailed data available through government sources, it is difficult to compare and assess gaps in terms of duplicated efforts or inadequate resources.

15. This includes ongoing programmes; projects completed or discontinued during the same period are not part of the estimated total.

08 KEY FINDINGS AND MESSAGES

The Government of Jordan has committed to providing access to quality education for all children living in Jordan. To achieve this goal, the Ministry of Education (MOE) and sector partners must continue their efforts to develop an inclusive, resilient education system that promotes equitable outcomes, especially for the most vulnerable.

Several frameworks guide the national priorities for the sector, including the Education Strategic Plan (ESP) 2018–2022. The analysis in this paper demonstrates that public expenditure on education is not always aligned with the national objectives outlined in these policy frameworks. By considering the adequacy, efficiency and effectiveness of public spending, this brief provides recommendations that may be useful for MOE and other stakeholders in advancing plans and mobilizing funding to deliver results for children.

Adequacy of Budget Allocations and Challenges

Current education expenditure levels are not adequate to realize the national ambition of all children being in school and learning. Public spending on education constitutes less than 4 per cent of GDP and has been in decline since 2015. This is lower than the MENA average and below recommended international benchmarks.

Analysis also underlines the need to allocate adequate resources when considering specific ESP targets. Though the government has set a goal to universalize KG2 access by September 2020, early childhood education received less than one per cent of the MOE's 2019 budget. There are also limited resources allocated to support accredited non-formal education programmes that reach the most vulnerable. Since basic education is compulsory, Jordan needs to invest more in alternate learning pathways for out-of-school children.

Given the likely decline in international aid and recent agreement to introduce a teachers' pay rise, budgetary pressures on the already strained sector are expected to increase. However, a lack of detailed data on off-budget support and projects makes it difficult to assess gaps in terms of duplicated efforts or inadequate resources.

Efficiency and effectiveness

While public spending on education has in recent years focused mainly on responding to the urgent demands associated with population growth, challenges remain in terms of the quality and equity of education. Compared to other countries, Jordan is significantly underperforming in delivering improved learning outcomes (as measured by international test scores) against current levels of expenditure on education. There are also significant disparities in access and learning outcomes for different groups of children in Jordan.

Sustainable Development Goal 4 presents the global ambition of 12 years of quality basic education for all. At present, Syrian refugees and children from vulnerable communities are the least likely to be enrolled in school. Inequities are also reflected in student scores in international exams, local standardized tests, and other global indicators. PISA and Tawjihi results show that children from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds and from certain geographical regions are learning less in school than their peers.

Most spending covers current expenditures, with the wage bill comprising more than 88 per cent of MOE's 2017 budget. This leaves little to invest in other capital and non-salary recurrent expenditures that contribute to improving the quality of education. To achieve the aims of the ESP, more resources will be needed to support non-salary

expenditures, such as teacher development and the provision of teaching and learning materials. It is recommended that MOE and partners continue to build on existing efforts to provide teachers with pre- and in-service teacher training, strengthen school management and improve the learning environment.

Equitable outcomes can be promoted by addressing disparities at the district level, prioritizing disability- inclusive education, increasing access to early childhood education, and continuing to support the education of all vulnerable children, irrespective of nationality. Information on capital investment and expenditure is not disaggregated at a district level. As a result, district-level disparities in terms of education outcomes and spending remain unexamined. There is a need for disaggregated data at a lower administrative level. This would permit in-depth analysis of investment strategies and expenditures and how they correlate with education indicators. Increased awareness of the ESP's goals and strategies at the governorate level, along with capacity building of governorate councils on project appraisal and timely implementation, could improve the equity and quality of education in the most vulnerable areas.

Since 2012, and in accordance with the Budget Law, the government has published allocated budgets directly benefiting children, along with a review of budgetary performance. However, there is a still a need for stronger monitoring and evaluation to better support Jordan's ROB approach, while enhanced budget design is needed to reflect updated costings and to align budget performance indicators with ESP priorities and SDGs. This requires prioritized and realistic targets in the ESP, strengthening linkages between the Ministry of Finance and line ministries, and enhancing capacity and engagement of technical staff at the MOE in budget review, analysis and preparation.

Given the limited fiscal space available, priority should be given to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of public spending through the reallocation of education budget lines and prioritizing spending to support the most vulnerable groups and regions. Inefficiencies could further be reduced through exploring cost-effective modalities for service delivery and investing more capital and non-salary current expenditure on inputs to improve the quality of education.

In conclusion, it is recommended that budgeting for the education sector be aligned to carefully prioritized long-term strategies designed to improve the education of all children. A Public Expenditure Review would be helpful to provide more detailed information on current spending and to inform greater alignment between future budgets and national priorities, as set out in the Education Strategic Plan.

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