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# Forming Responsible Citizens

*Promoting Gender Equality and Preventing Violence in the Mediterranean Region*

## “Hand in Hand to Stop Violence”

### DIAGNOSTIC STUDY | JORDAN | 2018

In partnership with



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# Acknowledgment

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We would like to thank the institutional and financial support received and hope to contribute with the other three countries involved to strengthening the tools for practical learning of citizenship at secondary school age and life period.

Special thanks are due to those who have responded to our requests to make this diagnostic study happen.

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# Executive Summary

Direct teaching of civic and citizenship education as a secondary school subject has only recently been introduced in Jordan with the 2017/2018 school curriculum thanks to a sharp focus on the part of the Jordanian government on value education as a vehicle to promote a culture of tolerance, dialogue, non-violence, and respect for the rights and duties of individuals. Before this, civic and citizenship education values were taught indirectly within a group of secondary school courses labelled “Civics”, covering “Social and National Education”, and directly only by local NGOs as extracurricular activities.

Carried out in close collaboration with the Ministry of Education of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, this qualitative diagnostic study represents a scientific attempt to analyse how civic and citizenship values are taught in secondary school, directly and indirectly. In the framework of the FRC project, this diagnostic study aims at understanding whether civic and citizenship value teaching instruments and methods in secondary schools in Jordan take into account the level of maturity of the students in a way to enhance children’s capability to form and express his or her own views (CRC, art. 12.1). This is further illustrated by tackling the two core issues of the modern school curricula taught in Jordan, i.e. the ideological dimensions of violence and gender, as well as the unspoken and spoken messages these curricula convey—which are discussed at schools and felt only by those who are directly linked to the classroom.

The study was conducted according to a critical methodology (indictive critique and analytical descriptive approach) in order to overcome the traditional perceptions of social and regional educational phenomena within the curricula of Social Studies, Islamic Education, and Arabic Language. The textbook analysis concerns the 2017/2018 first semester curricula for grades 5 through 10. To deepen the reach of the theoretical analysis, field research has also been carried out with different education stakeholders and across governorates. Questionnaires were submitted and focus groups and interviews were conducted for a qualitative exploration of the school environment, with a specific focus on violence and gender discrimination.

In terms of the output of the investigation with regards to textbooks, the work highlights a gap between the content of what is taught at the time research was conducted and what secondary school students would need to sharpen their capability to form and express their own views in accordance to their age and maturity. Additionally, the curricula analysed overlook critical issues affecting the structure of the Jordanian society, the role of women and the dangers coming from fanaticism and discrimination, which goes against the expectations to promote a culture of peace and to engage youth

as key agents. Specifically, the use of certain words and the evocation of certain images, together with a sometimes mere superficial reference to (or omission of) important subjects, involuntarily turn the books into bearers of “dangerous” content, such as propagation of all forms of violence, extremism, intolerance, discrimination and rejection of the other.

Field research confirmed negative behaviours and situations as a reality in Jordanian school. Providing insights onto the educational ecosystem, fieldwork depicts schools as a challenging environment for both teachers, who are not properly trained on the qualitative side of teaching, and students, who do not feel at ease, nor appreciated, at school. Based on the research findings and on the conclusions we draw from them, our recommendation is to address both macro and micro-level approaches to value-based education, as summarised in the table below.

Table 1. Conclusions and recommendations

	<b>CONCLUSION</b>	<b>RECOMMENDATION</b>
<b>1</b>	Gap between schools and real life	Structures, processes and instruments should be put in place to foster participation of different stakeholders
<b>2</b>	Lack of a democratic educational ecosystem	Make the school environment safe and attractive through teacher training, value based pedagogical approach, and qualitative measurement of school performance
<b>3</b>	Widespread violence exists in schools, in different forms	Focus on value-based education on non-violence and non-discrimination with contents and methods appropriate for the age and level of maturity of the students
<b>4</b>	Discrimination against women exists in schools	Ban gender discrimination from schools tackling both education instruments (textbooks content and language) and education pedagogical approach
<b>5</b>	Instruments do not always take into account the age and maturity of the students	Develop and apply the most appropriate and relevant teaching methods and tools for each school grade in accordance with the age and level of maturity of the students

In the framework of the FRC experience, in partnership with the Jordanian Ministry of Education, and with the examples from Morocco and Tunisia as an inspiration, we recommend the development of new initiatives to support the education tools that have already been designed and implemented, with a specific focus on participatory value-based activities and teaching methodology. Specifically, and based on success stories from the other countries involved in the FRC project, we recommend the implementation of youth club and classroom activities to transmit civic and citizenship values according to the evolving capabilities of secondary school students.

*Structure*

This qualitative study consists of three chapters. Chapter I introduces some background information about the “Forming Responsible Citizens” project, the Jordanian educational system context, the role of this study and the research questions. Chapter II presents the methodologies used in the study, while Chapter III shows the outcomes of desk research as well as field research. Finally, we present our conclusions and recommendations based on the findings. In the Annex we include further information about education in Jordan and our field research tools.

*Keywords:* education, citizenship, civics, discrimination, violence, gender, Jordan



# Chapter I: Introduction

## 1.1 Forming Responsible Citizens

The Forming Responsible Citizens (FRC) initiative was launched in 2015 with the aim of reinforcing the role of schools as the main vehicle for the transmission of values of sustainable and inclusive development, freedom and gender equality, and to promote these values through the development of a renewed civic education curriculum in order for children to learn how to become responsible citizens.

This initiative is being led by the Barcelona-based organisation ideaborn and has seen the light thanks to the support provided by the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM). The project is being implemented in Morocco, Tunisia, Lebanon and Jordan, with financial support from Norwegian and Monaco governments, as well as ideaborn, and in partnership with local entities expert in education, namely: the Moroccan Center for Civic Education (MCCE), the Tunisian Social Development and Empowerment Center (SDEC), the Adyan Foundation of Lebanon and the Lebanese National Commission for UNESCO, and the Jordanian Centre for Civic Education (JCCE) in Jordan.

### *Key elements*

Focusing on the school as a key vehicle to engage youth, the **project objectives** are the following:

- to contribute to violence prevention in all its forms and especially against girls and women;
- to contribute to enhancing the exercise of rights, duties and responsibilities by children and youth, according to article 12 of the UN *Convention on the Rights of the Child*;<sup>1</sup>
- to contribute to the diffusion of values of sustainable and inclusive development among children and adolescents in the Southern Mediterranean region, with a special emphasis on contributing to gender equality;
- to encourage policy makers and legislators to put more effort in gender equality and prevention of violence through the development and implementation of adequate citizenship education curricula in each country.

The **expected actions** for local implementation include:

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<sup>1</sup> CRC Article 12 (1) states that: “States Parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child” (1989).

- analysis of school textbooks used to teach 11 to 17-year olds, to understand how civic and citizenship education are being tackled;
- gather and analyse teachers' and students' perception on how the core issues of civic and citizenship education are being taught;
- contribute to the preparation of new teaching materials to complement the existing ones when considered necessary to facilitate the dissemination, understanding and practice of civic and citizenship core values;
- validation of the first draft of the materials with the local community to establish Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) that get parents, educators and administrators to work together.

In terms of **expected achievements** at local level, FRC aims at:

- setting up a local FRC Steering Committee—which should involve representatives from the Ministry of Education and local partners—whose role is to ensure that the work plan and deliverables are fully in line with the agreed project contents and scope, as defined by ideaborn;<sup>2</sup>
- developing complementary education materials which should encompass the concepts of citizenship education, systems and processes of civic life, education for equality, tolerance, coexistence, intercultural dialogue, rights and responsibilities, education for human rights;
- conducting roundtable meetings to ensure project transparency and the reinforcement of PLCs;
- training teachers in professional development and in the use of the new citizenship teaching materials.

## 1.2 Background: Jordanian education context

“The State shall ensure work and education within the limits of its possibilities, and shall ensure tranquillity and equal opportunities to all Jordanians.” (Article 6)

“Basic education shall be compulsory for Jordanians and free of charge in Government schools.” (Article 20)<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> The FRC Jordan Steering Committee members, established in December 2017, sees the participation of Dr Hisham Atieh Al Qawasmeh (Ministry of Education); Dr Sabah Awad Abed Nawaiseh (Ministry of Education); Dr Khaleda Masarweh (Schneller Schools Principal and Civic Education Trainer); Emad Abu Saleh (CEO Arab Innovation initiative, trainer, youth activist); Khalid Abu Radwan (Human Rights and Conflict Resolution Expert); Mona Al Alami (JCCE Director); Gemma Aubarell (ideaborn). Not present at the first meeting but accept to be members: Dr Maha Darwish (Educator Counsellor at UNRWA); Wedad Al Shraideh (Director Princess Basma Center in Al Mafrag).

<sup>3</sup> *The Constitution of The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan*, 1952, as amended in the Official Gazette No. 5117 of 1/10/2011)

The education system in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan is based on the aspirations to freedom, justice, human and economic development to achieve a significant level of productivity and modernisation. Since the early 1950s, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan has made concerted efforts to combat illiteracy through the implementation of strategic policies and sustained investment in educational development. As early as 1952, the Government instituted the Adult Learning and Illiteracy Elimination Programme (ALIEP), implemented nationwide under the auspices of the MoE. It aims to create education and training opportunities for illiterate or semi-literate adults (aged 15 years and above) who were deprived of basic education in their youth.

The philosophy of education is based upon the Jordanian Constitution, the Islamic Arab civilisation, the principles of the Great Arab Revolt and the national experience of the country. The desired vision of the education system emphasizes the importance of providing all people with lifelong learning experiences relevant to their current and future needs in order to respond to and stimulate sustained economic development through an educated population and a skilled workforce. Based on the philosophy above, the general objective of education is to “shape a citizen believer in God, adherent to the homeland and nation, endowed with virtues and human perfections, and mature physically, mentally, spiritually, and socially” (MoE, 2004, as quoted by IBE/UNESCO 2012)<sup>4</sup>.

The philosophy and objectives of education are listed in the **Education Act No. 3** of 1994, which also covers the functions of the MoE, the tasks of the Boards of Education, the educational policy, and elements regulating curricula and textbooks.<sup>5</sup> Key regulations of the 1990s related to basic education are the following:

- **Regulation No. 1** of 1995 on the organisation of the MoE defines the administrative structure of the Ministry and its basic units and committees at all levels (central level, governorates and districts), as well as their main tasks.

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<sup>4</sup> World data on Education. VII edition 2010/11. Compiled by UNESCO / IBE, 2012 <http://www.ibe.unesco.org/sites/default/files/Jordan.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> As reported in “Jordan: Constitutional & Legal Foundations” in [www.education.stateuniversity.com](http://www.education.stateuniversity.com): According to the 1994 Act, the missions and responsibilities of the Ministry of Education include:

- Establishing and administering public schools at all levels and supervising private schools.
- Providing health and counselling services.
- Encouraging educational research.
- Enhancing educational relations inside the kingdom and with other Arab and Islamic countries.
- Establishing adult education centres.

Furthering cultural and scientific development through libraries and museums, radio and television, lectures, clubs, societies, and appropriate magazines (<https://education.stateuniversity.com/pages/749/Jordan-CONSTITUTIONAL-LEGAL-FOUNDATIONS.html>).

- **Regulation No. 41** of 1997 on scientific research for the development of the educational process establishes the objectives of educational research at the Ministry, and it defines the tasks of the Research Committee for developing the educational process.
- **Regulation No. 59** of 1993 on educational certification and training concerns the establishment of the Educational Certification and Training Committee at the Ministry and its tasks, as well as the creation of committees specialised in training, conditions of those responsible for training courses, and the way financial rewards are paid.
- **Regulation No. 42** of 1992 concerns the establishment of the Committee on the equivalence of certificates and its main tasks and functions (IBE/UNESCO, 2012).

All these efforts resulted in the Kingdom having the highest levels of literacy for youth (99%) and adults (89%) in the Arab region.<sup>6</sup> Despite these impressive achievements, the Kingdom remains committed to completely eradicate illiteracy. The government invests 3.6% of GDP in education (12.53% of total government expenditure), which means:

- PPP\$ 1,215.31 per pupil in primary education
- PPP\$ 1,552.37 per pupil in secondary education
- PPP\$ 2,087.01 per pupil in tertiary education.<sup>7</sup>

The structure of the educational system presently catering to youth comprises formal and non-formal systems. The non-formal system includes preschool education, which is run by the private sector and enrolls children as young as age three. Jordanian public schools are single sex schools. Some private schools allow for mixed classrooms.

The formal education system is composed of the following stages, as schematised in Table 1. In details:

- A compulsory stage for children ages 6 to 15 (grades 1-10), consisting of primary school (grades 1-6) and preparatory school (grades 7-10). This is what the Constitution calls “basic

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<sup>6</sup> UNESCO data from “Adult Learning and Illiteracy Elimination Programme, Jordan”, published 3 February 2012, available at <https://uil.unesco.org/case-study/effective-practices-database-litbase-0/adult-learning-and-illiteracy-elimination>. Partners of ALIEP include UNESCO, Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO) and Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization (ALECSO).

UNDP *Jordan Human Development Report 2015*, states that “between 1999 and 2007, Jordan experienced continuous improvements in education at all levels. This has been the case since the mid-twentieth century. Education played a major role in the economic and social renaissance of Jordan. Educational reform efforts started in the early 1990s and included: national education standards; teaching English as a foreign language from grade one and computer science from grade 7; and developing curricula to fit the current knowledge gaps. The main goal is for Jordanian students to meet the requirements of the modern labor market, and to contribute to sustainable development” (p. 51, 2016).

<sup>7</sup> 2017 UIS data, decreasing since 2016. No historical evolution of figures available. 2017 UIS data reports the population aged 14 years and younger at 3.5 million, i.e. 35.5% of the total, while 1.84 million are aged 15 to 24 (i.e. 19% of total population).

education”. An example of basic education weekly timetable by subject and grade is provided in Table 2;

- A comprehensive secondary education (academic and vocational) and applied secondary education (training centres and apprenticeship). Subjects include Arabic, biology, chemistry, computer science, earth science, English, maths, physics, social science, and Islamic studies (unless Christian). According to Scholaro.com, academic secondary schools are still afflicted by class and gender discrimination;
- Higher education, either a two-year intermediate level course offered by community colleges or four years of university level courses, either in public or private institutions. The student achievement on the General Secondary Education Certificate Examination (GSECE) is the sole criterion for admission into higher education institutes.

Table 2. The structure of the education system in Jordan

Education	School/Level	Grades	Age	Years	Notes
Middle	General Education	1–10	6–16	10	Education is compulsory for ages 6 to 16.
Secondary	Secondary Education		16–18	2	Certificate/Diploma awarded: Tawjihi (General Secondary Education Certificate)
Vocational	Secondary Vocational Education		16–18	2	Certificate/Diploma awarded: Completion Certificate
Tertiary	Undergraduate			4–6	Bachelor degree programme (4 to 6 years). Teacher education is part of the university system. All teachers must obtain a Bachelor, secondary teachers must in addition pass one more year of study to obtain the Higher Diploma in Education.
Tertiary	Master			1–3	Two years after completing a Bachelor programme
Tertiary	Doctorate			3–5	

Source: Scholaro Pro <https://www.scholaro.com/pro/countries/Jordan/Education-System> © 2018, Scholaro, Inc.

An example of school weekly timetable before the introduction of the current curricula is presented in Table 2. It shows that there is a group of courses labelled “civics”, covering “social and national education” from grades 1 to 5, and history, geography, national education from grades 6 to 10. Indeed, before the introduction of the new Jordanian curriculum starting with the academic 2017/2018, first semester, there was no formal civic education teaching in the public-school

curriculum. JCCE was the only CSO which introduced civic education as extra-curricular activity outside school hours in 2003 focusing on civic participation and good governance.

Table 3: Basic education weekly timetable

Subject	Number of weekly periods in each grade									
	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X
Islamic education and culture	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Arabic language	9	9	9	9	7	7	7	7	7	6
English language	-	-	-	-	5	6	6	5	5	5
Mathematics	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	4	4
Music and anthems	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Art education	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Physical education	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	1
Vocational education	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	4	4	4
Computer studies	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	2
<b>Civics:</b>										
Social and national education	2	2	2	2	3	-	-	-	-	-
History	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	1	1	1
Geography	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	1	1	1
National education	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	1	1	1
<b>Science:</b>										
General science	3	3	4	4	4	4	4	5	-	-
Physics	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	2
Biology	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	2
Chemistry	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	2
(French language, optional)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	(3)	(3)	(3)
<b>Total weekly periods</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>36</b>

Note: Each teaching period lasts 45 minutes.

Source: World data on Education. VII edition 2010/11. Compiled by UNESCO / IBE, 2012 <http://www.ibe.unesco.org/sites/default/files/Jordan.pdf>

In terms of governance, all Jordanian primary and secondary schools (including private schools) are regulated by the MoE (وزارة التعليم والتربية). The Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research MoHESR (وزارة التعليم العالي والبحث العلمي) is responsible for higher education. Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) at the secondary level (excluding community colleges), as well as applied vocational education, is administered by the Vocational Training Corporation (VTC), which is under the authority of the Ministry of Labour.<sup>8</sup> The UNESCO

<sup>8</sup> UNDP, 2016, pages 47-48

Institute for Statistics (UIS) reports the pupil/teacher ratio at 17.88 for preschool, 21.04 for primary school and 11.43 in secondary school.<sup>9</sup>

No contextual description would be complete without reference to the refugee crisis. A challenge from the eradication of illiteracy comes from the fact that Jordan is a refuge for people fleeing surrounding countries (which means that the number of illiterate adults increases parallel to the rising numbers of refugees). Jordan is one of the countries most affected by the Syria crisis, with the second highest share of refugees compared to its population in the world (89 refugees per 1,000 inhabitants). The majority of Syrian refugees in Jordan live in urban areas and in poverty: over 80% live below the poverty line. 51% of refugees are children.<sup>10</sup> UNRWA provides basic education to over 120,000 students at 173 UNRWA schools, in addition to refugee youth attending government schools (Table 3 recaps the educational infrastructure as it was in 2013). Students in the fourth, eighth and tenth grades are asked to take national quality-control tests in the core subjects—Arabic, English, science and maths.<sup>11</sup>

Table 4: Distribution of schools by authority and gender in Jordan, 2012-2013

Gender	Ministry of Education	Private Schools	Other Governmental Schools	UNRWA	Total
Male	1,295	64	31	85	1,475
Female	538	15	3	71	627
Co-Ed	1,712	2,521	3	17	4,253
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,545</b>	<b>2,600</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>173</b>	<b>6,355</b>

Source: Ministry of Education - The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan 2013

Source: UNDP, 2016, p. 48

<sup>9</sup> The UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) is the statistical office of UNESCO and is the UN depository for global statistics in the fields of education, science and technology, culture and communication. Data available at <http://uis.unesco.org/country/JO>

<sup>10</sup> UNHCR, February 2018. Available at [https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/FactSheetJordanFebruary2018-FINAL\\_0.pdf](https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/FactSheetJordanFebruary2018-FINAL_0.pdf)

<sup>11</sup> UNRWA data available at <https://www.unrwa.org/what-we-do/education>. UNDP notes that “the huge influx of Syrian refugees will affect the education sector because it increases class sizes and has led to a two-shift school schedule that has cut class time by almost 20 percent. Needless to say, this will aggravate regional disparities in the education system across governorates and widen disparities between Amman and other governorates”. UNPD *Jordan Human Development Report 2015*, published February 2016.

### 1.3 Citizenship Education

The notion of *citizenship education* is related to that of *civic education*. The latter deals with the knowledge and understanding of political institutions, concepts, and processes of civic life including human rights, peace, and democracy. Citizenship education goes one step further and encourages active participation beyond mere understanding through a mix of formal and informal approaches (Faour and Muasher, 2011). Following the 2008 and 2009 International Civic and Citizenship Education Study (ICCS), this work understands citizenship education to encompass “three main aspects: (1) knowledge of civic concepts, systems, and processes of civic life; (2) skills of civic participation, problem solving, and negotiation; and (3) disposition, a sense of belonging, values, and ethics” (ibid. page 8).<sup>12</sup> FRC, then, stems from the idea that citizenship education implies the shaping and tempering of children in ways that will turn them into *good citizens*, i.e. responsible citizens who will be able to foster social, cultural, as well as economic development in line with fundamental values such as peace and tolerance of diversity.

Today 30% of the population in the Arab region is under 15 years of age and is more educated and more digitally connected than any previous generations. Yet, “Overall, the quality of education is poor”.<sup>13</sup> In spite of significant investments, reality shows that “current [education] systems focus on quantitative indices rather than quality”,<sup>14</sup> thus failing in their task of forming responsible citizens who are empowered to understand and deal with complex and quickly changing societies.<sup>15</sup> And,

<sup>12</sup> ICCS is quoted by Faour and Muasher as “the largest study on civics and citizenship ever conducted in 38 countries (none from the Arab region). It was conducted by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA), an independent cooperative of national research agencies. See Wolfram Schulz et al., ICCS 2009 *International Report: Civic Knowledge, Attitudes, and Engagement Among Lower Secondary Students in 38 Countries*, International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (2009): 251, <http://www.icfes.gov.co/iccs/index.php/documentos/category/5?download=24%3Ap-2009>.”

<sup>13</sup> UNDP. *Arab Human Development Report 2016: Youth and the Prospects for Human Development in a Changing Reality*. Executive Summary. New York: UNDP Regional Bureau for Arab States, 2016., p. 12) Available at: [http://www.arabstates.undp.org/content/rbas/en/home/library/huma\\_development/arab-human-development-report-2016--youth-and-the-prospects-for/](http://www.arabstates.undp.org/content/rbas/en/home/library/huma_development/arab-human-development-report-2016--youth-and-the-prospects-for/). The AHDR reports almost universal completion of primary education, a significant growth in secondary school enrolment and an overall increase in total years of schooling.

<sup>14</sup> Faour, Muhammad. *A review of citizenship education in Arab Nations*. The Carnegie Papers, May 2013, Carnegie Middle East Center, Lebanon Beirut. Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2013. The report covers the following eleven nations: Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Oman, Palestinian Authority, Tunisia, and UAE (all FRC partner countries are included). All the dimensions of education were fully managed top-down at Ministry level at the time of research. The *Review* shows that almost all the countries considered spend considerable percentages of their GDP on education and that net enrolment rates for primary and secondary education are comparable or higher than the world average.

<sup>15</sup> Marwan Muasher, Nathan J. Brown. “Engaging Society to Reform Arab Education: From Schooling to Learning”. Available at <https://carnegieendowment.org/2018/10/11/engaging-society-to-reform-arab-education-from-schooling-to-learning-pub-77454> “Failing to move from a narrow focus on schooling to a broader and society-wide process of learning will result in generations of unproductive citizens.”

“most Arab educational systems [...] are not producing graduates with the skills and knowledge required to compete successfully in today’s global economy”.<sup>16</sup>

Building on the Carnegie studies, we definitely concur that reforms to education in our society need to tackle the *technical* aspects (i.e. building or strengthening infrastructures) and at the same time they must address the *human* aspect. Young people need to be formed to become “citizens who learn how to think, seek and produce knowledge, question, and innovate”.<sup>17</sup> Indeed, a concern such as violence, in all its different forms throughout our societal tissue, cannot be tackled through mere technical reforms.

#### 1.4 Life skills-based education

It is worth mentioning here that Article 10 Paragraph (c) of the *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women* (CEDAW) provides for the need to refine and adapt educational curricula to eliminate any stereotypical notion of the roles of women and men.<sup>18</sup> Education, based on life and civic skills, not only seeks to prevent violence, promote peacebuilding and develop knowledge, skills, attitudes and values, but also enables students, youth and adults to prevent the occurrence of conflict and violence in their visible and hidden forms. It qualifies them to resolve disputes peacefully and to create conditions leading to peace, whether within the individual or between persons, groups or at the national or international levels. These life skills when acquired by students enable them to:

- Diagnose and apply peaceful solutions to conflict resolution (e.g. problem solving, decision making and critical thinking skills as well as emotion management, communication and interpersonal relationships);
- Diagnose and avoid dangerous situations (e.g. critical thinking, problem solving and decision-making skills);
- Evaluate violent solutions, which appear to be successful as featured by the media (e.g. critical thinking skills);

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<sup>16</sup> Muhammad Faour and Marwan Muasher (2011): *Education for Citizenship in the Arab World*, Carnegie Papers, Carnegie Middle East Center, Beirut. (p. 5)

<sup>17</sup> Ibid, p. 1

<sup>18</sup> CEDAW Article 10 states that States shall ensure that women have equal rights with men in education, including equal access to schools, vocational training, curricula and educational resources. States shall eliminate stereotypes of the roles of women and men through revising school materials and teaching methods. Paragraph (c): The elimination of any stereotyped concept of the roles of men and women at all levels and in all forms of education by encouraging coeducation and other types of education which will help to achieve this aim and, in particular, by the revision of textbooks and school programmes and the adaptation of teaching methods. <http://www.refworld.org/docid/3ae6b3970.html>

- Resist pressure from peers and adults which leads to the use of violence (e.g. problem solving, decision making and critical thinking skills as well as stress management, emotional management, communication and interpersonal relationships);
- Act as a mediator to calm down adversaries (e.g. self- awareness skills, problem solving, decision making, critical thinking, stress management, emotional management, communication and interpersonal relationships);
- Help prevent community crime (e.g. problem solving and decision-making skills, communication and interpersonal relationships);
- Reduce prejudice and increase tolerance for the purpose of diversity (e.g. critical thinking, stress and emotional management, communication and interpersonal relationships).<sup>19</sup>

To conclude, we may say that civic education is both a science and an art. Its essence lies in fixed principles transmitted to young people through pedagogy. In order to absorb these principles, young people need to learn them at the hands of those who have the skills, proficiency, and thoughtfulness.

### **1.5 Implementing FRC in Jordan**

This study is the output of a close cooperation between the JCCE, the MoE in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, and their coordinating partner ideaborn, with the support of the Union for the Mediterranean. The diagnostic study has been conceived as a base line analysis on the ways citizenship and civic values are taught. In particular, during the first FRC Steering Committee meeting,<sup>20</sup> the Committee recommended an in-depth analysis of the core concepts of violence prevention and gender equality developed in the current curriculum, as a basis to highlights the strengths and the weaknesses of the approach and of the materials.

The learnings and conclusions of this study are meant to serve as the basis to the development of education initiatives specifically focused on citizenship and civic values and behaviours to support the implementation of existing education materials and curricula. Having explained that civic education is a new school subject introduced with the new curricula, then, it is important not only to *study the books* used to teach the different subjects to the referred age group, and see how they contribute to promoting peace and fight violence, but also to understand *how teachers and students perceive* the presence of the major issues of violence and discrimination in the school today.

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<sup>19</sup> On life skills-based education (LSBE) see [https://www.unicef.org/arabic/lifeskills/lifeskills\\_25517.html](https://www.unicef.org/arabic/lifeskills/lifeskills_25517.html) and in English [https://www.unicef.org/lifeskills/index\\_7205.html](https://www.unicef.org/lifeskills/index_7205.html)

<sup>20</sup> This meeting took place at the Jordanian Center for Civic Education premises in Amman, Jordan, on 17<sup>th</sup> December 2017.

Ultimately, the study aims at providing knowledge and training to students as well as strengthening and developing appropriate behaviours among children; thus, it comes in accordance with the vision of His Majesty King Abdullah II, as expressed in all his discussion papers. His Majesty stressed that everyone has a role to play in this matter, prompting civil society organisations to join efforts with national institutions through their activities and initiatives in order to serve young Jordanians and equip them with the knowledge and skills that are compatible with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (*2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, UNGA, 2015).

### *Civic education in Jordan: meaning and role*

His Majesty's view was reiterated by HE the Minister of Political and Parliamentary Affairs, Eng. Musa Maaytah during his speech at the opening ceremony of the Forum: "Civic Education and Religious Diversity in Promoting Community Peace and Fighting Violence", organised by the JCCE in 2017 in cooperation with the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung and which was attended by intellectuals and participants from Jordan and other Arab countries. Minister Maaytah emphasized the importance of "civic education awareness" as an indispensable necessity due to its main role in educating individuals and societies about the nature and importance of citizenship which, in turn, constitutes the system of civil and political rights. He added that, in order for civic education to have concrete manifestations and tangible results in community and political development, an Arab spring is needed; a spring that begins in schools rather than on the streets. HE said: "Civic education, its skills and components, raise the level of education and knowledge in the political and social fields, and promote a culture of tolerance, understanding, non-violence, civilised dialogue and respect for the law and rights of individuals". He related this to "the concept of good governance through the rights of individuals to transparency and accountability in the state and society".<sup>21</sup>

Whether taught independently or introduced within the general curriculum, civic skills are considered the main component of civic education, as citizens need these skills to exercise their rights and carry out their duties as active members of their communities. Intellectual skills of civic education cannot be separated from civic knowledge. Effective civic education always seeks to develop the competencies of individuals in interpretation and analysis in order to be able to make decisions and find solutions to problems based on knowledge and understanding. The ability to analyse and interpret enables individuals to distinguish between truth and opinion, and between purpose and means, thus helping them to understand their responsibilities and to distinguish between public and private ones.

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<sup>21</sup> Minister Moussa Maaytah. "Civic Education and Religious Diversity in Promoting Community Peace and Countering Violence". Forum organised by the JCCE and the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung in May 2017

In a democratic society where citizens are decision makers, individuals need to develop their evaluation and advocacy skills, so that their decisions and rulings on public issues are logical and serve the public interest.

*Civic education within the Jordanian educational system*

The goals of civic education are closely related to the general objectives of the educational system of which the true purpose is to *produce good citizens*. Based on this fact, achieving the goal of good citizenship is considered the first priority of the educational process: "Education plays a prominent role in building the state in terms of love of work, participation and the legal, behavioural and moral obligations of citizens".<sup>22</sup> Education is "a catalyst and a partner in social interactions of all types, and plays a role in the elimination of psychological, cultural and mental barriers between the different components of society, as well as between generations and between women and men".<sup>23</sup>

It would seem more important than ever to focus all attention on directing education and teachers towards the future, diverting them from all bias and spurring them towards neutrality and professionalism within a national and humanistic framework. The teacher is the main pillar of education and the educational environment is the fostering environment for the teacher, the student and the educational process; it is the factory in which the individual and the community are made. Educational products and their role in building nations and promoting positive societal interactions depend on and are very much influenced by the teacher and the educational environment.<sup>24</sup>

Education in terms of reason, thinking, behaviour and forming the national identity plays a key role in societal interactions. These interactions preserve the vitality, cohesion and enrichment of society itself through diversity. We must constantly reflect on the factors that influence societal interactions and bring about the desired positive changes that are compatible with progress and development. Otherwise, these changes, if in the *wrong* direction, will lead to the decline of society and its failure to keep up with progress.<sup>25</sup>

For children to become responsible (*good*) citizens, they need to understand and absorb the values of civic education. Yet, "Like all subjects taught in public schools in most parts of the Arab World, the teaching of civic education is teacher centred, with limited opportunities for students to

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<sup>22</sup> Abdullah Mujaidel. "A Study on the Crisis of Belonging and Citizenship in Arab Education" *Political Thought Magazine*, Arab Writers Union, Damascus, No. 21

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> Studies we have reviewed show that at least 40% of students are influenced by the ideas and values held by their teachers.

<sup>25</sup> Dr Ibrahim Badran, Minister of Education, "Civic Education and Religious Diversity in Promoting Community Peace and Countering Violence" Forum organised by the Jordanian Center for Civic Education, May 2017

engage in open discussions or express their views without fear of intimidation by their teachers. Active learning is rare, and students are hardly encouraged to think analytically or critically. Students are supposed to memorize the facts and information presented to them in textbooks to be able to regurgitate them on an exam without applying the information directly or integrating it into appropriate and meaningful experiences in their practical lives”.<sup>26</sup> Participation, hence, is key.

### *Education and gender equality in Jordan*

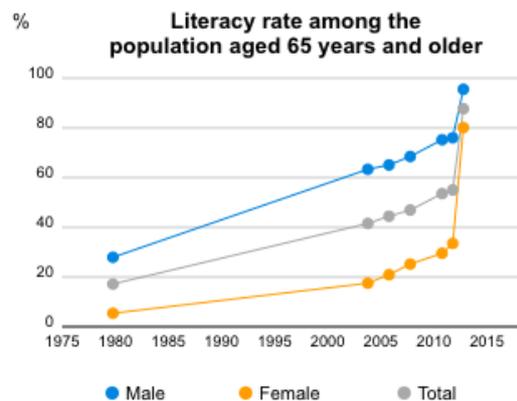
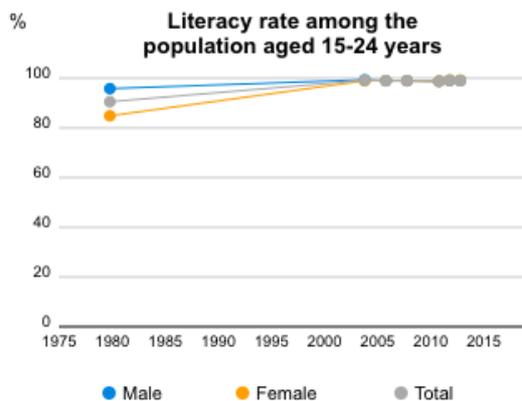
As for gender equality, Jordan still needs to work on this issue. Inequality itself is considered a form of violence against women. Jordan’s rank in the *Global Gender Gap Report* in 2017 fell one spot standing at 135<sup>th</sup> out of 144 countries compared to 134<sup>th</sup> in 2016 as published in *Al Ghad* Newspaper on 2/11/2017.<sup>27</sup> However, Jordan is determined to move forward in the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women. This was explicitly expressed in the report issued by the Government's Human Rights Coordinator in 2017 where he confirmed that efforts are still being made towards strengthening the role of women and that the Jordanian Government is interested in developing and strengthening the human rights system in a pioneering manner that would move the Jordanian State to a higher standard in this regard.<sup>28</sup> Jordan ranks 51<sup>st</sup> in terms of education index, and it has virtually closed the education gap between men and women, as illustrated by Figure 1.

Figure 1. Literacy rates in Jordan

<sup>26</sup> Muhammad Faour. *A review of citizenship education in Arab Nations*. The Carnegie Papers, May 2013, Carnegie Middle East Center, Lebanon Beirut. Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2013. Available at: [https://carnegieendowment.org/files/education\\_for\\_citizenship.pdf](https://carnegieendowment.org/files/education_for_citizenship.pdf) - <http://carnegie-mec.org/2013/05/21/ar-pub-51864>

<sup>27</sup> <http://www.alghad.com/articles/1915842> - <http://alrai.com/article/1021964> The *Global Gender Gap Report 2017* lists Jordan just ahead of Morocco (136<sup>th</sup>) and Lebanon (137<sup>th</sup>) in terms of global index: they “have made progress on closing their gender gap in labour force participation, but also see a widening gender gap on the Political Empowerment subindex”. (p. 22)

<sup>28</sup> See the Jordan Government Report on World Women's Day regarding “Official efforts to promote the role of women on the occasion of International Women's Day” at: <http://www.pm.gov.jo/content/1489321387>



Source: UIS, 2018

Jordan ratified the CEDAW in 2007. The convention is considered the main point of reference for women's rights and affirms the principle of gender equality and non-discrimination against women. The Convention also stipulates that these rights are human rights that should not be violated. Jordan submitted six reports to the CEDAW Committee; the sixth report was scheduled for discussion on 16 February 2017 in response to the international obligation contained in article 18 of the Convention.<sup>29</sup> Quoting the Government website, the sixth report “concluded that Jordan has made remarkable progress in a number of areas of the Convention both in terms of legislation and in the measures taken to achieve gender equality and the promotion of the status of gender equality, in accordance with the Constitution, laws and general policies of the State. The report also noted the efforts made towards gender mainstreaming in relation to plans, strategies and policies, and in measuring the extent to which some of the indicators and recommendations contained in the Navigator Concluding observations of the Committee [...] in its fifth report in 2011”.<sup>30</sup>

Jordan also adheres to regional charters protecting women's rights and on 24 October 2004 it ratified the 2004 *Arab Charter for Human Rights* (entered into force on 15 May 2008) promoted by the League of Arab States. Article 3(3) states that “men and women are equal in human dignity and rights and duties in light of the positive discrimination adopted by Islamic law and other heavenly

<sup>29</sup> CEDAW Article 18 reads:

- (1) States Parties undertake to submit to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, for consideration by the Committee, a report on the legislative, judicial, administrative or other measures which they have adopted to give effect to the provisions of the present Convention and on the progress made in this respect:
  - (a) Within one year after the entry into force for the State concerned;
  - (b) Thereafter at least every four years and further whenever the Committee so requests.
- (2) Reports may indicate factors and difficulties affecting the degree of fulfilment of obligations under the present Convention.

<sup>30</sup> Jordan Government Report on World Women's Day.

laws and legislation and charters in force for the benefit of women". Accordingly, Jordan is taking all necessary measures to ensure equal opportunities and de facto equality between women and men.

### **1.6 About this diagnostic study**

The education sector in Jordan received the news of updating and developing the school curriculum with joy and optimism. The MoE announced that the new curriculum, launched for 2017/18 academic year, first semester, had come to adapt to global development and progress, to fight extremism and terrorism, to take into account the individual differences between students, and to focus on the development of critical thinking and creativity of students. However, these sentiments soon turned into a wave of anger driven by accusations that the Ministry is scrapping the Islamic identity of the curriculum. After reviewing the new curricula, it was found that these accusations were false and not based on scientific grounds. On the contrary, the religious content remained strong. Anyway, this matter is not within the scope of this study.

This study stems from the issue of wallowing in the presented perceptions of the school curricula; the lack of harmony and coherence between the content of the lessons, the attempt to address a number of negative ideological dimensions—imposed by the surrounding struggle—which came with counterproductive results and led to the indirect exclusion of women. The curricula took—unintentionally—to promote all forms of ostracism, extremism, terrorism and the exclusion of others as this study shows. Given these premises, our study represents a scientific and serious attempt to provide an assessment and to further support the new educational curriculum to overcome a large number of pitfalls that have occurred.

In the overall framework of the FRC project, the first Steering Committee meeting set the priorities for the FRC diagnostic study in Jordan as follows:

“The diagnostic should be very practical oriented and focus not on citizenship in general but on the issues related to violence prevention and gender equality, always in the framework of the citizenship education approach. The diagnostic recommendations at the end should be the basis for the elaboration of [complementary teaching] materials. [...]. [The Jordan team] will include civil society approach in their demarche as well as governmental, school administration and teachers [input]”. (FRC Jordan Steering Committee meeting minutes. Amman, 17 December 2017)

Complementary to the above, the diagnostic study tackled: (a) the phobia of terrorism in the Social Studies curriculum and the neglect of social issues; and (b) gender segregation and the problem of overlooking important issues that should be included in the Islamic Education and the Arabic Language curricula.

The objectives of this exploration can be listed as follows:

- Highlight some topics that were presented to students without taking into account their intellectual level and age;<sup>31</sup>
- Alert the MoE Curriculum Department to the unsound methods that have been used to present the topics of extremism and terrorism to the students;
- Highlight the fact that the use of positive words is more effective than the use of words that reflect violence, extremism, racism and ostracism (as we found out through field trips);
- Draw the Ministry's attention to the gender discrimination examples found in the curriculum, hoping they will be rectified and modified. We totally understand that most societies suffer from gender discrimination (explicitly or implicitly) even in the most advanced countries of the world. This has been reflected in all educational, cultural and intellectual practices and it is our duty as researchers to address it in this study.

### 1.7 Research questions and hypotheses

For this study some research questions were prepared, as follows:

- Did the new curriculum take into account the intellectual maturity level of students?
- Did the new curriculum adequately address the issues of extremism and terrorism?
- What is the extent of women's presence in the new curriculum? And *how* are women present?
- Was the vocabulary used in the curriculum (sample study) free of violence?

This study started out with a positive hypothesis regarding the new curriculum, given that its development was not arbitrary but conducted by experts in the Ministry of Education. However, when reviewing the study sample, our hypothesis has completely changed, as positivity and negativity is utterly related to the benefits that the students get from the curricula.

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<sup>31</sup> To accompany the “evolving capacities of the child” (CRC Article 5), and until the child is “capable of forming and expressing his or her own views” (Ibid., Article 12.1), education norms and policies should be devised in the best interest of the child, hence they should take into account their level of maturity and their capability to assess, weigh and comprehend information.

# Chapter II: Methodology

The present study uses the **inductive critique approach** in addressing the issue of school curricula development. It also relies on the **analytical descriptive approach** of the studied phenomena. This approach is based on building hypotheses and testing them. The current research is qualitative, based on documents, studies, and intellectual statements. It is a research methodology in science that focuses on describing the phenomena and understanding them thoroughly and deeply. In order to get to a reality-based diagnosis of violent behaviour and gender discrimination, information collection tools have been diversified and implemented in different geographical locations to include students, teachers, CSOs, teachers' union and educational experts from within and outside the Ministry of Education

## 2.1 Literature review

This diagnostic study comprised four different steps. The first step consisted of the review and analysis, in January and February 2018, of the newly introduced curricula and of existing literature on civic and citizenship education for school grades 5 to 10. In specific, the team reviewed the following first semester 2017/18 curricula:

- Arabic Language
- Islamic Education
- Social Studies (a part of which is called National and Civic Education).<sup>32</sup>

Only for grades 7 to 10 there are specific civic education booklets, which cover part of the time (roughly one fourth) devoted to Social Studies. All public schools and most private ones use the same textbooks. Under **Law 16 of 1964**, the School Curricula and Textbooks Division of the MoE is responsible for producing and printing the textbooks. They are distributed free of charge during the compulsory stage, but there is a nominal fee at the secondary stage.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> The MoE introduced a new set of curricula starting with the first semester of the 2017/18 school year. The diagnostic study team borrowed hard copies of the books from the MoE Curricula Dept specifically for this analysis. Manuals are not available at the moment.

<sup>33</sup> Additionally, educational television was introduced on a limited scale in Jordan beginning in 1968. It provided programmes for secondary schools, primarily in such fields as mathematics, the sciences, and English. Information sourced from “Jordan Educational System—overview” available at <https://education.stateuniversity.com/pages/750/Jordan-EDUCATIONAL-SYSTEM-OVERVIEW.html>

In addition to school curricula, we reviewed a number of educational studies that aspire to develop the curriculum and analyse its content in a thorough scientific manner, and we applaud the researchers' hard work and accomplishments. All studies agree on the ultimate goal to narrow the gaps of the school curriculum and solve its weaknesses. Nevertheless, we have found fundamental differences affecting methodological mechanisms, analytical strategies, sample study, and of course results.

Most of the studies we have examined were based on the **content analysis approach**, which often includes a statistical approach as well. However, one of the drawbacks of the content analysis approach is that it follows a horizontal line that tries to trace a phenomenon in the school curriculum by focusing on the number of repetitions of each example or topic. At the end, the researcher provides an opinion on whether the school curriculum is rich or not. The results of this approach are usually expected, unscientific and inaccurate, as the researcher doesn't follow a subsequent plan targeting the content of the curriculum but, rather, preconceives a hypothesis and tries to search for it in the school curriculum. Moreover, this approach addresses multiple issues, which leads to overlooking some.

The scientific and educational studies have proved that the **analytical inductive (AI)** methodology is the preferred method that could lead to school curriculum reform. The AI method reviews the book page by page, stops at subjects targeted in the study and discusses and criticises each of them. The AI method focuses on the content and specificity of each school curriculum. For example, how can we look for extremism, racism and terrorism in the subjects of Mathematics or Science? A question that many studies using different methodologies have failed to answer, thus making them vulnerable to attacks by those who do not agree with the subjects and ideas addressed by the curriculum.

To illustrate the difference between the methodology we used in our study and the methodologies used in other studies we have seen, we look at the following examples:

- In the Arabic Language curriculum, the analysis concluded by the previous studies differs from the current study. For example, their studies did not only focus on women's image and the way women were presented but also on the number of times they were mentioned. With regards to women's looks and beauty, flirting was mentioned without understanding its original content.
- Previous studies have addressed some of the terminology used such as violent expressions, while this study focused on both the content as well as the terminology.
- In the previous studies of the Islamic Education curriculum there was no mention of the State of Islam and no differentiation between the State of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) and ISIS

(Da'ech) the terrorist group. The reason is the research methodology, which restricted researchers to specific points they could not overcome.

- The previous studies did not touch on the illustrations, but focused on the images and how they looked, neglecting their content and failing to analyse it. Unlike other researchers, we analysed the illustrations detailing violence, racism and extremism in the Social Studies curriculum.

Here, we should stress that the importance of choosing the AI methodology does not diminish the value of the efforts exerted in other studies. We do agree with them on a few issues, notably the negative presentation of a number of standards and topics in the Social Studies curriculum and the masculine dominance noted in grade 5 Islamic Education curriculum, among other grades. However, we have some other observations from previous studies that we summarise as follows:

- Previous studies focused on the terminology used ignoring the content and its implications;
- Previous studies applied all issues, despite their complexity, to all school curricula without taking into account the technical and intellectual aspect of each curriculum;
- The studies of the Arabic Language books often excluded rules of grammar and rhetoric without giving a justified reason—as if these subjects were not part of the Arabic Language curriculum. We note that some negative examples and methodological errors were found in the grammar book used for this study.

In conclusion, we can't deny the role of these studies in the development of the curricula and in putting an end to issues such as the visible undermining of women, the defamation of religion, the learning by memorisation and not by critical thinking, the lack of technological and global developments, and the disregard for age difference and intellectual level to mention a few.

## **2.2 Field research**

This desk work was enriched by data collection from the field, which was performed through different, complementary tools, targeting various stakeholders in different regions of Jordan, as shown in Table 4. Each research instrument had a specific function within the ultimate goal to provide a scientific and comprehensive understanding of the hypotheses we had defined.

Table 5: Data collection plan overview

INTRUMENTS	STAKEHOLDERS	LOCATION
<b>Questionnaires</b> (March/April 2018)	20 teachers	Madaba (Central Jordan)
	20 teachers	Karak (Southern Jordan)
	20 teachers	Zarqa and Rusaifeh
	120 students	Al Karak, Irbid, Al Mafraq, Al Zarqa, Amman
<b>Focus groups</b> (April/May 2018)	15 CSOs	Mafraq (Northern Jordan)
	3 persons from the teachers union	Amman
	3 persons from the Jordanian Education for All Coalition representing 3 CSOs	Amman
	20 teachers	Al Karak
	20 teachers	Madaba
	15 youth members	Al Karak, Irbid, Amman, Ma'an, Al Zarqa, Al Tafileh and Al Mafraq
<b>Interviews</b> (March/April 2018)	4 MoE staff	
	4 Education experts / UNRWA	

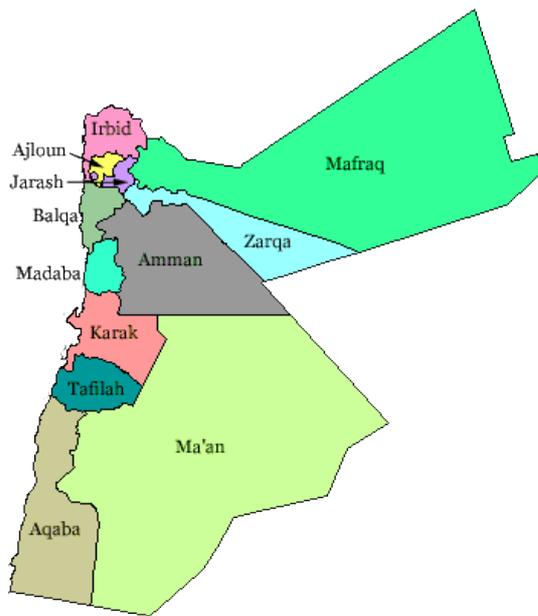
Questionnaires were intended to get a broad understanding of the opinion of key stakeholders (students and teachers) about our research questions across the country. They were distributed (paper copy) in several governmental schools in different governorates across Jordan (see Table 4 for details on the distribution of questionnaires and Figure 2 for Jordan's political organisation), selected based on equitable geographic distribution and balanced gender representation of respondents (for students, equal distribution male / female). All questionnaires were anonymous.

Focus groups were then organised to actually engage key stakeholders in discussing the issues of violence and discrimination. This format was selected to try and bring out from group dynamics some aspects of the research questions that may not have been anticipated by the study team and that had emerged from the questionnaires, and to validate the results of the desk research previously conducted. These focus group discussions took place in nine different governorates (*muhafazat*) out of the twelve shown in the table and map of Jordan (Figure 2).

Recruiting was done in both urban and rural areas to ensure equitable representation of the different strata of the population, as follows:

- Schools were asked to suggest teachers of different ages. In terms of gender representation, there was a majority of females, reflecting local status quo;
- School children were selected among pupils in grades 5 to 10, equal share of females and males;
- Representatives of CSOs included education experts and people particularly interested and engaged in the topic.

Figure 2: Jordan political map and territorial organisation



	<b>Governorate</b>	<b>Capital</b>	<b>Population</b>
<i>Northern region</i>			
1	Irbid	Irbid	1.770.158
2	Alloun	Alloun	176.080
3	Jerash	Jerash	237.059
4	Ma'raq	Ma'raq	549.948
<i>Central region</i>			
5	Balqa	Al-Salt	491.709
6	Madaba	Madaba	189.192
7	Amman	Amman	4.007.256
8	Zarqa	Zarqa	1.364.878
<i>Southern region</i>			
9	Karak	Al-Karak	316.629
10	Tafila	Tafila	96.291
11	Ma'an	Ma'an	144.083
12	Aqaba	Aqaba	188.160
<b>TOTAL (2015 census)</b>			<b>9.531.443</b>

Source:

Map: Wikimedia Commons <https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/8/8b/Jordan.geohive.gif>

Data: Jordan, in Wikipedia <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jordan>

Most groups lasted between one and a half and two hours and were moderated by some of the diagnostic study team members (Mr Khalil Abu Radwan, Ms Mona Al Alami, Dr Khaleda Masarweh). Names of participants are not available, since most asked to remain anonymous. Smaller discussion groups were also organised in Amman with education experts from the teachers' union and from the Jordanian Education for All Coalition.

Finally, in-depth face to face individual interviews were held with representatives from the MoE and from UNRWA to provide the study team with in-depth information pertaining to the participants' experiences and viewpoints regarding violence and gender discrimination. Specific attention was put on the current situation in school, with regards to the two main research topics, and the role of school in these regards. For reference, sample questions for interviews are provided in Annex D. Interviews lasted approximately 45 minutes each and were led by the diagnostic study team members (specifically by Mr Khalil Abu Radwan, Ms Mona Al Alami, Dr Khaleda Masarweh). Interviews were not recorded.

## Chapter III: Analysis and Findings

### 3.1 Analysis of school curricula

Since the study materials had just been launched, and they specifically seek to address the issues of terrorism and gender segregation, our diagnostic study on civic and citizenship education school materials and how civic and citizenship are taught utilised these two topic to illustrate with concrete examples the strengths and weaknesses of the school materials with respect to the key questions of the relevance to the children's age, maturity, and ability to form her / his own opinions regarding civic and citizenship values.

#### 3.1.1 Social Studies curricula analysis illustrated though phobia of terrorism and the neglect of social issues.

“It is difficult to curtail or directly abolish areas of existing curricula, even when they are regarded as dispensable or to be kept for small minorities. At the same time, there is pressure for a host of new contents and innovations to be recognized as a rightful part of school curricula. Once again, the solutions are either ambiguous or misguided, offering only the continual addition of 'something extra' to previously existing content.”<sup>34</sup>

Today, the Social Studies curriculum contradicts itself. Among the existing contents referring to the Jordanian society, one which is very important for students to understand and yet neglected is the structure of the society itself—as Table 5 illustrates.

Table 6: Structure of Jordanian society as referred to in schoolbooks

Grade	Citation	Page
5	<i>No mention of the society's structure</i>	-
6	Arbitration is based on either a formal or tribal law	40
7	<i>No mention of the society's structure</i>	-
8	Customs, traditions and knowledge	31
9	"The Jordanian national security depends on ... the invincibility of Jordanian society"	48
10	"One of the factors contributing to national political security in Jordan: the state of social harmony in Jordanian society"	34

<sup>34</sup> Gozzer, Giovanni, *School Curricula and Social Problems*. Prospects, UNESCO, 1990 (p. 1)

When there is no mention of the structure of Jordanian society (as in the 5<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grades curricula) and when the Jordanian society is referred to in simple sentences with dangerous implications (as in the other books), this will have a negative impact on students' understanding of their role, rights and duties as *good citizens* within Jordanian evolving societal organisation and the rule of law. For example, the 6<sup>th</sup> grade book states that formal law was established alongside tribal law. Yet, tribal law is not defined or explained in any of the other grades.<sup>35</sup> The tribal structure is important in the Jordanian society and students should know both its positive and negative connotations—since not every tribal law is right and not every tribal judge has wisdom. Vague citations (as listed in the table) may foster a negative affiliation to the tribe at the expense of citizenship and may increase racism and violence among students within the school, especially in areas of tribal conflict.

This is also evident in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade book where traditions are linked to cultural values without explaining the nature of the relationship between them. That will lead students—especially in tribal areas—to think that a person who does not know customs and traditions does not have cultural values! It is understandable that this topic could be above the intellectual level of the students. Yet, civic and citizenship education instruments should be devised as capable of tackling even complex issues in a relevant manner for the different school level and maturity levels of children. Indeed, important names have emerged in the field of sociology and critical educational sociology such as Ivan Illich, Pierre Bourdieu, George Snyder, Paul Ferrari, Paul Klezk, Pudloaustableh, Bodun, and many others who can be referred to and their ideas used regarding this matter.

“It is clear that school curricula are a direct reflection of the kind of society in which they are to be found and whose values they represent. It is also true that they provide continuity in the sense that they are drawn up by a generation which, at the height of its responsibilities and decision-making powers, seeks to transmit its specific characteristics to future generations.”<sup>36</sup>

Therefore, this important issue in our Jordanian society must be taken into consideration in a relevant manner for the students. In this context, we do not question the effectiveness of the rest of the citations from grades 9 and 10, but they definitely require explanation, justification and convincing. If the student is convinced of something, this belief will build his/her personality, loyalty to the country and its leadership. However, if he/she is not convinced, he/she will look for answers

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<sup>35</sup> We looked for words such as “tribe” or “tribal” in the Social Studies books of grades 5 to 10 and only found them in the previous example.

<sup>36</sup> Giovanni Gozzer, *ibid.*, page 12.

outside the school; on social media or from other people, which may be *negative* and *wrong* because they are not based on scientific grounds and not suitable for his/her level of maturity.

Among the subjects in this curriculum that are addressed in a vague or relevant way for the age of the students is the topic of “defending one’s country” which we followed throughout the whole study sample. This was presented without explanation of how a 5<sup>th</sup> or 9<sup>th</sup> grader can defend his/her country at such young age. The following table contains citations from the books regarding this issue:

Table 7: Defending one’s country

Grade	Citation	Page
5	“The main duty of any citizen is defending his/her country”	17
	“A good citizen loves his country and defends it”	21
6	<i>No mention of defending one’s country</i>	-
7	<i>No mention of defending one’s country</i>	-
8	<i>No mention of defending one’s country</i>	-
9	Types of duties... defending the country	13
10	<i>No mention of defending one’s country</i>	-

Table 6 raises a lot of question about the basic function of this curriculum. It totally ignores this important topic in some grades, fails to provide convincing answers to the questions of some students, and does not explain how to defend one’s country. As a result, the first thing that comes to students’ minds is armed defence, i.e. engaging in wars or trying to harm anyone who destroys public property because "defending one’s country" is a duty. Hence, the result is manifold forms of violence because 5<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> graders always link the word "defence" to being physical. The Curriculum Department should revise this by clarifying that one can defend his/her country through science, technology, economic development, using their mind, etc.

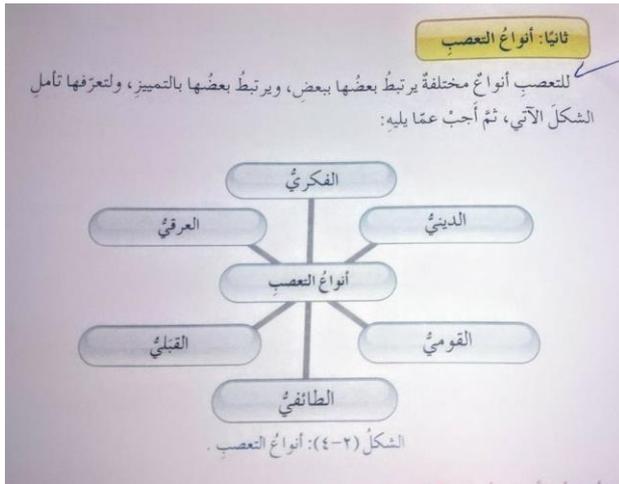
In our opinion, the main reason for the lack of clarification of the previously mentioned topics is the fear (phobia) of extremism and terrorism. This issue has become a central concern and occupies a considerable space of the new curriculum—nevertheless, it hasn’t been dealt through appropriate pedagogy: “The problem of racism and anti-racism cannot be transferred as such into the classroom as a school subject or part of the syllabus, but must find a suitable framework within which it can be fitted”.<sup>37</sup>

In this respect, the 8<sup>th</sup> grade education curriculum constitutes a model that threatens the intellectual and cultural security of the student. The “Coexistence Unit” has provided information that may develop a negative culture rather than a culture of citizenship and positive community

<sup>37</sup> Gozzer. Ibid., page 17. Racism stands for strict racial prejudice and discrimination.

service. And, it has led to promoting all forms of violence, racism, extremism and terrorism. According to the unit's objectives, students are expected to "mention the characteristics of a racist".<sup>38</sup> Examples for 8<sup>th</sup> grade book explain this concept, as shown in the illustrations below.

Figure 3: The different forms of fanaticism



#### Forms of fanaticism

- Ethnic or racial supremacist fanaticism
- Religious
- Nationalistic or patriotic
- Intellectual
- Sectarian
- Tribal

Source: Social Studies book, 8<sup>th</sup> grade, page 37

Prior to this illustration, there was a detailed discussion on diversity and the relationship between racism and discrimination. The illustration outlined the types of racism (i.e. prejudice and discrimination) in a way that embeds them in students' minds. Following the illustration, the causes of racism were stated, followed by the characteristics of a racist as shown below.

Figure 4: Features of fanatic personalities



#### Some features of fanatic personalities

#### Characteristics of fanatics:

- Do not accept dialogue with others
- Resort to violence to achieve goals
- Self-centredness
- Stagnant thinking
- Ignorance

Source: Social Studies book, 8<sup>th</sup> grade, page 38

<sup>38</sup> Social Studies book, 8<sup>th</sup> grade, page 29

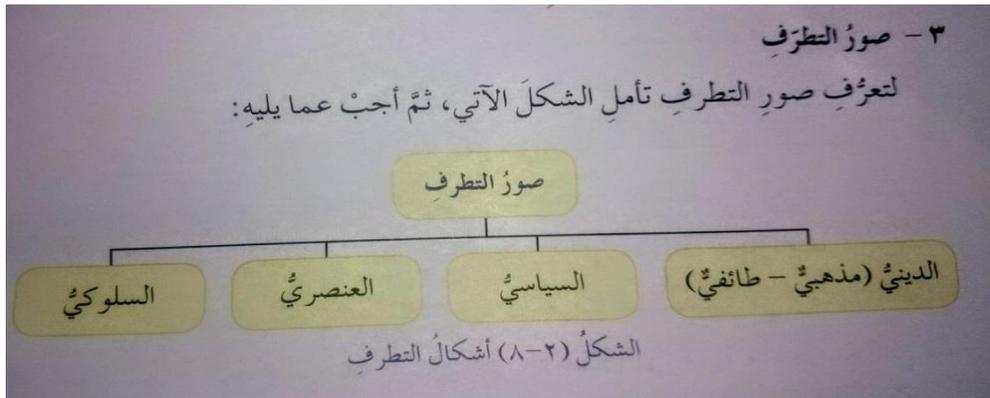
“The original role of schools was to provide pupils with cognitive instruments (intellectual and practical) and with the ability to formulate, reflect and invent. With the emergence of all these additional subjects, school has tended to become a place for solving problems to which society itself has failed to find an answer.”<sup>39</sup>

We wish schools focused on showing students the positives of our civilisation, especially at a sensitive age (adolescence), as showing students otherwise might backfire. This is what Giovanni Gozzer contends when he writes:

“When recommendations are made at the highest level of political and social responsibility for the introduction in certain regions of compulsory anti-Mafia instruction, that is, to devote part of the school time-table to devising methods of protection, resistance and antidotes to this phenomenon of organized crime, there is every good reason to question the validity of taking therapeutic educational action of this kind. *We should not imagine that major social problems will recede if we merely combat real elements of subversion and danger with an ill-defined view of preventive conditioning at a young age.* Such a solution is probably misguided and certainly ineffectual.”<sup>40</sup> (emphasis added)

The Social Studies book, 8<sup>th</sup> grade, shows forms and manifestations of extremism to students, as illustrated in Figures 5 and 6.

Figure 5: Types of extremism as illustrated to students



To identify types of extremism, look at the form they take

Types of extremism:

- Religious extremism
- Political
- Racial
- Behavioural

Source: Social Studies book, 8<sup>th</sup> grade, page 44

<sup>39</sup> Gozzer. Ibid., page 14

<sup>40</sup> Ibid

Figure 6: Manifestations of extremism



To know signs of extremism, look for the following signs of extremism / fanaticism:

- Rigid and closed mind
- Kill innocent people and take their money
- Violence against people
- Non-compliance with the law
- Mistrust in people

Source: Diagram from Social Studies book, 8<sup>th</sup> grade, page 43

Part of what happened in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade curriculum occurred in the 10<sup>th</sup> grade curriculum, specifically on pages 37 and 38, with the mention of the obstacles of social security, violence, racism and drugs. Also, some of the negative practices that students might not be aware of were brought to their attention, without any training on how to critically analyse and understand this information.

The school can educate students according to its own methods to combat negative phenomena. However, this cannot be done through academic subjects only—but through conducting capacity building training for both teachers and students in critical thinking concepts and activities to build their inquiry skills and then to stimulate their thinking skills, in order to help the students develop a set of positive and disciplined personal attitudes about all negative aspects of violence and intolerance.

In this context, we take another example from the researcher and educational expert Giovanni Gozzer. He states that:

“To say (to students) that smoking is harmful, giving a lecture on the dangers involved, lies somewhere between a television commercial (or 'anti-commercial') and an ineffective sermon. At best, the antismoking issue can be tackled by the section of the natural-science syllabus dealing with the respiratory system (the cross-curricular theory).”<sup>41</sup>

<sup>41</sup> Gozzer. Ibid., page 15

To wrap up this section on the analysis of the Social Studies curriculum, we suggest that (a) issues such as extremism, racism and terrorism be included in all curricula, and not limited to a specific curriculum; (b) they should not be presented to students all at once, as is the case in the current curriculum, but gradually and consistently, as appropriate to their age and maturity; and (c) students should be given the tools to critically analyse, understand and be able to discuss and tackle this topics at school and outside of school.

### *3.1.2 Arabic Language and Religious Studies curricula analysis illustrated though the issue of gender segregation*

The Islamic Education curriculum is considered the common denominator among all subjects taught. It constitutes the safe environment desired by every Muslim. Islamic Education emphasizes that human behaviour is measured and judged by its compatibility and harmony with the universal truths and the laws and systems that rule it. The book seeks to establish this in a way that reflects on students' personality. Yet, if we take a look at this curriculum from the 5<sup>th</sup> grade to the 10<sup>th</sup> (the study sample) we can see that there are some negative aspects that began from the introduction of these books.

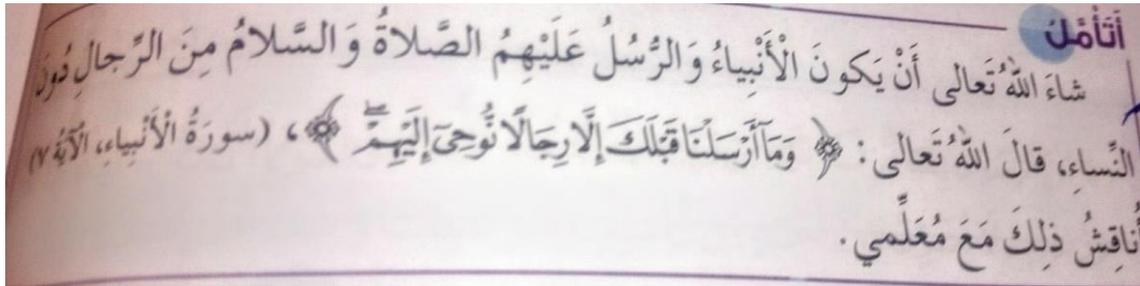
In the introduction to grade 5 book we read: "We put in your hands the Book of Islamic Education for the fifth grade, which we hope will contribute to the building of a stable Islamic personality which will bring victory for our religion and our nation". This introduction is also repeated in the 6<sup>th</sup> grade Religion book. We see that the students in the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grades are not capable of grasping the language in which the introduction is written, since it is not relevant to their level of understanding and maturity. Hence, it is recommendable to use a language that is more appropriate to their skills and knowledge and easier to understand, and then to select phrases from the Holy Quran to suit the understanding level of this age group.

On the other hand, in grades 7-10 we do not see this type of content, as if such significant tasks were only required of grades 5 and 6. This lack of consistency translates into lack of continuity in students training on a topic which would actually require deeper understand through adolescence and maturity. It is desirable to review the introduction in the Islamic Religion books and to use an appropriate—easy and relevant—language in the actual curricula, in order to achieve what is required without falling into contradictions. Today's inefficient method of writing book introductions gives an indication of an existing struggle in the new curriculum design and development—which was put in the hands of a group of authors while only one of them was tasked with writing the introduction.

Apparently, there seems to be no relationship between this issue and the subject of gender. However, we need to emphasize again that curricula writing is done at certain times by one individual

for a certain part although a team of experts are assigned to do this task. In terms of gender, one of the first forms of gender separation is the scarcity of representation of females compared to males in the books. We find that the 5<sup>th</sup> grade book is completely free of any examples pertaining to females. This includes questions in the lessons presented or examples about certain ideas and concepts. Since we are talking about 5<sup>th</sup> grade books we will illustrate some negative aspects hereafter.

Figure 7: Islamic Studies book



*Source:* This is a quote from the Holy Quran referring to God Almighty's prophets and messengers from the Islamic Studies book, 5<sup>th</sup> grade

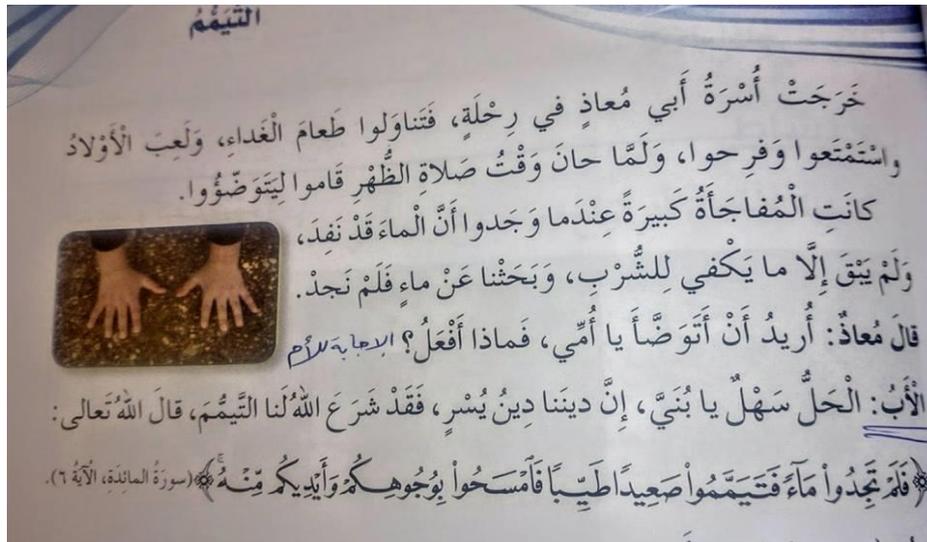
In the above example, the verse from the Quran is saying that all prophets were males. The students are asked here to reflect on these lines and then to discuss them with their teacher. So here we wonder:

1. Is the student capable of critically analysing and drawing the right conclusions from this idea, then reflect on it?
2. Are all teachers going to reflect with their students or just leave them to their own thinking and beliefs?

The curricula writers should be able to make assumptions and make suggestions on how this exercise should be given and what the negative and positive aspects of mentioning it in the book are.

Another important point is that there is no mention or example of prominent Muslim women such as Ayesha and Khadija who had an important role in narrating Islam Hadith compared to men narrators of that era. In addition, the curricula books do not provide examples of the role of Muslim women in the building of society. Women were mentioned as educators in the family and as weak individuals who needed the support of men, as illustrated by Figure 8.

Figure 8: The role of women



These verses from the Quran tell a story about lack of water at Zuhr prayer time (noon prayer). Since there was only enough water for drinking and not for ablution, the boy turned to his mother for water. Yet, while the mother cannot provide water, water comes from the father. This parable may be read to mean that men are those who always provide the answer, hence supporting male dominance over women.

Source: Islamic Studies book, 5<sup>th</sup> grade

In the 5<sup>th</sup> grade curriculum, we find a lesson which, we feel, has been added without a purpose. It is called: “Ethics of Sleeping: Separation of Males and Females”. The intellectual level of students at this stage must be diverted from discussing such issues which are closely linked to the sexual aspect, while the topic of gender segregation should be tackled through examples that are appropriate for students life and maturity, and focused on implications and applications that are of clear relevance to them. In addition, this topic is stressing the idea of separation between males and females from a religious point of view as seen above in Figure 9.

Figure 9. Sleeping rules



The text in this image states that boys should sleep in a different room from where girls sleep.

Source: Islamic Studies book, 5<sup>th</sup> grade

We do not believe that this subject should be approached from a religious point of view. Fifth graders are not ready to discuss such subjects—even more so if we consider that the lesson is followed by questions and exercises that can open the eyes of the children to sexual issues that are beyond the level of maturity proper of their age (questions in the lesson are showcased in the box below). We emphasize here that this issue is above the age of the students to comprehend. It raises questions that need to be addressed and explained. If such a content needs to be included in the curriculum, it is recommended that it is approached in a different educational method not related to religion.

**Write the word (Right) or (Wrong) next to the following sentences:**

- 1- Abu Muath assigned separate rooms for his male and female children.
- 2- Said who is 8 years slept with his 10-year-old brother in the same bed.
- 3- Abu Ahmad makes all his male children sleep in separate beds.

When there is such an unnecessary content in the curriculum, and much more important content is neglected in Islamic Education books of all grades, we can see a kind of systematic confusion in displaying the materials to students. For example, the use of the State of Islam created by the Prophet Mohammad is being confused by the Islamic State created by the violent extremist groups (Da'ech). It is clear from Table 7 that the issue of clarifying the contradiction between the concept of the State of Islam established by the Prophet (pbuh) and the extremist group called the Islamic State (Da'ech), which we hear about in the international news every day, was not one of the main priorities of the curriculum.<sup>42</sup>

Table 8: The Islamic State

Grade	Textbook Example	Page
Fifth	“after the migration of Prophet Mohammed (pbuh) and building the State of Islam”	6
Sixth	“The noble Prophet’s migration was [...] a breakthrough to build the State of Islam and to cherish the religion of Allah”	92
Seventh	<i>There is no mention of the State of Islam</i>	
Eighth	<i>There is no mention of the State of Islam</i>	
Ninth	<i>There is no mention of the State of Islam</i>	
Tenth	“Respect for the authority of the State of Islam”	51

<sup>42</sup> This also applies to the National and Civic Education curriculum for all grades (sample taken)

This is a very serious issue that has been taken advantage of by a large number of extremists and terrorists: if the Islamic Education curriculum does not clarify this matter, then who should?

Our analysis of the Arabic Language curriculum does not give such heavily negative results—actually, we think the curriculum is mature and suitable for the students’ mental and intellectual levels. Here, though, we are not talking about teaching methodologies and educational strategies; we are focusing on the *content*, which does not include such severe manifestations of violence, extremism and terrorism, and as many images of gender discrimination compared to the Islamic Education and National Education curricula.

The main manifestation of gender discrimination in the Arabic Language curriculum is the absence of women’s literature in poetry or prose. The role of the woman in Arabic textbooks is confined to housework and looking after children. An example taken from the lesson (from Al Ayyam book) in grade 8 textbook is: “His mother, as usual oversees the dinner”.<sup>43</sup> Yet, the role of women is not merely restricted to raising children and preparing food. Women have played a significant role in the Jordanian society, be it in the Jordanian Armed Forces, medical services, the police, hospitals and universities, and in other sectors. There are some Jordanian women who are ranked among the most prominent and influential figures in the world, yet the curriculum doesn’t mention or even refer to them.<sup>44</sup>

On the contrary, the Arabic Language book of grade 10 refers to the woman as a stupid housekeeper in the poetry verse: “Rabab is a housekeeper who pours vinegar in oil”.<sup>45</sup> Such unpleasant content should not be included in our curriculum, especially since the majority of Jordanians live under the burden of customs and traditions that persecute women, undermine their role in building the country and deprive them from their rights to education and work. The most effective solution to such negative issues is to provide positive images to the students within the curriculum through which they can deduce and develop positive attitudes towards their mothers, sisters and other women in their surroundings.

Among other negative issues in the Arabic language curriculum is the depiction of women as physical objects, with no reference to the mental or spiritual aspects of their personality, and with the exclusion of the aesthetics of Arabic literature and texts that have more profound content than women’s physical beauty. In the 7<sup>th</sup> grade book, the poet Abu Khafaja Al Andalusī describes the

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<sup>43</sup> The Arabic language book, grade 8, page 78.

<sup>44</sup> For example, Malak Jihad Aqeeli, chosen by the World Economic Forum as one of the 100 influential young people of the world in the fields of art, business, social entrepreneurship and one of the technology leaders, thinkers, and decision makers under the age of 40. *Al rai* Newspaper, Friday, 17/3/2017.

<sup>45</sup> Arabic Language book, grade 10, page 69. A poem by Bashar ibn Burd joking with his housekeeper; an act that actually encourages kind treatment of servants, yet this positive content was not mentioned in the book.

beauty of a river by comparing it to the lips of a beautiful woman. It is a good thing to introduce the students to texts from Arabic Literature. However, we need to take the content into account as well. There is a sexual aspect in this verse that will be understood only by adults—and not even by all adults. Describing the pure water of a river as being more delicious than kissing the lips of a beautiful girl for seventh graders will definitely instil in their minds that women are beautiful objects only.<sup>46</sup>

Let's take another sample from the 9<sup>th</sup> grade Arabic Language book, which comes under the title: "Selections from our Beautiful Language". The text helps to cement and exemplify the notion that the beauty of a woman is in her body, dress and adornment. We quote from the text:

"When Maysoun bint Bahdal got married, she looked wonderfully beautiful. She sat on the podium dressed in expensive clothes, adorned with magnificent jewellery, wearing the most delectable perfume and surrounded by very beautiful maids".<sup>47</sup>

This is repeated in the fifth unit of grade 10 textbook (Ghazal poetry), where the text says: "He describes her as one of the most beautiful women, especially her eyes".<sup>48</sup> We agree that Arabic Language is the language of beauty, but beauty shouldn't be limited to the physical aspect.<sup>49</sup> Spiritual beauty has been neglected or not been investigated properly in the curriculum. Neglecting this aspect has unfortunately contributed to the process of gender discrimination, to viewing women as maids, or as mere bodies. Presenting such content to a teenage student is a serious issue that has been overlooked.

With regards to extremism, fanaticism and terrorism, these concepts are not included in the curricula. On the contrary, the values of tolerance, coexistence and peace have been mentioned—which is very remarkable. However, there are some violent texts with brutal content that appear in the curriculum. For example, in the 5<sup>th</sup> grade textbook (see Fig. 10) there is a poem by Ahmad Shawqi entitled "The Pigeon and the Hunter" that says: "The hunter turned towards the sound, and towards her he pointed the arrow of death. She fell from her throne into the grip of the knife."<sup>50</sup> Regardless of the overall content of the poem, which is actually a positive content and tells the story of a pigeon (a symbol of love and peace) and a human being (a symbol of murder and assault on nature), we must

<sup>46</sup> "الله تَهْرُ سالَ في بَطْحَاءِ أَشْهَى وَرُوداً مِنْ لَمَى الحَسْنَاءِ | "God has the River Sal in Batha / Delightful and rosy from Lama Belle"  
The poet marvels at the river flowing in a wide flat land and says it is as beautiful and delightful as the lips of a beautiful girl. Lama is a female name that also means the dark inner part of a woman's lip.

<sup>47</sup> Grade 9 Arabic textbook page 44

<sup>48</sup> Grade 10 Arabic textbook page 52

<sup>49</sup> Such as the poet's saying: "I have preferred her with a curvy body". Arabic Grammar book, grade 10, page 28

<sup>50</sup> Arabic textbook, grade 5, page 41

develop the values and ethics of love and peace away from violence, murder, blood and weapons at this stage of the student's life.

Figure 10: Illustration of "The Pigeon and the Hunter"



The aspect of violence is repeated in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade book when talking about "literary debate", specifically the famous "Debate between the Sword and the Pen" by Ibn Nabata Al Andalusi in which each one of the debaters try to prove that he is better and more important than the other. The danger lies in the clever argument of the sword and its eloquence that could be adopted by the students themselves: "The sword says: Praise be to God who made paradise under the shadow of the swords, and proceeded to hand it to obedient people to enjoy the pureness of its water. This is the reward to those who fight together as a cohesive whole".<sup>51</sup> Such content, even if it is negated by the pen's argument, must leave an impression on the students who will be taken over by the eloquence and cleverness of the sword, especially since its argument was preceded by a Quranic verse while the pen's argument was logical and emotional with no religious support.

To conclude, the analysis of Arabic Language and Religious Studies curricula confirms the findings of the previous analysis of the Social Studies curriculum and the overall inadequacy of the teaching and learning materials to the age and maturity of the children. The usage of content (images and texts) not appropriate for secondary school grades may instil in students' mind a very different conviction to what the books were actually trying to teach. The examples highlighted in this analysis show that civic and citizenship values will most likely not be understood and embraced by students if these values are taught in a manner that is not consistent over time, appropriate to students' intellectual maturity, relevant to their life-stage and lifestyle, and not critically discussed in the classroom.

<sup>51</sup> Arabic textbook, grade 9, page 11

### 3.2 Field research: Questionnaires

As mentioned in Chapter II, questionnaires were meant as instruments to get a broad understanding of how students and teachers feel about the school climate, specifically in relation to our research questions and our focus on civic and citizenship values as a means to counter violence, extremism, discrimination. Key findings are summarised below.

#### *Output: students*

What we can see from students' answers is that their perception of the school climate is rather negative, hence probably not conducive of values of integration, equality and equity, and personal development.

- 65% said that their teachers do not care about their family circumstances;
- 65% said that the school is isolated from its local community;
- 59% said that they do not attend physical education classes regularly;
- 56% said that the children of the school principals / teachers / specific families receive special treatment in schools;
- 52% do not attend art classes regularly;
- 50% are reluctant to answer the teachers' questions for fear of being insulted and punished;
- 48% said that teachers use harsh words that embarrass them;
- 85% feel alienated in their schools;
- 45% said that their parents do not know anything about what is happening with them at school;
- 44% are afraid to participate or initiate school activities.

#### *Output: teachers*

The answers given from the teachers reinforce the criticisms that the Carnegie studies address to the *quality* of the education provided in Jordanian schools. Teaching methods emerge as still very much top down, not open to interventions or contributions from students. Theoretical commitments to nonviolence and children's rights are not followed by daily practice.

- 71% said that their students should obey them completely;
- 60% said that the school is committed to applying methods based on nonviolence;
- 58% said that the school organises discussions and lectures for parents on topics related to children's rights;
- 45% do not know the UN *Convention on the Rights of the Child*;
- 40% do not agree that students should criticise their practices/ teaching methodology.

### 3.3 Field research: Focus Groups

The different focus groups organised, in terms of regional coverage and stakeholders mix, allowed us to dive more in depth into our research questions. Below are the questions raised in the discussion groups and a summary of responses.

#### Q1- Do you think there is violence in schools?

A1 - 82% of the focus group said violence exists in schools in different forms.

#### Q2 - What are the types of violence in schools? What are the types of violence that you think worry parents?

A2 - There are two types of violence: verbal violence and physical violence. Existing violence patterns are:

- Student towards student
- Student towards teacher
- Teacher towards student
- Student against the school environment (vandalism)

Figure 11: A focus group session in Al Mafraq



This picture shows youth community members participating to a focus group in Al Mafraq led by Ms Al Alami

#### Q3 - What are the teachers' practices that cause violence?

A3 - The main cause is professional weakness of teachers. This is reflected in the following areas:

- Lack of good practices of non-violent communication with students
- Lack of classroom management skills
- Weakness in academic knowledge of their subject matter
- Inability to observe individual variations / differences among students
- Not used to consider the developmental aspect of the age group they are teaching to
- Inadequate lesson planning to make lessons interesting to students
- Discrimination between students (for different reasons)
- Teachers can be under psychological stress due to the economic problems
- Work stress due to a large number of lessons and other school duties
- Teachers using verbal and physical violence on students

Q4 - What are the students' practices that lead to violence?

A4 – Practices mentioned include:

- Bullying
- The existence of “bad groups” among students
- Lack of the culture of taking care of school property and school environment
- Imitating violent attitudes that they see at home within their own families
- Poor school achievement
- Difficult family environment

Q5 - What are the parents' practices that cause violence?

A5 – Practices mentioned include:

- Family disintegration (broken homes)
- The prevailing societal culture
- Polygamy
- Tribal differences and their power in the society
- Discrimination between children
- Parents' neglect of their children due to bad economic situation
- The prevailing culture of violence within the families
- Family economic status
- Poor parents' understanding of the developmental stage of their children
- Wrong practices of parents causing children to imitate
- Putting the blame of failure in studying on the student causing him/her to face psychological problems

- Poor cooperation of parents with the school

Q6 - What is your suggestion to reduce school violence?

A6 - The majority of responses focused on the following points:

- Planned and targeted activities to diffuse negative energies
- Activating the penalties available in the school discipline regulations
- Activating physical education classes and other recreational classes
- Activating art education lessons in schools.
- Activating the role of the educational counsellor in schools
- Establishing clear policies for interaction between school, home and community, which will have a positive impact on students
- Training teachers to have more discipline skills to deal with students
- Educating parents about the consequences of wrong behaviours of their children
- Developing students' talents and abilities, and enhancing their self-confidence
- Activating community partnership

*Discussion group with three education experts from the teachers' union*

This session took the form of a group interview with the participation of three education experts coming from the same background (teachers' union) and followed the participatory dynamics of focus groups. The goal was to have a deep dive into our research questions from the perspective of teachers, one of the main stakeholders. Their opinions are captured here below.

Figure 12: Teachers' Union session



Group discussion with three education experts from the teachers' union, led by Khalil Abdu Radwan (second from left) in Amman.

a) Violence and discrimination in the curriculum

The curriculum has improved from its previous version in terms of gender issues; there are no apparent cases of gender inequality or violence promotion in the curriculum. The existing forms of violence are:

- Student against student
- Student against teacher
- Teacher against student
- Community against teacher
- Student against school environment (vandalism)

b) Patterns of violence present in the school environment

- Physical and verbal violence
- The spatial environment can constitute violence towards both student and teacher.

c) Main causes of violence have been identified as follows:

- Lack of teachers' professional competence, due to insufficient training; teachers are thrown directly from university to the classroom
- The spatial environment of the school is inappropriate and constitutes violence against the teacher and the student.
- There is a clear lack of experiential educational activities and of modern facilities such as laboratories, gymnasiums, desks and chairs. Buildings are worn out and playgrounds are small.

*Discussion group with the Jordanian Coalition Education for All*

The Jordanian Coalition is a group representing CSOs concerned with education. The questions and answers were as follows below.

Q1. Do you think that violence exists in schools?

A1. Yes, violence exists in different forms.

Q2. What are the types and forms of such violence?

A1: There are two types of violence, which then take different forms.

- Types of violence:

- 1. Moral and psychological
- 2. Physical
- Forms of violence:
  - Violence among students.
  - Violence from the teacher towards the student
  - Violence inflicted by the student towards the teacher
- Violence inflicted by the parents against the teacher

Figure 13: Jordanian Coalition session



Group session led by Khalil Abdu Radwan

### Q3. Did you notice any forms of gender discrimination in schools?

A3. The response given by a member of an institution working with male and female primary school students in rural areas was as follows:

- Women teachers when punishing a male student would threaten to make him sit next to a female student.
- In schools where a male and a female student sit at the same desk, parents would insist that their son or daughter sit next to a student from the same sex.

### **3.4 Field research: Interviews**

Interviews played an important part in the diagnostic study as an instrument to validate and dive deeper on the research questions, while taking into account the feedback from different stakeholders gathered with questionnaires and focus groups. Here below we report the main output of three interviews.

*An interview with the educational expert Mr Samih Assaf, UNRWA.*

Q1. Do you think that violence exists in schools/ curricula?

A1. I think that the current curriculum has evolved a lot in terms of violence and its implications, but it still needs more activities that promote the culture of nonviolence, civil behaviour and human rights values. With regards to violence as practices, no one denies its presence in schools because of the weak implementation of school discipline regulations and effective behaviour practices. There is also an apparent weakness in the culture of dialogue and problem solving in peaceful ways, especially among the students themselves.

Q2. Do you think that gender discrimination exists in the curricula?

A2. Discrimination exists implicitly in the current curriculum; it is not directly mentioned in the curriculum, but it doesn't contain female models and examples compared to men's. Gender discrimination is still evident in the prevailing societal culture, which requires work and effort starting from school curricula all the way through university education.

Q3. Do you think that the culture of nonviolence and dialogue exists sufficiently in practices inside schools and among parents?

A3. Despite many attempts by authorities to overcome the persistent phenomenon of violence, these have not proved effective yet. Violence is still present in the practices of teachers and students. No one denies that we are still deficient in educating parents in a systematic and adequate manner to spread the culture of nonviolence, especially with the development of the various means of social communication which have a serious influence on the minds of both parents and students.

# Conclusion

## 1. Key learnings

Given that education is the cornerstone of every nation that aspires to progress and development, the strategy of changing educational curricula has become a major issue for educators.<sup>52</sup> In the course of reviewing the content of the new school curricula addressing civic and citizenship education and values (National and Civic Education, Islamic Education, Arabic Language) for the learning stages targeted by this diagnostic study (secondary school grades 5 through 10), we distilled a set of key learnings.

In general, we think that the new education instruments are very often not adequate to the students' age and level of maturity, and to their capabilities of understanding and critical analysis. For example:

- (a) some curricula do not take into consideration the cognitive, intellectual, and psychological level of the students, so they are ineffective when not harmful;
- (b) most figures and pictures in the textbooks have negative content, i.e. content that conveys a negative message, especially on immature minds. This needs to be revised and adapted to civic and citizenship values;
- (c) in several cases, positive content is delivered in a negative way by focusing on negative examples to warn students, thus actually achieving a publicity / advertising function (entice to doing the wrong thing).

Looking at each curriculum in detail, here below are the most notable examples of the inadequacy of the civic and citizenship education instruments.

### *(a) National and Civic Education*

1. The National and Civic Education curriculum overlooks issues affecting the structure of the Jordanian society, and focuses on what is outside the state as a result of fear of extremism and terrorism.
2. Grade 8 National and Civic Education curriculum includes some dangerous content, such as propagation for all forms of violence, extremism, intolerance, discrimination and rejection of the other in a negative non-educational way.

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<sup>52</sup> Mutawwa, Maryam bint Ali bin Mohammed, "The Strategy of Changing Educational Curricula". *Journal of Educational Development*, issue 59, page 27.

*(b) Islamic Education*

3. The Islamic Education curriculum, for most grades, excludes the woman from any examples provided in the book, presenting her as incompetent compared to the man, who then has to protect and support her.
4. The Islamic Education curriculum neglects to present and explain the State of Islam founded by the Prophet Mohammed (pbuh) and to highlight how distant and contradictory the ISIS terrorist organisation (Da'esh) is.
5. The best Islamic Education book is that of grade 10. We wish that all the Islamic Education textbooks were like it.
6. The weakest Islamic Education book is that of grade 5 which needs a thorough review.

*(c) Arabic Language*

7. The Arabic Language curriculum is suitable for the intellectual and linguistic level of the students, with just a few disadvantages compared to the other curricula.
8. The Arabic Language curriculum contains models that present the woman as a mere body overlooking the spiritual and intellectual aspects of her personality
9. Some Arabic Language books are entirely free of women's literature.
10. Some Arabic Language books contain poetry and prose with violent content such as words referring to murder, blood and weapons.

On top of the points mentioned above, we should consider the learnings from the fieldwork we carried out, which looks at value education from the perception of the stakeholders themselves. What emerges here is a certain detachment of the school from the students' family and community life (with the positive and negative implications on the current socio-economic environment and traditional customs) as well as the lack of a democratic educational ecosystem to support the development of responsible young adults. This translates in children feeling alienated from school and in a mere hierarchical relationship with teachers. Teachers emerge, generally speaking, as professionally weak: they do not seem to have the capabilities and pedagogical skills to establish a two-way dialogue and relationship with students and to tackle critical issues such as manifold form of violence and discrimination.

**2. Critical action points**

In order to create a positive learning environment in schools, which would help to achieve harmony between teachers, students and the administration and stimulate dialogue, discussion and consultation among them, we have identified a number of points which should be promptly addressed. Despite the existence of values of non-violence and non-discrimination in our religion and Arab

culture, we believe that there is an urgent need at this time to act upon these points in the education ecosystem, within and outside of classrooms, in a systematic and well-planned manner, in order to achieve our ultimate goal of creating responsible citizens. The key points are listed below:

(a) Improve the school environment

- Make the necessary changes to make the **school environment** safe and attractive.
- Bring the necessary changes to transform the **school** into an appropriate place for practicing **democracy**.
- Adopt the **values** and concepts of human rights, civic education and nonviolent behaviour as **quality criteria** for evaluating the school and its leadership.
- Develop **codes of conduct** that respect the dignity of the student and the values of human rights for both teacher and student, and that seek to decrease undesirable behaviours and implement appropriate classroom management strategies—away from physical or verbal punishment that can lead to legal action taken against the teacher.
- Focus on the role of teaching staff, school managements, educational supervisors and directors of education as **agents of change** by providing them with the right training on the values of human rights and civic education in order to integrate them in curricula and educational practices to produce responsible citizens.

(b) Focus on forming teachers

- Enhance the **communication skills of teachers** and promote values of tolerance and human rights.
- **Empower teachers** by training them to integrate the concepts and values of civic education and human rights in their teaching and pedagogical practices
- Train students to **resolve conflicts peacefully**.

(c) Create a bridge between the school and the community:

- Activate **community partnerships** through effective planning and realistic implementation in order to strengthen schools' relationships with local communities;
- Involve the local community in educational activities that are consistent with the school's objectives to spread the culture of nonviolence, promote the values of community peace and tolerance as well as reject all forms of discrimination.

### 3. Conclusions and recommendations

Our final recommendations target both a macro and a micro-level approach to value-based education. They can be synthesised as per Table 9 below.

Table 9. Recap of conclusions and recommendations

	CONCLUSIONS	RECOMMENDATION
1	Gap between schools and real life	<p><i>Structures, processes, and instruments should be put in place to <b>foster participation</b> of different stakeholders</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- activate community partnership, involving CSOs, families, students, local authorities</li> <li>- lead to a better understanding of the societal structure and tribal customs</li> </ul>
2	Lack of a democratic educational ecosystem	<p><i>Make the <b>school environment safe and attractive</b> through <i>teacher training, value based pedagogical approach, and qualitative measurement of school performance</i></i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- develop codes of conduct</li> <li>- form and empower school staff as inclusive and peaceful agents of change</li> <li>- focus on experiential education: activate recreational classes so students can learn teamwork, discipline, respect through cross-curricular approaches</li> <li>- form teachers to embrace human rights values and practices (participatory teaching methodologies)</li> <li>- evaluate schools based on quality, not only quantity, of output</li> </ul>
3	Widespread violence exists in schools, in different forms	<p><i>Focus on <b>value-based education on non-violence and non-discrimination</b> with contents and methods appropriate for the age and level of maturity of the students</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- form teachers to form students to solve conflicts peacefully and to accept diversity</li> <li>- remove or rewrite from school curricula all dubious references to violence which could lead to misinterpretation</li> </ul>
4	Discrimination against women exists in schools	<p><i>Ban gender discrimination from schools tackling both <i>education instruments (textbooks content and language) and education pedagogical approach</i></i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- in textbooks, present women as integral, active members of society, listing their achievements at all levels; avoid any allusions to women as mere physical beings</li> <li>- enhance teachers' communication skills so that they avoid customary gender stereotypes</li> <li>- form students to values of human rights</li> </ul>
5	Instruments do not always take into account the age and maturity of the students	<p><i>Develop and apply the most appropriate and relevant teaching methods and tools for each school grade in accordance with the age and level of maturity of the students</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- focus on a consistent education approach (language, pictures) specific for each school grade and across disciplines;</li> </ul>

		- form teachers to adapt their teaching methods to the level of maturity of their students
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Based on success stories from the FRC initiative, in partnership with the Jordanian Ministry of Education, and with the instruments already developed in Morocco and Tunisia as examples and inspiration, we recommend supporting existing materials with regards to value-based messages and teaching methodology. Specifically, efforts should focus on designing and implementing the most appropriate activities and methods for the evolving capabilities of secondary school students, and should be applicable in the classroom and at youth clubs.

While all the action points and recommendations listed above are of fundamental relevance to foster value-based education in Jordan, and to tackle the challenging issues of violence and discrimination, we have to stress again that the school curriculum is the main pillar on which the educational process is based. This educational process starts with the textbook, the teacher's abilities and experience, the teaching methodology and the reflection of all this on the student. The curriculum is the content that controls the material provided to the student. Hence, we recommend that existing materials be supported by participatory initiatives and activities with the involvement of teacher, school staff as well as students, following and adapting FRC best practices.

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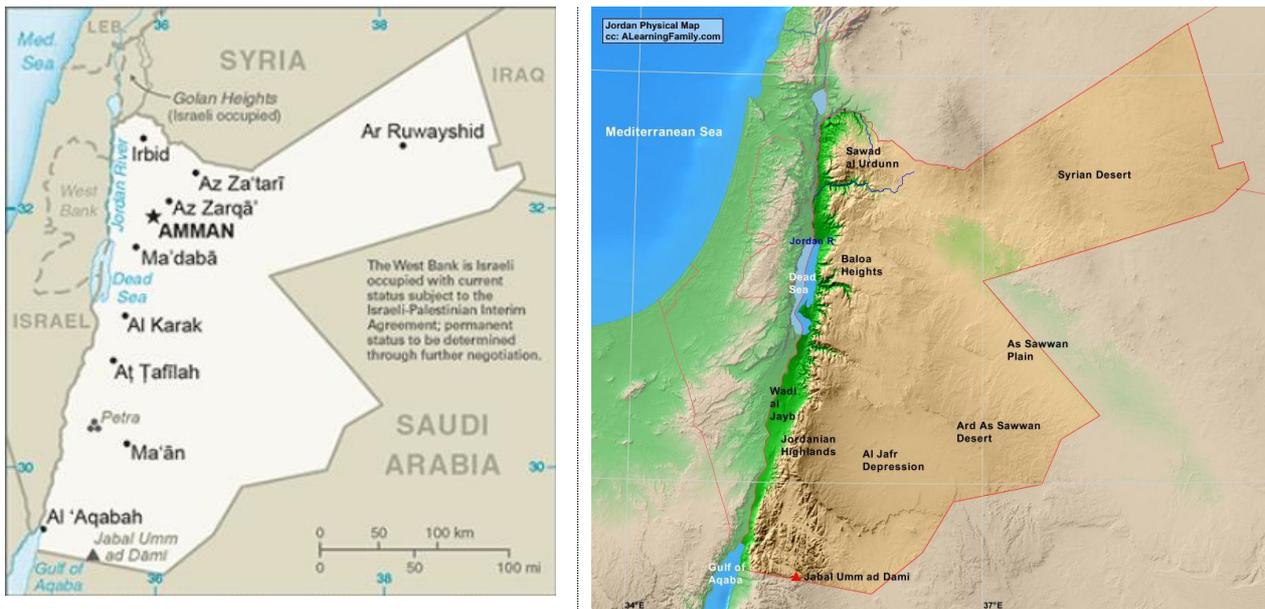
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# ANNEX

## A. Jordan, a snapshot

Figure 14: Maps of Jordan



Source: Political map: Wikimedia Commons <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Jo-map.png>  
 Physical map: A Learning Family <http://www.allearningfamily.com/main/jordan-physical-map/>

## B. Education Reform Efforts

The recent education reforms started in the early 1990s. This reform process was accelerated under His Majesty King Abdullah II in early 2001 with a vision to make Jordan the regional technology hub and an active player in the global economy. The National Vision and Mission for Education, as developed and endorsed in late 2002, states the desired direction for general education in the country. The two major consultative documents, that helped shape the national vision and also set directions for educational reform initiatives, were Jordan Vision 2020 and the 2002 Vision Forum for the Future of Education. These documents spanned kindergarten to lifelong continuing education. The overall strategy proposed by the Forum was endorsed by the Economic Consultative Council (ECC) in October 2002. The national development strategy and the Forum results were consolidated into specific development plans, the Social and Economic Transformation Plan, the General Education Plan 2003-08.

In July 2003, the Government of Jordan launched an ambitious programme in the entire MENA region a 10-year multi-donor Education Reform for the Knowledge Economy Programme (ErfKE) of which the World Bank provided US\$120 million. The goal of the programme was to re-orient the education policies and programmes in line with the needs of a knowledge-based economy,

improve the physical learning environment in most schools and promote early childhood education. This first phase of programme is from 2003-2009, closing in June 2009.<sup>53</sup>

The second phase of the ERfKE, which is aligned with IBRD and IFC Country Assistance Strategy (CAS) for the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, covered the 2009-2016 timeframe and was a multi-donor-financed project designed as a specific investment loan. The development objective of the Second Education Reform for the Knowledge Economy Project (ERfKE II) is to provide students enrolled in pre-tertiary education institutions in Jordan with increased levels of skills to participate in the knowledge economy. There are five components to the project, as follows:

1. Establishment of a national school-based development system
2. Monitoring and evaluation and organizational development
3. Development of teaching and learning, with two sub-components:
  - a. Teacher policies, training and professional development, and
  - b. Curriculum, assessment, and learning resources, aimed at reviewing and developing teacher utilization and professional development practices, and fine-tuning curricula and student assessments (all subjects for Grades 4-11 were reviewed and fine-tuned to ensure alignment with knowledge economy skills)
4. Development of special focus programmes
5. Improvement of the physical learning environment

One of the key learnings stated that bottom-up change built around the school community is more effective than top-down change. The project showed that the sustainability of a national school-based development system relies on the system's development at the local level. Local community engagement, such as having parents involved in the school development improvement plan, countersigning school expenditures, and meeting regularly with school staff, resulted in a sense of ownership that contributed to sustainability.<sup>54</sup> Yet, while several education reform initiatives have been undertaken by the government targeting capacity-building, reduction of the illiteracy rate,

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<sup>53</sup> Source: K12 Academics

<https://www.k12academics.com/Education%20Worldwide/Education%20in%20Jordan/education-reform-efforts>

<sup>54</sup> Source: "JO - ERfKE II Implementation Completion Report (ICR) Review", Independent Evaluation Group (IEG). The World Bank Projects and Operations, December 6, 2017. Available at <http://projects.worldbank.org/P105036/second-education-reform-knowledge-economy?lang=en&tab=overview>

expansion of early childhood care and basic education, and elimination the gender gap, none of them emphasized citizenship education (Faour and Muasher, 2011).<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> “For example, the project 12 | Education for Citizenship in the Arab World: Key to the Future supporting “Jordan’s Education Reform for a Knowledge Economy” (ERfKE) identified schools’ needs and conducted training for teachers and principals on modern teaching methods, supervision, leadership and self-assessment, and integrating technology in teaching. Nowhere in the project is citizenship education addressed.” (Faour and Muasher, 2011, p. 12)

## C. The Jordan K-12 Education System<sup>56</sup>

The Ministry of Education is responsible for K-12 education in Jordan. The K-12 education system in Jordan encompasses pre-primary education that is optional, basic education that is compulsory and last for 10 years, and secondary education that is optional.

### *(1) Pre-primary Education*

Pre-primary education in Jordan is offered by kindergartens and nursery schools. This educational level is optional. Kindergartens in Jordan are mainly run by non-governmental and private organizations.

- Ages: 4 to 6 years
- Duration: 2 years

This educational level provides a perfect study environment and works towards the overall growth of the children. This level promotes the development of the personality of the children.

### *(2) Basic Education*

Basic education in Jordan is compulsory for all. This educational level provides the basic skills and knowledge thus creating the foundation for higher and lifelong learning. Basic numeracy, language and science knowledge is imparted at the basic education level. Arabic language and history of the Islamic and Arab country is also taught. In addition, environment, social skills, and artistic knowledge is also offered.

- Duration: 10 years
- Grades: 1 to 10
- Ages: 6 to 16

Curriculum: Mathematics, computer studies, Islamic education and culture, vocational education, Arabic language, music, physical education, art education, English language, science (chemistry, physics, general science and biology), **civics** (history, national education, social education, and geography), and French language (optional).

### *(3) Secondary Education*

Secondary education in Jordan is not compulsory and is of 2 years duration. Students who have completed basic education are eligible for entry into the secondary education level. This education

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<sup>56</sup> Sourced from: <https://www.jordaneducation.info/k12/jordan-k-12-education-system.html>

level prepares students for higher education, or for entry into the job market. Secondary education is divided into 2 educational streams: (a) Comprehensive secondary education and (b) Applied secondary education.

*(a) Comprehensive Secondary Education*

Comprehensive secondary education provides general education, along with the specialized vocational and academic education.

- Duration: 2 years
- Ages: 16 to 18
- Grades: 10- 12

Comprehensive secondary education comprises of:

- *Academic Secondary Education* — This comprises of literary, scientific and Sharia/Islamic law. This level prepares students for higher education. Curriculum:
  - *Common general education*: Civics, Arabic, scientific education, Islamic education and culture, and English
  - *Compulsory subjects*: Mathematics, history, Arabic, physics, English and Chemistry
  - *Electives*: 1 subject from biology, environment and geology; 1 subject from mathematics, Islamic education and culture, and geography; 1 subject from vocational or literary streams, 2 subjects from biology, environment and geology, physics, and chemistry
- *Vocational Secondary Education* — This comprises of home economics, agricultural, industrial, hotel, commercial, and nursing. This level prepares students for entry into universities or community colleges, or workforce. Curriculum:
  - *For Industrial vocational education stream*: Scientific education, Islamic education and culture, civics, English, Arabic, Mathematics, chemistry, physics, Industrial administration and safety, industrial drawing and industrial science.
  - *For Agricultural stream*: Scientific education, Islamic education and culture, civics, English, Arabic, Mathematics, chemistry, biology, soil and irrigation, farming administration, and agricultural sciences.
  - *For Commercial stream*: Scientific education, Islamic education and culture, civics, English, Arabic, Mathematics, computer, principles of economics and legislation, accounting and book keeping, and office work and communications.

- *For Hotel stream:* Scientific education, Islamic education and culture, civics, English, Arabic, Mathematics, chemistry, biology, food production and catering, tourism, hotel accounts, and hotel management and reception.
- *For Nursing stream:* Scientific education, Islamic education and culture, civics, English, Arabic, biology, chemistry, physics, nutrition, science of medicines, and anatomy and functions of organs.
- *For Home Economics stream:* Scientific education, Islamic education and culture, civics, English, Arabic, biology, chemistry, vocational drawing arts, administration and vocational safety, and social science.

#### *(b) Applied Secondary Education*

This secondary education stream provides vocational education and training, and apprenticeship. The Vocational Training Corporation manages this educational level. Upon successful completion of the programme, a certificate is awarded.

#### ***General Secondary Examination***

Tawjihi is the general secondary/high school examination (In Arabic: امتحان الثانوية العامة) in Jordan. At the end of secondary education, students must undertake this examination in order to gain entry into the higher education institution in Jordan.

## **D. Education system in Jordan: The philosophy and objectives of education**

The philosophy of education in the kingdom stems out of the Jordanian constitution, the Islamic Arab civilization, the principles of the great Arab Revolt and the Jordanian national experience.<sup>57</sup> This philosophy is manifested in the following basics:

(a) The intellectual bases:

1. Faith in Almighty God.
2. Faith in the higher ideals of the Arab Nation.
3. Islam is a system of intellectual behavioural ideology that respects man, exalts the mind and urges for knowledge, work and morality.
4. Islam is a system of wholeness that provides virtuous values and principles that from the consciousness of both the individual and the group.

(b) The national, pan-Arab and human bases:

1. The Hashemite kingdom of Jordan is parliamentary, hereditary and monarchic state where loyalty is for God, the homeland and the king.
2. Jordan is a part of the Arab Nation and the Jordanian people are indivisible from the Islamic and the Arab Nations.
3. The Arabic language is an essential pillar in the existence of the Arab Nation; its unity and renaissance.
4. The Palestine cause is crucial to the Jordanian people.

(c) The social bases:

1. Jordanians are equal in political, social and economic rights and responsibilities and are distinguished only by what they contribute to their society and their belonging to it.
2. Respect for the individual freedom and dignity.
3. Education is a social necessity and a right for all, each according to his intrinsic abilities and potentials.

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<sup>57</sup> Source of this entire section: website of the Ministry of Education of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan <http://www.moe.gov.jo/en/node/19404>

## General Objectives

The general objectives of education in the Kingdom emanate from the philosophy of education, and are exemplified in shaping a citizen; believer in God, adherent to homeland and nation, endowed by virtues and human aspects, and mature physically, mentally, spiritually and socially so that each student, by the end of the educational cycles, shall be able to:

1. Use Arabic language in expressing himself and in communicating easily with others.
2. Vigilantly comprehend facts, concepts and relations connected with the natural environment both locally and globally and effectively use them in life.
3. Comprehended Islam as an ideology and Sharia' and vigilantly exemplify its values and trends.
4. Vigilantly comprehend technology and acquire skills of using, producing and developing it, and subjugate this technology to serve the society.
5. Think objectively and critically and adopt scientific methods in observation, research and problem-solving.
6. Adhere to citizenship rights and shoulder the related consequential responsibilities.
7. Invest personal potentials and free time in developing knowledge, innovation, invention, and the spirit of initiative, towards work and its completion and in innocent entertainment.

## The educational policy principles

The educational policy principles are manifested in the following:

1. Orienting the educational system to have better suitability to both individual and societal needs, and establishing a balance between them.
2. Emphasizing the importance of political education in the educational system, and enhancing the principles of participation, justice and democracy and their practices.
3. Enhancing scientific methodology in planning, conducting and evaluation of the educational system and developing research, assessment and follow-up system.
4. Expanding educational type in the educational institutions to have them involve programs for special education and others for gifted learners and for those with special needs.
5. Emphasizing the fact that teaching is a message and a career that has its own ethical and occupational basics.
6. Enhancing pride in the scientific and social status of the teacher for his distinguished role in building-up the individual and society.

**The basic education cycle**

Basic education is the base for education and the cornerstone for building-up national and pan-Arab unity, developing intrinsic potentials and attitudes and orienting students accordingly. This cycle aims at realizing the general objectives of education and preparing the citizen in all aspects of his personality; physical, mental, social and spiritual so that he shall be able to:

1. Vigilantly acknowledge Islam's history, principles, provisions and values and exemplify them ethically and behaviourally.
2. Acquire the basic skills of the Arabic language so that he becomes able to use it easily.
3. Realize essential facts relevant to the natural and geographical environment on the Jordanian, Arab and world levels.
4. Exemplify the social behavioural basics and respect the traditions, habits and sound values of his society.
5. Love his homeland, feel proud of it and hold the consequent responsibilities.
6. Acquire the basic skills of at least one foreign language.
7. Comprehend scientific basics of all exposed types of technology and exploit them in daily life.

## **E. FRC: Field research discussion guidelines**

Guidelines for focus groups and small discussion groups.

Discussion topics have been adjusted to the profile of each group of participants to ensure relevance.

- Do you think that violence exists in schools?
- What are the types and forms of such violence?
- What are the types of violence that you think worry parents?
- What are the teachers' practices that cause violence?
- What are the students' practices that lead to violence?
- What are the parents' practices that cause violence?
- What are the main causes of violence, then?
- What is your suggestion to reduce school violence?
- Did you notice any forms of gender discrimination in schools?
- Are there violence and discrimination in the curriculum?

## F. FRC: Sample questions for interviews

(1) Dear,

the questions below are means just to understand opinions from a variety of sources and you are an important part of them — your opinion will be a great influence in the guidance to seek to build a programme that seeks to reduce violence in schools to give our children and daughters a safe and comfortable school environment reflected in their behaviour and achievement to become active citizens in their society.

- Do you think there is violence in schools?
- What are the types of violence in the schools / schools that you think are hurting parents?
- What causes the violence and the teacher cause?
- What are the reasons that lead to violence and the student reason?
- What causes the violence and parents cause?
- What is your proposal to reduce violence in schools?

(2) Dear,

the questions below are just to know the opinions from a variety of sources and you are an important part of them, and your opinion will be a great influence in the guidance to strive to build a program that seeks to eliminate forms of discrimination in schools to give our children and boys a safe and comfortable school environment reflected on their behaviour and their achievement to become active citizens in their society.

- Do you think our society discriminates between the sexes?
- What types of discrimination exist in our society?
- Do you think that schools play a strong role in instilling a culture of justice, equality and non-discrimination between men and women / boys and girls?
- How to explain the reasons behind your answer to the previous question (if the answer is negative, but if the answer is positive, why)?
- What educational role do you think schools should do to eliminate discrimination in your opinion?

# Forming Responsible Citizens

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