



Program Information Documents (PID)

Appraisal Stage | Date Prepared/Updated: 21-May-2020 | Report No: PIDA212993

**BASIC INFORMATION****A. Basic Program Data**

Country Jordan	Project ID P173091	Program Name Additional Financing - Jordan Education Reform Support Program-for- Results	Parent Project ID (if any) P162407
Region MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA	Estimated Appraisal Date 08-Jun-2020	Estimated Board Date 30-Jun-2020	Practice Area (Lead) Education
Financing Instrument Program-for-Results Financing	Borrower(s) Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation	Implementing Agency Ministry of Education, Ministry of Public Works and Housing	

Program Development Objective(s)

The Program is to expand access to early childhood education, and to improve student assessment and teaching and learning conditions for Jordanian children and Syrian refugee children.

COST & FINANCING**SUMMARY (USD Millions)**

Government program Cost	0.00
Total Operation Cost	222.00
Total Program Cost	222.00
Total Financing	222.00
Financing Gap	0.00

FINANCING (USD Millions)

Total World Bank Group Financing	81.40
World Bank Lending	81.40
Total Government Contribution	122.00



Total Non-World Bank Group and Non-Client Government Financing	18.60
Trust Funds	18.60

B. Introduction and Context

Country Context

1. **Jordan’s economic growth had already decelerated significantly prior to the health and economic crisis triggered by the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic.** Jordan has historically maintained its stability and resilience despite being exposed to multiple exogenous shocks that impacted its economy over the past decade. Particularly, the country experienced spillovers from regional conflicts, specifically Iraq and Syria; fluctuations in energy prices due to disruption in natural gas supply from Egypt; loss of key Syrian and Iraqi export markets; and shifts in geopolitical relations. Combined, these shocks have compounded Jordan’s vulnerabilities and hit growth and employment in Jordan. From an annual average of 6.5 percent during 2000-09, real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth declined to an average of 2.6 percent per year in 2010-15 and stagnated at 2.0 percent per year during 2016-18.¹ In addition, the fiscal deficit and debt ratios surged to high levels in tandem with the post-2009 economic slowdown. Furthermore, Jordan’s near-term growth prospects have substantially weakened due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The lockdown measures, the disruption in regional and global markets, and the deterioration of the global economic outlook will have a significant impact on the Jordanian economy in the near term. Preliminary simulations show GDP could contract by 3.5 percent in 2020², mostly driven by declines in private consumption and exports. Over the medium-term, the public debt-to-GDP ratio is projected to remain elevated but stable, though susceptible to a variety of shocks.

2. **The conflict in Syria has led to a massive influx of refugees into Jordan, who have been largely absorbed into host communities and benefited from services, including education.** Jordan hosts around 1.3 million Syrian refugees, of whom over 720,000 are registered with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)³. Jordan has allowed Syrian refugee children to access tuition-free public schools in host communities since the start of the conflict, and additionally opened accredited public schools in *Zaatari* refugee camp in 2012 and *Azraq* refugee camp in 2014. In 2013, the Ministry of Education (MOE) additionally employed a double shift system for primary (but not secondary) schools. Today, roughly half of Syrian students in school attend during the second shift, another quarter are in schools in refugee camps, and another quarter are in the first shift with Jordanian students. Regardless

¹ World Bank. 2020. *Agile Concept Note – Jordan: Fiscal Public Expenditure Review*.

² World Bank. 2020. *MENA Economic Update – April 2020*.

³ UNHCR. February 2020. *Mid-Year Trends 2019*, available at <https://www.unhcr.org/search?comid=56b086754&cid=49aea93aba&scid=49aea93a5c&tags=midyear>. The total number of refugees and asylum seekers in Jordan is estimated at 756,110, of whom 34,500 are Iraqi refugees. This AF relies on UNHCR figures on Syrian refugees.



of the type of school or shift attended, Jordan prides itself in extending all education policies equally to all nationalities residing in the Kingdom.

Sectoral and Institutional Context

3. **Tangible progress has been made in expanding access to education in Jordan over the past four decades, but challenges remain both in the areas of access and quality of education.** The number of expected years of schooling rose from 3.4 years in 1970⁴ to 11.6 years in 2017 according to the World Bank's Human Capital Index (HCI).⁵ This is reflected in the near universal enrolment in basic education (grades 1-10); however, pre-primary⁶ net enrolment rates (NERs) remain low at 36.5 percent, and upper secondary (grades 11-12) NER is only at 71.2 percent.⁷ While there is no gender gap in the basic education NER, enrolment in pre-primary education is slightly higher for boys than girls (37.1 percent vs. 36.0 percent). At the upper secondary level, the gender gap is quite substantial in favor of females (NER 77.9 percent for females vs. 64.8 for males). The HCI adjusts the actual years of schooling by accounting for the quality of what children learn: in Jordan, the adjusted years of schooling equals 7.6 years, a 4-year gap relative to the time physically spent in school (as well as demonstrating a gender gap, with females at 8.1 years and males at 7.2 years).⁸ Another standardized learning metric reinforces the HCI finding: the World Bank's learning poverty measure reports that 52 percent of children in Jordan are unable to read and understand a short age-appropriate text by age 10.⁹ Here again, learning poverty is higher for boys (55.3 percent) than for girls (48.2 percent).

4. **Access challenges are particularly severe for Syrian refugee children in Jordan.** Despite the ability to enroll free of charge in Jordanian public schools, in 2018, out of the roughly 236,000 Syrian refugees between 5 and 17 years old in Jordan, only roughly 152,000 (64 percent) were in formal or non-formal education.¹⁰ Enrolment rates are especially low in early childhood education, but they do not reach beyond 70 percent for ages 7-10 years, when they begin to drop off again (and at a slightly faster rate for boys than girls). The primary reasons for low enrolment (and high dropout) rates for refugee children can be categorized into constraints on the demand side (financial constraints, early marriage, value placed on education) as well as supply side (distance to school, safe school climate concerns) that threaten to result in "a lost generation".¹¹ The relatively higher drop-out rate for boys is related primarily to the higher incidence of child labor among boys. This reflects the relatively high opportunity cost of education for Syrian refugees 10-16 years old: based on lessons learned from the UNICEF-run *Hajati* cash transfer program, discontinuation of the cash transfers led to lower school attendance and higher rates of child labor, particularly for boys.¹²

⁴ Barro, R. and J. Lee. 2013. "A New Data Set of Educational Attainment in the World, 1950-2010," *Journal of Development Economics* 104:184-198.

⁵ The HCI includes five education and health indicators: the probability of survival to age five, a child's expected years of schooling, harmonized test scores as a measure of quality of learning, adult survival rate, and the proportion of children who are not stunted.

⁶ Includes 2 years, Kindergarten 1 and Kindergarten 2.

⁷ Ministry of Education. 2019. *Statistical Abstract for Academic Year 2017-18*.

⁸ World Bank Human Capital Project, available at <https://www.worldbank.org/en/publication/human-capital#firstLink01642>.

⁹ World Bank Learning Poverty, available at <https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/education/brief/learning-poverty>.

¹⁰ No Lost Generation Partners. *Investing in the Future: Protection and Learning for all Syrian Children and Youth*. March 2019.

¹¹ UNHCR. 2019. *Vulnerability Assessment Framework: Population Study 2019*. The study is based on a representative sample of Syrian refugees and does not provide any comparison between Syrians and Jordanians.

¹² UNICEF Office of Research – Innocenti. 2019. *The Impact of Terminating Cash Support to Displaced Syrian Children in Jordan*.



5. **The MOE's Education Strategic Plan 2018-2022 (ESP) defines the Government's education program, identifying opportunities for education improvement for all inhabitants of Jordan.** The ESP lays out the reform program along six key domains: a) early childhood education (ECE); b) access and equity; c) quality; d) human resources; e) system strengthening; and f) vocational education. In order to support the ESP, the parent Jordan Education Reform Support (JERS) Program-for-Results (PforR) was approved by the World Bank Board of Executive Directors and became effective in December 2017, providing the Government of Jordan financing in the amount of US\$200 million, of which US\$147.7 is an IBRD loan and US\$52.3 million support from the Global Concessional Financing Facility (GCFF). The US\$200 million envelope consists of a PforR portion of US\$192 million and a Technical Assistance (TA) Investment Project Financing (IPF) portion of US\$8 million. The operation's Program Development Objective (PDO) is to expand access to early childhood education, and to improve student assessment and teaching and learning conditions for Jordanian children and Syrian refugee children. Thus, the original PforR has four key Result Areas (RAs) that support several domains of the ESP:

- (a) *Result Area 1:* Expanded access and improved quality of early childhood education
- (b) *Result Area 2:* Improved teaching and learning conditions
- (c) *Result Area 3:* Reformed student assessment and certification system
- (d) *Result Area 4:* Strengthened education system management.

6. **Already before the COVID-19 pandemic, the MOE sought to redouble its efforts in several RAs, prompting the need for the Additional Financing (AF).** Under RA1 on ECE, the Government's ambitions increased significantly during the last year, particularly around the speed of expanding access, and the target became to achieve 100 percent enrolment of 5-year-olds in KG2 beginning with academic year 2020-21. Under the original PforR, the focus of RA2 was on strengthening the capacity of teachers and school leaders and improving the learning environment in schools with a high proportion of Syrian refugees. Under the AF, the Government seeks to roll out these interventions beyond this subset of public schools. And under RA3 on student assessment, MOE is committed to digitizing the high-stakes *tawjihi* school-leaving and university entrance exam, above and beyond the original PforR's focus on revising the content and purpose of the exam.

7. **With the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic, the MOE responded swiftly by switching to distance education in the short term and planning for the medium term.** Online and television resources were set up to provide students with distance learning content. Leveraging readily available materials from the private sector, the Ministry is offering online lectures through its newly established *Darsak*¹³ platform and two dedicated TV channels. These resources cover the curriculum's core subjects of Arabic, English, math, and science for grades 1 through 12. In addition, the country's TV sports channel has been repurposed to broadcast educational material tailored to students preparing for the *tawjihi*. The MOE also developed the *Education During Emergency Plan 2020/22* (EDEP), which lays out the short- to medium-term education response to the COVID-19 pandemic in three phases:

- (a) *Response Phase (March-May 2020)* – corresponds to the swift response described above.

¹³ "Darsak" in Arabic translates to "your lesson" and can be accessed through the MOE website at MOE.gov.jo.



(b) *Recovery/Remedial Phase (June-August 2020)* – Since the distance education provided will likely leave learning gaps for those who were able to access it, and even larger gaps for students from vulnerable and disadvantaged backgrounds (including Syrian refugees) who could not access TV or the internet, MOE plans to provide a month-long catch-up program prior to the beginning of the new school year in September 2020. In addition, schools will be prepared during this phase for the return of students, including ensuring minimum required health and safety measures.

(c) *Sustainability Phase (September 2020-September 2022)* – Having made the swift leap to distance education, the MOE sees the benefits of maintaining the gains made in its ability to provide distance education by integrating distance education better into traditional classroom instruction. In other words, the education system in Jordan will not only recover but “build back better” during this phase, with MOE exploring opportunities to leverage high-quality distance learning content as a complementary resource for students during regular times and piloting blended learning modalities.

8. **The AF is providing timely technical and financial support to cope with the medium-term challenges caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.** Education sector financing will be a key challenge in times of increased pressure on the public budget, reductions in disposable incomes of families, and pressure on international financing as donor countries themselves have often been severely affected by the pandemic. The AF provides crucial support for investment in the human capital of the generation that will have to pay for the debts that countries are incurring to cope with the crisis today. The AF will further support MOE in leveraging investments in distance learning as a launching pad for more effective and inclusive education services.

PforR Program Scope

9. **The original PforR was valued at US\$700.0 million, representing 10 percent of the US\$7 billion ESP (Government program), and including key activities that focus on access to and quality of ECE, basic, and secondary education.** The proposed AF will operate within the original boundary of the Government program (see Figure 1). The PforR Program boundary will expand by US\$222 million in terms of the expenditure framework (see Table 1), of which US\$100m is being provided through the AF (see Table 2). This expansion is reflected in (a) ambitious new targets, e.g. under RA1 due to universalization of KG2; (b) additional interventions across the board to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic, including ensuring sustainability of distance learning innovations that were introduced as a response to school closures; and (c) additional expenditures since the Operation has been extended by 2 years. Finally, Table 3 provides the MOE’s past, present, and projected spending on ECE, basic, and secondary education, demonstrating that it has not only maintained spending levels in the midst of a difficult fiscal environment, but also in fact increased its commitment in nominal terms over the years.



Figure 1: Changes to Program Boundaries



Table 1: Program Boundaries and Expenditure Framework

Government program		Area	Original PforR (US\$ million)	AF (US\$ million)
		RA1: ECE access & quality	114	49.8
		RA2: Teaching & learning conditions	113	113.4
		RA3: Student assessment	98	51.7
		RA4: System strengthening	375	7.1
Total	US\$7 billion		700	222

Table 2: Program Boundaries and Financing

Financing Source	Original PforR (US\$ million)	AF (US\$ million)	Total (US\$ million)
Borrower/Recipient	500	122	622
IBRD/GCFF	200	100	300
Other	0	0	0
Total	700	222	922

Table 3: Ministry of Education budget for early childhood, basic, and secondary education (2018-2021)

Program	2018	2019	2020	2021
	Actual spending (JOD)	Updated estimated spending (JOD)	Estimated spending (JOD)	Indicative spending (JOD)
Early childhood education	4,020,256	5,000,000	5,670,000	5,850,000
Basic education	717,150,813	736,349,000	783,143,500	834,856,834
Secondary education	102,304,755	126,167,000	131,647,500	142,199,166

Source: Government Budget Department, Ministry of Education 2020 Budget



C. Program Development Objective(s)

Program Development Objective(s)

10. The Program Development Objective is to expand access to early childhood education, and to improve student assessment and teaching and learning conditions for Jordanian children and Syrian refugee children.

Project Development Objective Indicators by Objectives/ Outcomes

Indicator Name	DLI	Baseline	End Target	Monitoring & Evaluation
Number of Syrian refugee boys and girls benefiting from the PforR Program interventions (Number)	cross-cutting	0	180,000	This indicator will track all children who directly benefit from the program's interventions across all four RAs. Beneficiaries include those under DLI 1, but also refugee children currently enrolled in the system in target schools that will benefit from interventions. The indicator will be disaggregated by gender and level of education (KG, basic, lower secondary, upper secondary). Data source: EMIS.
Number of Jordanian and Syrian refugee boys and girls enrolled in KG2 (Number)	2	80,000	120,000	This indicator will be disaggregated by gender and nationality. Data source: EMIS.
Number of teachers evaluated against the new National Teacher Professional Standards (NTPS) who meet the minimum performance standards (Number)	4	0	6,400	This indicator will be disaggregated by gender, level of education (basic, lower secondary, upper secondary) and type of school (co-ed, all boys' school). Data source: MOE Teacher evaluation records.
Legal regulation adopted towards reforming the dual purpose of the <i>tawjihi</i> high-stakes exam	7	No	Yes	This indicator will be measured against the official adoption by MOE of a regulation separating the secondary school graduation function of the <i>tawjihi</i> exam from its function to determine admission to higher education, and replacing it with a combination of <i>tawjihi</i> and other placement tests. Data source: MOE website.

D. Environmental and Social Effects

11. **The social risks of the program are considered substantial.** The social risks under the proposed additional financing will remain “Substantial” primarily owing to land-related risks of the parent and additional financing. While the program excludes construction of new schools, RA1 supports expanded enrollment of Syrian refugee children at all levels, and for all children in refurbished and extended KG2 classrooms, primarily on existing school lands. Land acquisition is minimized by constructing on existing MOE lands wherever possible, and the MOE also uses other strategies to increasing enrollment (e.g. increase class size), but school expansions in some cases entail swapping of land between ministries, or acquiring adjacent parcels from private landowners. There are also risks related to informal land users which are not recognized under Jordanian Land Law, even when constructing on MOE lands. A land acquisition audit will be conducted and a Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) will be prepared covering



screening and implementation procedures for land acquisition and compensation in order to adhere to the PforR Core Principles.

12. **The program also entails risks and positive impacts related to community health and safety.** The AF supports the MOE's emergency response plan to COVID-19, with new hygiene facilities in schools, and virtual learning methods to support shelter-in-place and social distancing efforts. Health and safety for children and public from hazards during construction of extensions and refurbishments, and proximity to work crews, are also considered risks of the parent and AF. Health and Safety requirements will be incorporated into standard procurement documents for civil works under the program and the capacity of the MOE on Health and Safety will be augmented.

13. **The broader social risks associated with the Program as identified in the Environmental and Social Systems Assessment for the parent program, remain relevant for the AF.** These risks are contextual in nature such as violence in schools (various forms), gender biases in school curriculum or teaching, inadequate support to children with disabilities and special needs, vulnerability and psychological distress among poor Jordanians and Syrian refugees leading to negative coping strategies such as child labor, early marriage, and begging which may contribute to children dropping out. The government's program for universal KG2 under the additional financing may decrease risks related to inclusion and access and may exacerbate others if classrooms are overcrowded or licensing processes for new KGs are weak. The program incorporates several preventative interventions, such as social-emotional learning, and quality assurance measures that have been assessed.

14. **Environmental risks are considered moderate.** The environmental risks under the proposed additional financing remain 'Moderate' as rated in the original program since it supports similar physical activities (i.e. classroom expansion through refurbishment of available spaces in existing schools or construction of new classrooms/ child-friendly restrooms/ playgrounds extension on schools' available land). These activities are expected to result in low to moderate impacts on air, water, and soil quality as well as on workers' and adjacent communities' health and safety (including students and teachers) during construction. During school operation, impacts could be associated with water supply and sanitation, solid waste management and maintenance needs. The upgrading of the WASH facilities and the basic rehabilitation of school building (installation of heating/ cooling systems, electric maintenance and paint) may also result in a similar type of impacts but it would be limited, temporary and easy to mitigate. The impacts of the potential resultant e-waste associated with the end of use disposal of IT equipment utilized by the project (e.g. digitization of competency-based *tawjihi* exam and distance e-learning) would be low as the amount of generated e-waste would be insignificant compared with that generated in Jordan. Digitization will result in paperless exam and learning and reduces carbon footprint associated with paper production (cutting trees, use of chemicals, energy, etc.) the generation waste.

15. **The risks, conclusions and recommended mitigation measures are elaborated in an Addendum to the parent Program ESSA that has been prepared and disclosed on June 4, 2020.** The Addendum covers the following aspects: 1) an assessment of the ongoing relevance of the parent ESSA, including any changes to the activities, risks or benefits under the parent program; 2) any new risks or benefits associated with new activities under the AF; 3) changes to borrower environmental and social systems; and 4) evaluation of the borrower's environmental and social performance and track record to date in delivering the program.

**E. Financing****Program Financing**

Sources	Amount (USD million)	% of Total
International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD)	81.4	81
Trust Funds	18.6	19
Concessional Financing Facility	18.6	19
Total Program Financing	100.0	

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